

INSIDE

HOKIESPORTS

The Official Publication of Virginia Tech Athletics

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Orion Martin

FAMILY TIES

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Collegiate Inn Owner:
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Tasmin Fanning

VT UPCOMING ATHLETIC EVENTS VT

NOVEMBER

15	Volleyball vs. Maryland	6 P.M.
16	Wrestling: Hokie-Open (in Salem, VA)	10 A.M.
17	Men's Basketball vs. Mt. St. Mary's	8 P.M.
18	Women's Basketball vs. Radford	7 P.M.
20	Women's Basketball vs. NC Central	7 P.M.
MONTGOMERY COUNTY CHRISTMAS STORE NIGHT!		
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26	Men's Basketball vs. Elon (VT F/S Night)	7 P.M.

DECEMBER

1	Men's Basketball vs. Wisconsin	7 P.M.
ORANGE EFFECT!		
14	Men's Basketball vs. Longwood	2 P.M.
	Women's Basketball vs. James Madison	4 P.M.
29	Women's Basketball Hokie Hardwood Classic	
	Liberty vs. NC A&T	5 P.M.
	Hokies vs. Lafayette	7 P.M.
30	Women's Basketball Hokie Hardwood Classic	
	Lafayette vs. Liberty/NC A&T	5 P.M.
	Hokies vs. Liberty/NC A&T	7 P.M.

LET'S GO HOKIES!



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THE HOKIE CLUB ... THE OFFICIAL FUNDRAISING ARM FOR VIRGINIA TECH ATHLETICS

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!



POINT PRIORITY SHEET Q&A

Point priority sheets were sent to each Hokie Club member in October. This sheet is intended to be informational and gives each member a closer look at where he or she stands as we approach the benefits deadline of December 31st. Several questions have been asked about the point priority sheet, so we wanted to take this opportunity to answer some of those questions.

Q: I ordered tickets for the FedEx Orange Bowl on January 3, 2008. Why do I not see points for these postseason tickets reflected on this point priority sheet?

A: Points for postseason events such as football, men's basketball and women's basketball, as well as season ticket events for these sports, are added to each membership at the end of each year prior to the final rank being calculated. For this reason, you will not see these points reflected on your October point priority sheet.

Q: If I've prepaid my annual giving membership early in the past to receive the maximum allowable points before the

benefits deadline, what happens if I stop paying early?

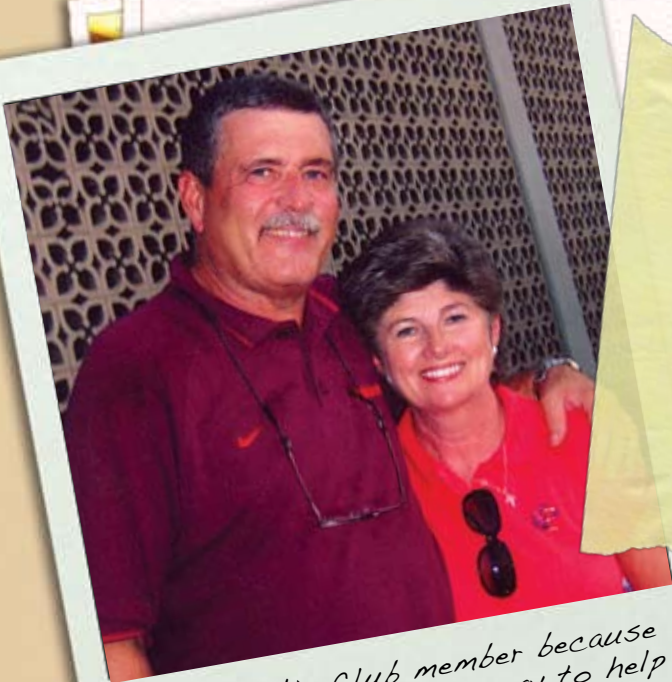
A: As long as a member pays his or her membership before it expires, they are fine. However, this member may see a decrease in his or her current giving points. If a member decides to stop prepaying his or her membership before the benefits deadline, the member's rank will be lower and benefits such as football parking, away game tickets and postseason tickets will be affected. Why? Current giving points count on your membership for 365 days from the date your gift was received and then go away.

Q: If my anniversary month passes and my membership expires, but I decide not to renew until the end of the year, what are the consequences?

A: Annual memberships are ACTIVE for one year from the time they were created. We refer to the month when a member joins as that member's "Anniversary Month." If you do not renew your membership by your "Anniversary Month," you are at risk of losing years of consecutive member points, and as an inactive member; you will not receive the monthly *Inside Hokie Sports* magazine.



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



I'm a Hokie Club member because I felt it was the best way to help Tech... ! It has an incredible influence in positive change at our school.

Norman V. Fitzwater

Hokie Club Level:

Golden Hokie Champion

Family members:

Joyce (wife), Nicole (daughter), Sarah (daughter) and Ben (son-in-law)

Q: What year did you graduate?

A: 1972

Q: A Hokie is...

A: A graduate of Virginia Tech and any other follower of our great university.

Q: The Hokie Nation is real because...

A: We have the best fans who travel and support our teams.

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

A: My high school principal encouraged me to visit VPI in 1967. I fell in love with VPI and the rest is history.

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

A: The Virginia Tech-UVa football game at UVa in 1995 when Jim Drunkenmiller's TD pass won the game in the last minute.

Q: I'm a Hokie Club member because ...

A: When Joyce and I moved back to Blacksburg in 1992, I asked the Hokie Club what I could do to help Virginia Tech.

Q: What motivates you to be so involved with the Blacksburg Hokie Club?

A: Working with our Hokie reps and with the Hokie Club staff. We have a unique opportunity here in Blacksburg to raise a lot of money for athletics. In the 12 years serving as the Blacksburg Hokie Club President, our club has raised over \$400,000.

Q: Describe your perfect day at Virginia Tech.

A: A great win by our team along with the Hokies Respect that we all want to show.

Q: My all-time favorite Virginia Tech football player is ...

A: Don Strock.

Q: My all-time favorite Virginia Tech student-athlete from another sport is ...

A: Jamon Gordon, men's basketball. My wife and I enjoyed watching him play.

FINANCIAL CORNER

Supporting Tech Athletics Since 1949

I am very pleased to report that our first quarter (July-September, 2008) results are in and the annual fund reflects an increase over the same period one year ago. This is especially encouraging given the current economic slowdown. Growing the annual fund is a key goal for our office as the costs of scholarships, both in-state and out-of-state, continue to rise.

You should have received a letter explaining your point priority ranking as of October. Hopefully, this will be a helpful tool as you complete your gifting plans for 2008.

With a terrific home schedule in Lane Stadium next fall, you will want to be well-positioned for the football season and the other athletics benefits that your membership earns.

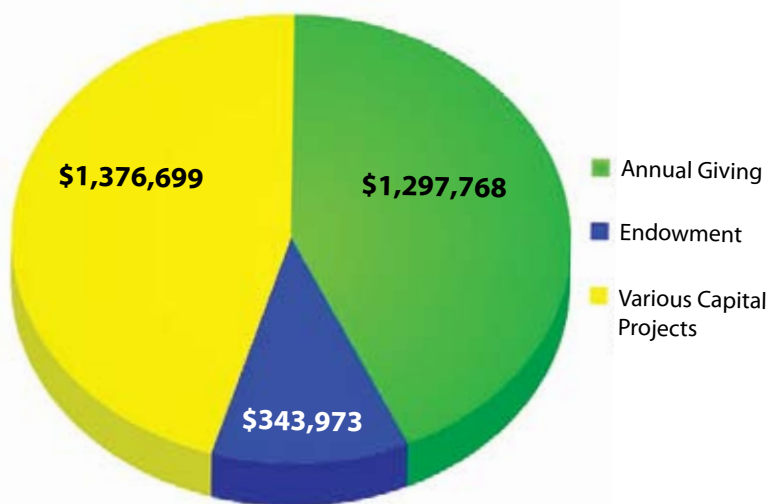
We appreciate your generous support in helping to educate our student-athletes and to make their experience here at Virginia Tech the very best it can be.

Go Hokies!

Lu Merritt

Director of Development for Intercollegiate Athletics

Quarterly Update: Activity from July 1, 2008–September 30, 2008



Cumulative Giving: \$3,018,440
Number of Members: 11,413

Important Dates to Remember

November 30, 2008

Last day to set up "Hokie Matic" & employee payroll deduction before benefits deadline

December 31, 2008

Benefits deadline (*must strictly adhere to this date for tax purposes)



"I am not only a student, but also a Virginia Tech athlete. As an out-of-state student, I greatly appreciate the Hokie Club and all they do for us. The 11,000-plus members truly represent what a Hokie is and what Virginia Tech is all about – service and support!"

