

McElroy rewrites record books in first career start

McElroy rolled up a SWC-record 359 all-purpose yards in the Aggies' 33-17 win over LSU.

By David Winder
THE BATTALION

When offensive coordinator Steve Enslinger told Leeland McElroy he was going to get the ball more than 25 times against Louisiana State University, McElroy thought he was joking. The joke, however, was on LSU as McElroy ran the Tiger defense silly.

"He's going to handle it (the ball) until he tells us he can't," Enslinger said after the Aggies' 33-17 win over the Tigers.

Apparently the word "can't" is not in McElroy's vocabulary as he carried the ball 35 times for 229 yards and three touchdowns.

He also had five catches for 49 yards and three kick-off returns for 81 yards. McElroy's combined offensive output set a new Southwest Conference record for all-purpose yardage with 359 yards.

"I think I did okay," said McElroy, acting as if Saturday's exhibition was just a normal day at the office.

It might have been normal for McElroy, but it was hot for everyone else as the temperature on the field reached 122 degrees.

Numerous A&M players fell victim to leg cramps and intravenous fluids were more popular than Gatorade after the game. But McElroy looked as strong on his 35th run as he did on his first.

"Leeland has won our strength and conditioning program the last three years," offensive guard Calvin Collins said. "He was the only one not getting cramps. He didn't even look like he was breathing hard."

Offensive tackle Hunter Goodwin said nothing McElroy does surprises him.

"He's just unbelievable," Goodwin said. "It was pretty hot, and there he is in the fourth quarter still giving all he had."

McElroy said he did feel the heat, but nothing was going to stop him.

"I'd be lying if I said I didn't, I did feel it," McElroy said. "But it didn't matter. That's what I've been asking for: That's what I've been wanting from day one. Ever since I stepped foot on campus, I've wanted to be a starter and be able to carry the load."

McElroy's 229 yards rushing was the first 200-yard performance for an Aggie running back since Rodney Thomas rushed 201 yards against LSU in 1993 and the fourth most in school history in a single game.

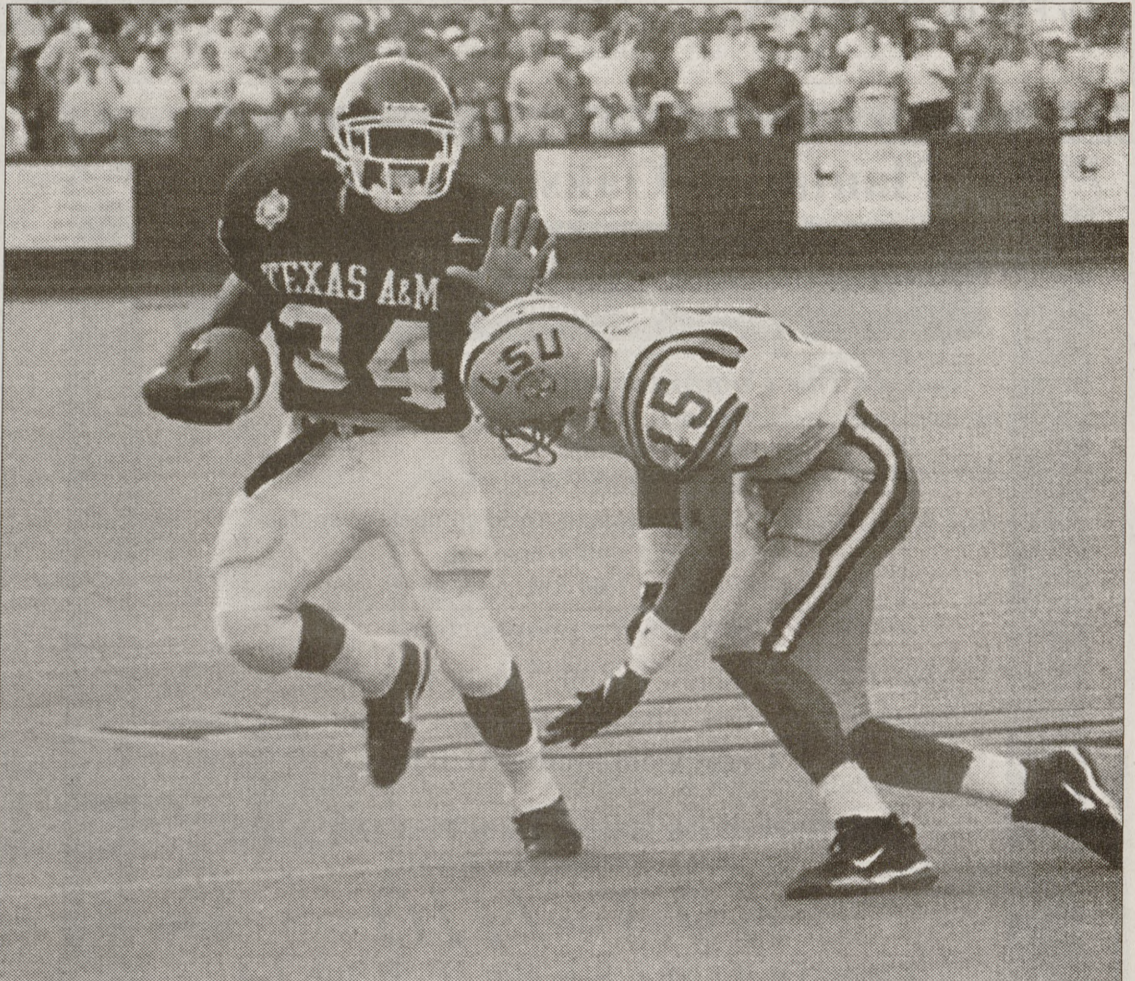
Although he is now in his third season on the team, McElroy's 229 yards were also the A&M record for most yards in a first start, breaking Greg Hill's record of 212 set against LSU in 1991.

