

ZACH THOMAS

Pampa High School Class of 1992



Zachary Michael Thomas was born September 1, 1973 to Steve and Barbara Ann Thomas. Zach has one older brother, Bart and one younger sister, Katina.

He attended White Deer Public Schools from Kindergarten thru his Freshman High School year. He participated in numerous U.I.L. competitions where he excelled. He played summer baseball, basketball, gymnastics, track, and was even in the Band. He enjoyed weight lifting and football, where he began his journey playing “Mean Machine” football 3rd – 6th Grade.

He started as a Freshman on the White Deer 1988 State Champions Undefeated Team with his brother Bart leading as the Quarterback. He was named Amarillo Globe News Newcomer of the Year.

Zach transferred to Pampa where he played Harvester Baseball and Football. His Senior season the Harvesters won District, Bi-District, Area and Regional which was a record setting year. It was the first in PHS history for the Football team to advance to the Quarter-Finals. Zach was named the District MVP and the Globe News Super Team Defensive Player of the Year. He was named First Team All-State his Senior Year. He is in the Texas High School Sports Hall of Fame and The Panhandle Sports Hall of Fame.

Upon graduation, Zach accepted the scholarship invitation to Texas Tech University where his brother Bart was playing. They became the only brothers in the History of the Southwest Conference to both receive All-Southwest Conference in the same year. Zach was awarded the Southwest Conference Defensive Player of the Year his Junior and Senior years. He recently was inducted into the 2014 Southwest Conference Hall of Fame.

Zach was the only 3 year Captain chosen by his teammates in Texas Tech Football History. He received the E. J. Holub "Double Tough" Award presented to the player who shows leadership and dedication.

Selected by the Texas Tech players he was awarded the Pete Cawthorn Memorial Award for Most Valuable Player (MVP) exemplifying valuable leadership and skills in both 1995 and 1996.

He was a two time Unanimous First-Team All-American 1994 and 1995. Also, he was selected as a 1995 Finalist for the "Butkus Award." In 2006, Zach was inducted into the Texas Tech Athletics Hall of Honor. Receiving many awards and honors, he set a school record of 20 tackles in a single game against Missouri. All the while, remaining humble and giving praise to those around him. His teammates, coaches and all those that made it possible for him to become the player he was.

His heart, humility and work ethic paid off as he became a member of the National Football League and a Miami Dolphin.

New Head Coach Jimmy Johnson selected a 5'11" linebacker from Pampa, Texas in the fifth round of the 1996 NFL Draft with the 154th overall pick. He would wear the number 54 jersey throughout his spectacular Miami career. Zach had only seen NFL games on television and had never attended an NFL game until his first official pro game that he played on his birthday September 1, 1996. As a rookie, Thomas led Miami with 154 total tackles (same number as his draft pick!) Teammates reported that he was first in the locker room, last to leave. Thomas was a student of the game, a football junkie and that gave him an edge. As a rookie he was recognized as the team's MVP and Newcomer of the Year by South Florida Media. He became the first rookie to earn MVP since Dan Marino in 1983 and first defensive player since 1976. Also, Zach received the 1996 Unsung Hero Award selected by NFL Players Association and Became the first Dolphin in team history to receive NFL Defensive Rookie of the Month.

Zach was selected to the Pro Bowl seven times during his career. He also earned first-team All-NFL honors five times. Selected to the 1998 "All-Madden Team". He was a three time Dolphin Leadership Award Recipient. He was chosen to the "All-Iron Team" as selected by CBS analyst Phil Simms and PFWA Dolphins Chapter "Good Guy" Award.

Linebacker Thomas was voted by the Associated Press to the All-Pro Team seven times being the 2nd most selected in franchise history. Zach played 12 years with the Miami Dolphins receiving numerous awards. He is Miami's all-time tackle leader with 1,639 tackles. He holds the Dolphin record for career touchdown interceptions (4). He was selected as 3rd on the Miami Dolphins All-Time Top 100 Players.

He played one year with the Dallas Cowboys wearing #55. His 1,733 total tackles are more than any linebacker currently in the Hall of Fame.

He was inducted into the "Miami Dolphin Ring of Honor" with his name and number on the stadium wall in 2012. Zach has been nominated for the NFL Hall of Fame.

Opportunities are endless for NFL players to participate in various benefit, charity and community service projects. Zach has enjoyed sharing his time, finances and talent in helping others. Children's Hospitals, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Hometown Huddle, Fishing Tournaments, Celebrity Golf Tournaments, John Offerdahl-Gridiron Grill Off (for foster children) speaking to youth appearances, Camp Katina, etc. Military and Veterans are favorites of Zach. He visits Veteran's Hospitals and also visited the Troops sponsored by USO and NFL in Germany – 469th Air Base Group – Kaiserslautern visiting troops in Landstuhl Regional Medical Center – Heidelberg and Frankfurt, Germany.

He also traveled to Iraq for the Tostitos, 2011 "Salute the Troops" and "Connect to Home Bowl" held in Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Placing the spotlight on and celebrating U.S. military men and women heroes stationed in Iraq. The game was actually played during the Holiday season December 2010 and broadcast during the Fiesta Bowl Half-Time.

Zach and Dr. Maritzabel Lozano were married in 2006. They are the proud parents of two children, Christian Zachary (4) and Valentina Bella (3). They reside in South Florida.