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## *THE MASTER OF THE KEY*

AFTER YEARS OF RELYING ON OTHERS TO UNLOCK DOORS FOR HIM, GEORGETOWN'S CENTER PATRICK EWING WILL SOON GO OFF ON HIS OWN

RALPH WILEY

Patrick Ewing stirred in his bed at 22 Pleasant St. in Cambridge, Mass. The bed was too small, but that's something a 7-footer with an 8-foot wingspan learns to live with. Ewing had slept like a rock and awoke refreshed. The sun was rising in a cloudless sky, warming the house and promising a fine Indian summer day. This, apparently, was no dream. Today—Friday, Oct. 12, 1984—a perfect day for anything, would be Patrick Ewing Day in Cambridge.

Shortly before noon Ewing left his mother's house along with Helen Ford, an employee at Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School, in a chauffeured Oldsmobile Ninety-eight. Soon thereafter they arrived at the back of Cambridge City Hall. Without a wasted motion, he opened a rear door to assist Ford from the car. She had proposed this Ewing Day to the city government and was delighted to serve as Ewing's self-appointed surrogate mother. Patrick's mother, Dorothy, had died of a massive heart attack in the house on Pleasant Street 13 months earlier.

As Ewing walked into the City Hall atrium, cheerleaders massed and bubbled, their ponytails bobbing barely above his waist. They escorted him to a wide staircase where he was joined by City Councilor Walter Sullivan, who stood two Steps higher than Ewing and put his arm up on Ewing's shoulder for a picture. The smiling Ewing was still the taller man. More city workers, officials and well-wishers offered congratulations, while Ewing, dressed like a diplomat, bent to be closer to them and to offer pleasantries in a singsong baritone that seemed to come from the ceiling. "Nice to see you, too." "Thank you very much." "How are you these days?" He was not ill at ease. Not yet.

Inside the offices of Mayor Leonard J. Russell, State Senator George Bachrach offered a handshake and a word of advice. "You need a bodyguard," said Bachrach. Ewing let out a short breath—like a laugh, but noncommittal. He'd traveled to Cambridge the previous evening from Georgetown's campus in Washington, D.C. Ford and Patrick's father, Carl, were mildly surprised that Patrick's only traveling companion on the flight from Washington was a coed from Howard University named Rita Williams. "We met on the Hill, the summer before last," Williams said. She had worked for Senator Bill Bradley while Ewing was an intern with the Senate Finance Committee.

"C'mon over here," City Councilor Sandra Graham said to Carl, who stood off to one side. "Without the father, there is no son." Carl Ewing, 59, studied Patrick briefly and deferred as only a father who knows when the son wishes to fend for himself can. Carl lifted a heavy maple chair, moved it to a corner of the room and sat down. "It may fit better over here," he said. Patrick reached inside his jacket, fished out his Olympic gold medal and slipped it on. The party soon moved to the City Hall steps for the public ceremony.

"Whereas, the city of Cambridge has been blessed to have Patrick Ewing as its native son, with three state high school championships at Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School, a national championship with Georgetown and most recently the gold medal at the Twenty-third Olympiad...." Russell read the proclamation with gusto to a crowd of a few hundred people gathered on Massachusetts Avenue. The sun grew warmer. "The city is honored to be where Patrick had his basketball beginnings.... I hereby proclaim October 12, Pat Ewing Day...a great, immortal day in Cambridge.... Finally, I present to Patrick Ewing, the key to the city."

Ewing smiled beneficently throughout, but sweat formed on his forehead. Good sweat, Ewing's old ally, was in this case a nuisance. His father passed him a folded handkerchief as more representatives spoke. "A proclamation from the Massachusetts Senate...Michael LoPresti authored...Governor Michael S. Dukakis...hereby Pat Ewing Day in the Commonwealth."

Graham asked if Ewing might like to say a few words. Ewing nodded. "I'd like to thank you all for coming out and giving me your support," he said. A motorcade then carried Ewing and the official party through the city's squares before stopping on Cambridge Street, at Rindge and Latin's War Memorial gym. "We're private people," Ewing's father had said before entering the lead car. "Patrick is one of the family, but I can't always judge him, and I'm his father."

The gymnasium floor teemed with students. On the gym's stage, Ewing sat with Ford, his father, his brother Carl Jr., his sister Lastina and Williams. The pep band played The Stars and Stripes Forever. There were more testimonials. Ewing seemed to listen more intently to these because most of them came from members of an informal group that has come to be known as the Ewing Committee.

