

INSIDE
HOKIESPORTS

The *Journal* of Virginia Tech Athletics

**HOKIES OPEN
2008 SEASON**

Stephan Virgil

INSIDE: Unique family relationships for football's Nick Marshman and cross country's Devin Cornwall

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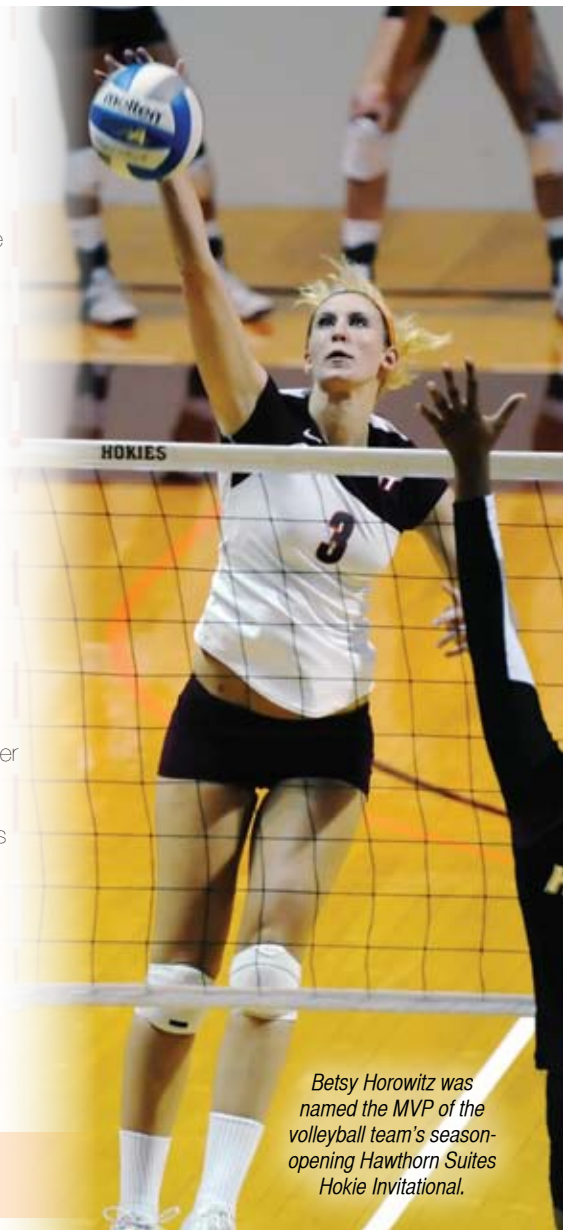
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Soccer & volleyball ring in new year with wins



Betsy Horowitz was named the MVP of the volleyball team's season-opening Hawthorn Suites Hokie Invitational.

VT ATHLETICS UPCOMING EVENTS
SEPTEMBER **VT** **OCTOBER**

19th Cross Country Alum. Invit.	6:00 PM
21st W. Soccer vs. James Madison	7:00 PM
Kids' Club Day!	
23rd Volleyball vs. Virginia	7:00 PM
26th Volleyball vs. Clemson	7:00 PM
Free VT Car Flags	
M. Soccer vs. Virginia	8:30 PM
Free VT Backpacks	
27th Volleyball vs. Georgia Tech	6:00 PM
Free VT Crocs	
30th M. Soccer vs. G. Washington	7:00 PM
Free VT Frisbees	

5th W. Soccer vs. NC State	1:00 PM
Free VT Hats	
7th M. Soccer vs. Radford	7:00 PM
Free VT Crocs	
9th W. Soccer vs. Virginia	7:00 PM
Free VT Soccer Cups	
10th M. Soccer vs. Maryland	7:00 PM
Free VT Hats	
14th M. Soccer vs. UMBC	7:00 PM
Free VT T-Shirts	
15th W. Soccer vs. Longwood	7:00 PM
Free VT Backpacks	



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The Hokie Club ... the Hokie Nation in true form. **The Hokie Club ...** responsible for raising all scholarship support for Virginia Tech's 21 varsity sports, capital projects and athletics department programmatic needs. **The Hokie Club ...** the crowd jumping around as the team runs out of the tunnel into Lane Stadium and onto the court in Cassell Coliseum. **The Hokie Club ...** Supporting Tech athletics since 1949!

Understanding the different ways to give to the Hokie Club

Outright Gifts

Outright gifts of cash, securities or other qualifying assets can go to work for your Hokie Club membership as soon as it is received. And you can immediately enjoy full income tax benefits.

Deferred Gifts

Your deferred gift benefits you now and provides support to the Hokie Club at some time in the future. With its combination of flexibility and financial advantages, a deferred gift may be your largest and most powerful charitable contribution.

Need income, either now or later? Perhaps for retirement? Charitable remainder trusts, gift annuities, and pooled income fund gifts pay you lifetime income, generate current tax benefits

and provide future support for Virginia Tech. Planning your estate? Bequests and retirement account designations are among the options that will reduce estate taxes and establish your legacy at Virginia Tech without affecting your current assets.

Several of the deferred giving opportunities include bequests, charitable lead trusts, retirement account gifts, beneficiary designations, life income gifts and retained life estate gifts.



Annual Giving Levels

Membership for annual giving levels is for 12 months. All annual giving levels must be renewed to remain ACTIVE and to obtain benefits.

Hokie Club	\$100-249
Orange & Maroon Hokie	\$250-499
Bronze Hokie	\$500-999
Silver Hokie	\$1,000-1,999
Golden Hokie	\$2,000-4,999
Platinum Hokie	\$5,000-9,999
Diamond Hokie	\$10,000-Up

Major Gift Levels

Major gift levels listed can all be made payable over a five-year period:

Golden Hokie Champion	\$50,000
Hokie Century Champion	\$100,000
Endowed Position Scholarship	\$150,000

For more information on how to give to Virginia Tech athletics, contact the Hokie Club at (540) 231-6618 or visit hokieclub.com.



Cumulative Giving Levels

Cumulative giving levels beginning at \$100,000:

Hokie Benefactor	\$100,000
Orange & Maroon Benefactor	\$250,000
Bronze Benefactor	\$500,000
Silver Benefactor	\$1,000,000
Golden Benefactor	\$2,000,000
Platinum Benefactor	\$5,000,000
Diamond Benefactor	\$10,000,000



"The best part of being a Hokie Representative is the privilege of awarding scholarships to well-deserving student athletes. Go Hokies!"

Brittney Boyce

Hokie Club Level:

Orange & Maroon Hokie

Family members:

Mark (husband)

Blake (son, Class of 2029)

Q: What year did you graduate?

A: 2003

Q: What is a Hokie?

A: Strong, confident, determined, proud, intelligent. Once a Hokie, always a Hokie.

Q: Is the Hokie Nation "real?" How?

A: Hokie Nation is a way of life. No matter where you are in the world, the color combination of Chicago Maroon and Burnt Orange sparks a friendship with a fellow Hokie.

Q: What is your best memory of Virginia Tech athletics?

A: Two words: "Enter Sandman"

Q: How did you get involved with the Hokie Club?

A: The Tidewater Hokie Club was lacking female representation. I am excited to see more women becoming involved. We love Hokie sports just as much as the boys do.

Q: What caused you to become a fan of Virginia Tech?

A: I cannot remember not being a fan.

Q: Do you have any game day superstitions? If so, what are they?

A: Don't doubt the Hokies or your rental car may get struck by lightning in the parking lot. Just ask Lee Corso.

Q: "When I was at Virginia Tech ..."

A: We camped out for three days to get tickets to the football games.

Q: What motivates you to give back to help Virginia Tech athletics?

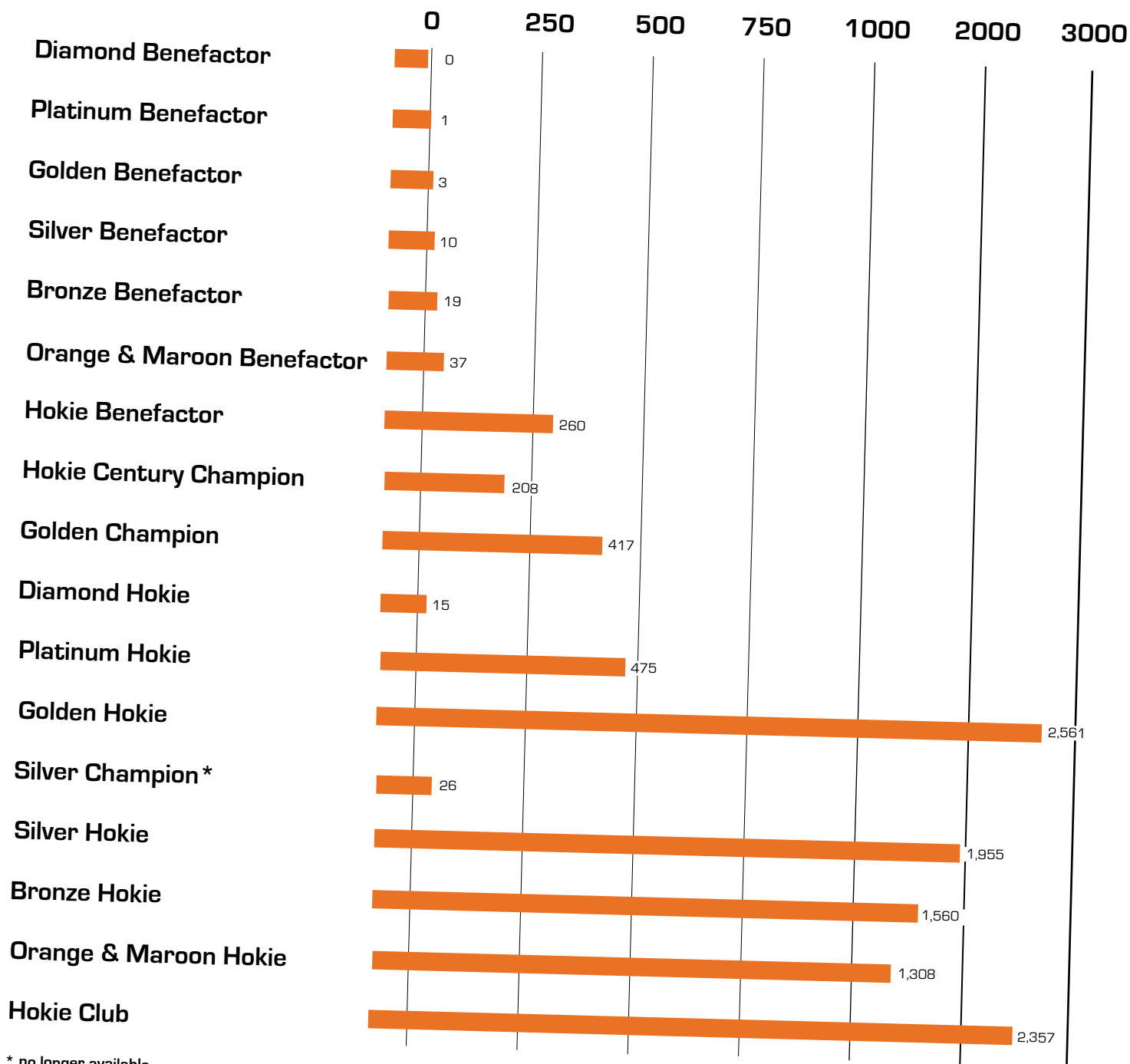
A: The student-athletes who give so much of themselves to our school. A lot is to be said for their hard work and dedication that helps bring the Hokie community together.



FINANCIAL CORNER

Hokie Club Finances

The Hokie Club currently has 11,212 members (as of 7/30/08). Members are ranked and benefits are awarded based on the Hokie Club's point priority system. Listed is a chart outlining all of the Hokie Club giving levels and also the amount of members that make up each giving level:



* no longer available

For more information on supporting Virginia Tech athletics, contact us at:

Virginia Tech Athletic Fund
 P.O. Box 10307
 Blacksburg, VA 24062-0307
 (540) 231-6618 (Office) • (540) 231-3260 (Fax) • Hokieclub.com



Hokie Club Football Game day Information

Bowman Room Pregame Meals

The Hokie Club will serve pregame meals in the Bowman Room prior to each home football game. Reservations are required. The Bowman Room is open to Bronze Hokie Club members and above.

- Reservations will be taken on a first-come, first-serve basis. If no room is available, you will be notified and your check returned.
- No walk-ups will be accepted. Reservations must be made by Wednesday at noon prior to each game.
- If seating capacity is reached before the Wednesday deadline, we will not accept any additional reservations.
- If you make reservations and do not attend, you will be billed for the cost of the meals.
- Cost is \$15 per person.

GAME	BOWMAN ROOM	GAME TIME
Sept. 6 • Furman	11 a.m. – 1 p.m.	1:30 p.m.
Sept. 13 • Ga. Tech	1 p.m. – 3 p.m.	3:30 p.m.
Oct. 4 • W. Kentucky	TBA	TBA
Nov. 6 • Maryland	5 p.m. – 7 p.m.	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 22 • Duke	TBA	TBA
Nov. 29 • UVa	TBA	TBA

The Bowman Room will open 2 1/2 hours prior to each home football game, and close 30 minutes prior to each game. Set-ups are provided and a small donation at the bar is appreciated.

Please mail your reservation and/or check to: Hokie Club, P.O. Box 10307, Blacksburg, VA 24062. For more information, contact Diana Adkins at (540) 231-8481.

Hokie Club Football Parking Maps

Parking maps for the 2008 football season are available online at hokieclub.com.

Parking Lots available for view include Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11.

The Walk

What better way to get in the Hokie Spirit or to compliment your tailgating festivities than to join in on "The Walk?" Come out to support Virginia Tech football players, coaches and staff as they come to campus in preparation for the game. "The Walk" starts two hours before kickoff at the center of Lane Stadium's west side on Spring Road and continues to the Jamerson Center.

2008 Football Away Game Hokie Club Socials

Away game Hokie Club socials for the 2008 football season will be held in the lobby bar/lounge at each of the team hotels from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on Friday evenings before away games. Listed below are details for each game:

North Carolina

Date: Friday, Sept. 19, 2008

Hotel: Hilton Raleigh-Durham Airport at Research Triangle Park, Durham, N.C.

Nebraska

Date: Friday, Sept. 26, 2008

Hotel: Crowne Plaza Hotels & Resorts, Omaha, Neb.

Boston College

Date: Friday, Oct. 17, 2008

Hotel: The Westin Waltham-Boston, Waltham, Mass.

Florida State

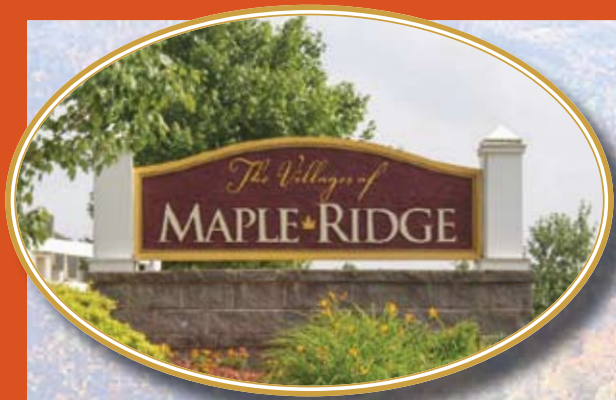
Date: Friday, Oct. 24, 2008

Hotel: Ramada, Tallahassee, Fla.

Miami

(No Social Planned)





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THE HUDSON TEAM



Five selected to Tech Sports Hall of Fame

Members of the Virginia Tech Sports Hall of Fame selection committee announced that five more former Tech standouts were selected for induction to the Hall of Fame. Those five will be inducted officially at a dinner on the Tech campus on Nov. 21st, the night before the Hokies' home football game against Duke.

The list of former athletes includes:



KATIE OLLENDICK
Track and Field

Ollendick became the Hokies' first female track & field athlete to earn indoor and outdoor

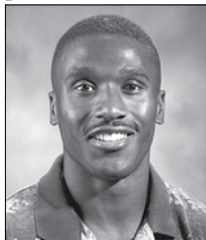
All-America honors in the same season – her senior year in 1997-98. Her prowess in academics matched her athletics prowess, as she maintained a perfect 4.0 grade-point average for her career.



EUGENE CHUNG
Football

Chung became a starter on Tech's offensive line as a freshman, later earned All-America

honors in 1991 and then went on to become the first Hokie offensive player to be selected in the first round of the NFL Draft, going to the New England Patriots with the 13th pick.