Ashley Owens

r-Senior

Women's Soccer

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



PROJECTIONS FOR 2009 FOOTBALL PARKING

Football parking is a key part of the football game-day experience at Virginia Tech. In an effort to provide guidance to Hokie Club members for the 2009 season, we have provided below the lowest Hokie Club rank assigned to each parking lot. These ranks were based on the 2007 benefits deadline and were used for the 2008 football season. These rankings should be used as a **GUIDELINE ONLY**, as these cutoffs can and probably will change for the 2009 season as Hokie Club members upgrade their memberships and as parking circumstances change.

Possible Parking Lot Changes for the 2009 Football Season

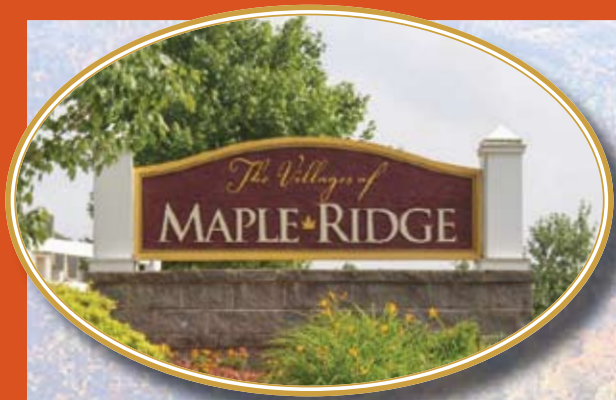
1. We anticipate losing spaces in Lot 8 (Litton-Reaves), as the university plans to begin construction on a new building this winter.
2. We anticipate that the top half of Lot 5 (Chicken Hill) will be paved before next fall.
3. We hope to receive additional parking inventory to offset these losses.

Lowest Ranked Hokie Club Members In Parking Lots During 2008 Football Season

Lot	Location	Rank	Donor Level
1	Coliseum	1,853	Golden Hokie & Above
2	Stadium	1,443	Platinum Hokie & Above
3	Physical Plant	1,716	Golden Hokie & Above
4	Track/Soccer	678	Golden Hokie Champion & Above
5	Chicken Hill	2,744	Golden Hokie & Above
6	Health & Safety	2,781	Golden Hokie
11	Cochrane/Engle	2,878	Golden Hokie
8	Litton-Reaves	3,745	Golden Hokie
7	Vet School	3,946	Golden Hokie
16	I Lot (Cage)	4,471	Silver Hokie
9	Litton-Reaves Overflow	4,650	Silver Hokie
18	Smithfield Road	5,211	Silver Hokie
17	Duck Pond Overflow	5,600	Silver Hokie
12	Price Hall	5,651	Silver Hokie
13	Davidson Hall	5,688	Silver Hokie
13A	Chemistry/Physics	5,766	Silver Hokie
14	Solitude	5,802	Silver Hokie
19	Media Building	6,012	Silver Hokie
15	Derring Hall	6,451	Bronze Hokie
20	Stanger	7,317	Bronze Hokie
RV Parking			Donor Level
3	Physical Plant	790	Golden Hokie Champion & Above
16	I Lot (Cage)	5,757	Silver Hokie & Above
B	B Lot	First Come/First Serve	

2008 Football Point Priority Cutoff for Parking - 7,317





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THE HUDSON TEAM



Hokies picked to finish sixth in ACC preseason poll

The Virginia Tech men's basketball team was picked to finish sixth in the ACC in voting by 40 media members at the league's annual basketball media day held Oct. 26th in Atlanta. All 40 of those media members picked North Carolina to win the ACC, with Duke coming in second, followed by Wake Forest, Miami, Clemson and the Hokies.

Tech finished with a 21-14 overall record last season, including a 9-7 mark in the ACC, and the Hokies advanced to the quarterfinals of the NIT before falling to Ole Miss. Tech was picked to finish in sixth place despite finishing fourth a year ago and returning four starters. Six guys return who started at least 12 games, and 81 percent of both the scoring and rebounding return from last year as well.

"We're not going to buy into what people say. We didn't last year," said Tech coach Seth Greenberg, referring to the Hokies being picked to finish 10th in this same poll a year ago. "If we had, we'd have won about eight games. When the ball goes up, whatever has been written or said means nothing."

Tech opens its season Nov. 14th against Gardner-Webb at Cassell Coliseum. Tip-off is slated for 8 p.m.

Tech women picked to finish 10th

The Virginia Tech women's basketball team was picked to finish in 10th place in the ACC in the league's preseason poll, as determined by a vote of the newly formed Blue Ribbon Panel. The Blue Ribbon Panel, beginning this season, consists of national and local media members, as well as school representatives. In addition to the league's preseason poll, the panelists will vote on weekly honors and postseason all-conference teams.

The Hokies finished 15-15 last season, 2-12 in the ACC. But they return four of five starters, including the league's leading scorer in Brittany Cook, who averaged 17.9 points per game.

North Carolina was picked to win the league. The Tar Heels received 15 of 42 first-place votes. The Tar Heels won 33 games last season and return three starters.

Maryland was picked to finish second and received 11 first-place votes, followed by Duke (14 first-place votes) and Virginia (2 first-place votes). Florida State, Georgia Tech, BC, N.C. State and Clemson round out the top nine, with Virginia Tech coming in 10th. Miami and Wake Forest round out the league.

Tech opens its season Nov. 14th against UNC Greensboro at Cassell Coliseum. Tip-off is slated for 6 p.m.

Cheeseman bouncing back to TB



Shortly after the loss to Florida State, Tech head coach Frank Beamer announced that Jahre Cheeseman would be getting reps at tailback after having been moved to fullback several weeks ago. Cheeseman, a 5-foot-10, 196-pound redshirt junior, was one of the leading candidates for the starting tailback job back in the spring until he suffered a broken left leg during a scrimmage.

"We hope to get a lift there," Beamer said. "He'd played tailback for a while and had a good run at the end of the Georgia Tech game [a 70-yarder in last year's game]. We're looking for a lift at that position."

"Coach Hite came and told me, and I didn't ask any questions," Cheeseman said. "I was like, 'OK.' It's an opportunity for me. I'm more comfortable there. I probably had a shot at the job until I got hurt in the spring. Then I was probably too cautious when I came back."

Cheeseman has rushed 25 times for 154 yards in his career.

In another position-related move, tight end Greg Boone got reps at quarterback leading up to the Maryland game as an emergency in the event Tyrod Taylor or Sean Glennon were not cleared to play. Boone, a 6-3, 280-pound redshirt junior, was a *SuperPrep* All-American as a quarterback in high school, but was moved to tight end following his freshman year.

"I knew it was coming," Boone said. "If I've got to do it, then I'll do it. But I'm about winning and I know we'd have a better chance

at winning if Tyrod or Sean or Cory [Holt] were back there. It would be tough for me. It would all be new."

Hokies lose another for the season

The serious injuries keep occurring for the Virginia Tech football team, which recently lost back-up free safety Lorenzo Williams for the season because of a knee injury suffered during a practice the week before the Florida State game. The injury will require surgery.

Williams, a 6-2, 200-pound freshman from Fayetteville, N.C., became the 11th Tech player to go down with a season-ending injury. He played in all seven games, seeing most of his time on special teams. He finished the season with six tackles.

Also, freshmen Xavier Boyce and Bruce Taylor have been shut down for the season with injuries. Boyce, a receiver, and Taylor, a defensive end, injured their knee and shoulder, respectively (Boyce underwent surgery). Both should receive medical hardship waivers to preserve their year since neither played in more than three games this season.

Other players lost for the season include Kenny Lewis Jr. (Achilles), Davon Morgan (knee), Kenny Younger (knee), Ron Cooper (knee), Brandon Dillard (Achilles), Aaron Brown (shoulder), Joe Jones (shoulder) and Marcus Davis (shoulder).


Former Hokie named new pitching coach for Detroit Tigers

Rick Knapp, a former standout pitcher for Virginia Tech in the early '80s, was recently tabbed by Detroit Tigers' manager Jim Leyland as the ball club's new pitching coach.

"I'm extremely excited to join the Tigers organization," Knapp said in a Tigers' press release. "I look forward to working with Jim, the rest of the coaching staff and the talented pitchers throughout the system."

Knapp arrives in Detroit after spending the past 12 seasons as the minor league pitching coordinator for the Minnesota Twins.

Knapp pitched his junior and senior seasons for the Hokies and still holds the season and career records for best won-lost percentage. He went 10-0 in 1982 with a 3.86 ERA and threw five complete games, striking out 68 batters. He followed his undefeated season with a 10-1 campaign in 1983 to finish his Tech career with a .952 winning percentage. He tossed nine complete games in his final season and fanned 59 batters.