Two days later columnist David S. Broder would write in The Washington Post, "One of the continuing puzzles about [him] is the quality that his intimates see in him that makes them feel he needs to be shielded from the outside world.... It has never been clear to me just what it is that the people in this protective phalanx believe they are protecting...yet they always seem poised to intervene—as if he were going to need help." Broder was writing about President Reagan, but he might as well have been talking about Ewing, the dominant and reclusive center of the NCAA basketball champion Hoyas.

What is it about Ewing that compels the Committee to protect him so? His youth? He's 22 now, "more proud of being a man than this great basketball player we talk about," says Georgetown coach John Thompson, largest and most influential member of the Ewing Committee. Is it Ewing's difficulty in expressing himself? Is he not a senior in fine arts at one of the nation's most esteemed universities? Mary Fenlon, the Hoya basketball team's academic coordinator, won't comment on Ewing's academic record, but a faculty member in Georgetown's College of Arts and Sciences says, "He's definitely on time for graduation. No problems that we see. Same requirements as everyone in the field."

So is it merely habit? Is it just easier this way for Ewing—allowing the Committee to handle his celebrity for him? He seems to feel that he has better things to do than talk about himself. The Committee members seem to feel good testifying about what they've done for Ewing.

Deborah Ross was the first Committee member to speak. For five years before Ewing went to Georgetown she had been his tutor, working to help him bridge the language gap between proper Bostonese and Ewing's native Jamaican patois. "I saw another side of Patrick," she told the student audience. "His achievements, academic and athletic, are not unrelated. Patrick agreed to participate in the learning process. You can't teach somebody who doesn't want to learn. Patrick had the willingness to accept an enormous challenge...and to suffer losses...but never to refuse to work.... I never gave Patrick a graduation present, until now."

Steve Jenkins pulled at the end of his bushy red beard as he talked. "I had Patrick first, in 1975, in the old Rindge Technical High building," he said. "He was 6'1". I had him playing point guard. He went to Upward Bound at Wellesley College instead of summer basketball camps. Patrick Ewing stands as an example for all kids in Cambridge."

Mike Jarvis stood up. With Ewing as his center, Jarvis had coached Rindge and Latin to those three Massachusetts titles. Jarvis is a proponent of the Celtics' team concept, and his hero is Bill Russell, whose rebounds Jarvis recalls counting as a youngster—"counting them until I went to sleep," he says. But Jarvis purposely had never mentioned Russell to Ewing until Ewing, as a 10th grader, had asked, "Who is this Bill Russell?" Ewing had been in America only four years at the time, and people were saying to him, "You play like Russell." Ewing had to ask to be sure this wasn't an insult. At other times people had called him names he hadn't understood. He hadn't known what "Hey, Peking man" meant until he asked. To this day, Ewing hasn't seen so much as a film clip of Russell playing.

Jarvis spoke eloquently. "Patrick took something God gave all of us—potential—and first he discovered it, then he developed it. He learned—was taught—to listen. Once you told him the answer, he never forgot. Not a day of practice did he miss. Not one day. Never did he miss a class, not even a study hall. Never did he average more than 21 points a game. He could've had that in a quarter. Nobody received more criticism, from the day he started to play. No matter how foolish he looked, how people laughed, he practiced. And God gave Patrick Ewing something else—one of the greatest mothers in the world. This is their day, the Ewings' day, Dorothy and Patrick Ewing."

At this, tears welled up in Patrick's eyes, and he glanced over his right shoulder at Lastina and asked her, "Are you all right?" She nodded. While swiveling his head back, he noticed a television minicamera that was aimed at him. He spun toward Ford, looking churlish, jerking his thumb over his shoulder at the camera. "Can you tell them to take that camera off me?" he asked. "Oh," said Ford, smiling, "they won't bother you." Ewing stared straight ahead.

Soon it was his turn to speak. "Well," he began. He was moved and more than a little nervous. Again he let out a laughlike burst of breath. "I really don't know what to say. This brings back memories. I appreciate it, and it feels great to be home. I'm honored to have this day, except that when everybody was talking they made me feel like a saint. John Thompson has said, 'There are no saints in the pivot.' I'd like to thank you for your time and your effort."

Patrick Aloysius Ewing was then pronounced a charter member of the CRLHS Sports Hall of Fame. His family sat impassively. Patrick had, after all, merely done what was expected of him. But the students in the audience stood and cheered. They had a better perspective on expectations. When Ewing stood where they stood now, he couldn't have expected to become a role model. They cheered like mad.