ERIC MCCLELLAN
Men's Soccer

McClellan was a four-year standout and two-time MVP in soccer for the Hokies from 1989

through 1992 and still stands as the school's all-time leader in goals scored and total points. He actually broke those Tech's career records goals and points during his junior campaign, and finished his career as a two-time All-Metro selection.



JIM BEARD
Baseball

Beard played baseball at Tech in the early 1950s, and in 1954, he guided the Hokies to their first

NCAA berth. He finished his career as the school's leader in wins, strikeouts and innings pitched – records that stood well into the 1970s.



DR. JAMES I. ROBERTSON, JR.
Administration

Robertson, a highly honored Tech professor and Civil War historian, took the time to

help shape Tech's athletic history as Faculty Chairman of Athletics from 1979-1991 when he served two terms as President of the Metro Conference and was a longtime member of the conference's Executive Committee.

The new inductees will bring the total number enshrined into the Hall of Fame to 141.

Top recruit out for season

Marcus Davis, one of the top freshmen who signed with the Tech football program back in February, underwent surgery on an injured shoulder and will miss the 2008 season. He will redshirt this season while rehabbing his shoulder.

The 6-foot-3, 228-pounder from Ocean Lakes High in Virginia Beach, Va., had been working at flanker during the first couple of weeks of August and stood a good chance at playing this season. But the injury eliminated that.

Davis was rated the No. 9 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times and SuperPrep, and the No. 38 athlete in the nation by rivals.com. He played quarterback his senior season at Ocean Lakes, and completed 104 of 233 passes for 1,837 yards and 20 touchdowns. He also ran for 858 yards and 12 touchdowns.

Virginia Tech injury report

In addition to Davis, two more players will not play this season because of injuries. Ron Cooper, a 5-10, 189-pound redshirt sophomore from Richmond, came into the fall as the top back-up at safety, but he tore the anterior cruciate ligament in his knee during a practice and underwent surgery. Also, Aaron Brown, a 6-6, 320-pound redshirt sophomore from Cincinnati, underwent surgery on his shoulder that will cause him to miss the year.

Tech also suffered another serious blow when reserve fullback Devin Perez, who contributes a lot in the Hokies' short yardage offenses, went down with a ligament sprain

in his left foot. The 5-8, 240-pound redshirt senior will be out 4-6 weeks.

Scholarship recipients

In keeping up with his tradition of rewarding walk-ons who work their way up the depth chart and into contributing roles, Tech head coach Frank Beamer awarded scholarships to three players for the upcoming season – kicker Dustin Keys, linebacker Jonas Houseright and Perez, the above mentioned fullback.

Keys, a redshirt senior from Stafford, Va., won the kicking job with a terrific spring and August. Houseright, a redshirt senior from Gate City, Va., is the team's third linebacker and also contributes on special teams, and Perez, a redshirt senior from Sparta, N.J., participates a lot in short-yardage and goal-line situations.

"They all deserve it," Beamer said.


Star prospect wanting to play

Ryan Williams – maybe the top prospect who signed with Tech last February – went into the East Carolina game sixth on the depth chart at tailback. But the 5-foot-9, 204-pounder from Stonewall Jackson High in Manassas, Va., still wants to play this upcoming season as opposed to redshirting even though he did not play in the Hokies' loss to East Carolina in the season opener.

"I do want to play," he said. "I still feel I can contribute to the offense. I don't want to redshirt. I feel I can use this year as my 'experience' year. With limited carries or limited playing time or whatever I end up getting, I want to use that as my experience. I want to get a feel of the college game speed and the big hits and what it's like to be out there on game days – things of that sort. I really want to play."

Williams came to Tech as a SuperPrep All-American and was ranked the No. 8 running back prospect in the nation by SuperPrep. He rushed for 640 yards and seven touchdowns in seven games, missing three games because of an injury. He still managed to secure a spot in the U.S. Army All-American game.

Realistically, he probably wouldn't see much time with five other tailbacks in the backfield. So redshirting would be in his best interests – even though he wants no part of it.

"I'd have to go with the flow," he said when asked what he'd do if the coaches told him they wanted him to redshirt. "I can't tell them no. They're the coaches and they know what's best with the team. I'd just have to ride." 

Jimmy Robertson

Young Hokies learn tough lesson in season opener, but should get better as season continues

As we compile this issue of the magazine, the students have been back a week, backpacks heavy with textbooks and notebooks. The classes started, the syllabi got handed out, professors updated Blackboard and young men and women began a rather monotonous semester-long routine of reading, writing and research, with tests and quizzes, both planned and unplanned, sprinkled in.

After roughly three weeks worth of classes (coined 'practices' in football speak), the Virginia Tech football team took its first test of the season on Aug. 30th and the results were not pretty, a 27-22 loss to East Carolina. During the grading of this one, Frank Beamer's pen bled plenty of red ink.

For those who watched, you know the story. Tech's errors were comprehensive. Some were minute, such as the missing of numerous tackles. Others were large, such as an ill-timed interception that resulted in an ill-fated (for Tech) ECU score right before halftime. Others were egregious; such as having a punt blocked that led to the Pirates' game-winning touchdown with less than two minutes remaining.

"There's no excuse for that," Beamer stated afterward.

Students who logged on to message boards related to Tech saw them spinning out of control not long after the defeat. Players and coaches became punching bags for those eager to relieve their frustrations.

Yet here's a novel idea – take a deep breath and a long-term approach when analyzing this team.

After all, isn't there a semester's

worth of assignments and tests left on this team's syllabus?

When studying this team, we knew coming into this season that the Hokies just wouldn't be quite as good as last year's squad – they lost 22 seniors, most of them tremendous players, including eight who got drafted in April's NFL Draft. Statistically, 1,400 tackles, 59 sacks, 32 interceptions, 409 receptions, 6,139 receiving yards and 43 touchdowns left. Not to mention, they lost leading rusher Branden Ore, who for all his shenanigans, possessed NFL-type ability.

We knew going into this season that the Hokies possessed a bunch of youngsters. They only returned 14 seniors and 10 starters. The team's resident professors – the coaching staff – spent a lot of time teaching, all the while trying to get this class up to speed because the course material – their opponents – comes quickly.

Beamer and the staff dressed 10 true freshmen and played eight of them. Thirty-one players who dressed for the ECU tilt had yet to play in a collegiate game. Ten different players made their first collegiate starts against ECU.

Even a lot of Tech's upperclassmen lack experience. Guys like Purnell Sturdivant, Cordarrow Thompson, Dorian Porch, Kenny Lewis, Jr., Demetrius Taylor, Greg Boone and others have been in the program a while, but played only a little. And making matters worse, the Hokies played the game without arguably their most talented athlete – Macho Harris – who missed the game with a foot injury.

This opening game wasn't Intro to College Football 101, a gimme course to ease one into college academia. Playing football at Tech is like taking an upper level course. You better spend time working and studying, or else.

So what should we have expected? Well, anything because that's what you get with the unknown. And like a bunch of freshmen taking their first college exam, they typically struggled.

"It just takes time," Beamer said. "We knew that going in. We knew we had a young crowd, and it's just going to take some time. What I like from our crowd is that I thought our effort was great. It's just that our execution has to get better – and I think it will."

And it's not as if there weren't some positives to come out of the game.

Stephan Virgil played extremely well in his first career start. Dyrrell Roberts made a nice catch of a beautifully thrown pass by Sean Glennon that went for 62 yards and set up a score. Lewis and Darren Evans ran hard and showed the ability to break tackles. Plus, the Hokies committed just one penalty, showing discipline for a young team.

"Certainly, we've got areas to improve in, but I was pleased with our effort on both sides of the ball," Beamer said. "We had only one penalty. We played with discipline. I'm encouraged that we were only one block away on several plays from breaking them. We've just got to get a little better there. Defensively, the effort was outstanding. The missed tackles and a couple of missed alignments, we can get those corrected.

"This is a young football team that wants to get better, and we're going to work hard to get better."

East Carolina doled out a tough lesson in the opener. But now Tech's younger players know what to expect. They played a good team in an NFL stadium in front of 70,000 or so fans, and they led for 56 minutes of the game. The great teams find a way to finish those types of games, regardless of how they play. The Hokies learned that painfully.


And you know some of Tech's better players will play better. Guys like Kam Chancellor and Sergio Render and Ed Wang are too good not to play better. You know Glennon will respond – no one works harder or wants to win more than that guy.

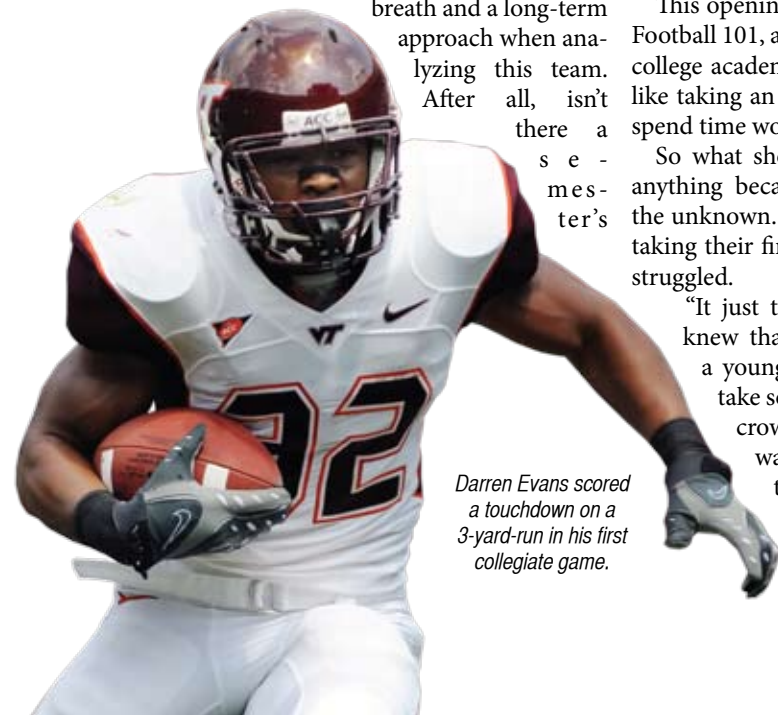
Following the game, Tech's coaching staff remained upbeat. The coaches know this team possesses a lot of good, young talent. The message was simple – keep your head up, we'll be alright.

The Hokies will be back in the classroom – their practice field. After this loss, they'll take better notes and study more efficiently. We all know what that equates to – success in future tests.

So Tech fans need not get disheartened. After all, consider this. The past two times the Hokies lost a season opener, they responded and won conference championships (1995, 2004 – a note courtesy of athletics communications czar Bryan Johnston). That goal remains attainable.

Yes, this group faired poorly in the first test, and they may struggle at some point down the road.

But just remember, the final grade isn't in yet. 



Darren Evans scored a touchdown on a 3-yard-run in his first collegiate game.



Bill Roth

SEC's new financial windfall TV deal has other conferences on notice

"The things a school can do with its debt services or provide for athletes with that kind of guaranteed revenue is mind-boggling."

For schools like Mississippi State or Ole Miss, the SEC deal now elevates them into a new, mega-dollar stratosphere where they'll dwarf even Notre Dame's television money. The Irish's contract with NBC is worth a reported \$9 million annually, which is a tremendous deal, but nowhere near what say ... Vanderbilt will earn on a yearly basis starting next year. Yeah, Vandy.

When the ACC expanded prior the 2004 season, it signed new television contracts with ABC/ESPN and Raycom Sports that paid out roughly \$70 million per season. For 2006-07, each ACC school got about \$6.1 million in television revenue from the conference. That, too, is a lot of money, but nothing like the SEC's new arrangement, which leads to this question: "How much can the ACC get when it renegotiates its current television deals?"

"It comes down to taking care of our knitting," Weaver said. In other words, win games.

And that's where the ACC has failed.

With Clemson's loss to 'Bama, the ACC is now 9-32 vs. non-conference top-25 teams since expansion in 2004.

Throw in a 1-9 BCS bowl game record, and sparse attendance for the past two ACC football championship games, and the next ACC TV negotiator (the league hired former CBS Sports honcho and IMG super agent Barry Frank the last time) is certainly in no position of strength.

ESPN has made a huge commitment to the

SEC, not only financially, but also in terms of exposure in football and men's and women's basketball. It will be the wealthiest, most televised conference in the country, and the Disney giant will ensure its success. After all, the company has invested billions of dollars in this endeavor.

You might not see a Florida Gator-themed ride at Walt Disney World (the "Tim Tebow Experience", perhaps?), but the marketing possibilities are seemingly endless.

For the schools, the landscape has changed. If SEC schools want to compete with the NFL or NBA and pay their coaches \$4-\$5 million per year, it's doable. If they want to upgrade facilities or charter jets for Olympic sports teams, the money is now there.

No, this isn't NFL television money, where each NFL team earned about \$85 million according to The Sports Business Journal, but it's grandiose on the college scale.

For ACC schools which compete with in-state SEC rivals, this is a major challenge. Weaver and Tech's head coaches are somewhat immune to the SEC measuring stick, but their counterparts at Florida State, Clemson and Georgia Tech are not as fortunate.

In the provincial dynamic that is Florida-Florida State, South Carolina-Clemson and Georgia-Georgia Tech, winning the in-state battle is paramount in recruiting, in fundraising, in media exposure and general fan support. Beating the in-state guy is critical. Just ask former Georgia Tech coach Chan Gailey.

ACC administrators are hoping that a strong season on the football field is followed

From coast to coast, college administrators and television insiders did a double-take when they read the press release.

In Blacksburg, Jim Weaver, Tech's Director of Athletics, read the staggering financial numbers, turned to associate AD Tom Gabbard and asked "Imagine what we could do with our facilities if we had this kind of revenue?"

The blockbuster story of the early football season wasn't Alabama's win over Clemson or anything else that's happened on the field. The news that has everyone abuzz is the SEC's new television deal with ESPN that will pay the conference and its member schools \$2.25 billion (that's billion, with a "B") over the next 15 years. The deal comes on the heels of the league inking a 15-year contract with CBS worth \$55 million.

To put this into perspective, each SEC team will earn between \$13 million and \$15 million per season from the league's television deals, roughly tripling the SEC's previous contract. In addition, each team is also allowed retain its own local multimedia rights and delayed television package.

Sun Sports, for example, just anted up \$100 million for a 10-year deal with University of Florida. As a result, the Gators will realize \$25 million per year in media rights before a single ticket is sold at "The Swamp." As they say, it's great to be a Florida Gator, or at least the Gators' accountants, eh?

"The money is staggering," Weaver said.



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by success in the Bowl Championship Series. Opening-week losses by Clemson and Virginia Tech notwithstanding, the ACC will have other opportunities during the regular season and bowl time to improve its image, and thus, its worth.

The ACC's current television contracts run through 2011, so there is time for an on-field resurgence and there's hope that Fox will attempt to get into the regular-season college football business, which could help raise the bar. That network already televises BCS games other than the Rose Bowl and having another suitor in the mix could certainly help.

The SEC earned its revenue through on-field success, not by the size of its television markets or by having savvy negotiators. Simply put, its teams won a ton of football and NCAA Tournament games and packed stadiums and arenas throughout its region. Its ultra-lucrative football championship game has provided a cash windfall for its membership, and its basketball teams have been the biggest winners in recent NCAA men's and women's basketball tournaments.

The ACC is being creative in its attempt to increase revenues. It hopes to draw larger crowds to its football championship game, which has been moved from Jacksonville to Tampa (2008 and 2009) and Charlotte (2010 and 2011). It will possibly increase the number of conference men's basketball games from 16 to at least 18 in the next go-round of television dealings. The league will likely strongly encourage two of its teams to play the Labor Day Monday Night game it vacated (Tennessee faced UCLA) this year.

But in the end, it's a simple equation: the league has to win those big non-conference games in the major sports and have success in the BCS and the NCAA men's basketball tournament.

That's what the SEC has done, and now it will benefit from the revenue and unprecedented exposure starting in 2009.

And on your next trip to Disney World, if you hear the Mouseketeers singing "Rocky Top," at least you'll know why, right?



As a league, the ACC hasn't made the most of its non-conference opportunities against other BCS programs in the past few years. The conference could use some more high-profile victories to enhance its stature among the TV networks – like the one head coach Frank Beamer (left) and the Hokies landed when they knocked off LSU in 2002 as a member of the Big East (above).