Following his stellar collegiate career, Knapp was taken in the 41st round by the Texas Rangers and spent five seasons in the minor league system before beginning his coaching career. 



FROM
THE
**EDITOR'S
DESK**

Jimmy Robertson

Despite injury, Lewis has plenty to add to Hokies' cause

On a cold, blustery afternoon, Tech's football team worked out in Rector Field House, and along the sideline stood a young man on crutches dressed in a sweatsuit – and wearing a helmet, of all things.

To be sure, it was an odd sight. But then it's surely been that kind of season for the Hokies, who have battled countless severe injuries and a brutal schedule, and yet still went into November with a clear shot at claiming the ACC's Coastal Division crown.

On this particular day, though, not even a helmet could disguise the pain on the face of Kenny Lewis, Jr. As most know, Tech's starting tailback and resident emotional leader shredded his Achilles tendon in the victory over Western Kentucky University and now faces his toughest opponent ever – rehabbing from that injury.

"I actually feel good physically," Lewis said. "But it just doesn't feel right not being out there. When the game starts and it's not me out there catching that first kickoff, it just doesn't feel right."

The injury marked the second devastating one for Lewis. Last spring, he suffered a torn labrum in his shoulder that required surgery. Tech's sports medicine staff expected him to miss the first three or four games of this season because of that one, but Lewis' ferocious work ethic enabled him to come back without missing a single game.

This latest one is a different beast, how-

ever – it's arguably the toughest injury from which to return. The ordeal figures to be a nine-month affair.

Lewis, however, can still be a major player on this team, even without being on the field. In fact, his role now may be even more far-reaching, considering Tech's injury situation.

Tech running backs coach Billy Hite wants Lewis to remain involved with the running backs. He wants Lewis to impart his wisdom, and more importantly, blanket them with his upbeat attitude.

So for the rest of this season, he'll be trading his helmet for a whistle and his playbook for a headset. He'll be juggling rehab sessions and position meetings.

"I've always considered it a blessing to be around the guys," Lewis said. "Coach Hite wants me to be in the meeting rooms and to be on the sidelines during games. I think I can help those young guys. I can tell them what the defense is going to do in certain situations. You know, if the linebacker is doing this, then the safety is going to do that. Things like that. Instead of them reacting to the defense, the defense will have to react to them."

It's a role Lewis never thought he'd have to embrace. And one he never really wanted to, at least in the days following the injury.

But his unyielding faith and a stern lecture from his father led him to embrace his near future. Lewis read the book of Job in the evenings following his injury, and for those without a Biblical background, Job was a pious man who lost all of his possessions and

all 10 of his children to the curses of Satan. Yet Job remained true to the Lord, and later, received double his possessions and he and his wife had 10 more children.

"I saw how he stayed faithful," Lewis said. "He was going to serve God regardless. That opened my eyes."

And the speech from Lewis' dad?

"He got mad at me," Lewis said, with a smile. "He got mad at me for not thinking of how I could think of helping someone else."

"Mine is a testimony in the making. That's how I look at it. This injury isn't about me. It's about doing my best to help the guys."


The stretch run is here. It's all hands on deck, and Lewis' teammates definitely need him.

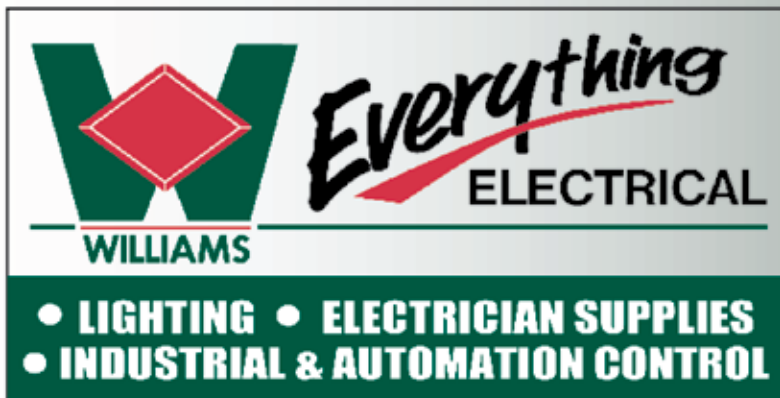
Even if he's on crutches.

Money month

The month of November often gets referred to as the 'money' month in college football, as most games are conference games with lots on the line – such as championships.

The turning of the calendar to the month of November bodes well for the Hokies, who traditionally have played their best football down the stretch. In fact, Tech currently sports a 10-game winning streak in the month of November dating back to a 2005 home loss to Miami and has won 13 of its past 14 November games heading into a Thursday night match-up with Maryland.

Frank Beamer's teams simply get better as the season goes along. The Hokies are 37-15 in November since 1993. Time will tell if form holds true. 



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Bill Roth

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They've been cutting hair – and solving the world's problems – at Andy's Barber Shop on Colley Avenue in Norfolk for over 25 years.

Some businesses have come and gone in that block. An old restaurant is now a doctor's office. The Old Colony House restaurant? It's now a Chinese joint.

But Andy's has been there for three generations, cutting hair for the kids and grown-ups in the Park Place neighborhood.

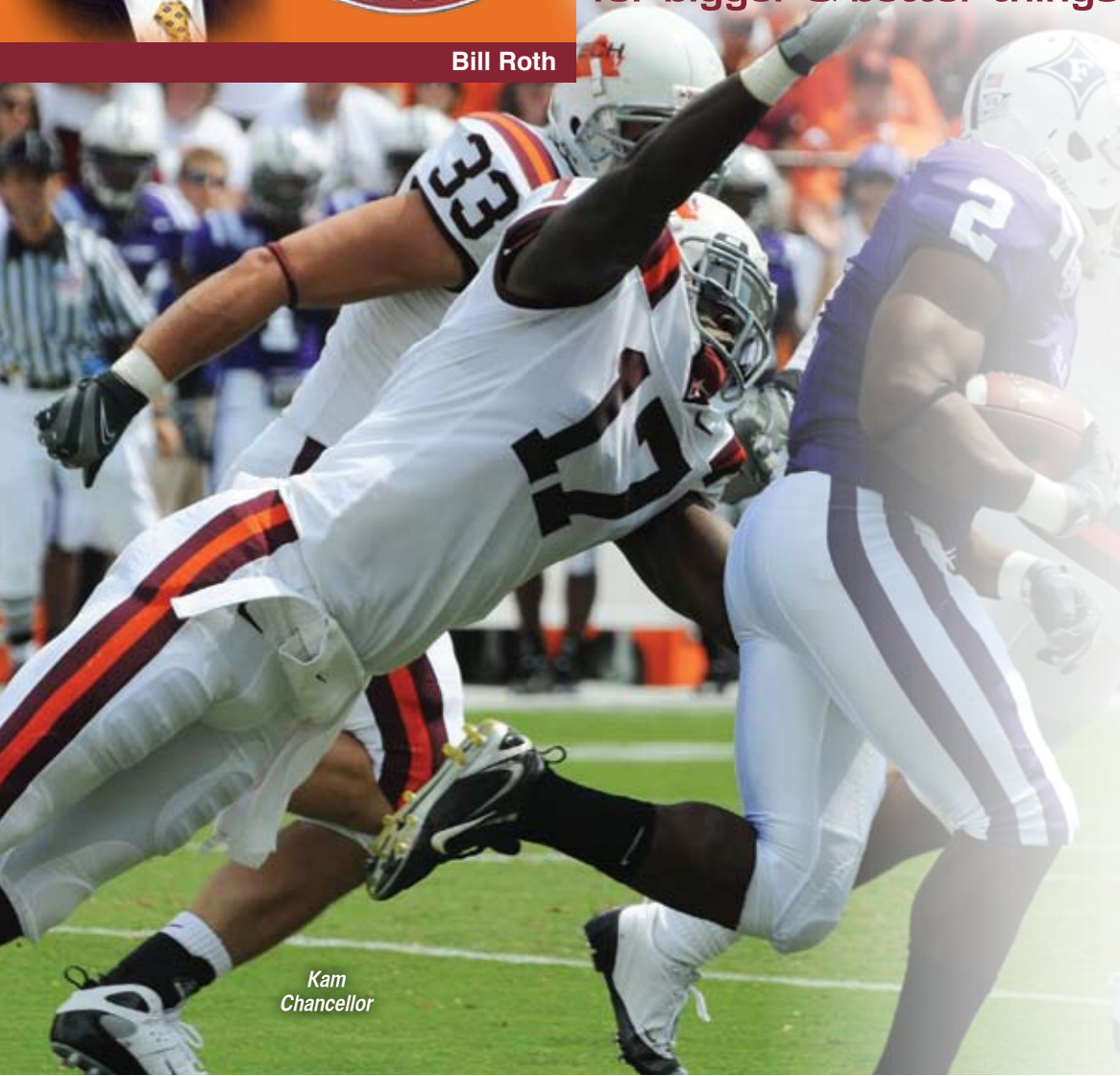
It was there in 1998 when Kumasi Johnson, the grandson of founder Andy Lovick and a third generation barber himself, suggested that a skinny, tall fifth-grader named Kameron Chancellor help out in the shop each day after school. Kumasi had been cutting hair for all the Chancellor kids, including Kam, and thought it would be a sound idea.

