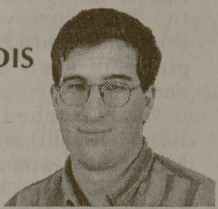


Otis Thorpe Oilers' answer to QB trouble

NICK GEORGANDIS



Asst. Sports Editor

I watched the Oilers play the Steelers on Sunday afternoon, in a kind of euphoric stupor, still feeling the adrenaline rush from the Aggies 34-10 trouncing of the Longhorns. That was a good thing, I found out, because I didn't feel my heart wrenched from my chest each and every time the Oilers screwed up (and if you didn't watch the game, believe me, they screwed up plenty).

So instead of weeping and curling up in the fetal position, I tried to work out a solution to solve the Oilers' offensive woes. By the third quarter, I had determined that the Oilers definitely need a new quarterback. No, not just another punk off the waiver wire (yes, I mean you, Billy Joe Tolliver), I mean a bonafide field general. A guy that's tough, that the other players can look up to, a guy that can take the hit and has a cannon for an arm.

OK, you're thinking, they'll draft a Steve McNair or an Eric Zeier type and start rebuilding. No, no, no. I'm talking about right now. Today. The Oilers are sinking faster than the ratings of Models, Inc. They need a man the fans will rally around, and I've got the perfect candidate.

Otis Thorpe. Yes, that Otis Thorpe. The one that starts at power forward for the World Champion Houston Rockets. Thorpe is the man for the job, just look how he fills the above wish list of quarterback characteristics.

1. Field General: Thorpe is the Rockets' co-captain, along with Hakeem Olajuwon. He hardly ever commits stupid fouls, and he knows his limitations (i.e. no vertical leaping over six inches). He won't throw a lot of interceptions.

2. Toughness: For a while, Otis had the longest consecutive games played streak in the NBA, and only lost it when he had a major kidney bruise. Since then, he has played another 200 or so in a row. Plus, he went 35-40 minutes a night in the playoffs against Cliff Robinson, Charles Barkley, Karl Malone and Charles Oakley, four guys who have all made the All-Star team in the past.

3. Someone the guys can look up to: With Sean Jones gone to Green Bay, Ray Childress is the tallest Oiler at 6 feet, 6 inches. Thorpe is six feet, 11 inches and is more muscular than Arnold Schwarzenegger. The guys will respect him... or else.

4. Taking the hit: I'm tired of Cody Carlson limping around like he's going to his death bed. Like it says in No. 3, Otis is used to getting shoved around, punched, kicked and every other tactic used by the New York Knicks' defense. Put a pair of pads on the guy, and he could be unstoppable.

5. Strong arm: You ever seen Otis throw one down court? He has great accuracy and superb velocity. Sure, every once in a while he'll misfire and deck some jerk with front row seats who's not paying attention, but with that ball speed, one of Thorpe's interceptions could kill Rod Woodson or Deion Sanders, giving the Oilers'

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Aggies dash Horns' Cotton Bowl hopes



By Nick Georgandis THE BATTALION

Going into the 1994 college football season, the University of Texas realized that due to Texas A&M's season on probation, they had a legitimate shot at the Cotton Bowl for the first time in three years.

Despite an uneven 2-2 start to their Southwest Conference season, the Longhorns still had a shot to stay in the bowl race going into Saturday's annual tilt with the Aggies. Not only could the Longhorns get back in the SWC race, they could prove they were legitimate with a win over the ranked Aggies.

The Longhorns proved nothing on Saturday in their 34-10 trouncing at the hands of the Aggies, except maybe that they are looking for a new coach.

"This was the biggest game of the year," A&M senior running back Rodney Thomas said. "This win means more to me than any other game this year."

A week after tying Southern Methodist University at the AlamoDome, A&M was firing on all cylinders from the starting gun. At the end of the first quarter, the Aggies were up 14-0 and by halftime they were cruising at 24-0. The Longhorns did not reach the Aggie end zone until the 40th minute of the game.

"Our job each week is to keep the offense from scoring," senior linebacker Antonio Armstrong said. "We had control and kept putting pressure on them. We stopped the run and they had to start throwing the ball, which is playing into our hands."

Armstrong made a key play that truly broke the game open for the Aggies. In the second quarter, the Longhorns, behind freshman quarterback James Brown, had just recorded a first down at their own 48 yard line. As Brown rolled out to his right, he was crushed by Armstrong from his blind side.

The ball slipped out of Brown's grasp into the soft hands of defensive end Brandon Mitchell, who turned up field and rumbled 48 yards for a touchdown, to the great delight of the large A&M congregation standing in the seats of that end zone. When Kyle Bryant

A&M receiver Brian Mitchell (18) looks on as running back Rodney Thomas (20) leaps into the endzone over Texas defenders Victor Frazier (7) and Tre Thomas (17) for A&M's first score Saturday.

Stew Milne/THE BATTALION

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McElroy gets kick start to return game

A&M running back ends return streak, gets 89-yarder against Horns

By Drew Diener THE BATTALION

Leeland McElroy was frustrated. Ever since he ran back the opening kickoff 100 yards for a touchdown against Southern Mississippi September 24, opponents refused to let him return another kick.

"He's a freak of nature," sophomore guard Calvin Collins said. "I can't describe him, he just makes things happen."

After going 0 for October, it looked like the sophomore from Beaumont was not going to get another chance to work the magic that made him the nation's leading kick returner a year ago. After a 102 yard return by McElroy against them last Thanksgiving, the University of Texas was not going to let McElroy touch the ball on a kickoff this year. No way.

Following a 10 play, 80 yard touchdown drive on their first possession of the second half, Texas was set to kick-off. McElroy and senior Billy Mitchell

were deep for the Aggies, ready to receive the kick. As Texas kicker Phil Dawson booted the ball in Mitchell's direction, the returnmen switched sides, and McElroy wound up with the football.