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VIRGINIA TECH'S COMPLIANCE CORNER

The Virginia Tech athletics department compliance team has a certain motto – 'Winning the right way.'

Roughly 10 years ago, the compliance department at Virginia Tech consisted of basically one person.

But the complexity of NCAA rules, the organization's more than 400-page manual and Tech AD Jim Weaver's stringent belief in following all rules and regulations resulted in the athletics department expanding its compliance area. The department has four full-time people overseeing the compliance area.

In each issue of the magazine, there will be a section dedicated to compliance issues and to education. The compliance 'team' works with both the NCAA and the ACC to make sure rules are being followed.

"We have three goals," said Tim Parker, Tech's assistant AD for compliance. "We educate about relevant ACC and NCAA regulations, we coordinate policies and procedures to meet these regulations, and we implement systems to monitor the effectiveness of these policies and procedures."

Before getting started with the topic of the month, here is an introduction to the compliance team at Tech:

Tim Parker, senior assistant AD for compliance – Parker, a 1984 graduate of

Lynchburg College (and he got his master's from the University of Richmond in 1989), is the quarterback of the team. Parker is starting his 12th season as the head of athletics compliance operations. He came to Tech from the Patriot League office, where he was an associate commissioner. He oversees all components of VT Compliance Services, and serves as the university's primary liaison with NCAA staff members on most issues.

Shauna Cobb, assistant AD for compliance – Cobb, a former student athletic trainer, is a graduate of Clemson University. She served in the Georgia Tech compliance office before joining the compliance team here at Virginia Tech. Her primary responsibilities include rules interpretations, financial aid, processing waivers with the Atlantic Coast Conference, and facilitating the review of legislative amendments with departmental staff.

Bert Locklin, assistant director of compliance – Locklin, a former diver and 2001 graduate at the University of Nebraska, served as the diving coach at Tech for four years before joining the compliance team in April of 2006. He also coached at New Mexico State and Western Illinois, and

having been a coach, he possesses extensive knowledge of the NCAA manual from a coach's perspective. At Tech, Bert monitors the recruiting activities of the coaches, monitors the playing and practice logs for the teams, monitors VT's camps and clinics, administers the NLI program, liaises with the Eligibility Center on initial-eligibility and amateurism issues, and assists with the day-to-day issues and education as it pertains to compliance with NCAA, ACC, and Tech rules and regulations.

Heather Robertson, coordinator of academic compliance – Robertson came to Tech from the College of Engineering where she served as the admissions specialist. She serves as a liaison with the registrar to make sure Tech's student-athletes meet the university's and the NCAA's academic requirements.

Charles Holloway, Jr., compliance intern – Holloway is a graduate of Averett College who came to Tech from Mount Olive College in Mt. Olive, N.C. He serves as sort of a 'sixth man' on the compliance team, helping in a variety of ways in the day-to-day operation of the compliance department.

TOPIC OF THE MONTH

Most fans don't know it, but student-athletes are not the only Hokies connected to the athletics department who have to pass exams. Each year, the NCAA produces a Coaches' Certification Exam. Any coach wishing to engage in off-campus recruiting activities during the upcoming academic year must pass the exam, as required by NCAA Bylaw 13.1.2.1.1. These types of off-campus recruiting activities include watching prospects practice or compete ("evaluation" in NCAA jargon) and face-to-face interaction with prospects and/or their parents (simply referred to in NCAA-speak as "contact").

Each year there are four versions of the exam. Due to the additional complexity of their sports' recruiting rules, coaches in the sports of football, men's basketball, and women's basketball take a sport-specific exam. A uniform exam is given to coaches in all other sports.

In addition to ensuring that a coach has the basic knowledge necessary to navigate the NCAA's regulatory maze while recruiting off campus, the exam was also designed to help coaches to become more familiar with the NCAA Manual. The exam, you see, is "open book." The 2008-09 NCAA Manual is 427 pages in length, but questions on the exam are drawn from only about 70 of those pages.

Each annual Coaches' Certification Exam contains 40 questions covering a myriad of rules and regulations. The majority of questions can best be described as brief case studies, portraying situations encountered by coaches. Others are directed toward a specific bylaw and are "definitional" in type. All questions are either multiple choice or true/false. Many of the questions involve material that is "second-nature" to the coaches; some, however, deal with obscure regulations and truly test a coach's ability to effectively use the NCAA Manual to find the answer.

Here is an example of the type of questions asked on the exam:

Outside of the contact period, a member of the football coaching staff may speak at a banquet at which prospective student-athletes are in attendance, provided _____.

- A) It is not a dead period and the coach does not engage in evaluation activities.
- B) The coach does not make a recruiting presentation in conjunction with the appearance.
- C) The coach does not have direct contact with any prospective student-athlete in attendance.
- D) All of the conditions above are met.

The correct answer is "D."

Thus far, 54 Virginia Tech coaches have taken the 2008 version of the NCAA Coaches' Certification Exam. Eighteen of those coaches – or one-third – scored a perfect 40-out-of-40 on the exam. These perfect scores included head football coach Frank Beamer, head women's basketball coach Beth Dunkenberger, and head men's basketball coach Seth Greenberg. Distinguishing themselves as masters of long-term exam success were head golf coach Jay Hardwick and head swimming & diving coach Ned Skinner, who have each finished the exam error-free eight times in the past 10 years. Cumulatively, the Virginia Tech coaching staff answered correctly 96.2 percent of the time on the 2008 exam, topping the 95% success rate for the fifth consecutive year.

DEFINITION OF THE MONTH

Student host – the student host must be either a current student-athlete or a student designated in a manner consistent with the institution's policy for providing campus visits or tours to prospective students. The institution may provide a host a maximum of \$30 for each day of the visit to cover all the actual costs of entertaining both the host and the prospective student – excluding the cost of meals and admission to campus athletics events. The money cannot be used for the purchase of souvenirs such as T-shirts or other institutional mementos.

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CATCHING UP WITH ... TECH'S OLYMPIC QUEEN

By Matt Kovatch



Photos by Getty Images

By now, the odds are you've read or heard Queen Harrison's story over the past couple of months. You probably know about how she pulled out of the NCAA Championships with a hamstring injury before improbably placing second in the 400-meter hurdles at the U.S. Olympic Trials. You probably know about how she advanced through the prelims on the world's biggest stage before bowing out in the semifinals, and maybe you even saw the race on TV.

It's certainly been a busy summer for the junior hurdler from Richmond, who made Virginia Tech history by becoming the first female Hokie to make the U.S. Olympic Team in any sport while still a student-athlete. She spent a little over three weeks in China, and on her first day back in Blacksburg, she took some time to share a little more about her experience in Beijing before getting back into the swing of things during Tech's first week of classes.

IHS: We all know how you fared during

your race, but what was going through your mind on the big day? You obviously would've liked to have made the final, but were you at least happy to get out of the prelims?

QH: "Yeah, I was definitely happy – I'm happy just to have made the team, really. Race-wise, I felt really good. I didn't feel nervous. I'm the type of runner who doesn't really get nervous that much. Maybe the night before a little bit, but when you step out into the arena, every track is the same 400 meters, so I don't really get nervous. It just had been a long time since I raced. I hadn't raced since the Olympic Trials, and I wasn't really 'race sharp.' Other than that, I felt really good, and I was just really proud to be out there competing with those people."

IHS: What was the atmosphere like in the Bird's Nest (Beijing National Stadium, which housed the opening and closing ceremonies in addition to all the track and field events and held nearly 91,000 people)?

QH: "TV didn't do it any justice. It's the biggest thing I've ever seen. I don't know if you've ever been to the track at the University of Pennsylvania where they hold the Penn Relays [Franklin Field, with a capacity of nearly 53,000], but it's like two times that size. When I went to the Penn Relays, I thought that was the biggest track I'd ever seen, but then I saw the Bird's Nest. I actually got to go in there a couple days before I raced. We weren't allowed to practice on the track, but we could look at it. I went in there and it looked huge, but there were no people in the stands. Then when I went out for my race, there were just hundreds of thousands of screaming people, and it's something that you can't even put into words. I didn't feel nervous or anything like that, but it definitely takes your breath away when you walk out and see all those people."

IHS: Did you hang around to see any other track events? Were you there for Usain Bolt's record-breaking performances?

QH: "No, I watched those on TV, but I was able to see a lot of the relay races and jumps in person on my race days. I went as a spectator a couple of days, too."

IHS: Did you go to any other sporting events or get to meet any other famous athletes?

QH: "Actually, I got to meet Michael Phelps. He was in my building. We all stayed in the same building, except for the basketball team. Every other sport stayed in the same building in the village. I was able to go to a couple of other things. I went to a volleyball game, but I didn't get to see beach volleyball. I went to one men's and one women's basketball game. But a lot of the time, I just spent time with my family. My mother and two of my sisters were able to make it over there. I didn't have tickets for them to go to other sports, so I didn't go to a lot of them."

IHS: Everyone who watched the opening ceremonies here in the States was in awe. What was it like to see that in person?

QH: "I was only at the closing ceremonies. I wish I would've been at the opening ceremonies, too, but I needed to finish training. At the closing ceremonies, you could just see how much time and effort that China put into it, and they really set the bar high. It was crazy. I know you all probably saw a glimpse of it, but I'm not sure what was broadcast on

television. I think the coolest thing was just the intricate details that they put into it. It was amazing to see firsthand. They covered up the field and the track with a tarp type of thing, and all of the different countries were just mingling with one another. It was a great experience."

IHS: Other than the Olympics, what was some of the Chinese culture that you got to experience in your time there?

QH: "We went to this place called the silk market. I really like to shop and it is an experience that any shopper would really enjoy. They grab all over you and they do whatever they can to sell you their stuff. They try to give you outrageous prices, and you just bargain with them. It was so fun to do that. We also went to an authentic roast duck restaurant, and that was so good. I was so happy. Everyone was always talking about the duck in Beijing, so I had to make sure I tried it – after I was done running, of course. I went with my family, and that was something I really enjoyed."

IHS: It must have been the experience of a lifetime, but is it safe to say you were ready to come back after nearly a month overseas? Weren't you forced to stay an extra day because of a delayed flight?

QH: "Yeah, I don't even know why, but the return flight got canceled. I think they may have overbooked that flight, so we had to stay another day. I just slept a lot so I could get back into this time zone. I was ready to come back like three days before I actually did come back. I kind of wished I could've changed my flight, but I really wanted to see the closing ceremonies. After a while, you just want to be able to sleep in your own bed and be able to brush your teeth with the water from the faucet, so I was definitely getting homesick after a while."



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HOKIES SPUTTER DOWN THE STRETCH IN SEASON-OPENING LOSS TO ECU

By Jimmy Robertson

Ike Whitaker

TECH-ECU NOTEBOOK

- Stephan Virgil's touchdown was the 116th non-offensive touchdown scored by Tech under Beamer. It was the 75th scored by the defense, with 25 coming on fumble returns. The last fumble return for a touchdown by a Tech player came in 2006 when Xavier Adibi returned one 35 yards for a score in the third quarter of a game at Wake Forest. Tech now has a nation-leading 67 non-offensive touchdowns since the start of the 1999 season. That's six ahead of Miami.
- Tech's All-ACC cornerback Macho Harris did not make the trip to Charlotte. The senior injured his left foot in the Hokies' last fall scrimmage and sat out the game, snapping a streak of 27 consecutive starts.
- Ten Tech players made their first collegiate starts – Danny Coale, Blake DeChristopher, Dyrell Roberts, Rashad Carmichael, John Graves, Davon Morgan, Purnell Sturdivant, Cordarow Thompson, Stephan Virgil and Jason Worilds. Eight of the 10 true freshmen who dressed played in the game – Roberts, Xavier Boyce, Jarrett Boykin, Jake Johnson, Quillie Odom, Bruce Taylor, Eddie Whitley and Lorenzo Williams. Ryan Williams, a talented running back, didn't play.
- All four members of Tech's secondary made their first career starts at their respective positions – Carmichael, Virgil, Davon Morgan and Kam Chancellor. Chancellor started at rover last year, but was moved to safety this past spring.
- DeChristopher, an offensive tackle, missed most of the game after suffering a deep thigh bruise on the first series. Richard Graham and Greg Nosal played in his absence.

The 2008 Virginia Tech football squad opened the season at Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte, right in the heart of NASCAR country and only minutes away from cavernous Lowe's Motor Speedway, one of NASCAR's most popular venues.

Given how the game ended, the best description would be to say the Hokies got passed on the last lap.

Tech appeared to run out of gas heading toward the finish line, giving up 14 points in the final 3:36 and ultimately watching East Carolina head to victory lane with a 27-22 win. The season-opening loss marked the Hokies' first

"It hurts to lose with a blocked kick at the end. We were zone protecting. The guy [Lee] kind of beat our tackle underneath. I thought the snap was a little soft and the kick was a little slow. The guy just broke through on our protection and he did a nice job. There's no excuse [for the block]. I bet no one's worked harder on zone blocking this preseason than us."

- Tech head coach Frank Beamer

since falling to Southern Cal in the 2004 opener and it marked just Tech's second season-opening loss in the past 13 seasons.

It was not the greatest of days for Tech, which wrecked itself in just about every turn. The Hokies' offense turned the ball over twice, including a critical one right before halftime, and

only made one big play. The defense missed tackles on nearly every play. And the kicking game was abysmal.

In fact, the kicking game turned out to clinch the game for ECU. The Pirates forced a punt by Tech's Brent Bowden with less than two minutes to go, and T.J. Lee slid past the Hokies' protection to block the punt. Lee picked up the loose ball and ran it 27 yards to the end zone for a touchdown that gave ECU a 27-22 lead with 1:52 remaining – its first lead of the game.

"It hurts to lose with a blocked kick at the end," Tech head coach Frank Beamer said. "We were zone protecting. The guy [Lee] kind of beat our tackle underneath. I thought the snap was a little soft; the kick was a little slow. The guy just broke through on our protection and he did a nice job."

"There's no excuse [for the block]. I bet no one's worked harder on zone blocking this preseason than us."

The Hokies had a final chance. But four plays netted just three yards, with a Sean Glennon pass falling short on fourth down to cinch things for the Pirates.

Glennon, a redshirt senior who beat out Tyrod Taylor for the starting job, played reasonably well except for two costly interceptions. The worst came right before halftime when the Hokies led 14-0. On third-and-16 from the Tech 17, he went back to pass and

threw it right into the hands of ECU's Nick Johnson, who returned it all the way to the 1. ECU scored shortly thereafter to cut the lead to 7 and took the momentum into the locker room at halftime.

"I can't blame anyone but myself," Glennon said. "It was a bad decision on my part. I didn't see him [Johnson] and I need to see that guy. It's on me. I've got to take care of the ball on third and long. That hurt us."

Glennon completed 14-of-23 for 139 yards to lead a Tech offense that mustered just 243 yards on the day. Sixty-two of that came on a pass to Dyrell Roberts.

ECU quarterback Pat Pinkney paced the Pirates, completing 19-of-23 for 211 yards and a touchdown. The Pirates also rushed for 158 yards.

One of the few bright spots for the Hokies was the play of cornerback Stephan Virgil. The junior from Rocky Mount, N.C., returned a fumble 30 yards for a touchdown and a blocked extra point for a two-point conversion.

"I felt like that could be the difference," Virgil said. "It was tough to lose it. We let it get away at the end."

The Hokies now head to the shop for extensive repairs. Tech figures to lap Furman in its next game before opening the race to the ACC title game with a contest against

Georgia Tech. Media members put Tech on the pole for that, but it needs to get the motor firing on all cylinders for the Hokies to take that particular checkered flag at the end of the season.



Kenny Lewis, Jr., rushed for 58 yards on 12 carries and scored a touchdown on a 6-yard run in the second quarter.

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FAMILY TIES

FOR THE MARSHMANS,
THE BEAUTY OF FAMILY
IS BEYOND SKIN DEEP

By Jimmy Robertson



Marshman family (left to right): Bernadette, Janet, Elliott, Nick, Sonya, Alexandra, Patrick (Alexandra's husband), and Frank (sitting).

Nick Marshman remembers the day vividly.

He had been at Virginia Tech for just four months, an 18-year-old, mid-year enrollee doing his best to adjust to the rigor of academics and the rigidity of major college athletics. On this day, he stood on the sideline, preparing for his first real game at Lane Stadium in front of real, live people – a lifelong dream about to become a reality. That it was the annual Maroon-White spring game mattered little to him.