The 35 carries are the sixth-highest in A&M's history, just six behind Roger Vick's record of 41 carries against Texas in 1986.

It also moved McElroy into 16th place on the A&M all-time rushing list and placed him fourth in Aggie history for most rushing yards in a game.

"When we go back and look at this tape, we're going to say 'It's amazing he didn't have a couple of more big runs today,'" A&M Head Coach R.C. Slocum said. "He got into secondary several times, and he was off balance when he got to the safety, and he was not in position to make a move, or he might have had a couple of more long runs today."

A couple of more long runs combined with some more "normal" McElroy games, and A&M opponents are not going to find certain Aggie jokes funny anymore.



Nick Rodnicki, THE BATTALION

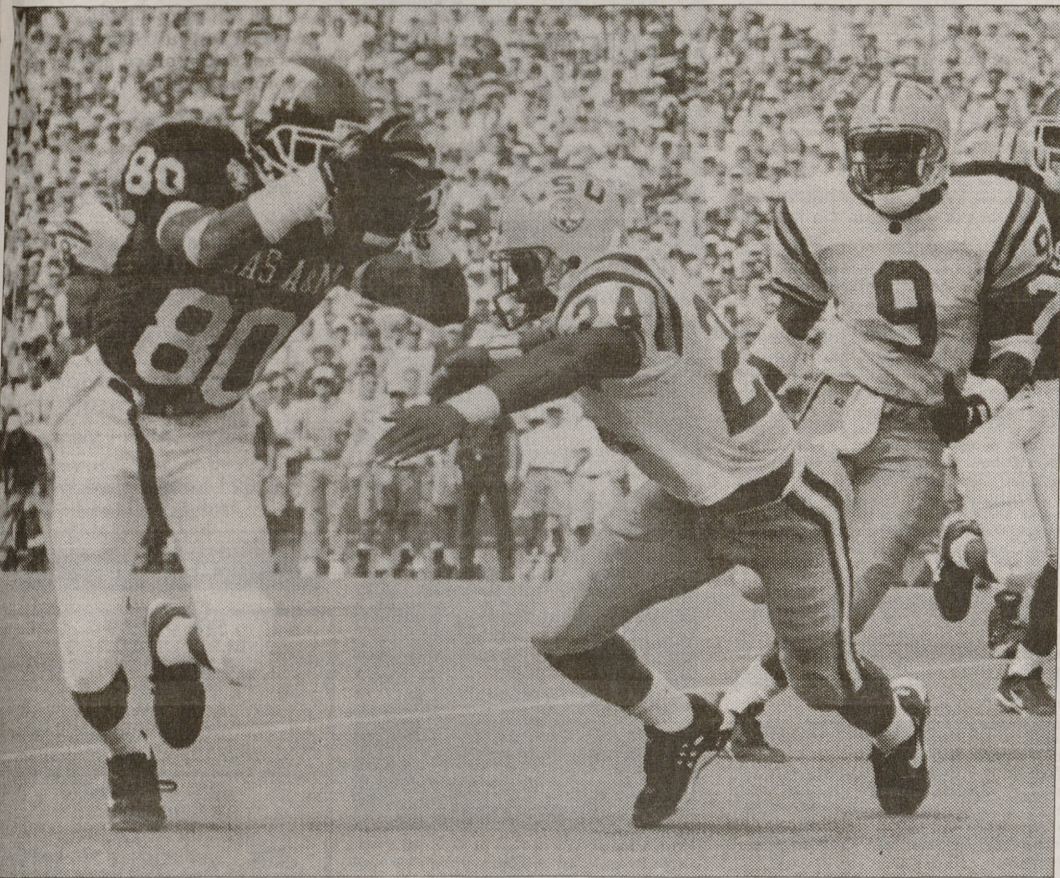
A&M junior tailback Leeland McElroy dashes around would-be tackler Troy Twillie towards the end zone in the third quarter of A&M's 33-17 win over LSU at Kyle Field. McElroy rushed for 229 yards on 35 carries, the fourth-most yards ever by an A&M player in a single game.



