

WEEK TWO  
GEORGIA STATE AT NORTH CAROLINA STATE

Finley, Thomas lead NC State past Georgia State, 41-7  
5:10 PM ET

RALEIGH, N.C. -- North Carolina State played without one key receiver while welcoming another one back to the rotation -- only to lose him again to another injury.

But the Wolfpack's impressively deep receiving corps had Thayer Thomas, who has earned a scholarship -- and, now, his quarterback's trust.

The former walk-on caught nine passes for 114 yards with a one-handed touchdown in his first start at slot receiver, helping N.C. State rout Georgia State 41-7 on Saturday.

"I'm blessed they trust me to go out there and play," Thomas said. "They wouldn't put me in positions if they didn't trust me. That's the one thing I wanted to do this whole offseason, just gain their trust so I could go out there and play."

Ryan Finley, who threw for 370 yards and two scores -- including the highlight-reel TD to Thomas on the Wolfpack's opening possession -- called Thomas "trustworthy."

"He's special, he's worked for it, and he's earned the right to be on this stage," Finley said. "And I've really been impressed with him."

N.C. State (2-0) has one of the deepest receiving groups in the Atlantic Coast Conference, and that depth has been tested early.

When Stephen Louis missed the opener with hamstring tightness, Jakobi Meyers stepped up and caught 14 passes for 161 yards against James Madison.

This time, Louis was back but Meyers was out with an ankle injury -- so Thomas was elevated to the starter's role in the slot. Kelvin Harmon caught eight passes for 129 yards but Louis was hurt early in the fourth quarter after taking a shot to the helmet.

Meyers "told me all week at practice, 'It's your turn,'" Thomas said. "Whoever gets put in that position should be able to go out and make plays, because the slot in our offense is looked at a lot, and I feel like any receiver who's put in this position could have done it."

Finley, who was 31 of 38, finished with the second-best yardage total of his career -- surpassed only by his 415 yards in last year's opener against South Carolina.

"It's a great performance by him," N.C. State coach Dave Doeren said. "But if you know Ryan, you know he wants other people to get credit. ... And I love that about him."

Dan Ellington was 15 of 28 for 194 yards, and Destin Coates had an 8-yard touchdown run that gave the Panthers (1-1) a 7-0 lead. N.C. State scored the game's final 41 points.

"We've got to convert and score," coach Shawn Elliott said of a team that missed two field goals and failed on a trick play on a fourth-and-1. "We've got to put them in the end zone. We've got to put points on the board."

THE TAKEAWAY

Georgia State: Despite the loss, the Panthers look like they have a keeper in Ellington, a junior college transfer making his second start at the school. He was responsible for the Panthers' best highlight of the day -- a 46-yard pass to Devin Gentry on third-and-4 that set up Coates' scoring run -- and will be a handful for Sun Belt defenses.

N.C. State: The ground game produced three touchdowns -- Reggie Gallaspy II (1 yard), Brady Bodine (39 yards) and Matthew McKay (2 yards). But that couldn't mask the problems the Wolfpack had in again getting their running game going.

They averaged just 2.9 yards per carry in the opener against James Madison and were at 2.5 yards per carry in this one before Bodine skewed the stats with his long scoring run that increased the total at the time to a more palatable 3.8 -- a number that eventually settled at 3.7. Gallaspy and Trent Pennix shouldered much of the load with freshman Ricky Person Jr. not in uniform.

"We obviously have work to do there," Doeren said, "and we'll work hard to get better at it."

THAYER'S A PLAYER

Thomas' touchdown grab was his second in two career games. He also set up a field goal with a 56-yard throw to Pennix on a double-pass trick play. And his 24-yard catch at the sideline with 6 seconds left in the first half led directly to Dunn's field goal that made it 20-7 at the break.

WEIRD PLAY

After Gallaspy's scoring run in the second quarter, the Wolfpack lined up for the extra point -- except for one very important player. N.C. State started out in the swinging gate formation and when they got settled, the Wolfpack lined up with a full line, a holder -- and no kicker. Christopher Dunn hurried out and knocked the PAT through the uprights to make it 17-7.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
GAST	7	0	0	0	7
NCST	10	10	7	14	41