The April day resembled so many during that time of year. The sun splashed over the stadium. A lazy wind barely mustered enough energy to unfurl the flags. Fans of all ages loitered in and around the stadium, with the adults getting in some tailgating practice and the kids honing their pigskin skills not for the hope of garnering a future scholarship, but simply for the innocent joy of it. As kickoff approached, they all slowly walked to the congregating point to catch their first glimpse of next season's squad.

During the game, Marshman and Barry Booker, a teammate and a classmate, gazed

around at the spectacle with wide eyes, soaking it all in. They looked up at the west side stands, seeing a few familiar faces and tossing a quick wave, avoiding the sharp eyes of an attentive coaching staff.

Booker then asked Marshman a rather benign question at the time.

"Where are your folks sitting?" he said.

"Right there," Marshman replied, pointing to two people waving and enjoying themselves after making the drive down from Harrisonburg, Va., the Marshmans' hometown.

"Where?" Booker asked again. "Are they sitting behind the white couple right there?"

"No," Marshman said. "Those are actually my parents."

Booker's face, as expected, expressed surprise. Marshman matter-of-factly explained to his teammate that he was adopted. And as only teenagers can do, they quickly moved on to other subjects.

Marshman is now a fifth-year senior, a college graduate, and a two-year starter on Tech's offensive line. He loves NASCAR and hanging out with his friends from home, and in his scant free time, he takes his rod and reel

and heads to any number of local creeks and rivers.

He loves his parents and wastes little time thinking about being adopted. And even less time thinking about the skin tone of his parents. To him, they are normal. To them, he is normal.

In a society rife with labels and tags and stereotypes and racial overtones, theirs is a story that is refreshing.

In the Marshman family, things just simply aren't black and white.

Nick Marshman is used to getting interviewed. For one reason, he always willingly does interviews. For another, he eloquently and forthrightly answers questions.

Most of those center on football. Few center on his background. Few know he's adopted – including his teammates – or that his parents are white.

"They'll know after reading this," he said. "But it's not really something I think about that much. Obviously, after I got into elementary school, everyone pretty much knew I was adopted. So you kind of forget and assume

everyone knows. But you get to college, not everyone knows and they're surprised when they hear that or when they see my parents."

The story, though, only begins there. Few know that Marshman actually has four siblings.

And they are all African-American or biracial, too.

This story actually starts with Frank and Janet Marshman, whom both come from big families and have big hearts for kids, regardless of their skin tone. Both of them had three siblings, and both agreed they wanted a big family once they got married.

However, fate tried to intervene. They couldn't have children of their own, so they went about circumventing fate. After a lot of inner soul-searching, they decided to explore the adoption route and ultimately pursued it.

Their research revealed some startling – and certainly sad – findings. Plenty of African-American children were available in contrast to white children. The Marshmans simply wanted children, no matter the race, so they started the process.

"So why African-American kids?" Frank Marshman said, asking the question that certainly begs to be asked. "Well, for starters, we wanted to adopt domestically. We're not fans of international adoption. We're not trying to make a political or social statement with that. It's just our beliefs.

"Secondly, we didn't care. Color didn't matter to us. And African-American children were very available. If you wanted a blue-eyed

"There was probably a time when I thought about it [finding his biological parents] more. But you get to this point and there's a possibility I could go to the NFL, and if you look for them at this point, you really don't know if they want to know you or if they're just seeing the dollar signs and that they could get money out of you. So I don't see me trying to find them." - Nick Marshman

blond at the time, you were going to wait 5-10 years. But there were plenty of African-American children available."

Then came the process of securing a child. That turned out to be a bit tedious for the Marshmans, as they found out that adoption agencies frowned – at least inwardly – when it came to placing African-American children with white parents.

Ultimately, they found out about Catholic

Charities in Roanoke, Va., and that agency agreed to help them. Officials there conducted a home study, and within six weeks, the Marshmans were presented with a daughter, Alexandra, who is now a 25-year-old young woman.

"We were on vacation when we got the call," Janet Marshman said. "We didn't expect it to happen that fast. Fortunately, we were able to find an agency that would place a black child in a white family."

The Marshmans knew they wanted at least four kids, but "five was a nice round number," Janet said. Nick came next, followed by Elliott (now 21), Sonya (20), and

the youngest, Bernadette, who is 18.

All five children came within a seven-year span, leading parents from around the Commonwealth to wonder how the Marshmans survived during those early years.

"Raising one is hard and raising two is harder," Frank said, with a small laugh. "But raising five isn't any harder. They just entertained themselves."

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Though he looked differently than nearly all of his friends, Nick Marshman experienced the normal childhood. He ran around the house, tormenting his siblings, as young boys do, and at school, he wildly caroused around the playground with his buddies. It wasn't fairy-tale like, but it was normal and that certainly beat what could have been considering his situation.

His adoption and his parents rarely came up in conversation with anyone. He never

lived in fear, fear of what adolescents would say, or worse, do. He never lived in embarrassment or shame. He just simply lived.

It explains why he struggles to answer questions related to his parents and to being adopted. He simply never has given it much thought because he always considered himself normal.

For example, when asked his reaction when he found out about being adopted, he thought for a minute.

"I don't even remember when they [his par-

WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT starting guard **NICK MARSHMAN**

Born: Feb. 13, 1985.

What do you watch on TV?: I watch NASCAR on Sundays and then usually *Dirty Jobs*, *No Reservations with Anthony Bourdain*, *Ax Men*, and *Deadliest Catch*.

What's in your iPod?: I have a play list of country and then one play list of rap.

What do you drive?: 2000 Ford Expedition.

Favorite flicks: *Tombstone*, *Harley Davidson and the Marlboro Man*, *Grandma's Boy*, *Scarface* and really any action movie.

Favorite magazines: Anything talking about or selling hunting and fishing equipment.

Favorite Internet sites: Probably the Virginia fish and game site to check hunting dates and stocking reports for trout season.

What's on the walls of your apartment?: I have posters of Al Pacino from *Godfather* and *Scarface* and then just random pictures.

Favorite city to visit: Charlotte, N.C.

What was your first job?: I was a bus boy at a restaurant in a Four Points by Sheraton hotel.

Favorite team as a kid: Tampa Bay Bucs

I'd love to trade places for a day with ...: I don't think I would love to trade places with anyone.

Favorite dinner: Momma's baked mac and cheese – nothing else.

Talent you'd most like to have is ...: I would like to learn how to play the guitar.

Your greatest love: Hanging with friends and being around my friends. There is nothing like just hanging with your friends.

Your motto: Live life to the fullest because you never know when your day comes. So you should live life to the fullest and meet everyone you can.



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ents] told me,” he said. “I think maybe when I was younger, but I don’t remember ever actually sitting down with them. Maybe when I was 5 or 6, they told me and I just went on.

“I probably didn’t understand fully, but once I understood, I didn’t think anything of it. I went to school and did everything normally. Everyone knew that I was adopted so it didn’t matter.”

Amazingly, all throughout elementary school and all throughout his days at Turner Ashby High, Marshman can’t recall a single situation in which racism reared its ugly head toward him, which stands as a fine testament to the folks who live in Harrisonburg and the Shenandoah Valley.

In fact, according to Janet, none of their kids experienced such ugliness.

“We did not experience overt racism,” she said. “Maybe underneath we’d question some things, but people here knew us and our kids were involved in things at school. Race wasn’t something that raised its head. Our children moved back and forth between various groups of people and it was never an issue.

“That’s why we stayed in this community. This is a university community [JMU] and we felt the mindset would be more open and liberal, and we’ve found that to be true.”

Nick gradually became more recognized for his abilities on the court and the field than anything else. In fact, his teammates refuse to believe this, but Marshman was a stand-out basketball player at Turner Ashby, and early on during his high school days, he gave thought to pursuing that route.

But Joe Taylor put such nonsense to rest. Seeing the young man’s size the time – 6-5, 270 – and his athletic ability, the head coach at Turner Ashby coaxed Marshman into coming out for football his sophomore year. He lined the big fellow up at tight end for a couple of years, but eventually moved him to

tackle midway through his senior season.

“I was always one of the biggest guys on the team,” Marshman said. “I knew at some point that my days as a tight end were going to run out. I just didn’t know when and where. But you don’t look at it as where you want to play. You look at it as where you’re going to get on the field and where you can help the team the fastest.”

Taylor’s decision and Marshman’s willingness to accept it turned out to be a rather fruitful decision for him. He received multiple scholarship offers, but ultimately chose to accept Virginia Tech’s.

And he did so for one primary reason – he wanted to stay close to home and close to his family.

Marshman has enjoyed a very good career – in fact, an underrated one. For three years, he bounced between guard and tackle, often sacrificing personal gain for the better of the team, and last year, he filled in admirably for Ed Wang, who missed the first half of the season with an injury. He thrives at guard, and offensive line coach Curt Newsome insists that, given Marshman’s size and athleticism, he can play at the next level.

Considering that he is about to embark on another phase of his life here in four months, another question begs to be asked – has he given thought to finding his natural parents?

“I was taking a human development class and they ask you some of these things like, ‘Do you have heart disease in your family?’” he said. “When things like that pop up, I wonder. But then I ask myself how much work I would have to go through to find out and go through medical records and stuff like that.

“There was probably a time when I thought about it more. But you get to this point and there’s a possibility I could go to the NFL, and if you look for them at this point, you really

don’t know if they want to know you or if they’re just seeing the dollar signs and that they could get money out of you. So I don’t see me trying to find them.”

If he does – or if any of their children decide to go down that route – Frank and Janet Marshman have promised to help. The Marshmans participated in a closed adoption, which means the birth parents’ names are sealed and finding them could prove to be a monumental task.


“When they [the children] turned 16, we gave them all the information we had and let them read anything we had,” Frank said. “We’ve told them any time they’re interested in finding out about their natural parents, we’d be glad to help. I’d be curious, if it were me. But none of them have chosen to go in that direction.”

In Nick’s case, why would he? He’s got the life – loving parents, loving siblings and a football future that looks bright. He loves his friends, many of whom came from Turner Ashby to go to Tech. He lives with a group of former high school classmates, and they grill out every Sunday before watching the day’s NASCAR event – one of Marshman’s true loves.

They hunt and fish, and keep the meat. Their top purchase during the winter is an old college staple – Hamburger Helper – and they mix in deer meat instead of beef to save on groceries.

He and Sergio Render, one of his best friends on the team, do a lot of hunting and fishing together as well. They joke about being the only two black guys on the team to hunt and fish. You could jokingly call them a redneck tandem, if you will.

But why get into colors and stereotypes?

After all, look at the Marshmans. They refused to, and what a wonderful lesson they have taught the rest of the world. 

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Q&A WITH back-up QB Cory Holt

By Jimmy Robertson

Q: What was your reaction when the coaches approached you about moving back to quarterback following a stint at receiver?

CH: They told me the first day of practice and they said they didn't know what the situation with Sean [Glennon] and Tyrod [Taylor] would be.

They wanted me over there for security purposes in case Tyrod redshirts or one of them gets injured. I'm not sure what the final word is going to be, but that is how it stands right now.

To be honest, I was a little disappointed [in moving back to quarterback]. But I'm not a selfish player. I'm working for the best of team. If it's best for the team that I'm at quarterback, then I'm all for it.

Q: What do you hope to accomplish this season now that you're a back-up QB?

CH: I'd like for us to go out with a bang my senior year. We're opening up in Charlotte, which is only about 40 minutes from my hometown. I'm hoping something good happens to me in that ball game and in the future. That would be a great way to get this season started. But if not, it's been a fun ride. I'm just hoping I can make an impact this season.

To be honest, I was a little disappointed [in moving back to quarterback]. But I'm not a selfish player. I'm working for the best of team.

Q: How would you describe your career at Tech?

CH: It's been a rollercoaster. I was competing for the starting job at quarterback one spring and then I was third on the depth chart the next spring. Then I was working

at receiver in the spring, and now I'm back at quarterback. It's been a bit of a see-saw thing. But I can't complain.

Q: Even though you haven't played much, do you have any regrets about coming to Blacksburg and playing for Virginia Tech?


CH: None, none at all. I get that question all the time. Coach Beamer has to make decisions on what's best for the football team. I respect his decisions. I'm all for him and for this team.


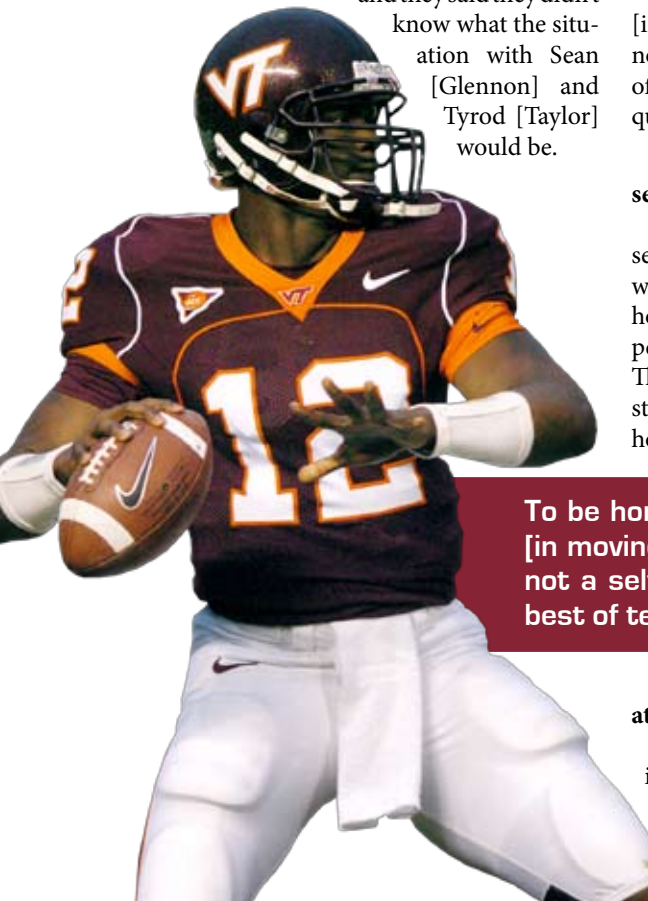
Q: After having to go to Hargrave to bolster your academics to meeting the NCAA's eligibility standards, you have already graduated with a degree in apparel, housing and resource management, and you are pursuing a second undergraduate degree. What does that say about you?

CH: I think it says a lot about my character and my will. I came here hoping that football would lead me to other places. I quickly found out that you can't rely on just football. You have to get an education. People like Bryan Randall and Vinnie Fuller taught me things like that.

Q: What are your plans once the season ends?

CH: I have a job offer from Camden Properties, which is a top-50 Fortune 500 company, in Charlotte (Camden's corporate headquarters are based in Houston). I had an internship offer with them this past summer, but I declined so that I could work out here this summer, thinking that I would get myself ready to be a good receiver. But that didn't work out.

We had a career fair up here last spring and I met with them then. They liked me and made me an offer up front. So I have something in place once the season ends. 



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HOKIES STEPPING UP TO KEEP THE WEIGHT DOWN

Greg Boone

By Jimmy Robertson

After watching Georgia's talented and speedy defensive ends sprint past some of his offensive linemen in the Chick-fil-A Bowl, Tech offensive line coach Curt Newsome got a first-hand glimpse of a rather 'big' problem forming.

And this one weighed heavily on his mind throughout all of last season as well.

Following his second season as the line coach, Newsome felt some of his linemen simply were too heavy and that the added bulk hindered their ability to move and their stamina – and thus, their play on the field. In February, he took the first step toward what could end up being a career-defining moment for a few of these players, strongly encouraging them to stay in Blacksburg over the summer, with the idea that they lose some weight and get in better shape.

"We knew coming in last season that Ryan Shuman hadn't been here [over the summer] and Nick Marshman hadn't been here," Newsome said. "After the [April 16th] tragedy, it was hard to get everyone together. We didn't get to finish spring practice and the kids were gone a lot. We had some doing internships. It just was not the same as a normal year.

"So we jumped on it this February and challenged them to be here for two sessions. Then Coach [Mike] Gentry and Coach [Keith] Short took it over."

What came about was a plan that transformed

a group of rather pudgy young men into leaner football-playing machines.

Gentry, Tech's assistant AD for athletic performance, and Short, his assistant and a former player at Tech, hatched up a weight-loss plan that received a lot of attention in Blacksburg and deservedly so. Actually, reminded of some past successes by having athletes walk the stadium steps, Gentry recommended he and Short dust off that old plan.

