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How five-star Texas A&M commit Terry Bussey's impact stretches well beyond field at Timpson

Inside the Texas A&M commit's special impact on the Timpson community.



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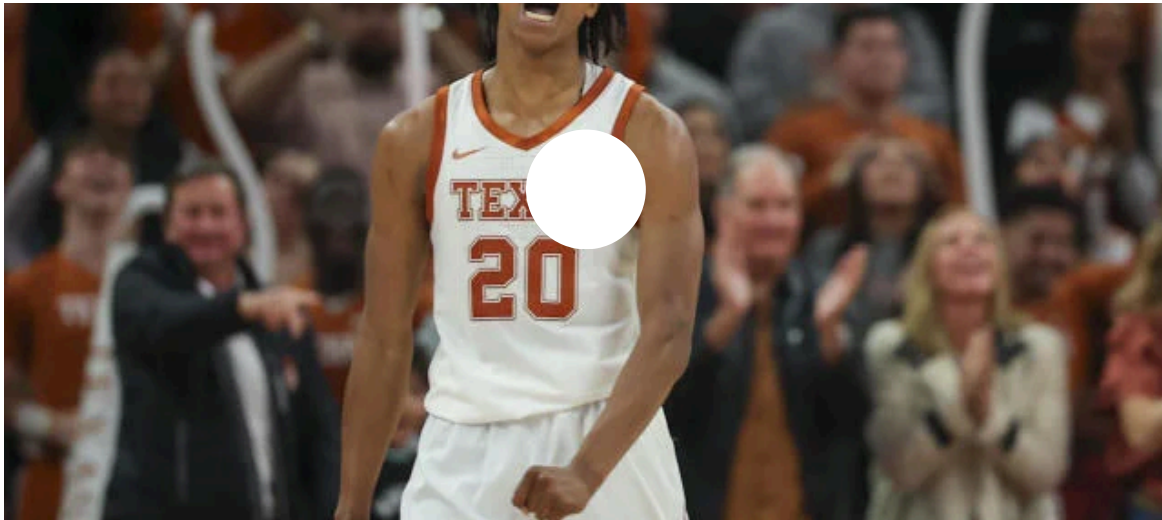
By ANDREW HATTERSLEY

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NCAAM Highlights: No. 13 Texas A&M at Texas (1/25)



After **Terry Bussey** made his return to the field against Waskom in a 63-12 victory last month, head coach Kerry Therwanger looked on as friends, family, opposing players and fans stuck around for close to 20 minutes after the game snapping picture-after-picture with the five-star athlete.

The community turned out again in droves last Thursday to watch Bussey announce where he would be heading to college from a top five of Texas A&M, Texas, Oklahoma, Alabama and LSU. The packed gymnasium not only featured friends, family, coaches and teammates but many other members of the Timpson community as well.

Bussey's emergence as one of the best players in the country this cycle has put the spotlight squarely on the Timpson program as well. Media has flocked to games. Fans and opposing players have asked for pictures. Through it all, Bussey has put up one big performance after another and handled the spotlight with maturity beyond his years.

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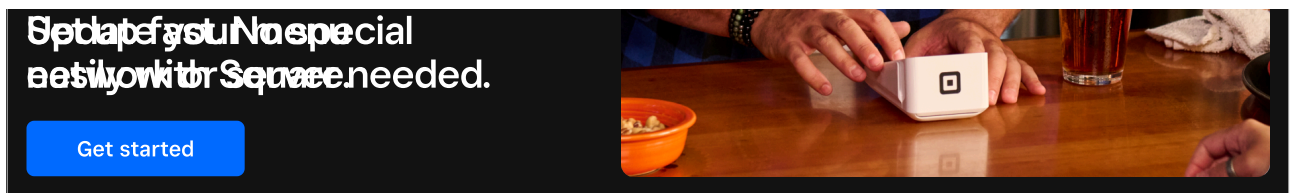
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“Well, it's different, I can be honest. Most 2As don't have this. But the good thing is, it's been like this kind for the last year and a half,” Therwanger said Thursday. “After playoff games, we've got other teams fans coming up trying to get him to sign stuff and things like that, and we just kind of giggle because just weird to us to see the opponent ask for autographs and things like that. But it's been fantastic to shine a light on our community and our program and just get to enjoy the ride with him a little bit.”

Bussey has had to overcome terrible tragedy in his life losing both his mother and having one of his sisters pass away, [as told in a story by Bally Sports Southwest last month](https://247sports.com/college/texas-am/article/terry-bussey-texas-am-commit-timpson-impact-off-the-field-kerry-therwanger-jerrold-campbell-217384243/).

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Through those tough moments though, he has forged a strong bond with the Timpson community, young and old, and embraces the chance to set an example for those younger than him.

