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**CarePlus**  
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## Thomas uses 'God-given talent' to win

continued from Page 7

guy who gets the ball and takes it to the house."

Thomas didn't have to think long about making his jump. "You really don't think when you're running," Thomas said. "You just react. It was one of those plays when things just happen. It was one of those drives when you know you have to get the ball in the end zone."

Thomas' performance came during a record setting day for Hill. Rushing for 212 yards on 30 carries, Hill set a new NCAA mark for yardage by a freshman in his debut.

Thomas was the Aggies' second leading rusher against LSU, but he's no stranger to being a great runner. He and Hill will work in tandem this Saturday when A&M travels to Tulsa to face the Golden Hurricane.

Last fall, during his senior season at Groveton, a Class 2A high school, Thomas rushed for 3,703 yards and scored 48 touchdowns. He was named the No. 13 recruit in the nation by Super Prep and was selected to the Associated Press "Super Team" first team of offense.

Coming from a 2A high school, Thomas never doubted his ability to play big-time college football.

"One thing I've learned is no matter where you're from, it's how you play the game," Thomas said. "If you play with a lot of intensity and a lot of heart, you can't be defeated. It's doesn't even matter how big or small you are. It just doesn't matter. It's competitive spirit."

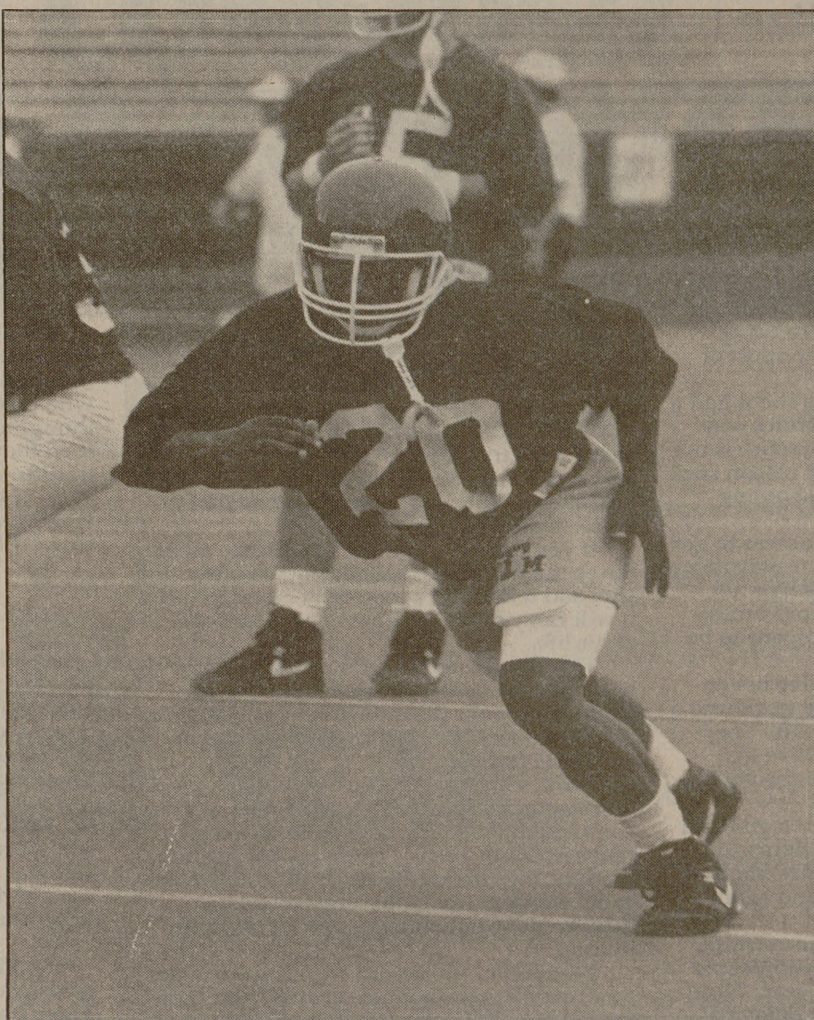
The A&M coaches weren't worried about Thomas coming from a small high school either, Toledo said.

