

SPORTS

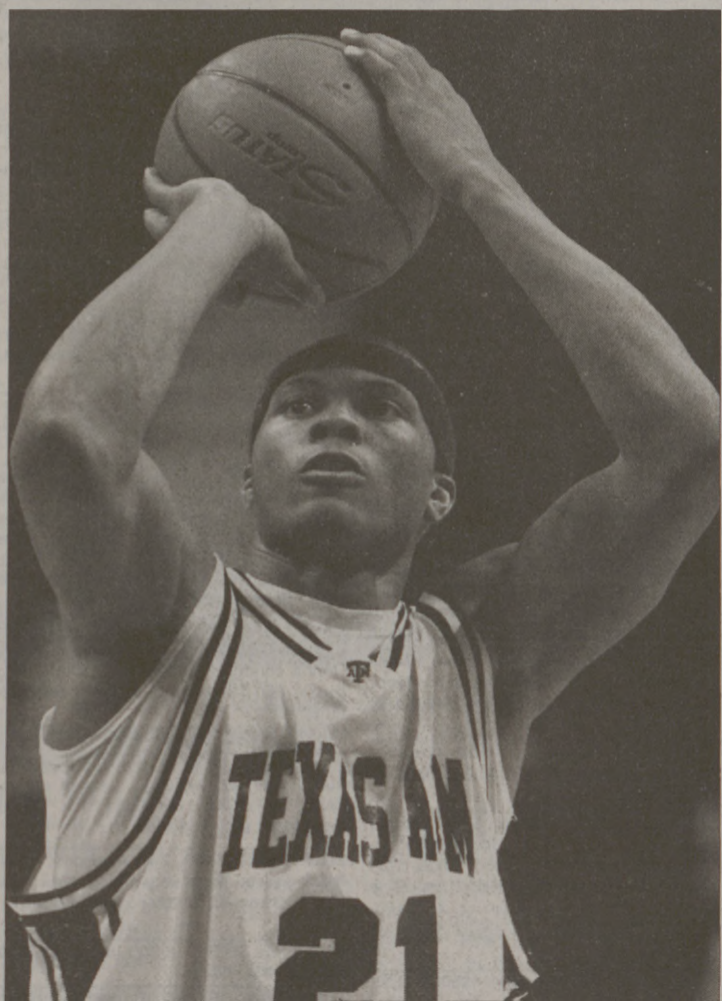
THE BATTALION

Page 1B • Thursday, February 26, 2004

First win slips away as Aggies lose to Baylor

Overtime proves too much for Aggies

By Troy Miller
THE BATTALION



JP BEATO III • THE BATTALION

A&M sophomore guard/forward **Antoine Wright** prepares to shoot one of his two free throws with three seconds left against Baylor Wednesday. **Wright** missed both to send the game into overtime. Baylor won 67-61.

finish it out," Watkins said. "In this conference if you're going to win, you've got to get it done."

After an atrociously sloppy first half of play, in which Baylor and A&M combined for the same number of turnovers

as field goals (22), the Aggies held a 29-27 lead. The A&M lead increased to eight with 14:31 left on a jump shot by Wright, but every time A&M

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Watkins on his way out as A&M coach



TROY MILLER

Losing to probation-stricken Baylor at the tail-end of a winless conference campaign doesn't help matters when your six-year winning percentage is .357.

For Texas A&M men's basketball head coach **Melvin Watkins**, the final buzzer of his era at A&M has already gone off, according to sources within the Athletic Department.

Despite being one of the most-liked figures in the department, nothing less than a Big 12 tournament championship will change his situation — too bad history is against him as A&M is the only school without a Big 12 tournament victory since the conference was formed in 1996.

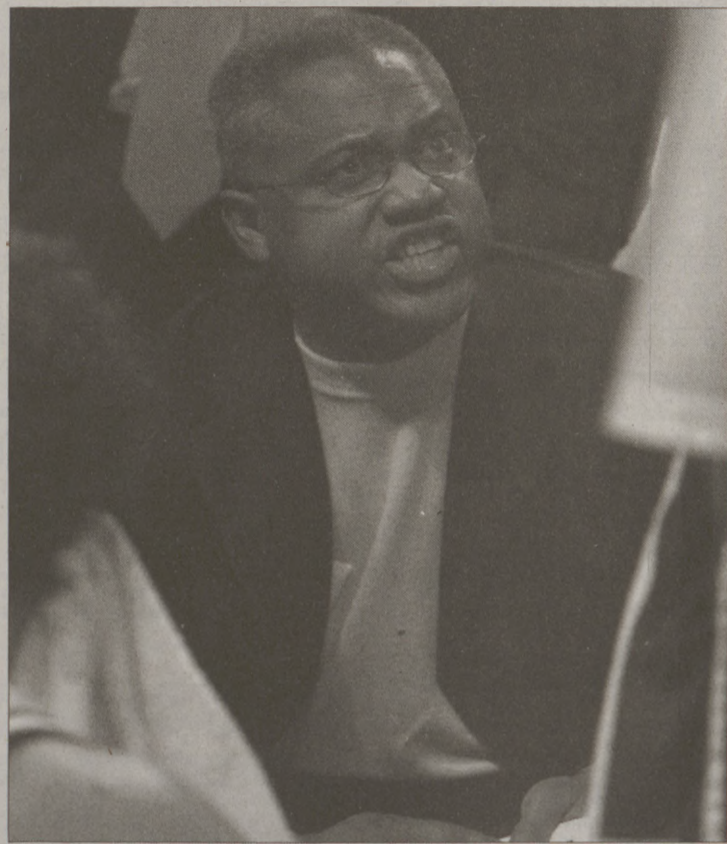
Now A&M Athletic Director **Bill Byrne** will have his hardest, yet most important decision to make.

The A&M Athletic Department is losing millions of dollars in potential revenue by fielding a mediocre basketball program, and it's no secret that Byrne wants that to change.

So who should replace Watkins?

The answer to that question isn't easy as A&M is known as a black hole for men's basketball coaching careers.

After **Shelby Metcalf**, the most successful coach in A&M history, left the program



JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION

A&M head coach **Melvin Watkins** draws up a play during a timeout in the Aggies' 67-61 loss to Baylor Wednesday.

during the 1989-90 season, **Kermit Davis Jr.** entered the lead role.

Davis lasted one season after going 8-21.

Then came the sideline tirades of **Tony Barone**. His tie-throwing antics were amusing, but that's all that would make Aggie fans smile as Barone had just one winning season in seven years in Aggieland.

Then came **Watkins**, the coach from the University of

North Carolina-Charlotte who, in two seasons as 49er head coach, led his alma mater to two straight 20-win campaigns and two straight NCAA tournament berths.

At Charlotte, **Watkins** won, and he did it by recruiting the best classes Charlotte had ever seen.

At A&M, the recruiting

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