After all, the Chancellors needed the money and Kumasi needed the help. And besides, barbershops beat the streets. Everyone, including Kam's mother, agreed, thus the 10-year old was hired.

Odd jobs mostly. Sweep up hair. Clean the clippers. Take out the trash. It was a good job for a 10-year-old in a pretty rough neighborhood.

"He was always quiet, but he was always very observant," Johnson said from Andy's. "Listen, you can learn a lot about the world in a barbershop. You hear people fussin' and fightin' over little things and Kameron was always very alert about that. He would ask questions about what he heard. He might have been the shy kid in the corner, but he was listening to what everyone in the shop was saying."

Oh, he heard the language and the fights



Kam Chancellor



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– politics, religion, race and relationships. He heard the drama and stories each and every day. But at least he was off the street, right?

For some perspective, Park Place sits north of Ghent and south of Colonial Place in Norfolk. It's been one of that city's roughest neighborhoods for years. Street gangs like Purple Hayze, Nine Trey Gangster Bloods, and 74 Hoover Crips have called that area home.

Chancellor estimates that, of his 20 buddies from Park Place, 15 are either dealing drugs, in jail or dead. He's been to three funerals, including one in October.

"It can be a rough place. It is a rough place," Chancellor said of his neighborhood. But he found refuge in a barbershop. Even more, he found perspective.

Chancellor would work there five or six days a week from the time he was 10 until he was 14. He'd come right there after school or after football or basketball practice. Then Johnson would drive him home.

"Guys can be rough, and (Kameron) heard a lot of stuff (at Andy's)," Johnson said. "You learn a lot about the world in a place like ours. You learn a lot about women. And you learn a lot of jokes."

With a big grin on his face today, Chancellor admits that he did hear plenty of jokes during the four years that he worked there and "Yeah, you do learn a lot about women hangin' out in a barbershop."

All the patrons knew him. The regulars called him 'Shoe Shine Boy,' coined as such by the owner's son who, like everyone else, took an immediate liking to the kid's magnetic smile and charm. Always on time. Always with a smile. Always polite.

When he wasn't at school or work, Chancellor was practicing football and basketball with his teams and his best friend, Prince Parker. His dream was to play in the

NFL like his boyhood idol, Sean Taylor. He was big like Taylor. He could run like Taylor. And he wanted to be a big-time safety like Taylor. Even today, Chancellor has a poster of Taylor hanging in his bedroom. And the screensaver on his computer is of Taylor.

He was a terrific athlete, but unfortunately, injuries during his high school football career as a safety and quarterback at Maury High School left Chancellor somewhat under the radar for college recruiters. ODU offered him a basketball scholarship. JMU had offered in football in the fall of 2005.

But nothing from Virginia Tech. Nothing from UVa. In fact, no other Division I-A offers came until the Hokies offered him a scholarship after Thanksgiving in 2005.

"It's funny. I still liked JMU because they had offered first, but my high school defensive backs coach, Kevin Allen, told me I was crazy. That I had to go to Tech," Chancellor said.

Chancellor signed with the Hokies in February of 2006. It was his only Division I-A offer.

Two years later, Chancellor is Virginia Tech's starting free safety, patrolling the secondary like his idol Sean Taylor did.

He's the quarterback of Tech's defense, making the checks and making sure his teammates are aligned correctly. He understands that, as the free safety, he's also the last line of defense and that it's his first season playing the position.

"I might make a mistake once, but I won't make it again," he said. He says he looks up to guys like Aaron Rouse and Brandon Flowers, ex-Hokies now in the NFL who enjoy "knockin' someone's lights out."

This story's had a happy ending for everyone and making it even sweeter: his best buddy, Parker, joined the Hokies as a walk-on in 2006 and is now a receiver on Tech's team.

As a football player, Chancellor is on his way to being an all-star. As a person? Well, the most humble, polite, friendly and caring person you'd ever meet is well on his way to earning his degree in human development.

"Kameron is one of those people who always listens to what you say," Johnson said. "He genuinely cares about you and your feelings."

That makes him a terrific person, and a great teammate at Tech.

After his football career, Chancellor envisions himself working as a high school guidance counselor, a social worker or a family counselor.

"I really enjoyed the Herma's Readers experience last month," he said. "I was at James Monroe Elementary (in Norfolk) and enjoyed being around those kids and in that setting and listening to them."

"That would be a perfect job for him," Johnson said. "Social work or serving as a counselor."


In a way, that's what they do at Andy's.

"When you cut people's hair, they open up to you. They tell you things," Johnson said. "Maybe it's because you're right there with them. Next to their ears and their eyes and their mouth. You have a razor. You have clippers. They trust you. And so they say things."

Chancellor grew up in that precise environment where you listen, understand and relate. You gain perspective and maturity.

And so when you talk with Chancellor today, he looks you in the eye and listens. He understands. And he tries to relate.

That's not your typical 20-year-old, is it?

So in a few years, whether he's an NFL star 'knockin' people's lights out,' or a high school counselor somewhere in Norfolk, you just know 'Shoe Shine Boy from Park Place' is going to be a huge success. 



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Office of Student Life now under new leadership

By Jimmy Robertson

The Virginia Tech athletics department's latest hire has two main tasks ahead of her.

First, she'll be in charge of maintaining the excellence of the Office of Student Life. Then she'll take on the challenge of expanding on that excellence.

Reyna Gilbert recently took over as Tech's assistant AD for student life, overseeing an office designed to assist student-athletes with the transition to college life, while also integrating them within the community and university during the rest of their time in college and helping them pursue careers of their choosing. In 2006, Tech's Office of Student Life was honored by the Division I-A Athletics Directors' Association with the I-A CHAMPS Program of Excellence Award, a lifetime award that recognizes Division I-A athletics programs that have established student-athlete welfare as the cornerstone of their operating principles. Tech became the 43rd Division I-A athletics department to be recognized and the fifth ACC school.

"The opportunity to become an assistant athletics director for student life at a major Division-I institution was extremely appealing," Gilbert said. "However, the chance to work at an institution where serving others is embedded in the mission of the university, the athletics department and its student-athletes is an honor."

Gilbert came to Tech after serving as the Compliance Coordinator and CHAMPS/Life Skills Coordinator at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale. A former gymnast and a graduate of Northern Illinois (with a master's from Ball State), she's also worked at the University of Central Florida.

At Tech, she'll head a three-person team consisting of Danny White, the coordinator of student life and a South Carolina grad who recently got his master's from Tech, and Becca Scott, Career Services liaison to the Office of

Student Life and a Tech grad.

Their charge is to continue the excellence of the Office of Student Life, which was formed in 1994 and has been overseen by former football standouts Derek Carter and Jermaine Holmes, along with Megan Armbruster and Patricia Lovett, throughout the years. All four contributed to the office's success, but Armbruster's establishing of the "Hokies with Heart" initiative probably was the most important.

"Hokies with Heart" is the community outreach component of the Office of Student Life and allows organizations to request Tech student-athletes to attend local outreach events. Each team partners with a local community organization (e.g. United Way, Boys and Girls Club, etc.) and volunteers time at these events.

"Danny and Reyna have set an example of what it means to work hard," said Paul LaPenna, a cross country runner and a Skelton Award recipient (a \$5,000 scholarship provided by Bill and Peggy Skelton). "Student Life has also supported community service by encouraging athletes, including myself, to get out there and provide for a community that truly loves our sports programs at Tech."

Gilbert wants to continue this highly successful component of the Office of Student Life, while also expanding into other areas.


"I would like to increase our focus on the transition student-athletes make into college life at Tech and their evolution into the next phase of their lives, be it graduate school, a



Reyna Gilbert (second from right) will be coordinating many outreach projects in the future similar to this one in which Paul LaPenna, Erin Reddan, Natalie Sherbak and other members of the track and cross country teams collected shoes for Nike's Reuse-A-Shoe Program.

career, or professional sports," she said. "The creation of a specific four-year plan for student-athletes would provide them with programming to meet their needs at each phase of their collegiate career. I believe this would not only assist student-athletes by providing them with a benchmark each year, but would also serve as an added benefit to coaches during the recruiting process."

