

# The list goes on . . .

## Aggies continue linebacker tradition

by Steve O'Brien  
The Battalion



PHELAN M. EBENHACK/The Battalion

Texas A&M is considered by many people now to be the new Linebacker U.

The likes of Johnny Holland, Larry Kelm, John Roper, Aaron Wallace, and most recently William Thomas, have passed through Aggieland and made their presence felt on Kyle Field.

A main cog in what was a highly touted A&M linebacking corps for the 1991 football season will be missing, but barring injuries, the Aggies should not miss a beat, A&M head coach R.C. Slocum said.

Senior Anthony Williams, rated among the nation's best linebackers, was declared academically ineligible for the 1991 season.

The leading linebacker becomes senior Quentin Coryatt, also one of the nation's top rated inside linebackers. Coryatt, who may be physically stronger than Williams, begins only his second year of play for the Aggies.

Next to Coryatt, the Aggies will quickly fill the vacant spot left by Williams with sophomore Jason Atkinson.

Slocum said it remains to be seen what the loss of Anthony Williams will do to the defense.

"If we can keep our two starters healthy it won't be a major loss," Slocum said. "But instead

A&M linebacker Quentin Coryatt is an All-American and Butkus Award candidate.

of having Jason Atkinson ready to come in on either side for Quentin Coryatt or Anthony, now he is the starter."

Last fall Atkinson stepped in for an injured Williams against Texas and responded with 10 tackles, leaving him with 32 total tackles on the season.

"We still kid about it," Atkinson said. "Standing next to Quentin I don't look that intimidating, but I can do the job."

At 6-4, 243 pounds, Coryatt is rated the country's eleventh best collegiate linebacker and named to the preseason All-Southwest Conference team by one sports publication. Coryatt also earned Associated Press Defensive Newcomer of the Year honors while accumulating 92 tackles his first season as a starter last season.

Slocum said Atkinson can be a force for the Aggies next to Coryatt.

"Jason is one of the best athletes on our team," Slocum said. "He can move well and reacts well."

Juniors Otis Nealy and Marcus Buckley get the call as the two starting outside linebackers.

Nealy, who has played mainly as a reserve the past two seasons, brings speed and experience to his position.

After playing backup, Nealy said it is his turn.

"I'm blessed to be in this position," Nealy said. "I'm not Roper or Thomas. I'm a man of my own. They had their thing, and now it's my turn."

Buckley, who gained a starting outside linebacking spot midway through last season, could be the next great A&M linebacker. Buckley finished last season with 47 tackles, including 31 solo stops. He also had four quarterback sacks and eight pressures.

## Buckley knows meaning of hard work, dedication

by Steve O'Brien  
The Battalion

For the first time, A&M linebacker Marcus Buckley knows the most important person in his life will be watching him play football.

Buckley's father, Nelson, always told his son how important it was to work hard. Nelson told Marcus he had to be disciplined to get the things he wanted out of life.

For Marcus, this meant working at a gas station to earn extra money and struggling through the hard work of school every fall. Hard work also meant becoming a three-time all-district tailback at Eastern Hills High in Ft. Worth.

Like his father told him, the hard work Marcus put into things would help him get what he wanted. In the spring of 1989, Marcus was offered a scholarship to play football at Texas A&M.

His dedication to football paid off, but there was something missing. Marcus' father, suffering from the effects of emphysema and diabetes since Marcus was 10 years old, was never able to see his son play football.

"He was always too sick and couldn't get to the games," Marcus said. "The most he could do was take me there (to the game) and then he would have to go."

This past August Nelson Buckley died at the age of 69. For Marcus, his father's death means his biggest fan can finally watch.

"I know he's in a better place now," Marcus said. "He'll be watching me play all the time now."

And with his father looking over him, Marcus knows he can never give up.

"Every time I get tired or want to quit, I just think of him," Marcus said. "My father couldn't even walk (20 feet). I can do so much."

Marcus, a junior who took over the starting outside linebacker spot half-way through last season, is dedicating this season and the rest of his life to the memory of his father.

At 6-2, 225 pounds and possessing blazing speed, Buckley is poised to become the next great A&M linebacker. Three previous A&M outside linebackers, John Roper, Aaron Wallace and William Thomas, received All-Southwest Conference honors and all currently play in the National Football League.

But Buckley contends he will make his own mark on A&M.

"It's hard to match-up with those players in the past," he said. "They're all guys to shoot for, but it's a hard goal to achieve. "But I'm not Roper or any of those other guys," Marcus said. "I can only play the way I know how and the rest will just happen."

Buckley is part of a four man linebacking corps that should be one of the best in the SWC.

Nelson Buckley instilled more in his son than a good work ethic for football.

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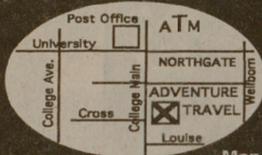
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## Rebuilding the wall

### A&M defensive line must stay healthy this season

by Art Garcia  
Special to the Battalion

Maroon is the color most often associated with the Texas A&M football team, although this year that color could very well be green.

The 1991 Aggie defense returns only five starters from last season, and none of those are defensive linemen.

The three projected starters on the defensive front are all sophomores, enough to make A&M head football coach R.C. Slocum a little nervous.

But Slocum seems very comfortable with this year's unit.

"The defensive line looks better than anytime in the last two-to-three years," the head coach said.

The reason for Slocum's optimism is that all three projected starters this season already have a full year of experience behind them.

Sophomore defensive ends Kefa Chatham and Eric England both played last year as true freshmen, filling in for a line decimated by injuries.

Also, sophomore nose guard Pat Henry returns to reclaim his starting spot after a medical red-shirt last season.

Henry, who started as a freshman two years ago, said he has a point to prove in 1991.

"To show people the Pat Henry that could play is back."

A key to this year's defensive success is how the Aggies stack up against the run. Last year A&M finished fourth in the



JAY JANNER/The Battalion

Noseguard Pat Henry hopes to return to the form before being injured before last season.

Southwest Conference in rushing defense, a topic of concern for the coaching staff.

"We need to stop people from running the football on first and second down," Slocum said. "This year's line is more physical up front - All (the linemen) are 265 to 275 pounds and can move."

Chatham, a 6-foot-4 inch, 250-pound lineman, agrees that speed is one of the line's best assets.

"The speed up front in stunts will help us stop the run," Chatham said. "We're young but strong."

Slocum said he hopes the defensive front can stop the run on first and second downs in order to open up more opportunities to blitz.

By setting up passing situations, it forces the opposition into the hands of A&M's highly-regarded and much-publicized secondary and linebacking corps.

But how does the line feel, being in the media shadow of the rest of the defense.

"No problem," said Chatham. "I'm quiet, so I like it that way."

But Henry believes in the team concept.

"I feel good about the defensive backs getting publicity," he said. "After all, when we win it says the Aggies won - not just the defense."

Both players agree the only thing that matters is working towards a SWC title.

Add to the defensive line equation 1989 starter Kevin Tucker, senior Mark Wheeler, sophomore Lance Teichelman, and the state's number-one recruit Sam Adams.

Slocum, who has been coaching on the defensive side of the ball for more than 20 years, praised is young defensive lineman.

"Sam Adams is one of the best in a while to come in here," he said.

If the defensive line stays healthy this season, Kyle Field may be a place where offenses

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