"I mean, it's been amazing having support from my hometown and my community and my friends and family. It puts a spotlight on you. You got little ones looking up to you so you can't make a wrong move, or they're going to try to do the same thing. I feel like I watch myself and carry myself the right way for the little ones," Bussey said after his commitment ceremony. "I mean, God put me in a position for a reason, so I'm going to use this ability he gave me as a platform to spread his word and make sure to show everybody how I'm doing it right and trying to do it right."

Dealing with the constant attention as a high school athlete can be difficult, especially for someone playing multiple sports and focusing on school. If Bussey can make an impact, though, that's what he aims to do.

"I got great people around me all the time," Bussey said. "Everybody's in a positive mood. If they're not, I can smile and brighten up their day a little bit, just do whatever I can to help somebody out because you never know what somebody's going through."

Jerrold Campbell, Timpson High's principal, has known Bussey since a young age. The way he has handled an often-stressful recruiting process has been unlike anything Campbell has seen before.

"The only word that comes to mind is humility. We can go places, we can walk into facilities, be around coaches. He's never awestruck. He never thinks, this is so cool. There's a lot of times where he's going on visits. His own buddies have no idea that he's going there. Today, nobody knew what that decision was going to be," Campbell said. "I didn't know what that decision was going to be. So, he's just one that's very humble. He doesn't look for the light for himself. He wants to go out, compete, play hard and win, and he wants teammates that are going to do the same thing. And so, it's a deal to where he's handled it probably better than many that I've seen."

Campbell recalled the first time Bussey and him went over to an A&M camp together back in June 2022. Bussey hadn't even finished warming up yet before defensive backs coach TJ Rushing was

already keeping close tabs on him. The Timpson standout walked away from that camp with an offer from the Aggies.

“Coach Rushing saw him and it was basically he hadn't even finished warming up, and Coach Rushing was excited to have him there and he ended up with an offer that day. You have to think that that may have played a little bit of role of being in early, and then being able to stay in contact gives you a little bit more time to develop those relationships and all that kind of stuff,” Campbell said of the Aggies entering the race early. “But, yeah, it could have possibly I don't know for sure, but it definitely could have played a little bit of a part in it.”

Bussey has been at the top of the Aggies' board for the better part of the last year. While there's been some belief that A&M has long been the leader for Bussey, it hasn't always been that way. The Aggies have been consistent in their approach recruiting him and that stood out down the stretch when it came time to make a decision.

“They've made me a priority since the beginning, and their love hasn't changed through the whole process. I can't lie, it ain't always been A&M,” Bussey said after his decision. “Last night and [Thursday] morning, I was like, this is my home right here.”

That didn't mean there weren't some nervous hours for Rushing. Bussey said he did not fully make up his mind until the day of the decision, and nobody around him knew what the ultimate decision was going to be.

“It was hectic. He was nervous because I wouldn't tell nobody because I didn't know, really,” Bussey said laughing. “But it's been great conversations. It's been pretty hectic for him. I think he's going to be all right now.”

The newest Texas A&M pledge will be back in Aggieland this upcoming weekend for an official visit. After having so many people recruiting him over the last few months, the tables turn a little bit as he will be in town to recruit for A&M.

“I'm going to try to work something,” Bussey said. “But, I mean, it's going to be great. I already know got a bunch of recruits coming down there, a bunch of people I have relationships with. So it's going to be great.”

He will also get a glimpse of the future and is excited to be a part of the Aggies' defensive backfield.

“I feel like it's going to be great. It's going to be a great thing to be a part of. I mean, we got defensive linemen that are unbelievable,” Bussey said of being part of A&M's defense down the

road. "We got linebackers that are unbelievable. We got safeties and stuff, that's unbelievable. Just being out there. To be able to help my team make plays when I need to. Be in the right position, I need to help my team out."

Therwanger has full confidence Bussey will be able to make a big impact on the field. He's had the chance to see what the Timpson two-way standout can do for several years now.

What also has him excited, though, is the future Bussey has off the field. The Texas A&M commit will graduate high school with an associates degree already in hand and plans to study engineering at the college level.

"The most important thing I coached an all-stater at Lovelady before. He was an All-State running back, but what I'm most proud of, he's a lawyer today, and I'm going to be able to probably say that same thing about this young man," Therwanger said of Bussey. "He's a great athlete, but as he gets older, he's going to be an engineer and a great father and a great community member. That's the most important thing."

Before Bussey gets to A&M though as a summer enrollee, he has big plans for his final year. One that involves delivering Timpson's first ever state title.

"I'm not just trying to make a deep run now. I'm trying to win a state title finally," Bussey said smiling. "So, I mean, we just going to try to have to work at it and try to get it this year."

Comments (20)

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Analysis: Oddly enough, Texas A&M has best-ever NET ranking following collapse at Texas

Oddly enough, Texas A&M men's basketball has its highest spot in the history of the NET rankings following a 70-69 loss to Texas on the road Saturday in Austin.



VIP By **CARTER KARELS**

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