"A football player is a football player," Toledo said. "If you can play at a 5A school your chances are a lot better. But when you are a real talent it doesn't matter what level you play at. We saw Rodney Thomas and if he would have been in 5A he would have been a great running back too."

"He was a man among boys." But the amazing statistics Thomas compiled in high school couldn't help to calm his nerves before Saturday's game.

"He was scared to death," Toledo said. "His heart was beating so fast. He was really concerned we would call some audibles, but he's got a ton of ability."

"He's a physical guy. He's got great speed and God-given talent."



KARL STOLLEIS/The Battalion

Rodney Thomas rushed for 81 yards in the Aggies' 45-7 win over Louisiana State. Thomas is a true freshman from

Groveton High School where he was one of the top recruits in the country last season, rushing for 3,703 yards.

One play in particular worried Thomas.

"We had a play planned all week called the gate play," Thomas said. "They told me I was going to run it. I didn't believe them but coach called my name. I was real nervous. It turned out to be one of those plays that helped me get the jitters out and helped me get going."

On the play, A&M quarterback Jeff Granger walked up to the ball with the offensive line wondering out of position behind him. Then the linemen formed to the left side of Granger as he pitched the ball to Thomas. The offensive line plowed a path for Thomas down the left side of the field.

On the play, Thomas made the longest run of the day for A&M, darting 38 yards down the side-

line.

Thomas' performance came on a day when a number of freshman played well for the Aggies. Wilbert Biggens returned five punts for 52 yards and two kick-offs for 53 yards. Fullback Cliff Groce rushed for 12 yards on four carries and caught two passes for 27 yards.

The future is a bright one for A&M, Toledo said.

"It's going to be fun coaching them," Toledo said. "When you look at the number of people we have offensively that are seniors that we're going to lose - then you look at a guy like Granger who backed up (quarterback) Bucky Richardson - the future is exciting."

Thomas will be part of that future, but he won't be content to stand in the shadows for long.

## Robinson ready to lead Spurs

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Spurs center David Robinson says he plans to play a bigger leadership role in the upcoming season to help teammates get the "spirit" they need to be championship contenders.

"I'm just going to try to be a leader," Robinson said after an informal team workout. "It just doesn't make sense to win 55 or 56 games and lose in the first round of the playoffs. That's ridiculous."

The Spurs last spring won their second consecutive Midwest Division title with a 55-27 record, but were knocked out of the NBA playoffs in the first round by the Golden State Warriors.

"You can have talent but it means nothing if you don't have spirit," Robinson told the San Antonio Express-News in Wednesday's editions.

Robinson said the Spurs must change their attitude and demand a higher standard of conduct from each other off the basketball court. The team suffered a series of embarrassing off-court incidents last season.

Guard Rod Strickland broke his right hand in a fight outside a San Antonio nightclub. Later in the season he was charged with indecent exposure in Seattle, but the charge eventually was dropped.

Guard David Wingate faced rape charges in Texas and Maryland and missed the first 55 games of the season before he cleared up his legal troubles.

Strickland and Wingate also were at the center of controversy during the Spurs' playoff series against Golden State. The two were seen at a San Antonio bar at 2 a.m. on the day of a game that started at noon.

Robinson declined to discuss specifics of the playoff incident, but said: "When guys don't come on time when they don't do the job for the team, it shows a tremendous amount of disrespect for this team."

"We are friends and teammates, but sometimes friends have to rebuke other friends. Sometimes you have to tell people, 'If I'm going to be your friend, you're going to have to show me some respect.'"

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**Major League Update**

**Twins lose again; Braves win; Pirates keep rolling**

**Royals 10, Twins 4**  
 MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Right fielder Gene Larkin misplayed Todd Benzinger's hit into a triple in a six-run sixth inning, as the Kansas City Royals beat the Minnesota Twins 10-4 Wednesday.

Luis Aquino (8-3) allowed three hits in five innings. Tom Gordon pitched two innings, and Joel Johnston and Mike Magnante each pitched one inning.

Scott Erickson (18-7) gave up seven runs, six earned, and eight hits in 5 2-3 innings.