But something in Ewing's mood had been broken—or perhaps he wanted more time with Williams. He'd been scheduled to give a press conference, but it was hastily canceled. A television news crew wanted an interview, but Ewing refused. Questions were referred to one member or another of the Committee. Ewing signed autographs on his way out and posed for pictures in the teachers' cafeteria. Outside, leaning against a tree only slightly taller than he, he asked for, and received, permission to kiss Williams on the cheek. He didn't refer this matter to the Committee. His mother should have seen this day. "She did see it, I'm convinced," said Ford. "Look—the sun shines so brightly."

Dorothy Phipps Ewing left Jamaica for the U.S. in 1971, leaving behind her husband and their seven children in a weather-beaten house near Kingston. She promised to send for them before long. "America is a dream in Jamaica, in all the islands," says Jarvis's wife, Connie, whose parents were born in Barbados and Jamaica. "In the islands you can count on great weather and menial work. Jamaica has something like a caste system—the darker you are, the less you have. The respect is according to color. Ultimately, the dream of all island people is to come to America and accumulate something." Connie met Dorothy before the latter had even heard of basketball, when both were employed at Massachusetts General Hospital. With the help of relatives in New York, Dorothy had come to Cambridge and rented a five-room apartment on River Street, in the section between the Charles River and Central Square called the Coast.

Dorothy worked in the Mass General cafeteria, in the kitchen and food line. "She was a very hardworking woman," says Connie. "Her shift started at six, and she was conscientious. She took the work as a privilege."

By ones and twos, the Ewing children began arriving in the U.S., with 12-year-old Patrick, who bears the strongest resemblance to his mother, arriving on Jan. 11, 1975. Carl, who had come in 1973, had mixed feelings about moving to the U.S. "I had a good job in Jamaica, in heavy-duty mechanics," he says. "I didn't want to give it up. But Dorothy had come, and so I felt I had to come. But my wife did not have to work." She did work, if for no other reason than to make life better for her children. Not that raising those seven was any easy chore in itself. Dorothy still somehow found the means to save toward her next dream—a house where there would be more room for the family. As her children (Patrick is fifth eldest after Lastina, 37, Carl Jr., 36, Pauline, 34 and Rosemarie, 27; Barbara and Karlene are 19 and 18, respectively) grew older, she wanted something more for them than jobs in Jamaica's bauxite mines or Massachusetts' hospital kitchens. "Education," says Connie Jarvis. "She believed in it because she didn't have it." As a girl, Dorothy had attended St. Anne's School in Kingston. She knew the value of learning, though she'd left school to work. As an adult she'd sometimes speak of taking classes, but free time was an unrealized luxury. "She preached the value of education to Patrick and all her children," says Connie. "And Patrick trusted her completely." Carl Sr., meanwhile, came to grips with his new life and found work making fire hoses at a rubber company. He now works at Mass General.

Shortly after his arrival in Cambridge, Patrick passed a playground near Hoyt Park. For some days, from a distance, he studied the game the boys were playing. Then one day he walked more slowly than usual past the playground. "Hey, do you want to play?" one of the kids called. Ewing had never touched a basketball. "Sure," he said.

"I'd watched and seen the object was to put the ball in the basket," Ewing recalls. But did it turn out to be as easy as it looked? His laughter resonates. "It was more difficult than I could have imagined," he says. Ewing had been a soccer goalie in Jamaica. But he had had little appetite and, it seems, no aptitude for that sport. "He was young," explains his father. "He grew so fast."

Carl Sr. is 6'2½" and Carl Jr. the same height. None of Patrick's grandparents were taller. He dunked for the first time as a seventh grader, grew to 6'6" by the time he started the eighth grade and, of course, began to be noticed. But he wasn't a natural by any means. "All his skills and perhaps some of his size have come through many repetitions, much hard work," says Jarvis.

That year a letter came from school to the Ewing home, saying that Patrick had tested low in reading. He would require a tutor. Patrick's father understood. "The most difficult thing for me in the U.S. was the English," Carl says. "The people couldn't seem to understand what we were saying. And I had to listen keenly." Ford followed up the letter with a phone call to Dorothy asking if she would participate in a Title I parents' advisory council. Dorothy agreed, "for Patrick's sake," says Ford, but she never showed the same interest in his basketball. "I could never get her to come to the games!" says Ford.