Eighty-nine yards later, Longhorn special-teamer Victor Frazier caught up with the speedster and drug him down one yard shy of the end zone.

"I was (surprised to be caught), but of course I had to break a few tackles, and I guess he (Frazier) was in a dead sprint while I was doing that," McElroy said. "He had an angle on me, so maybe he was just that fast."

"I really don't know what the situation was," McElroy said.

Texas head coach John Mackovic had issued a pre-game edict, stating that McElroy would not touch the ball on a return. McElroy said Mackovic's statement was not playing through his mind while he was racing past Longhorn defenders.

"I was thinking about getting in the end zone," McElroy said. "Of course, I thought I was going to score. It (not scoring) just happens that way sometimes."

McElroy's return set up the Aggies final touchdown of the day, which added the final nail in the Longhorns' coffin.

"We came out focused, and we weren't going to let what happened last weekend happen to us again," McElroy said. "Last weekend was sort of an eye opener, and it let us know that any team can beat you on any given day."

Aside from his special team heroics, McElroy provided the igniting spark to the Aggie running game. His 12 carries for 74 yards and one touchdown led the team.

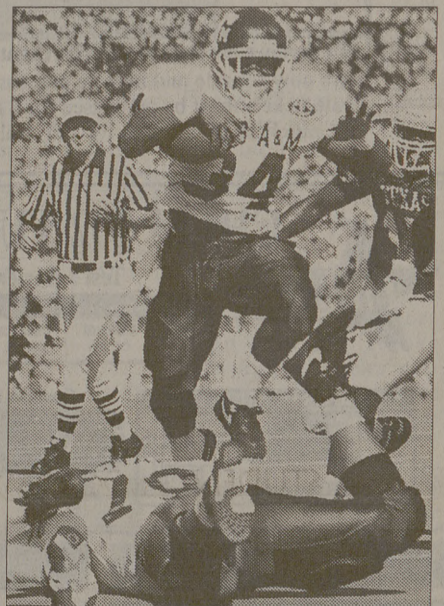
"He's unexplainable," Collins said. "He's got deceptive speed, and doesn't look like he's trying hard."

Going into the game, Texas was giving up an average of 183 yards rushing per game. Despite this fact, McElroy said he believed Texas could have come out and stopped the run.

"You go out there with a game plan, and you don't expect to do too much because you might have to change it," McElroy said. "Our plan was to go in there and use what we had, and if it worked, we were going to stick with it."

The plan worked as A&M amassed 294 total yards, including 133 on the ground. Despite a solid performance rushing the ball, McElroy said finally getting to return a kick was the highlight of his game.

"I owe it all to my personnel," McEl-



Stew Milne/THE BATTALION

A&M running back Leeland McElroy (34) rucks up part of his 74 yards rushing Saturday.

roy said. "I couldn't go out there and do it all by myself. All I do is use my speed, hit the wedge, and once I'm through (past the defenders), it's just me and the kicker."

SPORTS BRIEFS

A&M basketball to appear in Aggie Hoops Fest '94

Just when you thought it was safe to go back on the hardwood...

Texas A&M head basketball coach Tony Barone will unveil the 1994-95 version of his men's basketball team Tuesday night at the Aggie Hoops Fest-'94 at G. Rolie White Coliseum, beginning at 7 p.m.

The festivities will include a short scrimmage between the maroon and white, a brief alumni game featuring former A&M players, a slam dunk contest, a three-point shootout and an autograph and photo session with all the Aggie players and coaches.

Other activities will include face painting and balloons for the kids, a variety of fan participation contests and a performance by the Texas A&M Dance Team.

Admission to the event is free, with doors opening at 6:30 p.m. Free popcorn and soft

drinks will be available to all fans in attendance.

Aggie swim teams open season with wins over Rice

The Texas A&M men's and women's swimming and diving teams both opened their home seasons off right last Friday, as both squads defeated the Rice Owls at the P.L. Downs Natatorium.

Both teams won easily, with the men lapping the Owls 143-63 and the Lady Aggies dunking the Lady Owls 138-79. A&M head coach Mel Nash said he was very excited with the team's overall performance.

"I was very pleased with the way we raced today," Nash said. "Even though they might have been apprehensive ahead of time,

our swimmers went in and got to it. I'm pleased with their focus after an extremely hard week of work. We didn't back off at all in workouts this week."

The swimming teams thoroughly dominated the Owls, finishing first in 17 of the total 19 events, including eight consecutive victories to open the meet.

The diving competition saw freshman standouts Jodi Janssen and Jarrod Flores taking first-place honors in both the one and three-meter diving competitions.



Barone



Nash

Re-Elect the Judge Rated "Well Qualified" by the Bar Association

Justice Joe DRAUGHN

14th Court of Appeals • Place 4

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- Member - Second Baptist Church of Houston.

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Justice Draughn has been voted "WELL QUALIFIED" by a margin of 18 to 1 over his opponent in the Houston Bar Association Judicial Qualification Poll. He is preferred 7 to 1 in the most recent Preference Poll.

Justice Joe Draughn is endorsed by all major groups, including: C.L.E.A.T. (Combined Law Enforcement Association of Texas), Association of Women Attorneys, Houston Professional Firefighter's Association, Citizens for Qualified Judges, Mexican American Bar Association, North and East Harris County Bar Associations, Pasadena Bar Association, Houston Police Patrolman's Union, Harris County Council of Organizations, Baptist Ministers Association of Houston, The Texas Constitutional Coalition, Harris County Deputy Sheriff's Association, The "C" Club, and Justice for All (A Victims' Rights Group), Houston Chronicle, and Bryan Eagle.

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