Scoring Summary -----

	GAST	NCST
<b>FIRST QUARTER</b>		
GAST TD 12:37 Destin Coates 8 Yd Run (Brandon Wright Kick)		
6 plays, 75 yards, 2:23	7	0
NCST TD 9:32 Thayer Thomas 5 Yd pass from Ryan Finley (Christopher Dunn Kick)	7	7
7 plays, 57 yards, 2:57		
NCST FG 3:22 Christopher Dunn 25 Yd Field Goal		
9 plays, 89 yards, 3:42	7	10
<b>second Quarter</b>		
NCST TD 10:41 Reggie Gallaspy II 1 Yd Run (Christopher Dunn Kick)		
10 plays, 80 yards, 4:27	7	17
NCST FG 0:00 Christopher Dunn 28 Yd Field Goal		
5 plays, 63 yards, 0:46	7	20
<b>third Quarter</b>		
NCST TD 3:43 Trent Pennix 1 Yd pass from Ryan Finley (Christopher Dunn Kick)	7	27
8 plays, 72 yards, 3:26		
<b>fourth Quarter</b>		
NCST TD 3:12 Brady Bodine 39 Yd Run (Christopher Dunn Kick)		
4 plays, 55 yards, 2:08	7	34
NCST TD 1:12 Matthew McKay 2 Yd Run (Christopher Dunn Kick)		
3 plays, 12 yards, 1:12	7	41

Team Stats	GAST	NCST
First Downs	19	27
Total Yards	349	541
Total Plays	65	70
Avg Gain Per Play	5.4	7.7
Net Yards Rushing	107	115
Rushes	31	31
Yards Per Rush	3.5	3.7
Net Yards Passing	242	426
Comp-Att	19-34	32-39
Yards Per Pass	7.1	10.9
Times Sacked	0	2
Yds Lost To Sacks	0	-8
Interceptions	0	1
Punts	4	2
Punt Average	0.0	0.0
Penalties	5	6
Penalty Yards	48	52
Fumbles	2	2
Fumbles Lost	1	0
Possession	29:28	30:32

Individual Stats

RUSHING

Georgia St.	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
17 Destin Coates	6	43	7.2	15	1
13 Dan Ellington	10	30	3.0	17	0
5 Tra Barnett	6	20	3.3	9	0
38 Demarcus Kirk	2	14	7.0	11	0
8 Taz Bateman	4	9	2.3	4	0
28 Seth Paige	2	-3	-1.5	2	0
18 Penny Hart	1	-6	-6.0	0	0
<b>N.C. State</b>	<b>Rush</b>	<b>Yds</b>	<b>Avg</b>	<b>Long</b>	<b>TD</b>
33 Brady Bodine	5	50	10.0	39	1
26 Trent Pennix	9	28	3.1	6	0
25 Reggie Gallaspy	11	24	2.2	8	1
24 Nakia Robinson	3	8	2.7	4	0
19 C.J. Riley	1	3	3.0	3	0
7 Matthew McKay	1	2	2.0	2	1
15 Ryan Finley	1	0	0.0	0	0

PASSING

Georgia St.	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Dan Ellington	15	28	194	6.9	0	0	111.8
Aaron Winchester	4	6	48	8.0	0	0	133.9
<b>N.C. State</b>	<b>Comp</b>	<b>Att</b>	<b>Yds</b>	<b>Y/A</b>	<b>TD</b>	<b>Int</b>	<b>QBRat</b>
Ryan Finley	31	38	370	9.7	2	1	175.5
Thayer Thomas	1	1	56	56.0	0	0	570.4
Matthew McKay	0	0	0	-	0	0	-

RECEIVING

Georgia St.	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
14 Devin Gentry	5	83	16.6	46	0
18 Penny Hart	3	53	17.7	34	0
27 Terrance Dixon	2	33	16.5	18	0
83 Cornelius McCoy	2	23	11.5	16	0
8 Taz Bateman	1	14	14.0	14	0
Diondre Champaigne	1	9	9.0	11	0
6 Jonathan Ifedi	2	8	4.0	5	0
17 Destin Coates	1	7	7.0	7	0
85 Christian Owens	1	6	6.0	6	0
28 Seth Paige	1	6	6.0	6	0
<b>N.C. State</b>	<b>Rec</b>	<b>Yds</b>	<b>Avg</b>	<b>Long</b>	<b>TD</b>
3 Kelvin Harmon	8	129	16.1	39	0
87 Thayer Thomas	9	114	12.7	24	1
26 Trent Pennix	3	66	22.0	56	1
19 C.J. Riley	4	49	12.3	20	0
1 Stephen Louis	2	32	16.0	15	0
86 Emeke Emezle	4	25	6.3	8	0
28 Dylan Parham	2	11	5.5	12	0