Ewing found himself standing out more and more for his size, yet struggling to catch up to his classmates in reading, precisely when he would have given anything to blend in. On the basketball court he was taunted as all big men are taunted, because, in the end, what else can one do in competition against such men? Says Jarvis, "I tried to tell him that some of the things that happened when he played on the road, some of the things said, were all a part of the game, people trying to get on his nerves. His mother told him—I heard her say this—"Work hard and do it right or don't do it at all. Let people say or think what they will.' I think Patrick heard his mother much more clearly than me."

At the end of Ewing's 10th-grade season, Thompson was in the Celtics' offices, visiting with his former coach, Red Auerbach, when the state championship final between Rindge and Latin and Boston Latin was getting under way in the adjacent Boston Garden. Thompson hadn't come to see Ewing, but Auerbach said, "You've got to see this one kid." They got to the arena just in time to watch Ewing draw a charge, then make a steal and sprint the length of the court for a stuff. Says Thompson, "That was when I said, 'Get me him and I'll win the national championship.' "

Ewing's frustrations in the classroom paid a dividend on the court. He performed with a vengeance. "I had to hold him out of practice sometimes, to make sure he didn't leave everything he had there," says Jarvis. By his junior year, Ewing had become a naturalized U.S. citizen and was no longer taunted as the Peking man. But the Boston Herald-American, having exhausted the adjectives of its sportswriters, dispatched its dance critic, Sharon Basco, who wrote of Ewing's "gift of flowing creaseless movement." She also wrote that "George Balanchine likes his dancers lean, long-legged and small-skulled." Perhaps only Katherine Dunham, the great black dancer and choreographer, could have fully appreciated the completeness of the Ewing technique.

St. John's coach Lou Carnesecca has said, "Ewing doesn't just beat you, he tears you apart." Villanova coach Rollie Massimino says, "He's Bill Russell. That's the only comparison I could make."

Of all the school records Ewing has broken in his three-plus seasons at Georgetown, none is more illuminating than his 390 blocked shots, many of which ended up as fast-break layups for the Hoyas—what coaches call the four-point turnaround. The fear factor being what it is, at least as many shots have in a sense been blocked by the shooters themselves. The opposition's field-goal percentage when Ewing is on court is hard to nail down (he has averaged about 31 minutes per game), but Georgetown last season allowed only 39.5% of its opponents' shots to fall. And over a 16-minute stretch of the second half of the 53-40 blowout of Kentucky in last spring's NCAA semifinals, the Wildcats went 1 for 22. Michael Jackson, Georgetown's junior guard, says, "Playing with Patrick was partly why I came to Georgetown. And he's better than I ever thought he could be."

Ewing has demonstrated the ability to shoot jump hooks, reverse dunks, jumpers, baseline finger rolls—a virtuosic offensive repertoire he and the Hoyas have seldom needed. "People don't realize that Patrick can do whatever he wants in a game," says Jarvis. "He prefers defense." Says George Raveling, who assisted coach Bob Knight on the 1984 U.S. Olympic team, "Patrick showed us he could adapt to any role. He buries his shot facing the basket, but he has no ego about it. He's not smiling and hand slapping—that's a man who takes his work seriously. The first sign of intelligence is silence. Where'd that 'dumb' rap come from?"

In 1980, Jarvis was determined to keep the Ewing recruiting circus under control. So he sent out to 150 Division I schools the so-called Ewing Letter, which promulgated rules for recruiting Patrick and listed his academic and athletic requirements. The letter explained in detail that because of his culturally poor background Ewing might need daily tutoring, remedial instruction, tapes of lectures and other special educational considerations. The Ewing Letter predictably left people around the country wondering: What, is he that dumb? (Ford says she once told Ewing, "Patrick, you don't have to be the tallest dummy in the world.") During the heat of the 1981 state championship game against Boston College High, the opposing fans chanted, "Ewing can't read!" That taunt followed Ewing into college competition.

"The enmity is based on a sad misunderstanding of a superb athlete," wrote Howard Husock in last May's Boston Observer. In 1981 Husock had won a New England Emmy for a PBS documentary entitled Patrick Ewing and an American Dream. "And make no mistake about it: It is also based on race."

"It wasn't a bad thing for Patrick to have the image of John Thompson to look up to," says Jarvis. "A center. Russell's friend. A great coach. And a black man."

In his recruiting, Thompson made no visits to the Ewing home until Feb. 2, 1981, the day Patrick signed with Georgetown. "[Dorothy and I] sat at a table," says Thompson. "I just remember her looking at me and not batting an eye. You talk about intimidation. She asked about his social life, and I said I wasn't responsible for his social life, that if Patrick couldn't find a social outlet in D.C., that was his problem. She said, 'Funny man.' I asked her to sign. She looked at me and said, 'Mr. Thompson, you sign for land. You don't sign for people.'" Thompson was thrown somewhat, but a slow smile creased Dorothy's face. She asked Carl to sign.