It was 3-3 when Kurt Stillwell led off the sixth with a double. He beat Larkin's late throw after the seemingly catchable ball went under second baseman Chuck Knoblauch's glove. After George Brett's first sacrifice bunt since April 28, 1979, Danny Tartabull singled.

Larkin got a late jump on Benzinger's ball, which bounced over his head and rolled to the wall. Bill Pecota doubled to make it 6-3.

**White Sox 6, Athletics 0**  
 CHICAGO (AP) — Jack McDowell pitched a five-hitter for Chicago's second straight shutout against Oakland, as the White Sox beat the Athletics 6-0 Wednesday night, moving within six games of the Minnesota Twins in the AL West.

McDowell (17-9) walked two and struck out six in his major-league leading 15th complete game. McDowell tossed his third complete game.

Dave Stewart (11-10) gave up three runs and seven hits in 5 2-3 innings.

Ozzie Guillen's 1,000th major-league hit, a single with the bases loaded in the second inning, gave Chicago a 2-0 lead. Dan Pasqua had doubled leading off the in-

ning, and Lance Johnson and Craig Grebeck drew back-to-back walks.

Tim Raines singled in the fifth, stole second and scored on Robin Ventura's single.

**Braves 6, Padres 4**  
 SAN DIEGO (AP) — The Braves were a hit from the opening pitch Wednesday night.

Seven of Atlanta's first eight batters got hits as the Braves scored five first-inning runs, and Tom Glavine became the first 19-game winner in the major leagues as the Braves beat the San Diego Padres 6-4.

Atlanta hadn't won since outfielder Otis Nixon was suspended Monday, losing twice at San Francisco and blowing a 11/2-game lead over Los Angeles in the NL West.

Glavine (19-10) allowed three hits in the first seven innings, then allowed two runs and four hits in the eighth. Alejandro Pena got Benito Santiago on an inning-ending groundout and finished for his ninth save.

Glavine, who struck out four and walked four, has the most victories for the Braves since Phil Niekro won 21 in 1979.

Lonnie Smith singled on the opening pitch from Ricky Bones (4-4). Jeff Treadway singled, but Terry Pendleton hit into a double play as Smith scored.

Dave Justice, Ron Gant singled and Sid Bream's single made it 2-0. Greg Olson hit an RBI double and Rafael Belliard followed with a two-run single before Glavine flied out.

**Red Sox 7, Orioles 5**  
 BOSTON (AP) — Jack Clark homered and scored three runs, leading the Boston Red Sox over the Baltimore Orioles 7-5 Wednesday night.

The Red Sox entered the game 2 1/2 games behind the Toronto Blue Jays in the AL East.

The Red Sox took a 5-0 lead in the first three innings against Dave Johnson (4-6). Mike Gardiner (9-7) got the victory with relief help from Dan Petry, Tony Fossas and Greg Harris who earned his second save.

Clark, who walked and scored twice in his first two plate appearances, increased Boston's lead to 6-2 by leading off the fifth with a home run off Anthony Telford.

In the sixth inning, Cal Ripken became the fourth shortstop in major-league history to hit 30 homers in a season, joining Ernie Banks, Rico Petrocelli and Vern Stephens.

**Pirates 6, Cardinals 5**  
 PITTSBURGH (AP) — Cecil Espy hit a sacrifice fly in the ninth inning as the Pittsburgh Pirates rallied from a five-run deficit and beat the St. Louis Cardinals 6-5 Wednesday night, reducing their magic number to six.

Willie Fraser (3-2) walked Orlando Merced in the ninth, Jay Bell singled Merced to third and Espy's sac fly scored the winning run.

Pittsburgh, scored two runs in the fifth and three in the sixth, increased its NL East lead to a season-high 11 1/2 games. Any combination of six Pirates wins and Cardinals losses will give Pittsburgh its second straight division title.

Roger Mason (3-0) pitched 1 1-3 innings of perfect relief.

Mike LaValiere hit an RBI double in the fourth off Bryn Smith and Jose Lind hit a run-scoring single. The Pirates tied it in the sixth on Bobby Bonilla's triple, Barry Bonds' single and Steve Buechele's two-run homer.

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