First, though, they came up with a target weight for each player. Short, who pretty much oversaw things, weighed the players every single day, and once they came within five pounds of their target weight, they did not have to participate in the walk. However, if they ever went over that mark, they would find themselves setting the alarm clock.

The cardiovascular part of the plan was really quite simple. It called for the players to come in at 6:30 in the morning on Monday through Thursday and walk the stadium steps on the east side. The players would walk to the second level, walk across, and then walk down. They would zigzag their way the length of the east side and back.

"It is certainly not the most intense workout we've ever come up with," Short said. "But when having to get up that early, you're motivated to get off as quickly as possible."

Of course, a plan is only as good as those who

participate in it. NCAA rules prohibit coaching staffs from requiring players to stay around and work out in the summer. A player must volunteer to do so.

Shuman, Marshman, Sergio Render, William Alvarez and Hivera Green – all offensive linemen – agreed to stick around and participate, and they were joined by defensive linemen Kwamaine Battle and Cordarrow Thompson, and tight end Greg Boone. As a group, they saw a need to lose weight and get in better shape.

“It’s something I needed to do,” Render said. “It was going to make me a better football player, and now going into the season, I’m in better shape than I have been since I came here. I needed to do it and I think I’ve improved my game a lot.”

“The guys were great about it,” Short said. “They bonded together and pushed each other. They showed up on time and never complained.

“They knew going in that this wasn’t about punishment. We wanted them to become better players and we also were worried about their overall health.”

Of course, that’s easy for Short to say. The first few mornings, most of them felt as though they were on the verge of a heart attack.

“The first couple of times, it’s going to get you,” Thompson said. “After a while, you don’t think about it. I got my iPod and got going and I’d finish it in like, 30 minutes.”

The critical part of the plan was the time. No player wants to get up at 6, much less get up at that time and go walk the steps at Lane Stadium.

But that dawn workout forced the players to go to bed early. Thus, they weren’t out running through the McDonald’s drive-thru after midnight.

“Instead of me going out, most of the time I was in bed by 11 or 12,” Render said.

Also, most of these players had 7:30 workouts because of summer school schedules. So once they finished walking the stadium steps, they went straight to the weight room and lifted. Following their lift session, they went through their normal conditioning drills, which, for the most part, consisted of running 110-yard sprints in a specified time.

Once a player reached his target weight, he no longer had to walk the stadium steps. But the weigh-ins continued, so if a player weighed in above his target weight, he set his alarm clock, got up and headed to Lane Stadium.

Wanting the plan to be all-encompassing, Gentry and Short also encouraged the players to meet with Amy Freel, Tech’s director of sports nutrition. After all, one needs to work the other end of the equation when it comes to losing weight – eating the right types of foods. All of them took advantage of her expertise, including Marshman, the heaviest Hokie who

has met with Freel on a number of occasions in the past.

“I talked with Amy and made sure I was eating the right stuff,” he said. “I’m making sure I’m not eating the fatty foods, like fast foods. I try to cook my own meals and if I go out, I go to Subway or places like that. I also got into sushi this summer. That’s where half of my money goes these days.”

Freel developed a meal plan for each, taking each one of them to the grocery store and showing them some different things they could buy instead of buying the same foods – what she termed ‘frozen convenience foods.’ She showed them some different types of snack foods and got them to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into their diets. She also encouraged them to cook more efficiently.

“If you’re going to make the effort to cook,” she told them, “then cook enough for more than one meal.”

In coming up with a meal plan for each player, she noticed one huge problem.

“To be honest, they weren’t eating enough,” she said. “Most of them were eating one meal a day, so their metabolism was low when they were working out. In some cases, they weren’t hydrated enough either, so they were losing energy and would become fatigued quickly. They couldn’t work out with the intensity they needed to lose weight.

“So eating one meal a day actually causes you to gain weight. That’s a hard concept for people to understand. It seems backward to what you would think. But it’s true.”

The plan ran from early May to mid-August and turned out to be a huge success. Marshman won the title as the ‘biggest loser,’ dropping 24 pounds, and he now weighs 339 pounds. Shuman lost 20, dipping to 293 pounds, while Boone and Battle each lost 15. All eight lost at least 10 pounds and they all feel better. They also appear to be playing better.

“I can tell a big difference,” Marshman said. “I’m in the best shape I’ve been in since I got here. I’m moving better. I’m not tiring out before practice is over. I can go longer. And just all-around, I’m feeling better.

“It’s nice hear to people say, ‘you’ve lost weight.’ That’s always nice to hear.”

Now, the challenge is keeping it off, but so far, so good in that respect. Short continues to monitor the group’s weights and likes what he sees.

“They’ve all maintained their weight loss,” he said. “I’m hoping this [the plan] has taught them some discipline.”

For sure, a few of the players need to lose even more weight. Marshman, for example, wants to get into the 325-330 range.

But another thing is for sure – their weight is certainly not as ‘big’ of an issue as it once was. And for that, Tech’s staff is grateful.

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GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Some people may be confused as to why Tech defensive lineman Cordarrow Thompson wasn't the biggest loser in terms of weight among the eight who climbed the stadium steps four days a week for four months.

"He lost most of his weight before we even started doing this," Tech assistant strength coach Keith Short said.

Thompson, a redshirt junior from Stafford, Va., started his own personal vendetta against his weight. Checking in at close to 340 before the Orange Bowl, he received an eye-opening message from defensive line coach Charley Wiles after he made a few plays in a scrimmage a couple of weeks before the bowl game.

"He told me, 'See what you can do. Do you want to play for our school? I'm going to tell you for the last time – lose the weight or you won't get any snaps,'" Thompson said. "I took that to heart.

"My last meal eating bad food was the day before the Orange Bowl. When we got back, everyone else went home. But I stayed here and got focused and went to the cardio room [in the Merryman Center]."


To say that Thompson got serious would be an understatement. From mid-January through early March, he hopped on the treadmill twice a day for seven days a week – going 45 minutes each time. He also started eating right.

And as expected, he lost weight – a lot of it.

Thompson, who dropped 10 pounds walking the stadium steps as a part of the group of eight, has dropped more than 40 pounds overall. For the first time since his high school days, he weighs less than 300 pounds.

Perhaps it's no coincidence that he's starting at defensive tackle.

"I can run fast and my endurance has gotten a lot better," he said. "I'm not always tired. I've got more energy. I feel great.

"I'm hoping I can have a good year this year and show everyone what I can do." 

Cordarrow
Thompson



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What it's like to be ... a certified sports field manager

There aren't many feelings like walking into a stadium and getting that first view of the beautiful green field on which your favorite team plays. But don't take it for granted – there are a lot of people hard at work year-round to keep it looking like it does. One of those people is Jason Bowers, Virginia Tech's sports turf and athletic grounds manager who oversees Lane Stadium/Worsham Field. Pioneer Athletics, the nation's leading developer and manufacturer of field marking paint, recognized Bowers and his staff last year as the winner of the Field of Excellence award and placed Worsham Field on the cover of the company's annual calendar. Bowers recently shared some of the ins and outs of his job as the brass of the grass.

It's tougher than maintaining your yard at home.

"A lot of people think, 'My lawn at home is green. Why doesn't Tech's field look good?' But with the heights we mow the grass and the stress that it takes everyday from the athletes, it's just ridiculous. Most yards probably get mowed at three or four inches, but our football practice field is an inch and a half, while the baseball, softball and soccer fields are an inch and a quarter. Worsham Field is at a half of an inch. When you have 300-pound guys trampling all over it, it takes a beating."

The grass has a mind of its own.

"All of our athletic fields except Worsham Field are Bluegrass, which is a cool-season grass. They get treated a little differently than Bermuda grass, which is what you see at the football games. Bermuda thrives better in the heat, but we've had such a cool summer this year and that's why it has a light brown tinge to it right now. With some of the 45- and 50-degree nights we've had, the grass got fooled. It was thinking 'Oh no, winter's coming. I've got to start going dormant.' That's when it turns brown – it takes all of its chlorophyll and stores it in its roots to save for the spring. That's made it a challenge this year, but it's a challenge every year. If it would've been really hot, the Bermuda would be loving life right now, but all the other fields would be screaming."

It's a fine line choosing which type of grass to use.

"Bluegrass is prettier in the fall, so when soccer is going strong in September, October and November, that's when it will look its best. You just get a better

color out of it. It's also probably the most tolerant to foot traffic and the stress that gets put on it. But football likes Bermuda because you can keep it shorter, and coaches everywhere believe (whether it's true or not) that the taller the grass, the slower your players will be. Soccer also wants Bermuda because lower grass height means a faster ball roll, but it's very expensive to change out."

There's a science to what they do.

"Sometimes we will seed over the Bermuda with Ryegrass, which is good for color, but it's not as heat tolerant and it is very susceptible to disease. We do that for TV games, because without the color, everyone would think the grass is dead. Then we have to spray out the Ryegrass after the season because it competes with the Bermuda for nutrients and light."


Taking care of the field is not their only duty.

"We're also responsible for all of the landscaping around all of the athletic facilities, which is a year-round job in itself, especially with all of the improvements and renovations our facilities have undergone. We're also weathermen of sorts, and we're equipped with the weather service information on our computers. During baseball and softball season, even on off days, we've got to constantly monitor the forecast so the tarp can get pulled in time. During football games, we've got to keep the referees informed if there's any lightning in the area."

They're the offensive linemen of the athletics department.

"You've got to like what you do in our job because we are the low man on the totem pole. But if Coach Beamer is happy with it, that's all that matters. With all of the things that he deals with, it's tough for him to even know everyone's name. But when he passes me in the hallway and says, 'Hey Jason, that field looked great,' it's a good feeling to know that he knows who you are and what you do. It's nice to get that pat on the back and approval from the coaches."

They're artists, and the field is their canvas.

"Throughout the season, I like the challenge of getting the fields to look better, but what I enjoy most is that first game of the season – getting the field painted and having it look sweet for everybody to see. Last year for East Carolina, it just looked awesome – it was perfect. Having that feeling of accomplishment is great – I've even had referees commenting on how good it's looked. We work our tails off, but it's all worth it for that final visual!" 

By Matt Kovatch



FULLER WORKING HIMSELF INTO LARGER ROLE WITH TITANS

By Jimmy Robertson

There are many things that signify the impending kickoff to a football season.

For starters, the magazines start rolling out their season previews. The various conferences start announcing their media kickoff functions. More and more players start working out.

And in Blacksburg, Vincent Fuller's appearance signifies that it's time to get serious about football.

NFL players usually get most of the month of July off before reporting for preseason camp, but Fuller's vacations consists of coming to Blacksburg. The former Tech defensive back, who now plays for the Tennessee Titans, works out for three weeks with Tech's strength and conditioning staff and with the Hokie players during player-organized passing drills.

"They [Tennessee officials] give you a workout to do on your own," Fuller said. "But I thrive when I'm around people who are working hard and no one works harder than the players here. I've been doing this for the past few years now and I haven't missed a beat."

Fuller's workout this summer consisted of meeting with Tech defensive backs coach Torrian Gray in the morning. Gray, a former NFL assistant coach, put Fuller through an array of drills, and once finished, Fuller went to the weight room to lift with Mike Gentry and his crew. After lunch and a nap, he returned to campus to participate in the passing drills with the players.

It appears to be paying off. A year ago, Fuller worked as the Titans' nickel back and made several eye-popping plays. In a Monday night game against the New Orleans Saints, Fuller intercepted a Drew Brees pass and returned it 61 yards to the end zone for a touchdown. Two weeks later, he snared an errant pass by Detroit's Joey Harrington and returned it 76 yards for a touchdown.

"I got a ton of calls and text messages," Fuller said. "I think, after the game against New Orleans, I had like 34 text messages and my voicemail was full. You've got to love that support. It was really cool."

Fuller played in every game a year ago and finished with 35 tackles, one sack and the two interceptions. All of those were career highs.

Last year marked a stark contrast to his first couple of years. As a rookie, the former fourth-round pick broke his right leg in the second game of the season while covering a



kickoff against the Baltimore Ravens. He spent the season on injured reserve.

"That was a transition year, kind of like a redshirt year," he said. "Then, the next year, I was just trying to make the roster, whether it be by playing on special teams or as a nickel back or just doing something. Last year, it was pretty much the same thing."

"This year, though, I'm trying to establish myself as a player. I want our coaching staff and our organization to know that I can help this team be successful."

In the NFL, Fuller knows the margin for error is small, particularly in his case because the Titans play in arguably the best division in football (the AFC South). The Titans play Jacksonville and Indianapolis – two playoff teams – twice. In Fuller's case, he's matching wits with Peyton Manning, arguably the best player in the NFL.

"His best trait is his accuracy," Fuller said. "He knows defenses and he knows where everybody is. There were a couple of times where I swore I did everything right and he still made the completion."

"That's the way it is in this league, though. You've got to bring your 'A' game. If you don't bring your 'A' game, then you're going to be on *SportsCenter* – and not in a good way."

Fuller's time in Tennessee may come to an end at the conclusion of this upcoming season, his fourth in Nashville. As a restricted free agent, he signed a one-year, \$927,000 deal for this season and will be eligible for free agency following the year.

He hopes to stay in the Music City, though. "This is a good organization and Coach [Jeff] Fisher is a players' coach," Fuller said. "He's got a good staff, too, and I want to play well for them."

"And Nashville's grown on me. It's a college city. You've got Vanderbilt and Lipscomb and Belmont and a bunch of others here. There are a lot of young people here and a lot of young professionals. I've bought a condo on the West End and I like it here. There's a lot going on, so hopefully I can stay for a while."

"This year, I'm trying to establish myself as a player. I want our coaching staff and our organization to know that I can help this team be successful." – Vincent Fuller

HOKIES IN THE PROS

(As of Aug. 31st)



ARIZONA CARDINALS

25 Eric Green - The former Tech corner-

back enters his fourth season in Arizona after being selected in the third round of the 2005 NFL Draft. He started 11 games for the Cardinals last season and finished with 51 tackles (47 solo). He did not intercept a pass the entire season. He finished the season on injured reserve after suffering a groin injury. He went on injured reserve in week 13 and did not play the rest of the season.



ATLANTA FALCONS

7 Michael Vick - The former No. 1 pick in the NFL Draft did not play last

season after being suspended by NFL commissioner Roger Goodell following his decision to plead guilty to dog-fighting and gambling charges. He will not play this season, but could return the league in 2009.



BUFFALO BILLS

93 Chris Ellis - The Bills took Ellis in the third round of April's

NFL Draft and signed the former Tech

defensive end to a four-year deal worth \$3.2 million. Ellis goes into this season as a back-up at the end spots.



CAROLINA PANTHERS

50 James Anderson -

Anderson goes into his third season as a back-up at the linebacker spot. He played in a reserve role last season, finishing with 17 tackles (14 solo). His best game came in his lone start when he recorded seven tackles against Tampa Bay. He was not active the final six games of last season.

87 Jeff King - King will be the starter for the Panthers this season at tight end following a breakout campaign last year in which he started all 16 games, catching 46 passes for 406 yards and two touchdowns. A former fifth-round pick in the 2006 NFL Draft, he finished second on the team in receptions and third in yardage.



CINCINNATI BENGALS

17 Shayne Graham - Graham

goes into his eighth NFL season (and sixth with the Bengals) as a starting kicker. A year ago, he made 31 of 34 field-goal attempts, with a long of 48, and all 37 of his extra points.



CLEVELAND BROWNS

27 Nick Sorensen -

Sorensen, entering his eighth NFL season, signed with the Browns in late October of last year after being waived by Jacksonville, where he spent four seasons. He'll play mostly on special teams for the Browns and also serve as a reserve at safety. He played in nine games last season, registering 13 tackles (11 solo) - all on special teams.



CHICAGO BEARS

34 Kevin Jones - After spending four injury-plagued years

with the Lions, Kevin Jones signed with the Bears in the offseason. He rushed for 581 yards on 153 carries and scored eight touchdowns a year ago, but tore the ACL in his knee and missed the latter part of the season. He signed a one-year

deal worth \$605,000 with the Bears.



DENVER BRONCOS

60 John Engelberger -

Engelberger, a former defensive lineman here at Tech, will be a starter on the defensive line for the Broncos. He started 15 of 16 games last season, recording 41 tackles, including 30 solo stops, and he had one sack. Entering his ninth year in the NFL (his fourth with the Broncos), he signed a two-year deal in February worth \$4 million.

