



N.C. A&T senior defensive lineman Adam Beal makes a tackle during the Aggies big win over Winston-Salem State over the weekend. The Aggies picked up their first win over the Rams in three years.

A&T continues winning streak

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

During North Carolina A&T's preseason football camp, a lot of the talk about the upcoming 2008 season surfaced around the offense.

Whether it was how the arrival of new offensive coordinator John McKenzie would improve the play of quarterback Herb Miller or running back Michael Ferguson's quest for the Aggies all-time rushing record or the Aggies new-look offensive line, the Aggies offense dominated the conversation.

But if last Saturday night is any indication, it could be the Aggies defense that has everyone talking by season's end. The Aggies defense staged a stellar goal line stance late in the fourth quarter to lead N.C. A&T to a 14-8 win over arch-rival Winston-Salem State in front of a sellout crowd at Aggie Stadium.

The win improved the Aggies to 2-0 for the first time since 2003. The Rams, who had won the last two previous matchups against the Aggies, came into the game having rushed more than 250 yards in each of those victories. Last Saturday, the Aggies held the Rams offense to just 271 yards of total offense. N.C. A&T's defense also held an opponent to less than 100 yards rushing for the second consecutive week.

But more than the numbers, it was the goal line stand that appropriately triggers the memory of stingy Aggie defenses of the past. Junior linebacker Andre Thornton led the Aggies with 11 tackles, 3 1/2 tackles for loss and a sack.

With the Aggies leading 14-6, defense took the field at the 7:41 mark of the fourth quarter as the WSSU drive started at its own 19-yard line. A 20-yard completion to Omar Kizzie, a 31-yard run by Roderick Fluellen on 3rd-and-19 and a 13-yard run by Brandon McRae gave the Rams a first-and-goal from the Aggies 4.

On first down, senior linebacker Brandon Long stuffed McRae in the hole for just a 1-yard gain. Glasper met McRae a yard deep in the Rams backfield to move the ball back to the 4. McRae took the hand-off again on third down and again went nowhere thanks to Glasper.

On fourth-and-goal, freshman Micah Stanfield came flying in from the outside, and hit Rams quarterback Jarrett Dunston six

yards behind the line of scrimmage. The hit forced a Dunston fumble, and Stanfield recovered the ball at the Aggies 14 with 1:13 remaining in the game.

Four plays later, the Aggies would take a safety to avoid any catastrophes deep in its own territory. But an incompletion by Dunston and a sack at the hands of Hedgepeth secured the Aggies first two-game winning streak in three years.

"I thought it would be a tough football game," said Aggies head coach Lee Fobbs. "We made more mistakes than they did, but we still came out with the win because we believe now. We believe we can overcome some of those mistakes and still win. Our kids responded to the challenge presented to them."

For the second straight week, the Aggies scored first. Their first score was set up by a reverse pass from the hands of former quarterback and current junior receiver Giorgio Lowrance. Lowrance took a reverse hand-off from Ferguson and then heaved the ball down field to senior receiver Chaz Dawson for a 41-yard gain to the Rams 13. Five plays later, Miller rolled out and scampered into the end zone for a 2-yard touchdown run and 7-0 Aggies lead. The Rams responded early in the second quarter as redshirt freshman quarterback Tienn Jefferson connected with Brent Thomas for a 48-yard gain to put the ball at the Aggies 1.

Like Miller, Jefferson would put points on the board by rolling out and plunging forward for a 3-yard touchdown run. The extra point was blocked by Glasper to keep the Aggies ahead 7-6.

Ferguson, who had 86 yards and a touchdown on 20 carries, gave the Aggies defense all the points it would need with a 12-yard touchdown run early in the fourth quarter. His score was set up by a 14-yard punt by Rams punter Jamaine Mack.

Blount added: "This was a tough one. It is a very intense rivalry and we are going to get back to work. The thing about this game is that, all you can ask of your young guys is to go out and play hard, and if they do that, I am happy with them. In that respect we succeeded tonight. We played hard. But we obviously have some things we need to work on."