Other programs conducted by the Office of Student Life include those associated with personal development (bringing in guest speakers to talk about various topics) and career development (a week in November will be declared 'Resume Critique Week').

The Office of Student Life, thus, has successfully helped many student-athletes become well-rounded. That's a tradition Gilbert and the team hope to continue. 

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HOLT DRAWS PRAISE FOR PLAY IN TOUGH SITUATION

By Jimmy Robertson

With Tyrod Taylor and Sean Glennon out, Cory Holt, a redshirt senior from Lexington, N.C., made the most of an opportunity, throwing a touchdown pass in the Hokies' 30-20 defeat at Florida State.



Cory Holt never participated in the Boy Scouts growing up as a kid in Lexington, N.C., but he sure subscribes to their motto.

Be prepared.

Holt, a fifth-year senior, found himself reaching for his helmet when Sean Glennon went down with an ankle injury at the 5:47 mark in the third quarter of the Hokies' game with Florida State. Tyrod Taylor already was out for the game with a sprained ankle suffered on the first play of the afternoon.

So Holt, who came to Tech as a quarterback, but had been working at wide receiver for the previous six weeks, entered the game at quarterback – his first game action of this season. He took over on second down and the Hokies ended up punting two plays later.

“When I first got out there, everything was pretty simple for the first series,” Holt said. “I got back on the sideline and Coach [Mike] O’Cain [Tech’s quarterbacks coach] called down on the phone. He told me he was going to keep the same playbook. The only concern they had with me was the checks. I haven’t had any checks. I’ve been working with wideouts all week, and I didn’t know anything about the checks. But other than that, I knew pretty much the whole offense.”

Tech trailed 27-13 early in the fourth

quarter, but the Hokies refused to go away and rallied behind Holt, who led them on a 46-yard march following a nice kickoff return by Dyrell Roberts. On fourth-and-1 from the FSU 7, Holt kept the ball and ran around the right side for a 3-yard gain. Then, on the next play, he lofted an easy throwback pass across the field to a wide-open André Smith for a 4-yard touchdown that brought the Hokies to 27-20 with 8:26 left – the first touchdown reception of Smith’s career.

“It’s something we did this week in practice,” Holt said of the play.

Then he added, “Well, actually Sean and Tyrod did. But I knew that if I had an opportunity, that play would be open.”

“We’re just fortunate we had Cory,” Tech head coach Frank Beamer said. “He gave us a chance to win the football game. Having that experience and being around, no question, we’re fortunate to have Cory.”

Holt finished with modest numbers in his roughly 20 minutes of action. He completed 3-of-6 for 28 yards, with the one touchdown, in the Hokies’ 30-20 defeat. But it was certainly enough to win the admiration of his teammates and to thrill his family watching back home in North Carolina.

“I’ve learned to be prepared,” said Holt, who

had played in just eight games in his career leading up to the FSU game. “I’ve been here a long time and learned behind some great guys like Bryan Randall and Sean and Tyrod. I’ve watched them and made the most of my opportunity.

“Sean came up to me after I threw the touchdown and said, ‘I bet you didn’t wake up this morning thinking you were going to be a quarterback.’ I was just thankful I was ready.”

Be prepared – that’s a lesson he certainly taught the rest of the team with his performance against Florida State.

Glennon moves up list

Taylor’s injury opened the door for Glennon, another redshirt senior, to get some snaps, and Glennon, too, made the most of his opportunity. Behind him, the Hokies opened a 10-0 lead and a 13-10 advantage at halftime.

He completed 9-of-16 for 133 yards, and he rushed for a touchdown. More importantly, he didn’t throw any interceptions – a large reason Tech stayed in the game.

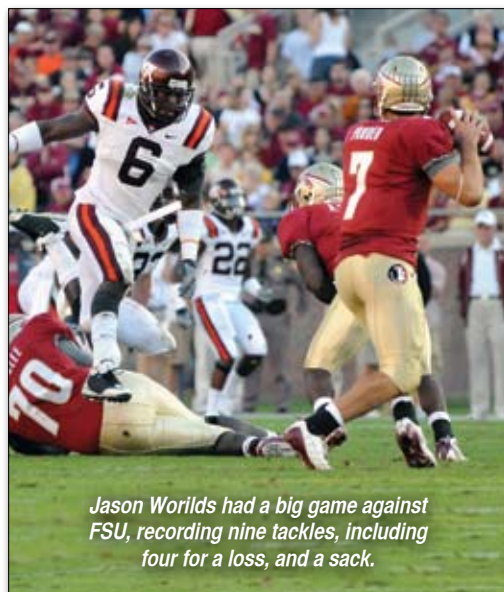
“I never lost confidence in myself,” Glennon said. “I wouldn’t have expected anything less. I know Tyrod’s been the guy, but I’ve always felt like if I were to go in, this offense wouldn’t be lacking anything. I could’ve made a few

more plays, but I thought for the most part, we were throwing the ball real well.”

Glennon moved up the Tech chart for career passing yardage. He now has 4,471 yards passing in his career heading into a game against Maryland, moving him past Jim Druckenmiller (4,383, 1993-96) and into fifth place all-time at Tech.

FSU 30, VT 20

Oct. 25th, 2008 • Tallahassee, Fla.



Jason Worlds had a big game against FSU, recording nine tackles, including four for a loss, and a sack.

The Virginia Tech Hokies lost their top two quarterbacks to injuries and didn't have enough to knock off No. 24 Florida State, falling 30-20 in an ACC game played in front of 81,876 fans at Doak Campbell Stadium in Tallahassee, Fla.

The loss continues the Hokies' hard luck in that city. Tech hasn't won in the Seminoles' hometown since 1974 – a span of six games.

Both Taylor and Glennon went down with ankle sprains. Taylor injured his on the first play of the game while being sacked by FSU's Toddrick Verdell. Glennon suffered his with

5:47 left in the third quarter while being sacked by the Seminoles' Dekoda Watson. Neither returned.

Tech led 13-10 at halftime, thanks to Glennon, who completed 9-of-16 for 133 yards and kept the ball moving. The Hokies had lost their lead when he went down and trailed 17-13 when Holt came into the game.

With Tech trailing 27-13, Holt guided the Hokies on a drive and threw a 4-yard touchdown pass to Smith with 8:26 remaining. But the Hokies couldn't get the ball back quickly, and Graham Ganon's field goal gave FSU a 10-0 point lead with 2:14 to go. Tech got no closer.

Other notes from the game:

- Glennon's 1-yard touchdown run in the first quarter marked the third rushing touchdown of his career.
- Josh Oglesby lost a fumble in the second quarter, marking just the second lost fumble for the season for the Hokies. It led to a field goal for the Seminoles. Dyrrell Roberts also lost a fumble and that led to an FSU touchdown.
- Devin Perez, a fullback, made the first start of his career.
- Jarrett Boykin's 41-yard reception in the second quarter marked a career long and served as Tech's second-longest reception of the season (Roberts, 62 yards against ECU). Boykin finished with four catches for 89 yards.

BC 28, VT 23

Oct. 18th, 2008 • Chestnut Hill, Mass.

Despite forcing five turnovers and jumping out to a quick lead, Tech could not hold on to it, nor rally late, in falling to Boston College 28-23 in an ACC game played at BC's Alumni Stadium. It marked just the Hokies' second ACC road loss – they also lost to BC in 2006.

Tech led 10-0 early, but BC scored 21 unanswered points and never trailed again. The Hokies cut into the lead late when Dustin Keys drilled a 45-yard field goal to make the score


28-23 with 6:32 to go in the game, but Tech didn't get the ball back until 1:08 was left.

Trying to muster one last scoring drive, Taylor lost a yard on first down and then threw incomplete on second down. On third down, he hit tailback Dustin Pickle for a 10-yard gain, setting up fourth-and-1 from the Tech 38. But Taylor's fourth-down pass to Roberts was off the mark and the Hokies turned the ball over on downs, cementing BC's win.

It was that type of evening for Tech's offense, which mustered 240 yards for the game. Taylor – who lost for the first time as a starting quarterback at Tech – completed just 12-of-27 for 90 yards, with one interception. The sophomore from Hampton, Va., did rush for 110 yards.

“Execution was the main problem,” Taylor said. “We just didn't execute the plays that were called. We had a tough time running the ball or getting anything going in the air. We just have to go back to the drawing board and fix up some of these little things that are hurting us.”