75 Carlton Powell - The Broncos took the former Tech defensive tackle in the fifth round of this past April's NFL Draft, but he won't be playing this upcoming season. Powell tore his Achilles tendon during an offseason workout and will miss the entire season. He signed a four-year deal worth almost \$2 million.

19 Eddie Royal - Royal went in the second round to the Broncos in this past April's draft and many expected him to contribute just on special teams in his first year. But Royal started as the No. 2 wideout during the preseason and may

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eventually win the starting job. Royal signed a four-year contract worth nearly \$4 million.



GREEN BAY PACKERS

37 Aaron Rouse

- The Packers took the former Tech

rover in the third round of the 2007 draft, and Rouse played in 11 games, starting three. He wasn't active the first three games of the season, but he finished with 25 tackles (22 solo), and he intercepted two passes on the season. He goes into his second season as a reserve at the free safety spot.



HOUSTON TEXANS

11 André Davis

- Davis enjoyed a rebound season a

year ago with the Texas, starting eight games in place of an injured André Johnson. He caught 33 passes for a career-high 583 yards and three touchdowns. He also returned kickoffs, having returned 32 for 968 yards, an average of 30.3 yards per return. He returned three of those kickoffs for touchdowns. Houston rewarded Davis with a four-year, \$16 million contract back in February and Davis goes into the season as the back-up behind Johnson. This will be his seventh NFL season.

75 Brandon Frye - The former Tech offensive tackle went to the Texans in the fifth round of the 2007 draft and spent the entire season on the practice squad. He goes into this season looking to secure a

back-up role at tackle – probably behind former Hokie Duane Brown.

76 Duane Brown – Brown went in the first round to the Texans in this past April's NFL Draft and could be the starter at left tackle. He signed a five-year, \$11.5 million deal with Houston.

52 Xavier Adibi – The Texans also drafted former Tech linebacker Xavier Adibi back in April and he'll go into this season as a reserve at linebacker. He signed a four-year deal with Houston.



JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

20 Pierson

Prioleau - Prioleau

signed with the Jaguars in the offseason after spending three seasons with the Redskins mainly in a back-up role. He played in 15 games last season with the Redskins, starting four of them, and finished with 45 tackles (31 solo). He will be entering his 10th season in the NFL and will be a reserve safety for the Jaguars.

75 Jonathan Lewis - The former Tech defensive tackle landed with the Jaguars in mid-August and expected to add depth to their line. But Lewis suffered a knee injury in the preseason finale against Washington and was placed on injured reserve. He will miss the 2008 season.



KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

24 Brandon

Flowers - Flowers

left school early and it paid off when he

went in the second round to Kansas City in April's draft. He signed a four-year deal with the Chiefs and will be a starter at cornerback this season.



MIAMI DOLPHINS

19 Ernest Wilford

- After spending four years with the

Jacksonville Jaguars, who drafted him in the fourth round of the 2004 draft, Wilford signed a four-year, \$13 million deal with the Dolphins in the offseason and will contend for a starting job there.

Tech's all-time leading receiver enjoyed a career year for the Jaguars last season, catching a career-high - and a team-leading - 45 passes for 518 yards and three touchdowns.



NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

61 Matt Lehr

- Lehr goes into his ninth season in the NFL

looking to add depth to the Saints' offensive line after signing a one-year deal with them in the offseason. He played in every game with Tampa Bay last season in a reserve role.



NEW YORK JETS

17 David Clowney

- Clowney, entering

his second season, bounced around after being drafted by the Green Bay Packers in the 2007 draft, but ultimately landed with the Jets, who placed him on their practice squad last fall. He was

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not activated for any games, but should contribute as a reserve receiver and on special teams this season.

68 Will Montgomery - The former Tech center signed with the Jets in September of last year and goes into this season as a reserve. He played in seven games for the Jets, starting the final two games of the regular season. This will be his third season in the NFL.



OAKLAND RAIDERS

64 Jake Grove

- The former Tech center goes into his

fifth season with Oakland after being drafted by the Raiders in the second round of the 2004 draft. He played in just seven games last season, missing the majority of the season because of a knee injury. But he appears to be healthy now and will be a back-up behind John Wade at center for Oakland this season.

23 DeAngelo Hall - After a tumultuous season in Atlanta, Hall found himself on the move when the Falcons traded him to Oakland, which signed him to a seven-year deal worth more than \$65 million. The All-Pro cornerback started 15 of 16 games for the Falcons, finishing with 70 tackles (63 solo) and five interceptions on the season. Entering his fifth NFL season, he'll be the starter in Oakland.



SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

55 Darryl Tapp -

The former Tech defensive end earned a spot in the starting lineup for the Seahawks and started all 16 games last season and both of the Seahawks' playoff games. He recorded 49 tackles, including 41 solo stops, and seven sacks. He also intercepted a pass. Four of the sacks for the second-round pick in the 2006 draft came in a game against St. Louis. Tapp will again be a starter for the Seahawks this upcoming season.



SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

84 Josh Morgan - Morgan went in the sixth round of April's

draft to the San Francisco 49ers and may be a bargain for the team (he signed a four-year deal worth \$1.8 million). He enjoyed a terrific camp and may end up

being a starter at receiver by season's end, if not sooner.



TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

69 Anthony Davis

- The former Tech tackle will be entering his sixth season

with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers after landing with them as a free agent coming out of college. He played in nine games last year and heads into this season as a reserve at left guard behind Arron Sears.



TENNESSEE TITANS

22 Vincent Fuller

- The former Tech defensive back


is in his fourth season with the Titans after enjoying a nice year last year. He served as the Titans' nickel back and he returned two interceptions for touchdowns. He returned one 61 yards for a touchdown in the Titans' victory over the Saints, and two weeks later, he returned one 76 yards for a score against Atlanta. He finished with 30 tackles (27 solo) and had a sack this season.



WASHINGTON REDSKINS

23 Justin Hamilton

- Hamilton did not play in the NFL last year after spending

his rookie season with the Cleveland Browns. But the Redskins signed him in May and he goes into this season as a back-up at the safety spots. He figures to see most of his time on special teams, though. 



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FATHERHOOD, FAITH IN HIS ABILITY, ALL KEYS TO SAUNDERS' FANTASTIC SEASON

By Jimmy Robertson

This seems hard to believe, but back in late January, Joe Saunders was wondering if he'd have a job.

He probably spent countless hours pondering if he'd have a good-paying job as a member of the starting rotation of the Los Angeles Angels or be working for professional baseball's equivalent of minimum wage in the minor leagues yet again.

Eight months later, he arguably ranks as the second happiest athlete in the world behind Michael Phelps.

The former Tech standout has enjoyed a gold medal type of season on and off the field, helping to lead the Angels to Major League Baseball's best record and pitching for the American League all-star team on the field, while becoming a father for the first time off of it. Such successes show that Saunders is doing something right with his life, though obviously the latter trumps the former by a Josh Hamilton long shot.

"Obviously, I don't get as much sleep as I used to these days," Saunders said, referring to his newborn daughter named Matea. "But she's a special, special person. It's been an unbelievable experience. I wouldn't trade it for anything."

Nor would he trade his season on the mound for anything – and fortunately, he doesn't have to do so.

Saunders, who left Tech a year early after being taken with the No. 12 pick in the first round by the Angels in the 2002 amateur draft, entered spring training in early February battling with three other starting pitchers for the No. 5 spot in the Angels rotation. This list of challengers included Ervin Santana, a supremely talented, but often inconsistent, hard-throwing right-hander. But an injury shelved Kelvin Escobar (shoulder) and another injury delayed the season for John Lackey, thus all but forcing Angels manager Mike Scioscia to put Saunders in the rotation.

The left-hander has made the most of it, going 14-7 as of Sept. 1st, with a 3.67 ERA. He's given up 159 hits in 164 1/3 innings, while striking out 79 and walking 47. He ranked sixth in the American League in wins and among the top 10 in earned run average.

"I think the key for me has been being more aggressive in the strike zone," Saunders said. "I'm not nibbling or pitching at the corners. I'm using more of the plate early in the count. That's allowed me to get quicker outs and to throw deeper into games. I think I'm showing them [Angels officials] I can pitch at this level."

The Angels got a glimpse of Saunders' talent back in 2006 when he made his first appearance in the major leagues. He made 13 starts in place of an injured Bartolo Colon

and went 7-3 in those starts.

In 2007, though, Saunders performed a yo-yo routine, bouncing back and forth between the big league club and the Angels Triple-A affiliate in Salt Lake City. He went 8-5 last year with the Angels, with a 4.44 ERA, but in September, he went just 1-3 with an ERA approaching 7.00. He secured a spot on the Angels' playoff roster, but never got into a game.

"It was tough," Saunders said of last season. "They kept sending me up and down, but you have to remember I was replacing a former Cy Young winner [Colon]. I knew he was coming back and that I'd probably be sent back down."

"I understood that. You just have to bite your tongue and make the most of it. I just tried to stay positive and let everything work out."

Saunders ultimately put the ending to the 2007 season quickly out of his mind during spring training and secured a starting job.

"My plan going in was to compete with Ervin for the job," Saunders said. "I had worked as hard as I could to get myself prepared as much as possible. Then we had some injuries and I wanted to make the most of my opportunities. Now, I'm working as hard as I can to stay here."

That appears to be a certainty given his all-star season. Saunders became just the third

former Tech player to earn a spot on an all-star roster, joining Mike Williams (2002 and 2003, Pirates) and Toby Atwell (1952, Cubs). He got the nod after winning 12 games and yielding two or fewer runs in 12 of his 17 first-half starts.

He pitched one inning in the all-star game, which was held at Yankee Stadium – the final all-star game at that venerable venue. He got three outs on just 12 pitches.

“I was nervous at first when I went into the game, but then I realized, ‘I’m out here for a reason.’ To be on the same field with a bunch of guys who are Hall of Famers, it was such an honor. It was humbling.” - Joe Saunders on his all-star experience

“It was awesome,” Saunders said of his all-star experience. “It was the last one at Yankee Stadium, and the game was great [a 4-3, 15-inning victory by the American League]. I was nervous at first when I went into the game, but then I realized, ‘I’m out here for a reason.’ To be on the same field with a bunch of guys who are Hall of Famers, it was such an honor. It was humbling.”

That week turned out to be a whirlwind for Saunders. His daughter’s arrival occurred on a Saturday evening, just three days before the all-star game, and he didn’t want to leave his wife, Shanel – a former Tech softball player – and Matea. So instead of leaving Sunday, he took a late flight out and arrived in New

York City only minutes before the Home Run Derby that night.

In spite of his incredibly busy schedule these days, Saunders and his wife still manage to keep up with the Hokies. He also talks to former baseball coach Chuck Hartman and former assistant Jay Phillips on a regular basis.


“We’d like to get back [to Blacksburg],” Saunders said. “I haven’t been back since 2004.”

But the offseason is busy. It could be tough getting back this offseason with a newborn, but we can’t wait to get back there.”

For now, he’s all about leading the Angels into the playoffs, late-night feedings and changing diapers. He plans on putting a ball in his daughter’s hand soon in hopes of molding her into the best athlete in a truly athletic family.

“She’s got a chance,” he said. “I might have her throwing in a year or two. I’m pulling for a lefty, as you probably know.”

He said this with a chuckle, a man at ease within his life.

And suffice it to say, his upcoming offseason won’t be quite as stressful as the last one. 

HOKIES IN THE MINORS

(As of Aug. 31st)

57 Kevin Barker (1B) – Barker continues to plug away with his baseball career after being drafted by the Brewers in 1996. He currently plays for the Louisville Bats, a Triple-A affiliate of the Cincinnati Reds. He’s hitting .258, with 20 homers and 74 RBI.

4 Warren Schaeffer (IF) – Schaeffer plays for the Asheville Tourists, a Single-A affiliate of the Colorado Rockies in the South Atlantic League. The former Tech shortstop was hitting .223, with three homers, 32 RBI and six stolen bases.

34 Ian Ostlund (RP) – Ostlund, a former Tech pitcher, plays for the Toledo Mud Hens, a Triple-A affiliate of the Detroit Tigers. The left-hander is enjoying a successful season, with a 3-0 record and a 2.45 ERA. He’s allowed 62 hits in 69.2 innings, striking out 77 and walking just 17.

24 Wyatt Toregas (C) – Toregas started the season with Buffalo, a Triple-A affiliate of the Cleveland Indians, but he was sent down to Double-A Akron of the Eastern League and is tearing it up. The former Tech catcher is hitting .297, with 12 homers and 35 RBI. He hit two homers and drove in 25 with Buffalo.

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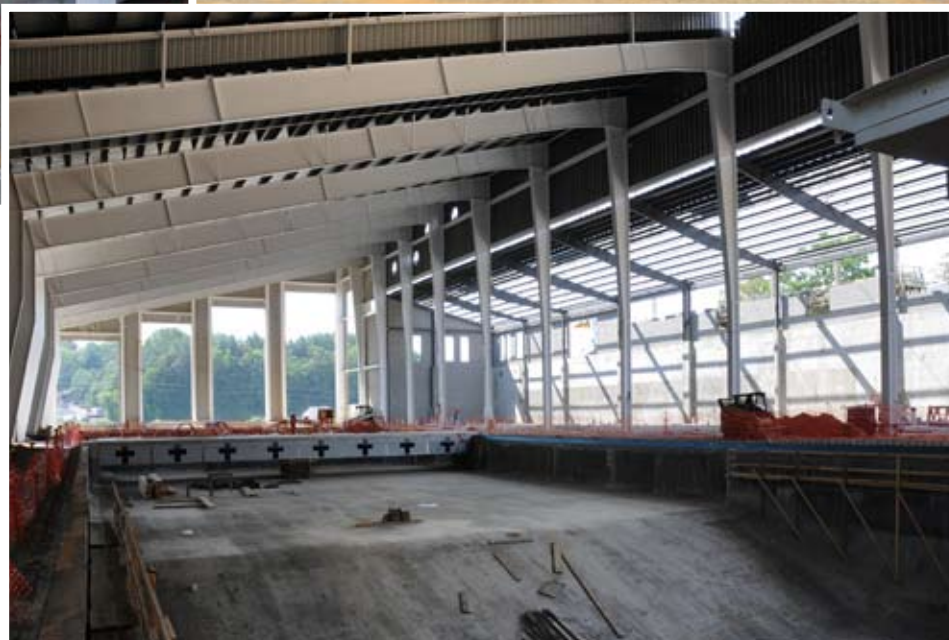
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TECH AND CHRISTIANSBURG PARTNER UP TO BUILD AN AQUATICS CENTER THAT HELPS BOTH SIDES AND SHOULD MOVE THE HOKIES' ALREADY STRONG SWIMMING AND DIVING PROGRAM UP THE NATIONAL RANKINGS

By Jimmy Robertson



Ned Skinner remembers the first time he walked into venerable War Memorial Gymnasium on the Virginia Tech campus and took a glimpse at the swimming and diving facility. A 34-year-old head coach at the time, he quickly surmised that this dated venue was better than his facility at William & Mary.

Now, he's about to move his program into a pristine new home, a place that rates as the Trump Towers of swimming and diving facilities.

The 10th anniversary of Skinner's hiring will be his final one of having meets at War Memorial. Early next year, his teams will be training and participating in meets at the Christiansburg Aquatics Center, a new state-of-the-art indoor swimming and diving facility in nearby Christiansburg that figures to be fully open and operational in February or March.

A collaborative project between Christiansburg and Virginia Tech – the first time these two entities have partnered on a project of this magnitude – this facility will arguably be the best in the state of its kind. The 62,000-square foot, three-pool venue first and foremost meets the needs of Christiansburg residents, who have lacked a swimming facility, and it also provides a top-notch arena for which to build a top-flight swimming and diving program.

Skinner's program is already on its way toward elite status. The Hokies sent seven swimmers to the Olympic trials in June, and both the men's and the women's teams finished in the top 30 of the national rankings this past season.

Now the program figures to get even better, with this facility being used as a major recruiting draw.

"Obviously, it's going to be a huge recruiting

advantage for us," Skinner said. "We're going from the bottom fifth of the ACC in terms of facilities to the top fifth. Only Virginia Tech and Georgia Tech are going to have the capability to host a complete ACC championship [the diving part is usually held at different locations]. Plus, we're going to have some autonomy in our scheduling and we'll be able to train kids using modern technology. We feel we're going to be able to prepare elite athletes and make them even better."