WSSU returns to action on Saturday at 6 p.m. at Bowman Gray Stadium in the Rams' home opener as they play host to Savannah State University in WSSU's Hall of Fame Game.



Photo by Charlie Pfaff

Parkland's talented running back Chris Hairston slips from the grasp of Ricky Wardlow during the Mustangs win over the Demons last week. Hairston played huge for the Mustangs during the victory. Hairston and the rest of the Mustangs hope to play just as well in a game against Mt. Tabor tonight.

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caught a relatively short pass and raced 80-plus yards for the big gain.

The Reynolds punt team made a huge turnover with 6:06 to go in the fourth quarter. Three York was able to recover a fumble by a Parkland punt returner on the Mustang 8. But Reynolds wasn't able to capitalize off the good field position. Then, Parkland was able to convert a fourth down play later in the game to seal the victory.

"They made big plays," said Reynolds head coach

Darren Nelson. "That hurt us tonight. We should've been on top of most of them. That's what you practice for. We'll come back and get better."

The Demons, who played their first JV game last week, only got limited practice time heading into the game against Parkland.

"We didn't practice any last week," Nelson said. "But I know what my kids can do. We're a better team than that. I'm going to make sure we show everyone that we're a better football team than that. I'm confident in that."

Reynolds will travel to play Carver today, while Parkland host Mt. Tabor.

"Like I said, it's great to be 2-0 heading into a big game," concluded Griffin. "We have a good group of players and coaches this year. We trust one another. That can take us a long way."

Some of the standouts for Parkland were Starnes, Hairston, Brian McPherson, Jamaal Saahir, Alex Mitchell, Antwon Davis and Kevin Minor — to name a few. Reynolds was paced by James, Brache Baucum-Porter, Trey Gaither, Matt Nixon, Will Woods, Terrance Cannon, Chris Williams, Marion Rice, Alex McCalister and Keewan Dalton.

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be going into the hall of fame. But this isn't just for me. This is for all of my teammates, former coaches, the city and all the people that supported me. This is not just me going into the hall of fame."

That means I'm coming to the hall with you, Hollywood. I am definitely a Woodbury supporter. You know that, Tory, did you even think this could be a reality when you first signed with Winston-Salem State from Glenn? Be honest.

"Not at all," Woodbury said. "I didn't even think anything like this was possible, especially with me being the number seven quarterback coming in. This was the furthest thing from my mind. I still remember when I found out. It was a Tuesday and I was getting off work. When they told me I just sat on the couch. Then, I started to text my former teammates."

I am definitely excited about this induction. I think most of us are. Some you know Tory from his days with the Tiny Indians. Some of you remember him from Glenn, while others have known Woodbury for as long as they can remember.

The fact of the matter is: We all know Tory, T-Wood, coach Wood, T-Dub, Hollywood and the Hall of Famer.

Friday's game to watch

A number of people ask me which football game is going to be the best each Friday night. I usually just respond by revealing the game I'm going to check out. That doesn't mean anything, though.

I will go ahead and tell you which game will be the Game of the Week for tomorrow night. There are several good games going on. There's Reynolds and Carver, Atkins and East. Glenn and North are also playing. But the game with all the firepower will be the one going on at Mt. Tabor. The Spartans will play a very upset Parkland team. Which team do I believe will win? That's a good question. I told someone that I think Mt. Tabor has the better team, but Parkland would win the game. But I'm not too sure anymore. I've talked to quite a few Mt. Tabor guys that felt a little disrespected after last week's Q&A with my man Nick James. I know that coach Bell never likes to lose to Mt. Tabor. And, Mt. Tabor coach Leymarr Marshall doesn't want to lose to anyone.

That's the way it goes sometimes. Both sides are ready. It should be an exciting battle. That's going to be the game of the night.

Anthony Hill is the sports editor for The Chronicle. He can be reached at 722-8624 (ext. 111) or ahill@wschronicle.com.

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