Other notes:

- Brett Warren picked off his second career pass and scored his first collegiate touchdown when he returned it 36 yards into the end zone just a couple of minutes into the game to give the Hokies a 7-0 lead.
- Macho Harris and Kam Chancellor also recorded interceptions in the game. Harris returned his 55 yards for a touchdown. It marked the fourth straight game in which he had intercepted a pass, becoming the first player since Carter Wiley in 1985 to do that.
- It also marked Harris' 13th career interception, a number that ties him for fourth place all-time at Tech. Chancellor's interception was his first of the season and the third of his career.
- Keys' consecutive streak of made field goals ended at 12. He misfired on a 44-yarder in the first half to snap the string. 



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FAMILY TRADITION

FOLLOWING THEIR UNCLE'S PATH, THE MARTIN BROTHERS SHARE CHILDHOOD MEMORIES AND GROWN-UP DREAMS *By Jimmy Robertson*

THE MARTIN FAMILY TRADITION

He sort of stole an old *Hokie Huddler* from 1988 out of his parents' house. The paper looked slightly faded and the edges were slightly frayed.

The article was about his uncle, with a black-and-white photo of him playing, a man who was a good player at Tech back in the day and an all-conference person – and a man who started him and his younger brother on this path. His family soon laminated that piece of paper carefully to preserve it. But this wasn't so much about preserving a worn piece of paper or an article, mind you. This was about preserving a *dream*, his dream and his brother's. So he taped it gingerly inside his locker, a reminder of where this dream started and that he and his brother are actually living it.

"Uncle Bobby is like a hero to us," Orion Martin said, referring to Bobby Martin, who played at Tech from 1986-89. "We didn't really know anyone else who played big-time college football like he did. Not where we grew up. It was kind of our dream to be like him and play football at Virginia Tech."

Orion and Cam Martin grew up as brothers, nephews, cousins and friends. They grew up with maroon blood gushing through their veins, but unlike most, theirs was tinged with

a bit of orange.

They grew up watching Uncle Bobby play football at Virginia Tech, though they barely remember the details given their youth at that point. They do remember rifling through his old media guides and game programs and newspaper articles, and at that young age, toddler age, actually, a dream reached an embryonic stage.

They wanted to play football at Virginia Tech, too.

And a family sewed together with undeniable love and uncharacteristic respect for each other helped them pursue it.

The court really isn't a court. It's a hard-scrabble patch of dirt adjacent to Grandma's unpretentious farmhouse. And it features just the perfect amount of space for a rugged game of three-on-three.

"Those kids have played so much basketball there," said David Martin, the father of Orion and Cam. "I bet that thing has sunk three feet."

The goal itself wasn't some shiny contraption, with an adjustable rim. Rather, it was plain and homemade, and much more durable than anything available at the local Wal-Mart.

This court served as the primary gathering spot for the Martin brothers and their cousins. That, and the field next to it, which the kids used as their personal football gridiron, a place where two-hand touch often morphed into a game of tackle.

The playground is part of a wonderful rural spot in Henry County, near Martinsville, that once served as the large farm of James and Kathryn Martin. James passed away many years ago, but he left each of his sons and daughters – seven of them in all – a small slice of this Americana to do with as they pleased. Six of them built homes there, each surrounding the main farmhouse, including David and Bobby. Together, this large piece of real estate off Flat Rock Road serves as their own little 'Martinsville.'

This is where Orion and Cam Martin grew up, and they buck the perception of the black student-athlete. Most think of the backgrounds of black student-athletes as inner city. Yet these two are country to the core. Mention the 'hood' to them and they think you're referring to the hood of Uncle Bobby's old pick-up.

They grew up playing with all their cousins. Kathryn Martin, the grand matriarch of this family, is the grandmother of 17.

"It was me, Cam and eight or 10 other cousins all outside playing," Orion said. "We played basketball on a dirt court and played tackle football out in Grandma's field. All the boys from the neighborhood would come up there. We played football and basketball pretty much all day.

"We were sheltered in a way. We were away from all the things you'd see in a city; all the violence and all the extra stuff that people experience growing up in an inner city. We didn't experience any of that. We grew up playing hide-and-go-seek in the barn and doing things like that. Most people don't know that, but that's how we grew up."

"It was fun," Cam said. "When I tell some people, they're jealous. Some people see their cousins two or three times a year. We had all our cousins right there, so we could go down the street and get enough people for a game of basketball or a football game. You get to see them whenever you feel like. It was really a lot of fun."

But it wasn't all fun and games for the Martins, not by a long stretch. Living on a farm more or less means working on a farm.

For the longest of time, the Martins raised cattle and also had a horse or two. The large barn near Grandma's house needed to be filled with hay every summer, and the fences needed constant repair after seeing perpetual head-butting from ornery bovines.

Uncle Bobby also dabbled in the logging business once he graduated from Tech. During the summers, he often wrestled Cam and Orion away from their beds – the two shared the same room for years – and hauled them into the woods for a day of cutting and splitting wood.

"I treated them like my own," Bobby said. "That's the way we do it around here. We're all raising each other's children. If I told them to do something, they did it just as if their dad told them. Same with my kids."

Their hands became calloused and then became as tough as leather. Their mindset became the same, too. At the end of the day, Bobby didn't always line the pockets of the boys' trousers with cash. Often, he'd just take them to the general store for a can of pop and a hot dog or a pack of nabs.

"Yeah, most of the time, I fed them or I'd take them to the movies every once in a while," Bobby said.

He paused for an instant.

"What did they tell you?" he laughed.

"Sometimes, he'd pay us, but he'd always find a way to take care of us," Orion said. "He'd always get us a Pepsi and a hot dog. He was what an uncle should be – a good, strong, Christian man looking out for his family."

Church plays a huge role in this family, in large part because David Martin juggles be-

ing an English teacher with being the associate pastor at their church. Every Sunday, the family loaded up and headed to God's house, though the two boys weren't always willing participants.

You see, church cut into the NFL pregame shows, much to the boys' dismay. But as they got older, they understood the importance of their faith. God led them to Him. He has a way of doing that, if one lets him.

It helped that Uncle Bobby went, too. Cam and Orion hold a special relationship with Bobby in large part because of Bobby's playing career at Tech. David Martin often loaded his boys in the car and made the 90-minute drive to Blacksburg on Saturdays in the fall to see Bobby play. Back in the days when Lane Stadium was half empty, videoboard didn't exist and *Enter Sandman* hadn't become Hokie Nation's national anthem.

They remember few of the details of Bobby's playing days. Bobby graduated from Tech in 1990, and at that time, Orion was 5 years old, Cam 3. Orion remembers a game against Florida State, and he also remembers his uncle downing a punt.

"He downed it near this end zone," Orion said, pointing to the north end zone. "But I don't remember who it was against, though."

The details matter little. They just know he played and they saw him, and they loved it. They loved it when he dragged them into the locker room after games and they got to high-five Will Furrer and others.

They saw others play, too, once Bobby departed. The family kept coming to games, not every game, mind you, but a couple a year, which only whetted the boys' zest for all things Hokie.

"We'd park in the lot out there next to



Orion Martin wears the same number as Bobby Martin - 90 - who is seen here forcing former West Virginia quarterback Major Harris to fumble the football in the Hokies' 12-10 upset of the Mountaineers in 1989.

Price's Fork [Road]," Cam said. "Then Orion and I would run across the Drill Field just to be sure that we didn't miss the kickoff. It was exciting. Man, those were some good days."

The dream kept swelling, and they knew that Bobby lived the dream that they ultimately came to want to live. So they'd do anything he did to live it. They saw him working hard, so they did the same, even if it meant cutting wood all day for a hot dog and a cold Pepsi.

"When you look back, Coach [Frank] Beamer has built Virginia Tech on hard work," Bobby said. "I know. I was part of it. And Cam and Orion have learned that here [on the farm]."

"Sometimes, you don't always work hard for a paycheck. Sometimes, you work hard because it's the right thing to do."

Orion and Cam Martin get their athletics genes honestly. Bobby Martin wasn't the only Martin to succeed on the gridiron. David Martin played at Ferrum for two years and then went on to play at William & Mary in the late 1970s. Also, Uncle Melvin, the oldest of the seven children of James and Kathryn Martin, played at William & Mary, too, his

time was during the mid-1970s.

Perhaps by fate, that trio of brothers ended up at George Washington High School in Danville, with David and Bobby teaching (Bobby also coached), and Melvin serving as the assistant principal. Rather than shuttle his kids to Martinsville for schooling, David just buckled his boys into his own car and hauled them to Danville, where they enjoyed a daily family reunion with dad and the uncles.

They'd hop in the car and ride home with me after practice and we'd be just like family."

They never complained because Martins simply don't complain. They just work. It's what you do while pursuing your dream.

Orion, older than Cam by two years, graduated in 2003, but his pursuit of playing at Tech nearly came to a halt. Frank Beamer's staff showed little interest in an undersized defensive end/tight end despite his abilities to make plays. So he enrolled as a day student at Hargrave the following fall and played on the prep school team in hopes of garnering some love from Blacksburg.