This venue truly is the Escalade of swimming and diving facilities. It features a 50-meter Olympic-sized competition pool (1,012,000 gallons!); 5-, 7- and 10-meter diving platforms; 1- and 3-meter springboards; locker rooms for both Tech teams; and a seating capacity of 1,100, which allows the building to host competitive swimming and diving events. It also includes components that the average person would not think of,

things like a sparger system at the bottom of the pool that releases air bubbles to soften the landing at the water's surface for divers, and a UV disinfection system, which will clean the water and eliminate the smell of chlorine.

Christiansburg officials even plan on taking another step – installing showers near the diving area. The recently concluded Olympics in Beijing prompted this idea. They saw divers going to the showers after their dives and learned that the hot water kept the divers' muscles loose. So they decided to include showers as a part of the project as well.

“Now we're going to be able to go head-to-head with the UNC's and Georgia Techs for kids,” Skinner said. “We've never used War Memorial as an excuse, but now that we're going to be in this new facility, there's a reality to the situation. Not having a long-course pool has hurt us. Not having a 10-meter platform has hurt us. Others can say, 'Come here and we'll train you in these events.' We didn't have any other options.

“I don't want to sound critical of War

From a Christiansburg perspective, the arena provides a separate family/leisure pool with a two-story water slide and a separate therapy pool to be used for physical therapy. And of course, town residents get to use the big pool during designated times. According to the partnership between Tech and the town, the Tech teams get to practice between 5-9 a.m. and 3-7 p.m. Also, Tech gets 10

contributing \$5 million total to a project that is going to cost \$14.5 million.

The unique partnership between Tech and Christiansburg came about when Tech graduate and former Tech and Radford swimming and diving coach Bill Beecher suggested it to Lance Terpenney, Christiansburg's town manager. In 1994, town officials embarked on a 10-year master plan of recreational



“Obviously, it's going to be a huge recruiting advantage for us. We're going from the bottom fifth of the ACC in terms of facilities to the top fifth. Only Virginia Tech and Georgia Tech are going to have the capability to host a complete ACC championship [most diving championships are held at different locations]. Plus, we're going to have some autonomy in our scheduling and we'll be able to train kids using modern technology. We feel we're going to be able to prepare elite athletes and make them even better.” - Ned Skinner

needs and a swimming and diving facility was the final thing on that list (in a poll, Christiansburg residents cited this as the town's biggest need). Originally designed as a 25-meter pool, Terpenney – a former Tech swimmer himself – took Beecher's

Memorial. Our program has grown immensely because of the work we put in there. But it has its limitations.”

That certainly won't be a problem now.

weekends a year to hold meets – dual meets, invitationals, the ACC championships, etc.

In return, Tech is paying Christiansburg a total of \$250,000 a year for the next 20 years,

advice and approached Tech AD Jim Weaver in 2005 about a joint venture that would enable the facility to meet Olympic specifications, while also giving the Hokies an awe-

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some facility. Weaver and Skinner conferred and agreed to the idea.

The facility was supposed to be finished last year. But to get financing, Christiansburg officials went through the Public-Private Educational Facilities Infrastructure Act (PPEA), a creative financing tool originally designed to help local governments build schools, but recently amended to include other types of projects. This created a delay of more than a year.

"We had never done one [a project] through the PPEA," Terpenney said. "Our lawyers hadn't, our architect hadn't, and our construction company hadn't. We kind of began this thing at the bottom of the learning curve. But in the end, it gave us a better project for less money."

"Plus, we had a series of discussions with the university and we wanted to get information from the ACC. It took us about a year and a half to accommodate everyone's needs."

A Tech graduate designed the facility and a Tech graduate is building it. Glenn Reynolds of Reynolds Architect serves as the architect on the project, while Sam Lionberger Jr. of Lionberger Construction is the general contractor.

Reynolds has put his unique touch on the facility. The building features a lot of

airy, open space and a lot of huge windows to allow for plenty of natural light and for aesthetic beauty when lit at night. He also played a role in the pool design, which called for two six-foot bulkheads instead of the tradition four-foot variety. Bulkheads serve as moveable bridges that allow big pools to be divided into multiple pools for multiple activities, and six-foot bulkheads allow for more room.

"You can configure this pool in any way you want," Reynolds said. "You could have starting blocks anywhere on the pool deck. You could run multiple events at the same time. We wanted to allow for as much flexibility as possible, and I think we've done that."

"I've really gotten tremendous enjoyment out of this project. Working with Lance and the people in Christiansburg and working with the people at Tech in the athletics department, it's been an enjoyment and I think the project is going to draw a lot of outside interest to the Christiansburg area."

Terpenney – who has been the town manager for since 1996 – is already finding that out. In fact, he started fielding calls before the project ever broke ground, and the mere thought of events in the facility brings a smile to his face.


"If it's sitting idle, it's losing money," he said. "There's been a lot of interest and we

think there will be even more.

"There's just not a facility like this around here. The Virginia state senior championships were held in Cary, N.C. Think about that – a Virginia meet had to go to North Carolina. But it was the only place that had adequate seating. We've already gotten a lot of calls from high school leagues, independent leagues, things like that. And obviously, we want to get the ACC Championships here."

That's certainly something Skinner wants to see as well. He's tired of traveling to places like Atlanta, Chapel Hill and College Park for the ACC Championships. He'd love nothing better than to crank up "Enter Sandman," go out and win the ACC title right here at home.

"The ACC won't award a bid until the site is complete, but we're looking at having it here in 2010 or 2011," Skinner said. "I think you're really going to see aquatics in general just evolve in this area [the New River Valley]. From learn-to-swim programs to club teams to collegiate swimming, I think the interest is going to explode. What people don't realize is that this facility is going to bring all these constituencies together. They're all going to have an opportunity."

"They're going to have a draw to come here. And hopefully we can bring some of those world-class swimmers to Virginia Tech." 

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BROTHER'S CONDITION HAS HELPED SHAPE TECH RUNNER AS A PERSON AND AN ATHLETE

Liam Cornwall's wheelchair isn't just a simple wheelchair. Nope, it's the Cadillac of wheelchairs, as he and his family refer to it. And after seeing it in action, it's not hard to see why.

It's got a sleek, black exterior and is motorized to allow the high school junior to zip around faster than most people can walk. It's built to maneuver over rocks and potholes, even while going down a grassy hill. And get this, it even transforms. Somewhat like an Autobot from last summer's hit movie, *Transformers*, it morphs from a normal-looking chair into an upright position at the push of a button, allowing Liam, who is afflicted with muscular dystrophy, to strengthen his bones by standing up. It's pretty cool, and his mother, Pat, agreed.

"He is more than happy to tell you everything about his wheelchair – he'd probably give you a ride!" she joked.

Liam was soon put to the test. When asked how fast he could go in the chair, he said he wasn't sure.

"This fast," he shrugged, as he accelerated it to the max.

It was a good enough answer for most, but not the inquisitive Liam, who has already racked up several college credits through honors and advanced placement courses during his first two years at Culpeper County High School in Culpeper, Va. Not even a minute later, he was asking his father, Bruce, to drive next to him in the van at an identical pace and shout out the speedometer reading so he could have an exact answer.

Bruce obviously declined to race his son and his wheelchair on the open road, but it's that curious nature that has defined Liam in his nearly 16 years, not his physical condition. And while Liam's muscular dystrophy certainly changed his life from the get-go, it's positively shaped someone else's life, too – his big brother, Devin, a cross country and track runner for Virginia Tech.

If you were to pass Devin on the street, the chances are you probably wouldn't think twice about it. He's got the unassuming, skinny build that distance runners possess, and he sports the scruffy facial hair that many college kids have.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE ... FOR MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

By Matt Kovatch



But partake in conversation with the 20-year-old junior and you are quickly treated to one of the friendliest young men you could ever wish to meet.

“What I find that makes him unique is that kids – especially his friends in high school – wouldn’t engage us in conversation, but Devin will talk to any parent there is,” Pat said. “His social skills amaze me every time I see him and sometimes I’ll just stand back and watch him.”

Devin will talk freely about a number of things, whether it’s his longtime girlfriend, RYANNE, his desire to get into sports marketing or his aspirations of one day writing a novel. On this day, though, he spoke at length about muscular dystrophy and what it’s like to live with someone who’s been stricken with such an awful disease. After listening to him and his parents, it’s not a stretch to say that Liam’s condition has helped mold Devin into the exceptional person that he is today.

Muscular dystrophy (MD) is a genetic disorder that gradually weakens the body’s skeletal muscles, causing the affected person to eventually lose the ability to do things like walk, sit up straight, move the arms and hands, or even breathe easily. As it worsens, it can lead to other health problems and it usually shortens the life span as compared to the average person. Present much more often in males than females (the faulty gene is located on the X chromosome, and in females, the mutation must be present in both copies of the gene, making it more rare), there are over 40 types of MD, and some of them, like Liam’s, haven’t been totally defined yet.



Devin and Liam, seen here as youngsters while living in Connecticut, maintain the close bond they developed during childhood.

Liam’s form of MD is classified as congenital myopathy, which according to the Cornwalls, is a really vague category that doesn’t have a whole lot of history on which to predict future progression or regression. Different forms onset at different times of a person’s life and can affect different parts of the body. Liam’s form was present at birth, and the Cornwalls knew early on that something wasn’t right. Devin remembers how his

age (mid-teens), there are a lot of kids where that’s the end of their life,” Bruce said. “So that was great news for us.”

Even so, Devin said Liam needed to use a walker by the first or second grade, and he transferred to a wheelchair fulltime around the fifth or sixth grade. He’s also gone through two major surgeries to correct his scoliosis, a common problem among MD patients in which the spine curves and twists because of a lack of muscle support and prevents the internal organs from growing and functioning properly.

Because of the whole process, Devin, who was actually a rowdy youngster who got kicked out of several day cares, was forced to mature a little earlier, whether he knew it or not. Just ask Liam.

“Since I’ve been able to realize it, I feel like Devin and I have sort of had a better relationship because of the MD,” Liam explained. “He couldn’t bully me like a regular big brother because it might have hurt me more than a regular kid, so we couldn’t really horse around as much. Instead, he’d always look out for me to make sure I didn’t get hurt.”

The siblings made up games that Liam could compete with Devin in, including Lego wars and a modified wiffle ball home run derby. Sometimes Liam would win fair and square, and sometimes, according to Pat, Devin was able to let Liam win because unlike Liam, he had the outlet of sports and athletics to satisfy his competitive nature. Predictably, Devin became quite comfortable with Liam and began to branch out toward other people who were different in some shape or form, a big step in the de-

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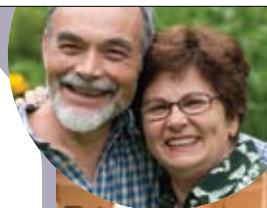
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Pat and Bruce Cornwall with sons Liam and Devin

velopment of the social aptitude that he displays today and something Pat wishes more people would do.

“A lot of times, you’ll see kids whispering, ‘what’s wrong with that person?’ and pointing,” Pat said. “I really hope that every parent says [to their child] that’s not polite to do, but if you want to know, why don’t you go up to that person and ask them, because they’re people, too? And even if they can’t talk, they’ll just be glad that you tried to talk to them.”

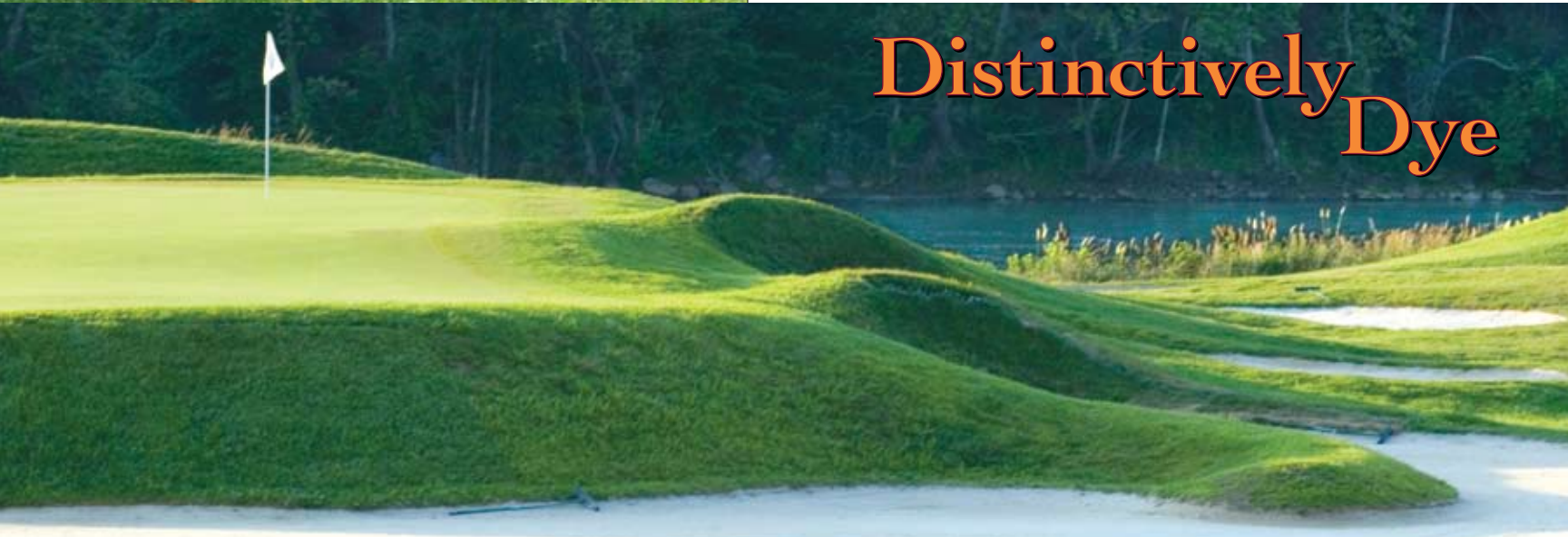
“People don’t want to offend me by asking questions, but it never really offends me,” Liam agreed. “I don’t mind answering questions.”

Soon enough, Liam’s MD became a family affair and the activities associated with it helped Devin to get even more involved. He’d go around to the local firehouses with Liam to thank the firemen who would collect money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). Liam was once selected as the state of Virginia’s Goodwill Ambassador for the MDA and got to participate in the annual Labor Day weekend Jerry Lewis telethon, where Devin tagged along to help as a pledge runner between the telephones and tallying room. And then there’s the annual MDA summer camp.

“Devin grew up a tremendous amount when he went to camp as a counselor,” Pat said.

“It really changed his outlook,” Bruce added.

Ah, the MDA summer camp. Each member of the Cornwall family can’t help but smile at the thought of the camp, a yearly gathering of children with MD that is fully sponsored by the MDA. The camps are located throughout the United States, but the one the Cornwalls are involved with is in Maryland just off the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. The children in attendance get to experience a multitude of things, whether it’s fishing, horseback riding, canoeing, wheelchair football, basketball and soccer, a pinewood derby, riding in fire trucks, limos and Harleys, meeting the D.C. United – you name it. But most of all, it’s the



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sense of companionship that keeps the kids coming back. Liam started attending when he was 7 and hasn't missed a year since.

"That's one of my favorite things – being around kids with a condition like my own," he said. "It makes you feel like you're not out of place. When you go there, nothing is wrong with you – you're just another kid who can make friends and you have one more thing to talk about."

"The MDA is the most incredible organization," Devin added. "And the camp is amazing. The only thing those kids want is to spend a week with their counselors and fellow campers and be treated normally, and the norm at that camp is that everyone is in a wheelchair – they're not sticking out and getting looked at funny. For some, it's the time of their lives."

Devin cites the camp as one of his most rewarding experiences, and he started counseling the first year he was eligible (counselors have to be 16). He hasn't been able to make it back to the past two camps because of his commitment to Tech's cross country program, but he said it's something he will definitely return to in the future.

"I owe it to the team to be training throughout the summer," the former ACC Freshman of the Year said. "We have a schedule we need to follow, and if I were to try to fit that in with camp, I wouldn't be doing the camp, myself, or my team justice. I don't like missing out on that, but it's something that has to happen right now."

Distance running truly is a commitment, something that Devin's teammate, Paul LaPenna, fully understands. But ask LaPenna his thoughts on Devin, and he hardly mentions his talents – instead, he talks about his personality.