Thompson returned to Cambridge the summer after Ewing, as a freshman, had done valiant battle in a losing cause against North Carolina's Sam Perkins, James Worthy and Michael Jordan in the NCAA championship game. Thompson and Fenlon sat down with the Ewings to make sure they realized what riches Patrick might receive if he abandoned college and turned pro. "I went to educate them on the situation," says Thompson. "Instead, they educated me."

Thompson told the Ewings that Patrick's market value might be as high as \$1 million a year. Dorothy's fist hit the table. "I want him to get his education!" she said. Carl took Thompson aside and told him he knew of people who dreamed of being rich, how he had once dreamed of this himself, how such dreams were not to be trusted. This was music to Thompson's ears—for his own as well as for Patrick's sake. "Mrs. Ewing would not bargain with the fact she was Patrick Ewing's mother," Thompson says, "and she would not let him bargain with being Patrick Ewing."

It was around that time that the Ewings bought the house on Pleasant Street. Some eyebrows were raised. "Make no mistake," says Connie Jarvis. "That is Mrs. Ewing's house. Their savings made the payments."

On Sept. 13, 1983, Dorothy complained of feeling ill and for the first time asked to leave the hospital before the end of her shift. She died at home two days later; she was 55. "Hard work killed that woman," says Mike Jarvis. "After his mother died, Patrick never mentioned leaving Georgetown for the pros again."

"What Patrick accomplished after that showed what kind of strong young man he is," says Thompson. "I've seen people fail who had his kind of advantages. But the Ewings take less credit than anyone. None of them sings his song."

Ewing certainly had a song worth singing in 1983-84. Georgetown, 34-3 for the season, won the Big East Championship by beating Syracuse 82-71 in overtime in Madison Square Garden. While much of the capacity crowd was distracted by Orangeman guard Dwayne (Pearl) Washington's 27-point scoring and by Hoya forward Michael Graham's shaved head and flying elbows, Ewing got a quiet 27 points and 16 rebounds. In a 37-36 win over SMU in the NCAA West regional, Ewing tapped in the game winner off a rebound of a missed free throw without benefit of inside position. Ewing's control was more subtle in the NCAA semifinal against Kentucky. He sagged off his man, 7'1" Sam Bowie, who couldn't hit the 15-to-17-foot jumper. Any shorter shot, by Bowie or another Wildcat, was subject to Ewing's close attention. Ewing blocks, or rather the fear of them, were the central factor in the Hoya win. Against both Kentucky and then Houston in the final, Ewing took early jump shots over Bowie and the Cougars' 7-foot Akeem Olajuwon. Whether or not he made them wasn't important. The point was that he could take them if the Hoyas needed them. Generally they didn't. They beat Houston 84-75. Ewing did nothing more spectacular than defend his own basket as if it were his home. The way Bill Russell used to do. Ewing and Olajuwon played to a statistical draw, but Ewing knew beforehand that that would mean victory for Georgetown.

There were no challenges for Ewing during the Olympics, so there was little he needed to do for Knight, whose team probably would have won the gold medal with Ewing home in bed. There was a brief span in the semifinal game against Canada, though, when Ewing showed what he could have done against the Russians, say. The U.S. led only 16-12 in the first half when Knight sent Ewing in for Wayman Tisdale, whose turn it had been to start at center. Ewing went baseline for a basket; broke up a pass; made two free throws; cupped a shot by Canada's Bill Wennington and fired an outlet pass that led to a score. When the U.S. lead had swelled to 16, Knight removed Ewing. Ewing passed by the coach slowly, expecting some acknowledgment. Knight, who had done all he could to keep the Olympians' egos under control, looked up and smiled, then slapped Ewing on the rear. The smile went as quickly as it came, but the implications were clear. Something had had to be done and Ewing had done it.

Says Thompson, "There's going to come a time when Pat Ewing tells John Thompson, 'I don't want to be bothered.' And I'm going to have to deal with that. Everybody who helped Patrick, including me, is involved in education and doing only what we are paid to do. But everyone likes to be a kingmaker. We have a tendency not to claim the ones who fail. I've spent as much time with other kids as with Patrick, kids who didn't turn out. So it's got to come from him. He made himself king."

