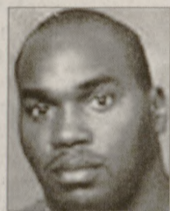


Chiefs' LB Thomas paralyzed after car accident

LIBERTY, Mo. (AP) — NFL star Derrick Thomas was paralyzed from the waist down following a car crash that broke his neck and killed a friend.



THOMAS

Thomas has use of his upper body, and it was not clear whether he will regain use of his legs, the Kansas City Chiefs said today.

The nine-time Pro Bowl linebacker will be transferred to a hospital in his hometown of Miami, said Dr. Jon Browne, the team physician.

"It takes time to check these things out," Browne said. "Improvement can come slowly or in rapid bursts."

Teammates and friends gathered at the hospital today. Chiefs president Carl Peterson and coach Romeo Crennel were joined by Steve Palermo, a former American League umpire who was not in 1991 and left partially paralyzed.

"Do not rule anything out," said Palermo, a Kansas City resident and friend of Thomas. "And do not rule anything out."

"This type of injury, it's impossible to know

how it's going to turn out, but Derrick is a fighter," Palermo said.

The 33-year-old Thomas and two companions were heading to the Kansas City airport at the time of the accident. They were planning to fly to St. Louis for the NFC Championship game when their car flipped on an icy road Sunday afternoon.

Thomas and the man who was killed were thrown from the car. The third man was treated at a hospital and released.

The dead man was identified as Michael Tellis, 49, of Kansas City, Kan. He is a close friend of Thomas who helped the player set up such projects as a charity golf tournament that had become an annual event in Kansas City.

"Forget about the football aspect of it," Cunningham said. "He has given a lot to this city and this organization. It's a tough thing to deal with."

With one of the quickest first moves of any defender in the league, Thomas became known for his "sack and strip" move. He would close fast on a quarterback's blind side and hack at his arm to knock the ball out of his hand.

Coaches designed the Chiefs' entire defense around the quick-hitting, 6-foot-3, 255-pounder. He was a mainstay in a consistently tough defense that

helped Kansas City become one of just three NFL teams to win 100 games in the '90s.

"God willing, all the initial reports will be off,

"Right now, I'm not concerned with Derrick Thomas the football player, I'm worried about Derrick Thomas the person."

— Tim Grunhard
Chiefs center

and he'll be OK," Chiefs center Tim Grunhard said. "Right now, I'm not concerned with Derrick Thomas the football player, I'm worried about Derrick Thomas the person."

An All-American at Alabama, Thomas became an immediate star as a pass-rushing specialist after being taken in the first round of the 1989 draft. He

was an All-Pro in his first nine seasons. In 1990, he set the NFL single-game record with seven sacks against Seattle.

That game was the same week as Veteran's Day. Thomas dedicated his performance to his father, an Air Force pilot killed in Vietnam.

Thomas made headlines in 1998 when he lost his temper during a Monday night game against Denver and committed three personal fouls during the Broncos' final touchdown drive. He was fined and suspended for one game and apologized to the Broncos and his fans.

Cunningham, the Chiefs' defensive coordinator from 1995-98, has said Thomas was primarily responsible for the team leading the league with a plus-130 turnover ratio in the 1990s.

"I take my hat off to No. 58. He is the most underrated football player right now on our football team," Cunningham said in December. "For one reason or another, everybody looks at Derrick Thomas and says, 'Well, he didn't show up in the playoff game.'"

"If Derrick is not out there at right end, the Chiefs would not have been as successful as they've been for the last 11 years. Derrick was the starting point to getting there."

Jets hire new head coach

HEMPSTEAD, N.Y. (AP) — Al Groh, a Bill Parcells pal for more than 30 years, replaced his former boss yesterday as coach of the New York Jets.

Three weeks after Parcells resigned and Bill Belichick stunned the club by quitting a day after he took over, the Jets finally sorted out their coaching puzzle.

Groh, who grew up a few miles from the Jets' training camp at Hofstra, was reportedly given a five-year contract worth \$6 million by new owner Richard Johnson IV, who bought the Jets this month from the estate of Leon Hess for \$635 million.

Parcells, who turned the Jets into winners in his three seasons as coach, will remain with the club as head of football operations.

The 55-year-old Groh first worked with Parcells when the two were assistants at Army in 1968, and Groh also was an assistant under Parcells at Air Force.

January 18 - January 28

Texas A&M Singing Cadets Auditions

We are located in MSC 003 (that's downstairs next to Hullahaloo)

Since 1891 there has been a vocal music group associated with Texas A&M. In 1940, we became known as the "Singing Cadets" and grew to receive national acclaim. The group performs 50-60 concerts each year which include performances throughout the state as well as many special performances. These include things like opening day for the Astros, Miss Texas pageants, Shania Twain, dinners for former Presidents of the U.S., and many others. We are comprised of 60-70 male Aggies where membership in the corps is NOT required. If you love to sing and are willing to work hard, then come join us. The "Voice of Aggieland."

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Fax: 847-9384
Email: scadets@tam2k.tamu.edu

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Nominate someone special for Aggie Parents of the Year

Attend one of the following mandatory informational meetings

Monday, January 24
Tuesday, January 25
Wednesday, January 26
Monday, February 3

at 8:30 p.m., in Rudder 203

If you have any questions, please call Lauren with Parents' Weekend Committee at 845-3051

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DANCE LESSONS

CLASS	DAY	TIME	LOCATION
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JITTERBUG I	SUN	8:15-9:45	GRW 266
JITTERBUG I	SUN	6-7:30	MSC 224
C&W I	SUN	8-9:30	MSC 224
C&W II	WED	7-8:30	GRW 262
ADV. JITTERBUG	THUR	7-8:30	GRW 266

SIGN-UPS WILL BE IN THE MSC FLAGROOM TODAY 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

CLASSES WILL START THE WEEK OF FEB. 6 AND WILL RUN FOR 4 WEEKS

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