"The best part about Devin is how he just radiates motivation," LaPenna said. "He's always enthusiastic and the team can just kind of feel his vibe. He's always ready to go."

That's not something that Devin consciously tries to do, but it's something that's come naturally because of the experiences he's been through and the realizations he's come to, many because of Liam and the MDA.

"I cherish the fact that I can walk," said Devin, who dreams to one day organize a charitable race to benefit the MDA. "Sure, I personally can run well, but just to be able to walk and do all the things I can do normally is amazing. I've realized that people affected by MD don't want pity. They just want to be treated normally. So that, in turn, has opened my eyes to how I treat other people – anybody I see.

"It's just an amazing concept that these kids are so full of life and so optimistic, even when they're facing death at an earlier age than most. It makes you look at your life and think, 'why should I be mad at anything?' You don't sweat the small things – it's all about the bigger picture.

"In a running sense, I used to get down to the fine print and say 'alright, I need to run



"I cherish the fact that I can walk. Sure, I personally can run well, but just to be able to walk and do all the things I can do normally is amazing. I've realized that people affected by MD don't want pity. They just want to be treated normally. So that, in turn, has opened my eyes to how I treat other people - anybody I see." -Devin Cornwall

this much at this pace and do that.' But I've come to the realization through all I've experienced that whatever happens will happen – I can only do so much. It opens your eyes to so many other things than yourself."

But that doesn't mean that Devin takes his running lightly now. In fact, he recalls one specific instance – with LaPenna, actually – where he used his sunny outlook as a source of motivation in one of his most grueling races.

"I can remember racing with Paul last year when he was coming back from an injury, and prior to that, I was talking to him about the notion of us not being able to run," Devin narrated. "That would break our hearts.

While running might seem like a horrible passion to some people, we love going out there and doing it. But for us to not be able to ever, ever, *ever* feel that, and even if you wanted to, to not even have the chance ... it's heartbreaking for us to think about.


"So this one race, we were like, 'alright, you yell at me if I'm slowing down because I need to keep the pace.' I was trying to qualify for regionals, and I wasn't quite fit enough at the time for the pace I needed to meet, so I was starting to drop off. But all of the sudden, Paul was shouting at me, 'run because you can run!' That was all I needed to help push myself through it."

The Cornwalls often joke that because Devin received so many athletic talents, Liam was graced with all of the family's smarts. Liam humbly downplays that, saying that Devin is a good student, too, but Liam has already started thinking about college. In fact, he's already made an official visit to Tech through the College Bound program that teaches young adults with disabilities what it's like to live on your own, and he is intent on coming to Blacksburg for school if he keeps his grades up. But his family knows that it's those smarts that have gotten him this far and that will continue to push him to greater heights.

"He's been blessed with the intelligence and awareness that he has," Devin said of his younger brother. "There's no turning back with MD – you can't really do anything to prevent it. It's a difficult realization to come to, but once you accept it, you thank whomever possible ... you thank God that Liam is here and can experience the things that he's able to experience."

And so Liam is able to continue stockpiling college credits while still in high school for one reason – he's already stockpiled many of the credits he needs to come with life.

"I truly believe that – I think his intelligence is what is going to get him through everything," Pat said with a beaming smile that only a mother could give. "He'll hopefully come to Tech, study what he wants to and be very successful at whatever he does for his lifetime."

One thing's for sure. With a role model like Devin, that won't be hard to do. 

HOW TO HELP

For more information on muscular dystrophy or to make a donation to allow individuals like Liam to live a better life, visit the Muscular Dystrophy Association's official Web site, www.mda.org.

OLYMPIC SPORTS

VOLLEYBALL AND SOCCER OPEN SEASON WITH WINS

By Matt Kovatch

Well, it's here folks. Another season is upon us. And not just another football season – the entire athletics calendar is back in full swing. We're talking the men's soccer team's challenge to produce an encore to last year's College Cup appearance, the women's soccer team's quest to get over the hump and into the postseason, and the volleyball team's mission to get back to its winning record of just two seasons ago.

The 2007-08 academic year was the most successful in Virginia Tech's athletics history by all accounts, including ACC championships, NCAA postseason performances and student-athlete grade-point averages. The Hokies even posted their all-time highest finish in the United States Sports Academy Directors' Cup, ranking as the 37th-most successful collegiate athletics program in the nation. And after seeing what the Hokies accomplished during the opening weekend of fall sports action, Tech could be well on its way to matching – or even bettering – that mark in 2008-09.

Let's start with the men's soccer team, which took on Portland and Washington in the Nike Invitational in Portland, Ore., on Aug. 29th-31st. Not only did the Hokies venture out to the great northwest to take on a pair of West Coast powers – Portland and Washington met

in the NCAA Tournament a year ago – but they came away unblemished, returning home with a 1-0-1 mark.

Weiss scheduled these games with the post-season in mind. The Hokies had never made a trip to the Pacific Coast before, and thinking ahead to late November when the NCAA Tournament draw might send Tech westward to where many soccer talents reside, he wanted his team to have an experience to look back upon. It turned out to be a worthwhile trip, as the Hokies battled to a 2-2 tie with host Portland in the opener before downing the Huskies 2-1 in double overtime two days later.

What's even more impressive is the way in which the Hokies scored their goals. Remember last season, when Tech had a handful of foreign athletes join the team and make a huge impact? Three of the team's top five point scorers were newcomers, and though they only stayed in Blacksburg for one season, they proved that Weiss knows how to evaluate talent. Now, fast forward to the 2008 opening weekend. All four of Tech's goals were recorded by newcomers – two by Emmanuel Akogyeram, one by Philip Aseweh and one by Luiz Yamashita – as were three of the five assists. But the good news is that all three of those players are not one-year rentals. They're freshmen who are here for the long haul, and this team should be an exciting one to watch as the season unfolds.

Speaking of youngsters, the volleyball team features plenty – seven true freshmen, in fact – and they were on full display Aug. 29th and 30th as Tech swept its own Hawthorn Suites Hokie Invitational for the third consecutive year. Tech opened the weekend with a 3-1 win over Maryland Eastern Shore before dusting Winston-Salem State 3-0 and finishing off the sweep with a 3-1 defeat of Coastal Carolina.

The Hokies led the ACC in blocking in 2007 and should once again boast a solid defense, but it's the offense this season that has a new look. After having limited depth at the setter position for the past two seasons, head coach Chris Riley welcomed in a talented freshman, Erin Leaser, to split time with incumbent junior Michelle Lang. Leaser was thrown right into the mix and ended up being named to the all-tournament team after tallying 70 assists in the three matches. Whether she takes over the setting reins fulltime to allow Lang to utilize her great net presence on the weak side, or whether the two continue to share duties, Riley at least has an option this year.

Besides Leaser, three other freshmen – Alison Blasingame, Justine Record and Kirsty Blue – were featured regularly on offense and each received double-digit attacks. Also of note was junior middle blocker Betsy Horowitz, who could be poised for a breakout season after earning tournament MVP honors by posting a team-high .463 hitting percentage, 24 kills and 12 blocks.

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Another offense looking to explode this fall belongs to the women's soccer team, which got off to a 2-1 start after winning back-to-back home games over Evansville (4-2 on Aug. 29th) and George Mason (2-0 on Aug. 31st). Even in the game that the Hokies lost, a 2-1 decision to Davidson on Aug. 23rd, they dominated in every offensive category except the final score.

This team features no shortage of playmakers – Marika Gray, Robin Chidester and Emily Jukich scored two goals each throughout the first three games – and head coach Kelly Cagle hinted in the preseason that they would be the keys to success this year. Tech's defense was not a problem in 2007 – it only allowed 20 goals in 18 games – and it looks to be stout once again after limiting its first three opponents to just 13 shots and four corner kicks combined. So if the Hokies can keep games close, Cagle says her crop of attackers has the ability to strike right up


until the final horn.

Fittingly, all seven of Tech's goals in the first three contests came in the second half. While it would be nice to see the Hokies get off to some stronger starts in the first half, it's at least encouraging that they have the composure to stay focused and aggressive as the clock ticks time away.

All things considered, opening weekend for the Hokies' non-football teams was a quite a success, and all signs to point many more throughout the rest of the fall. If you're in town for a football game, don't forget about the other guys. Chances are there will be some sort of Olympic sporting event going on that weekend, as even the promising cross country team will serve as hosts for three meets this fall. There are some new and exciting student-athletes to watch, so come out and support them if you get the chance – you won't be disappointed. 



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VOLLEYBALL

HAWTHORN SUITES HOKIE INVITATIONAL

Aug. 29	MARYLAND-EASTERN SHORE	W, 3-1
30	WINSTON-SALEM STATE	W, 3-0
30	COASTAL CAROLINA	W, 3-1

Marshall Tournament

Sep. 5	at Marshall	7 p.m.
6	vs. Western Kentucky	10:30 a.m.
6	vs. East Tennessee State	4:30 p.m.

Arkansas Tournament

12	vs. UT-Martin	6 p.m.
13	vs. Lamar	3 p.m.
13	at Arkansas	8 p.m.

UNC Wilmington Tournament

19	at UNC Wilmington	7 p.m.
20	vs. UNC Asheville	Noon
23	VIRGINIA*	7 p.m.
26	CLEMSON*	7 p.m.
27	GEORGIA TECH*	6 p.m.

Oct. 3	at Maryland*	7 p.m.
5	at Boston College*	Noon
9	at North Carolina*	7 p.m.
10	at NC State*	6 p.m.
17	WAKE FOREST*	7 p.m.
18	DUKE*	6 p.m.
24	FLORIDA STATE*	7 p.m.
25	MIAMI*	6 p.m.
31	at Georgia Tech*	7 p.m.
Nov. 1	at Clemson*	6 p.m.
7	NC STATE*	7 p.m.
8	NORTH CAROLINA*	6 p.m.
14	BOSTON COLLEGE*	3 p.m.
15	MARYLAND*	6 p.m.
20	at Wake Forest*	7 p.m.
21	at Duke*	7 p.m.
28	at Virginia*	6 p.m.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Aug. 23	at Davidson	L, 1-2
29	EVANSVILLE	W, 4-2
31	GEORGE MASON	W, 2-0

HAWTHORN SUITES INVITATIONAL

Sep. 5	TEXAS A&M	6 p.m.
7	GEORGE WASHINGTON	1:30 p.m.

Wake Forest Tournament

12	vs. Cal State-Fullerton	5 p.m.
14	vs. Charlotte	11 a.m.
21	JAMES MADISON	7 p.m.
25	at Miami*	7 p.m.
28	at Florida State*	1 p.m.

Oct. 2	at Clemson*	7 p.m.
5	NC STATE*	1 p.m.
9	VIRGINIA*	7 p.m.
12	at North Carolina*	1 p.m.
15	LONGWOOD	7 p.m.
19	MARYLAND*	5 p.m.
26	at Boston College*	1 p.m.
30	WAKE FOREST*	7 p.m.
Nov. 2	DUKE*	2 p.m.
5-9	ACC Tournament at Cary, N.C.	

MEN'S SOCCER

The UP Nike Invitational

Aug. 29	at Portland	T, 2-2 (2 OT)
31	vs. Washington	W, 2-1 (2 OT)

HAWTHORN SUITES HOKIE INVITATIONAL

Sep. 5	HOFSTRA	8:30 p.m.
7	XAVIER	4 p.m.
12	DUKE*	7:30 p.m.
14	at St. John's	7 p.m.
21	at Clemson*	2 p.m.
26	VIRGINIA*	7 p.m.
30	GEORGE WASHINGTON	7 p.m.

Oct. 4	at Wake Forest*	7 p.m.
7	RADFORD	7 p.m.
10	MARYLAND*	7 p.m.
14	UMBC	7 p.m.
18	at North Carolina*	7 p.m.
21	APPALACHIAN STATE	7 p.m.
25	at High Point	7 p.m.
Nov. 1	at NC State*	7 p.m.
7	BOSTON COLLEGE*	7 p.m.
11-16	ACC Tournament at Cary, N.C.	

CROSS COUNTRY

Sep. 5	VIRGINIA TECH CROSS COUNTRY RELAY	6:30 p.m.
19	VIRGINIA TECH ALUMNI INVITATIONAL	6 p.m.
Oct. 3	Highland Duel at Boone, N.C.	6 p.m.
18	Chile Pepper Invitational at Fayetteville, Ark.	10 a.m.
Nov. 1	ACC Championships at Chapel Hill, N.C.	11 a.m.
8	HOKIE OPEN RACE	9 a.m.
15	NCAA Southeast Region Championship at Winston-Salem, N.C.	11 a.m.
24	NCAA Championship at Terre Haute, Ind.	Noon

*Indicates ACC match; Home games in CAPS

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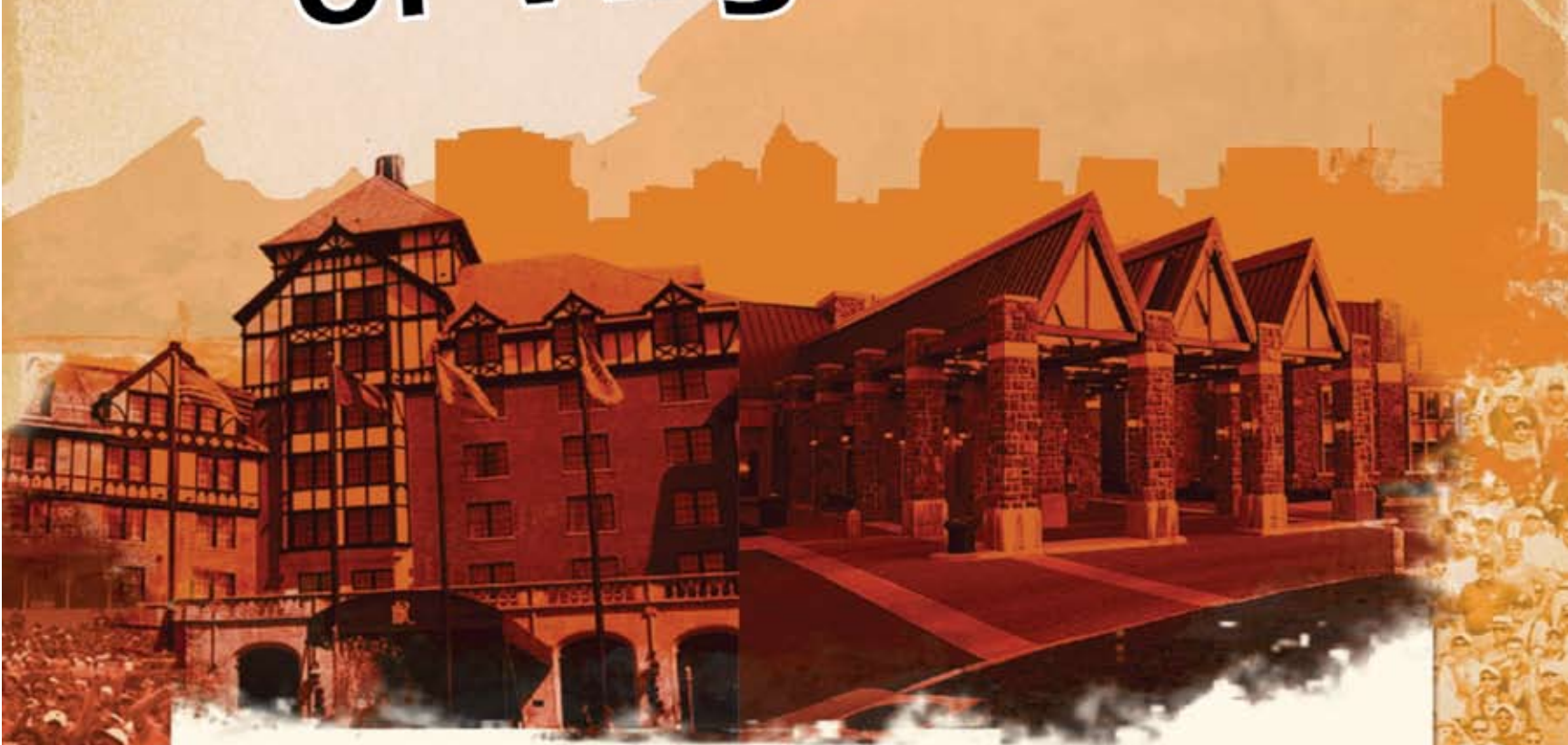
– Bobby Bowden, Coach, Florida State football

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