

# MARY G. MONTGOMERY VIKINGS

## Griffin 'great team leader' on defense

BY ARTHUR L. MACK  
alouismack@aol.com

For Mary G. Montgomery outside linebacker/defensive end Thomas Griffin, last year's heartbreaking 35-28 defeat at the hands of Class 7A, Region 1 foe Baker was a bitter pill to swallow.

That loss knocked the Vikings out of the running for a playoff slot. It would have been their first playoff appearance since 2002.

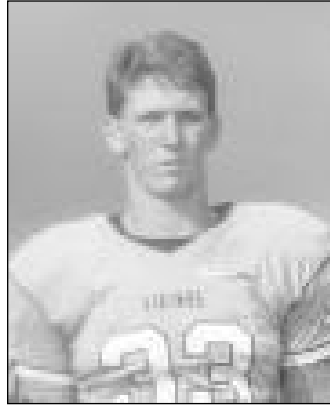
Needless to say, Griffin and his teammates are looking for redemption, especially now that new head coach Chris Wilson wants to encourage his team to finish games strong.

"It was pretty hard," he said of the loss. "Like coach (Wilson) said, when it

came down to the end, we just kind of lost it. All of us look back on that moment and we say we're not going to have moments like that again."

Griffin is one of several MGM defensive starters coming back from last year's 5-5 team. Last year, the Vikings gave up 264 points, and allowed 40 or more points on four separate occasions, including three straight lopsided losses to Auburn, Davidson, and McGill-Toolen.

But the front seven should be one



Thomas Griffin

of the strongest points of the team, and with Griffin being a senior, it's obvious that he will be one of the leaders on defense. Wilson has certainly liked what he has seen thus far.

"He's an extremely solid player," Wilson said. "He's one of these guys that I want to fill the team with, guys who are solid. He's a great team player and does what he can to make the team successful."

In the months following the end of the 2016 season, Griffin had the chance to get to know Wilson better.

"We were just having regular conversations, and he kept it pretty casual with the players," Griffin said. "But when it comes down to being serious and talking about the game and during practice, he does not play around."

During the summer, Griffin said he noticed how some of the younger defensive players took on more of an active role during workouts.

"We really had a lot of young players, and the way they stepped up, they acted more mature than some of the people that we lost," Griffin said. "They just stepped up and did their jobs just like we needed them to do, instead of playing like a young player."



MGM defensive coach Marcus Johnson, left, with some of the defensive stalwarts for the Vikings.

Now Accepting New Patients



**Adult Medicine • Pediatrics  
Acute and Long Term Care  
Well Exams • Immunizations**

Board Certified Internal Medicine  
Family Practice and Pediatrics



Most Insurance Accepted Including: ALL-Kids, Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Medicaid and Medicare Plans.

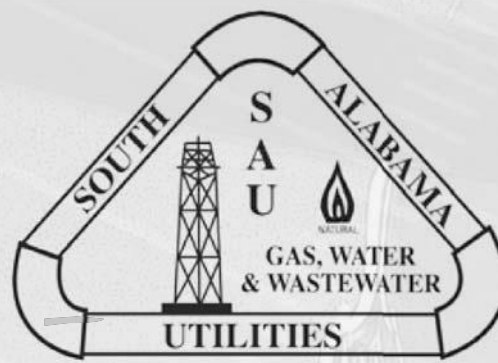
WilmerMedicalClinic.com

**(251) 410-7425**

Same Day Sick Appointments



**GO VIKINGS!**



Serving Mobile and Washington counties  
with Natural Gas, Water & Wastewater

[www.southalabamautilities.net](http://www.southalabamautilities.net)

**24-HOUR EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

**CITRONELLE**  
251-866-2365  
8100 Joy St.  
Citronelle, AL 36522

**SEMMES**  
251-649-4316  
4800 McCrary Rd.  
Semmes, AL 36575