Ewing is waiting to be interviewed in a small office in Georgetown's McDonough Arena. He sits deeply in a chair and rises from it, unfolding his long limbs easily. It's not his fault that it has taken a reporter two weeks to clear enough red tape to see Ewing for 30 minutes. That's the way it is at Georgetown. But once Ewing is allowed to speak, he talks easily. "The first thing Coach Jarvis taught me was defense," he says. "But I'm not Superman—I can't block every shot. The one thing Bill Russell suggested was to use my mind on defense."

It is Thompson's machinery that has kept Ewing so shielded from the public. Some have called it Hoya Paranoia. Where'd that 'dumb' rap come from? Indeed. It takes some doing, but a visitor can find Ewing in his senior studio—drawing and painting. Rarely do his works contain people. "I do landscapes," he says. "Still lifes." Has he ever tried drawing from his imagination? "That would not be realism, would it?" he answers.

"I've learned a great deal at Georgetown," he says. "Most definitely. Maturity, that's what college is for. Another thing my mother said was to put something away for a rainy day. I have to be able to work, do something with my life. I won't stop existing once I stop playing basketball. Georgetown educated me, and education is not just book knowledge."

Ewing says he isn't thinking yet about the NBA, but the NBA isn't so coy. The Dallas Mavericks, with three first-round draft picks, especially covet Ewing. But there's a new wrinkle in this year's NBA draft. The league's Board of Governors voted 20-3 (guess who was among the three) for a rule that will lead to the Ewing Lottery: The seven teams that don't make the playoffs will draw lots for the first draft pick. Last May the Portland Trail Blazers were fined \$250,000 by NBA Commissioner David Stern for initiating conversations with Thompson about Ewing. Stu Inman, Portland's general manager, still complains about the severity of the fine. "I paraphrase Coach Thompson—I think Patrick should know what he's turning down," says Inman. "I personally think we overreacted with this lottery because of concern that a couple of teams would play dead to get Ewing."

Why all this mad scurrying about? Because Ewing is the last of a cycle of notable college centers. If history somehow repeats itself, Ralph Sampson, the embodiment of cool finesse, might be the new Abdul-Jabbar. The fragile Bowie, skilled passer, rebounder and shot-blocker, could be another Bill Walton. Olajuwon—Nate Thurmond or Bob Lanier. Now comes Ewing, the last of this pack: Russell with a jump shot?

Yet there's still the small matter of finishing this season at Georgetown—a period of grace, perhaps, for Ewing, who has known few of them. Certainly life has been easy so far; through week's end the Hoyas had an 11-0 record. "Graduation from Georgetown and another national championship are equally important," Ewing says. "I have depended on family and friends and Coach Thompson. Now I feel I have moved on. I have learned a great deal. I'm capable of taking care of my own life."

"Once Patrick told me," says Jarvis, " 'I can fill my hands up with those rings.' And I believe he can." If Ewing should fail to fill his hands with NBA championship rings and leave the Committee disappointed—if he should wind up alone and injured somewhere in central Texas—he will not be lonely. Or poor. He plans to frame his diploma and hang it where he can see it. Let people think what they will. Thanks to the efforts of many—and despite a few of their well-intentioned excesses—Ewing is inexorably bound for some distant pantheon that at least he'll find comfort in.

"Patrick is proud, a warrior," says Thompson. "I mean that in a positive sense."

ILLUSTRATION

RICHARD SPARKS

TWO ILLUSTRATIONS

RICHARD SPARKS

As an NCAA and Olympic champion, Ewing stands mighty tall in Cambridge, particularly among youngsters on Patrick Ewing Day.

ILLUSTRATION

RICHARD SPARKS

Patrick and Lastina (with their niece Peta-Gaye) felt Dorothy's spirit at the CRLHS Hall of Fame ceremony.

ILLUSTRATION

RICHARD SPARKS

"I can't always judge Patrick, and I'm his father," says Carl.

ILLUSTRATION

RICHARD SPARKS

Dorothy worked herself to death to improve the lot of her seven children.

ILLUSTRATION

RICHARD SPARKS

The house at 22 Pleasant Street is where Dorothy's dream was realized—and where she died.

ILLUSTRATION

RICHARD SPARKS

Ewing defends Georgetown's basket as doggedly as if it were his home. He instills fear in all those who venture too near.

ILLUSTRATION

RICHARD SPARKS

"Everyone likes to be a kingmaker," says Thompson.

ILLUSTRATION

RICHARD SPARKS

Through lessons carefully learned, Ewing is skilled in more than merely the art of playing basketball.