But he still couldn't win over their affection. So he committed to Norfolk State – the only school to make him an offer.

"I had just accepted that this was the best it was going to be," Orion said. "Tech didn't recruit me and I was hoping they would. By Christmas, they hadn't shown any interest at all. I didn't care where I went at that point. I had it in my mind that this was the best that I could do and I was going to make the most of it."

That January (2004), David and Denese

"We'd park in the lot out there next to Price's Fork [Road]. Then Orion and I would run across the Drill Field just to be sure that we didn't miss the kickoff. It was exciting. Man, those were some good days." – Cam Martin

The two played sports, but obviously cared more about football than any other. Uncle Bobby served as an assistant coach – and a resident taskmaster over his two nephews. He was hard on them, so hard, in fact, that a couple of GW's coaches pulled Bobby to the side after a practice and gingerly confronted him about his coaching style.

"Maybe I was a little hard on them, but I had to make sure they played because they earned it," Bobby said. "Not because they were my nephews. They never complained.

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Martin drove their oldest son and his belongings to Norfolk, with a nagging feeling that this wasn't quite right. When they got to the dorm, they nearly turned around and drove him back. It more resembled the Norfolk landfill than housing for the school's students, but Orion talked them out of it, telling them he wanted to give the school a shot.

David and Denese trusted their son and then made the trek back to Henry County, saying little along the way. That night, they got in their bed.

And the emotions came out.

"We both just sat there and cried," David said. "We knew that was not where he was supposed to be.

"I remember to this day him telling me, 'Dad, no one else wants me.' You can't begin to imagine how that felt. I knew as a father that was not the place for him."

Later that spring, Orion came to the same conclusion. The epiphany occurred in the Norfolk State weight room, of all places, following spring practice.

"One of the guys there was like, 'What am I doing here?'" Orion said. "I heard him and I thought, 'That's a good question. What am I doing here?'"

"I mean, I had done everything I was supposed to do. I went to Hargrave and I got my SAT scores. What was I doing here? I wanted to go to bowl games and play on ESPN. I wanted to play in Lane Stadium."

Orion Martin went home following that spring semester.

He never went back.

In contrast, Cam's recruiting was going rather swimmingly. Recruiters from all over the country dialed up the Martin residence for the purpose of wooing the smooth athletic skills of one of the best players to come out of that area in a while. But Cam never

filled his brother in on everything.

"I was more frustrated than he was," Cam said. "I didn't talk about it [Cam's recruitment] with him because I knew he wasn't in a place where he wanted to be. I didn't tell him much. I know he was happy for me, but I don't remember one time when we really talked about it."

Beamer and Kevin Rogers were among the many trying to lure Cam. Rogers practically established residency at George Washington High, but a Beamer visit to the school that spring changed things dramatically for the Martin family.

David Martin knew that Cam wanted to go to Tech and he knew Orion's dream was to be there, too. So he managed to corner Beamer on that visit and ask a favor.

"I told him about Orion and explained his situation, and asked him if he would give him a look," David said. "He said if Orion could get into school, then he'd be glad to give him a look."

"I had a spot as a walk-on, but nothing was guaranteed," Orion said. "I just wanted a shot. I didn't want to be one of those 'could've' guys. My mindset was if I go and be on the scout team for four or five years, then that's OK because I gave it my best shot. That's what I was thinking. If it didn't work out, it



wasn't meant to be. But I didn't want to go through life thinking, 'I could've played for Frank Beamer or Bud Foster.'"

Everything fell perfectly into place after that. Orion got into Tech and enrolled the following fall. Then he earned a scholarship in the spring. Cam committed to Tech before his senior season and then went out and enjoyed a superb senior campaign, earning All-Group AAA honors as a safety. He then enrolled at Tech the following fall (2005), and once again, the brothers were together, playing a game that they played so often in the

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cow pasture next to Grandma's farmhouse.

"I had mixed feelings about it at first," Cam said, with a smile. "We even shared a room in the dorm and I was thinking, 'I can't seem to get away from him.'"

"But we still live together now and I wouldn't change it for the world. As you get older, you realize your friends and relationships may fall apart, but your brother will always be there for you. He's always been there for me. I was too young and immature to see that at first, but I see it now."

him enough change to pave that packed-down patch of dirt known as a basketball court next to his Grandma's.

"No way," he said, laughing. "That's who we are."

For sure, he'll take that *Hokie Huddler* with him wherever he goes. Looking back, it's certainly funny how things come back around.

Nearly 20 years ago, Uncle Bobby was bringing his two nephews into the locker room after games to meet the players. Last year, Orion and Cam returned the favor,


bringing Bobby into the locker room.

Then they showed him that old *Hokie Huddler* article taped on Orion's locker.

"I had to turn away," Bobby said. "My eyes started tearing up. That was very humbling."

It was more than an article about a Virginia Tech football player. On the contrary, it sparked two young men to peer inside their beings and say 'Why not?'

It was a vision. It was a hope. It was a dream.

And it certainly has come true. 



"Tech is a gold mine for success. There isn't any reason why someone shouldn't be successful here at Tech and graduate. There's a great coaching staff, a great strength and conditioning staff and the academic people are great. If you come in here and do things the right way, there's no reason you shouldn't be successful here." – Orion Martin

The remainder of Orion Martin's career consists of a few games. He's been a two-year starter and gotten to play with his brother and in front of a loving family. He's played countless games on ESPN, enjoyed the delirious atmosphere at Lane Stadium a half a dozen times a year and participated in an Orange Bowl, a Chick-fil-A Bowl, a Gator Bowl and a Sugar Bowl. And he got engaged to a young woman named Jennifer Edwards, whom he met at church, in the process.

He's lived the dream.

"I think it's two things," Orion said of the keys to his success. "Putting God first in my life. I haven't always been the perfect example of a Christian, but I've tried to put Him first in everything I do, whether it's off the field or on the field."

"And Tech is a gold mine for success. There isn't any reason why someone shouldn't be successful here at Tech and graduate. There's a great coaching staff, a great strength and conditioning staff and the academic people are great. If you come in here and do things the right way, there's no reason you shouldn't be successful here."

Meanwhile, Cam has another season left at Tech, another year to live his dream, albeit without big brother attached at the hip.

"I've done it before back in high school," Cam said. "But it won't be the same. It'll be different."

"Just watching the two of them has been absolutely breathtaking," David Martin said. "It's been very rewarding and I thank God for it. We're just going to try and enjoy the ride these last few games."

The future is the unknown for Orion, who already holds a diploma from Tech. He harbors thoughts of getting into coaching, but he wants to pursue the NFL dream next.

If anything, an NFL contract would give



Cam Martin (top) and Orion Martin (90) have played football together at every level, but nothing has been able to topple the experience of playing together at Virginia Tech.



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TWO HALL OF FAMERS

HEADLINE TECH'S FIRST FEMALE FORUM ON SUCCESS

By Jimmy Robertson



Lisa Pikalek
Karlish

One looks like the javelin she once tossed, tall and slender, and talks quietly in a way that belies her success. The other one still looks like a volleyball player and resembles a CEO, seemingly confident in front of any crowd.

Both are mothers and yet still look like athletes, a strong defiance of Father Time. Both speak with a combination of wit and wisdom, a testament to their undeniable pursuit of education and success in the job arena. Both excelled academically and athletically at Virginia Tech, earning All-America honors in the classroom and in their respective sports.

And both graciously returned to campus recently.

Katie Ollendick, a former track superstar who will be inducted into the Virginia Tech Sports Hall of Fame in late November, and Lisa Pikalek Karlish, a former volleyball extraordinaire who is already in the Tech Hall of Fame, came back to Blacksburg in early October as guest speakers for the inaugural Female Athlete Success Forum held in the south stadium club at Lane Stadium. All of Tech's female student-athletes were required to attend.

The Nutrition and Performance Committee within the athletics department sponsored

the forum. That committee consists of Dr. Mike Gentry (assistant AD for athletic performance), Dr. Gary Bennett (sport psychology coordinator), Dr. Mark Rogers (sports therapist), Amy Freel (director of sports nutrition), Jamie Meyer (coordinator of strength and conditioning) and Katie Baer (athletic trainer). Together, they brought Ollendick and Karlish back to campus to speak to Tech's female student-athletes and to offer advice on how to succeed academically and athletically, and also professionally, once they leave Virginia Tech.

"In the past, we've brought in speakers who maybe have overcome an addiction or adversity," Gentry said. "While we recognize the value of doing that, we also want to bring in former student-athletes who were successful here and who have carried that success into their professional lives as well. Katie and Lisa were winners in everything they did here, and they're still winners. They've carried all the things you need to succeed over into their professional careers."