"I think I did OK."

—Leeland McElroy
A&M running back

New coach, same results for '95 edition of Aggie 'D'



Nick Rodnicki, THE BATTALION

A&M freshman wide receiver Albert Connell approaches the end zone in Saturday's win over LSU.

A&M did not allow LSU to score until the third quarter.

By Nick Georgandis
THE BATTALION

One down, 10 more to go. In sharp contrast to the blowouts that Florida State and Nebraska put up on Saturday afternoon, the Texas A&M football team simply took care of business against a tough Louisiana State team, defeating the Tigers 33-17.

Although junior tailback Leeland McElroy carried the brunt of the load for the Aggies, with his 359 all-purpose yards including 229 on the ground, it was a collection of little things that gave the Aggies the victory.

"It was our first game, and we wanted to execute well and have very few penalties and turnovers," Offensive Coordinator Steve Enslinger said. "We didn't know what to prepare for from them, and I thought we did a good job."

As good as McElroy and the offense looked, it was the A&M defense that kept giving the offense good field position and plenty of opportunities to score.

The Aggies' first score, a 24-yard field goal by sophomore Kyle Bryant early in the second quar-

ter was set up when the defense pinned LSU within its own 10-yard line. The defense got the offense excellent field position by harrasing senior quarterback Jamie Howard into three straight incomplete passes.

Up 3-0 midway through the second quarter, the defense took the matter of scoring into its own hands. On a third-and-five play, Howard never saw junior linebacker Keith Mitchell blitz from the left side. Mitchell blindsided Howard in the end zone for A&M's first safety in two seasons.

"We had the blitz on, and I saw him with the ball," Mitchell said. "(LSU tight end David) LaFleur was supposed to block me, but he missed, and then he tried to come back at the last minute, but it was too late."

The defensive dominance continued in the quarter when LSU lined up for a field goal. Defensive end Brandon Mitchell ended the Tigers' scoring threat with his right arm. Mitchell busted through the offensive line and blocked the ball which was then kicked and fumbled by several players all the way back to LSU's 29-yard line, where A&M took possession.

"Eddie Jasper (A&M's nose-guard) told me to scoot over a little so there was only one guy against us two," Mitchell said.

Five plays later, senior quarterback Corey Pullig hit freshman wide receiver Albert Connell on an 18-yard touchdown pass to give the Aggies a 12-0 halftime lead.

Although the defense allowed the Tigers to put up 17 points in the second half, A&M Defensive Coordinator Phil Bennett said he was pleased with his unit's performance.

"Fatigue was a problem, and I'm a little disappointed we didn't handle it a little better," Bennett said. "But with 67 snaps giving up only 252 yards and with a guy like (LSU freshman tailback Kevin) Faulk, who might be the next Leeland McElroy, hell no, I'm not disappointed."

Despite his enthusiasm with A&M's overall performance, Head Coach R.C. Slocum said he is pleased that the team has this week off so the coaches and errors can identify and rectify mistakes made.

