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### COLLEGE FOOTBALL; Worthy of adulation

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AUSTIN -- Texas safety Michael Griffin could be an All-American this year. He could win the Thorpe Award as the country's best defensive back. He could win the Heisman Trophy as the country's top player. Heck, he could even win a Grammy.

It's all possible. Just ask Griffin's twin brother.

"The sky's the limit for him," said Marcus Griffin, also a UT safety. "He could accomplish anything he sets his mind to. Anything."

Michael Griffin, apparently, is that good.

He is one of the more verbose voices in the UT locker room, a guy who will gab about anything -- his pit bulls, his roommates' hygiene, life as a star running back at Austin's Bowie High.

Yet when it comes to the topic on the table -- "Michael Griffin could be the next great defender at UT. Discuss." -- Griffin becomes the strong, silent type.

"Everything I've accomplished," Griffin says, "is because of my teammates."

On this topic, Griffin -- a senior who led UT with 124 tackles last season -- is likely to let others talk for him.

So, cornerback Tarell Brown does.

"Mike is like Superman," Brown said. "He shows up in places you don't expect him to."

At this time last year, Griffin was a relative nobody. The lone new starter in the UT secondary, he constantly lined up beside a somebody.

Free safety Michael Huff went on to garner the Jim Thorpe Award and become a top-10 NFL draft pick.

Griffin, for most of the year, toiled in anonymity at strong safety.

Then he made 23 tackles in a victory at Texas A&M. He blocked punts in successive games against A&M and in the Big 12 title game against Colorado.

"I just started to get more comfortable," Griffin said. "The more comfortable I got, the more confident I got."

That led to perhaps the play of his life in the Rose Bowl.

USC's Matt Leinart thought he had just thrown a TD pass in the second quarter of UT's national championship-clinching triumph.

That was before Griffin swooped in for the interception, coming across the field to snatch the ball and tiptoe the sideline.

It was classic Superman. Now you don't see him, now you do.

And it made Michael Griffin famous.

Now, you can't walk past a news rack without seeing Griffin's image on the cover of at least one preseason magazine.

"He's always been a phenomenal athlete," said Duane Akina, UT's secondary coach. "The second half of last year is when he finally started to become a football player."

And so, Griffin enters his senior season with a target on his back, as visible as his jersey number.

He is big. He is fast. He can cover well enough to play cornerback if need be. And he can hit.

Whether he wants to admit it or not, Griffin is poised to be the next great defender at Texas.

Just ask the man whose opinion counts the most.

"Last year, all the attention was on Michael Huff," UT coach Mack Brown said. "Michael Griffin is pushing himself toward that level."

After that, a Grammy can't be far behind.

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FROM GRAPHIC:

#### BROTHER ACTS

--The best set of brothers on the same team were Oklahoma's Selmons in 1973: Lucious (senior), Lee Roy (sophomore) and Dewey (sophomore). Each was a first-team consensus All-American at least once. Lee Roy, who won the Lombardi Award and the Outland Trophy in 1975, is in the college and pro halls of fame.

--Oklahoma State has used two Woods brothers on each of its teams since 2002: Rashaun and D'Juan (2002-03), and Donovan and D'Juan (2004-06). Rashaun was a 2003 All-American and is the school's career leader in receptions and receiving yards. D'Juan, who was granted a medical redshirt in 2002 after playing in three games, is third on OSU's receiving lists. All three were on the 2003 roster, but Donovan redshirted.

--Paul and Pat McQuistan, 6-foot-6, 315-pound identical-twin offensive linemen from Weber State, were picked in the 2006 NFL draft. Paul was taken in the third round by the Oakland Raiders; Pat went in the seventh round to the Dallas Cowboys.

--Virginia's Ronde and Tiki Barber (1994-96), also twins, each earned All-ACC honors, and each will be in his 10th NFL season this fall. Their mother, Geraldine, once said of them: "When they were babies, they wouldn't go to sleep if they weren't in the same crib or playpen. They had to be touching. Even in their sleep, they would find a way to gravitate to each other."

--Holmes High School sent twins Keith and Kerry Cash (1987-90) to Texas, where they helped lead UT to the 1990 Southwest Conference title. Keith played wide

receiver in college with Kerry at tight end, but each played tight end for six NFL seasons.

--Division III Northwestern College in Minnesota -- which made headlines in 2005 for playing Trinity Bible College and Macalester College on the same day -- fielded six sets of brothers on last season's team, including Ben, Nick and Clint Wolcyn.

-- Gaylon Krizak and Tim Griffin