

Sports

Tuesday, October 30, 2001

THE BATTALION

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Tyler pipeline paying off for Aggies in 2001

By TRUE BROWN
THE BATTALION

Mention the words "high school football" and "Tyler" in the same sentence around any college football coach in Texas and watch their eyes light up.

So when A&M football head coach R.C. Slocum and his staff visit the piney woods to recruit each year, it is a safe bet that their eyes get about as big as silver dollars and as bright as the sun.

Six players on the Aggie roster graduated from Tyler

high schools and five have started in at least one game, giving the East Texas town more starters than Houston, Dallas or Austin.

"They are all delightful young men who were well-coached in high school," said A&M football head coach R.C. Slocum. "When they come in here, they take our coaching well. The football in Tyler is really good and competitive, and these young guys aren't phased at all. They just go out there and make big plays."

The most notable impressions have been made by wide receiver Terrence Murphy and running back Derek Farmer, both true freshmen.

Murphy, a Tyler Chapel Hill High School graduate, has earned starts in five games this season and already has set the A&M freshman single-game record for catches and receiving yards, grabbing 10 catches for 146 yards against Colorado on Oct. 13.

So far this season, Murphy has 27 receptions for 459 yards, and with one more touchdown, Murphy will tie the A&M freshman record for receiving touchdowns set by Brian Mitchell in 1991 and Leeland McElroy in 1993.

Wide receiver Mickey Jones, a senior from Robert E. Lee High School, also has contributed with eight catches for 82 yards.

On the defensive side of the ball, Linnis Smith, a sophomore



GUY ROGERS • THE BATTALION

Freshmen Tyler products Terrence Murphy (5) and Derek Farmer (1) celebrate after an apparent touchdown catch by Murphy Saturday. The Texas A&M football team has six players on the roster from the Tyler area.

defensive lineman from John Tyler High School, has 13 tackles this season and intercepted a pass against Baylor.

Redshirt freshman linebacker Brian Thompson, another graduate of Tyler Lee, has yet to see action this season.

One of the biggest surprises from the Tyler area comes from

behind the offensive line.

Farmer, who was expected to get limited playing time this season, has started at running back in the last five games for the Aggies.

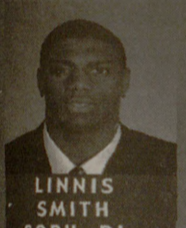

Farmer's 133-yard rushing performance against Iowa State Saturday was highlighted by a game-clinching 65-yard touchdown run in the fourth quarter.

"I knew coach had belief in me that I would get the first down," said soft-spoken Farmer of his touchdown run. "They gave me the ball, and everyone got on their blocks. I just ran."

Farmer, the Aggies' third graduate from Tyler Lee, also

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TYLER NO-TOUCHDOWN

 DEREK FARMER FR. RB	 MICKY JONES SR. WR
 TERRENCE MURPHY FR. WR	 CODY SCATES SOPH. P/PK
 LINNIS SMITH SOPH. DL	 BRIAN THOMPSON FR. LB

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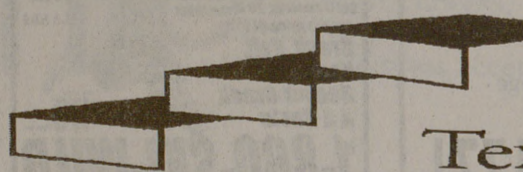
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