"So many times things can go wrong, especially in the first game that you just want to tell the guys, 'Just go out there and win the ball game,'" Slocum said. "I'm very satisfied with today's effort. We wanted to win the first game and have this week to smooth things out. Now we have a week to get everything worked out and get ready for Tulsa."

Aggies remain No. 3 in AP football poll

(AP) Florida State remained No. 1 in The Associated Press college football poll Sunday after beating Duke 70-26, while Notre Dame and Miami plummeted in the rankings after losing their openers.

Florida State received 38 first-place votes and 1,518 points from a nationwide media panel. No. 2 Nebraska, which opened defense of its national championship Thursday with a 64-21 victory over Oklahoma State, got 14 firsts and 1,467 points.

The Seminoles gained six first-place votes over the previous week, while the Cornhuskers lost one.

Texas A&M remained No. 3, with Penn State, Florida, Auburn, Southern Cal, Tennessee, Ohio State and Colorado rounding out the Top 10. Texas A&M received four first-place votes, Florida and Auburn got two apiece, and Penn State and Tennessee each

had one. Texas A&M beat LSU 33-17, Florida downed Houston 45-21, Auburn topped Mississippi 46-13, Tennessee defeated East Carolina 27-7, and Colorado beat Wisconsin 43-7. Penn State, Southern Cal and Ohio State did not play Saturday.

Notre Dame nearly dropped out of the Top 25 after losing at home to Northwestern 17-15. The Fighting Irish fell from No. 9 to No. 25, while Miami plunged from No. 12 to No. 19 after losing to UCLA 31-8.

Michigan rose two spots to No. 11 after beating Illinois 38-14, and UCLA climbed three notches to No. 12.

Alabama was 13th, followed by Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia, Arizona, Washington, Miami, Virginia Tech, Kansas State, Syracuse, North Carolina State, Oregon and Notre Dame.

| Team | Record | Pts | Pv |
|-------------------|--------|-------|----|
| 1. FloridaSt.(38) | 1-0-0 | 1,518 | 1 |
| 2. Nebraska(14) | 1-0-0 | 1,467 | 2 |
| 3. TexasA&M(4) | 1-0-0 | 1,361 | 3 |
| 4. PennSt.(1) | 0-0-0 | 1,298 | 4 |
| 5. Florida(2) | 1-0-0 | 1,293 | 5 |
| 6. Auburn(2) | 1-0-0 | 1,276 | 6 |
| 7. SouthernCal | 0-0-0 | 1,168 | 7 |
| 8. Tennessee(1) | 1-0-0 | 1,073 | 8 |
| 9. OhioSt. | 1-0-0 | 1,018 | 10 |
| 10. Colorado | 1-0-0 | 972 | 14 |
| 11. Michigan | 2-0-0 | 951 | 13 |
| 12. UCLA | 1-0-0 | 922 | 15 |
| 13. Alabama | 1-0-0 | 852 | 11 |
| 14. Oklahoma | 0-0-0 | 641 | 16 |
| 15. Texas | 1-0-0 | 605 | 18 |
| 16. Virginia | 1-1-0 | 554 | 17 |
| 17. Arizona | 1-0-0 | 529 | 19 |
| 18. Washington | 1-0-0 | 388 | 22 |
| 19. Miami | 0-1-0 | 282 | 12 |
| 20. VirginiaTech | 0-0-0 | 265 | 24 |
| 21. KansasSt. | 1-0-0 | 203 | — |
| 22. Syracuse | 1-0-0 | 195 | — |
| 23. N.CarolinaSt. | 1-0-0 | 191 | — |
| 24. Oregon | 1-0-0 | 187 | — |
| 25. NotreDame | 0-1-0 | 157 | 9 |

HEISMAN WATCH '95

• Leeland McElroy — running back, Texas A&M: Gained 359 all-purpose yards, 229 rushing and scored three touchdowns.

• Warrick Dunn — running back, Florida State: Rushed for 124 yards on nine carries.

• Lawrence Phillips — running back, Nebraska: Rushed for 153 yards and three touchdowns on 12 carries.

• Tommie Frazier — running back, Nebraska: Completed 6 of 10 passes for 120 yards and two touchdowns, rushed for 64 yards on 10 carries.

• Danny Kannel — quarterback, Florida State: Completed 21 of 27 passes for 275 yards and one touchdown.