For sure, their resumes take a back seat to no one.

After going to UVa for her freshman year – "You do make mistakes and you can recover from them," Ollendick joked. – she returned to her hometown of Blacksburg and shined

in track and field at Tech for the next three years, earning All-America honors in the high jump her senior season. She also was an academic All-American, graduating with a 4.0 grade-point average, with a double major in human nutrition, foods and exercise, and psychology. She added a minor in chemistry for good measure.

Ollendick later got a master's degree in physical therapy at the University of North Carolina. She currently is pursuing a doctoral degree in physical therapy at UNC, while also working as a pediatric physical therapist at the Duke University Medical Center.

Karlish's resume is no less impressive. She earned All-Metro Conference honors all four years at Tech and still ranks as the school's all-time leader in kills with 2,770. She was a two-time academic All-American and graduated in 1993 with a 3.9 GPA – and also was a double major in sociology and psychology. She received her master's and her doctoral degrees from Duke in clinical psychology and currently runs an independent strategic consulting service in the Raleigh-Durham area.

The two spoke to Tech's female student-athletes, a contingent that numbers more than 200, but they focused on contrasting topics.

Ollendick spoke to an array of topics. She specifically addressed the issue of time management – a seemingly never-ending issue for all student-athletes. A majority of Tech's student-athletes find themselves juggling weightlifting sessions, practices, film sessions (in certain sports), classes and study hall, while also trying to find some semblance of a social life.

Ollendick herself is a resident expert in time management. In addition to working at Duke as a pediatric physical therapist, she takes online courses while working toward her doctoral degree, and she trains for and competes in triathlons.

And for good measure, she's the single mother of a 4-year-old daughter.

"Time is at a premium, so manage it well," she said, addressing the audience. "Learn how to manage your time and your resources. Learn how to multi-task and prioritize. Take all those pieces and put them into your daily life. Come up with a plan. Take an active role. Be proactive in knowing what's coming up and what's ahead."

She also emphasized remaining active in some form of athletics once graduation hits. She chose triathlons – a grueling test of physical endurance that includes a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride, and a 26.2-mile marathon – as a way to channel her athletic skills.

"We often identify ourselves as athletes,"

she said. "What do you do when you're phasing out of that and making that adjustment? I would suggest you stay active and continue competing in whatever you do that makes you tick. Don't just give it all up. You'll find that it helps not just in the physical sense, but also mentally. There are a lot of things out there. I do the triathlons and that's a way for me to challenge myself."

Karlish spoke specifically to the topic of teamwork, citing her volleyball teammates during her days at Tech as an example. They had a losing season her sophomore year, but won 28 and 26 matches, respectively, her final two years, finishing in a tie for first in the Metro Conference her senior season.

"Just because you have a team doesn't mean you have a 'real' team," Karlish said. "A real team is one where the results of the team are more than the sum of its parts. The 1980 men's hockey team – the "Miracle on Ice" – that was a real team. If you look at the individuals on that team, you'd never think they would have had the success they had. They weren't the most talented or the most experienced. But real teams bring forth extraordinary results from ordinary people."

Karlish stressed the importance of female student-athletes as leaders of teams. The world continues to become more complex, and as a result, the problems become more and more complex. Teams, rather than individuals, will be needed to solve these problems, and women possess the skills to be the leaders of these teams.

"Women tend to be much more focused on the overall success of the team than their own standing within the team," she said. "Their approach is much more democratic and more inclusive, and the problem solving is better in a team environment."

"You guys bring the best of both worlds as




Katie Ollendick addressed a large crowd of female student-athletes at the Female Forum for Success. She discussed a variety of topics, including time management and life after graduation.

you move into the future. You understand teams and the need to rely on each other to get things done. You have the confidence and competitive spirit to step up and lead when the chips are down. The world needs people like you who will be humble enough to know that a team is stronger than an individual and that you have the confidence to lead those teams to deliver the best it has to offer."

Both Ollendick and Karlish provided some light humor during their addresses. Ollendick told the story of injuring her ankle while celebrating after one of her high jumps, while Karlish gave the play-by-play on how she and her teammates got a tattoo at a

sketchy place off Price's Fork Road following their first-place finish in the Metro.

Overall, their advice resonated with the audience. But Karlish probably hit on the most important point of the forum.

"Be confident in yourself," she said. "We, as women, always tend to focus on what we're not. You all are so amazing just to be here, and in the moment, you don't take the time to realize it. You all belong here and you've all accomplished so much in life already that most people won't have the opportunity to do. Every once in a while, take stock in that. Pat yourself on the back. You should be proud." 



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What it's like to be ... Tech's head equipment manager

By Matt Kovatch

In addition to all of the new faces on the football field this season for the Hokies, another new thing has really stood out – what those players have been wearing. First, the team unveiled its new jerseys for the season opener against East Carolina in Charlotte. Then, the Hokies sported throwbacks for the Furman game and have worn those twice since. Tech even broke out orange jerseys for the first time since 1994 when it played Georgia Tech. What the Hokies wear is decided by head coach Frank Beamer and a senior player, but the man who makes it happen is Lester Karlin, Tech's head equipment manager for 31 seasons. Here's a little more about what it's like to be the man in charge of keeping the team looking sharp:

IT'S NOT A ONE-MAN OPERATION.

While Karlin might be one of the most well-known and longest-tenured employees in Tech athletics, he is quick to send credit toward his staff of student helpers. "First of all, I've got a grad student, Chris King, and eight undergrads and an intern who help me. They play a really, really big role. They know what needs to be done and when."

THE TEAM MIGHT FLY IN A CHARTERED PLANE, BUT ITS EQUIPMENT DOES NOT.

The team's equipment truck is the first thing to leave Blacksburg and the last thing to return, and in a season that includes trips to Miami, Tallahassee, Boston and Nebraska (over 7,500 miles for six road games), that can make things challenging. "We usually start our routine on the Sunday following a Saturday game. But the truck didn't get back until 10 p.m. on Sunday following the BC game, so I was here doing laundry until 12:30 a.m. Everything had to get taken to the tailor

shop first thing Monday morning because we had to load up again on Wednesday to get to Florida State."

EQUIPMENT SERVES MANY PURPOSES, AND ONE OF THOSE PURPOSES IS TO LOOK GOOD.

Nearly all players besides quarterbacks and kickers wear gloves nowadays, and many wear visors on their helmets, as well as armbands and other accessories. Much of it is worn for a reason, but it's just more to keep track of for Karlin. "Whatever they see the pro players wearing, they all like to wear that, too – especially the visors. Sometimes a running back at the bottom of a pile might get poked in the eye, but I think most of them wear those for show – that's my opinion."

possible these days. "A long time ago when it got cold, we used to get gardening gloves and that's what they used to wear. But that was way back in the dark ages of football."

THE JOB MAKES YOU FEEL LIKE ONE OF THE GUYS.

Karlin began his career before he ever took a class in college (he graduated from Tech in 1974), and his favorite part of the job is a simple one. "I don't feel old, because hanging around these kids, you stay young. I just enjoy doing it. I did it for track and football in high school as a way to get involved, and it just stuck. A lot of people have asked me how long I'll continue, but I don't know. Five, six, seven years ... who knows? As long as I can keep doing it and feeling young."

NIKE HELPS TECH OUT, BUT TECH HELPS NIKE OUT.


All of the Hokies' athletics teams are supplied with the latest Nike gear, but don't think it's a one-way street.

"Nike sends stuff to us all the time to test out for them. Usually at bowl time, they will give us some shoes to try out. During the past couple of years, I've tried out a lot of things. We have a very good relationship with Nike. They come to us for advice as much as we rely on them."

THINGS HAVE CHANGED A LOT SINCE THE '70S.

Uniforms and equipment have evolved greatly over the years, but not everything can be seen by simply looking at photos. "Everything is a lighter weight now – the helmets, the shoulder pads. The pants we have are almost nothing now – you can almost see right through them. The material stretches so much that they're just skintight on the players now." Then there are the gloves, which offer a sticky grip that makes one-handed catches so

EQUIPMENT ROOM? TRY EQUIPMENT WAREHOUSE.

Speaking of Nike, Karlin said he bought almost 900 pairs of shoes from them this season. Other staggering numbers include: 2,060 pairs of socks, 1,340 pairs of gloves, 700 mouthpieces, 564 footballs, 500 "VT" helmet decals, 460 game jerseys, 200 practice jerseys, 46 offensive linemen knee braces and 36 new pairs of shoulder pads. 

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- Always be respectful and aware of the fans around you. Make sure they can enjoy the game too.

"Their crowd at Virginia Tech is exemplary of what you want crowds to be. That was the most sportsmanlike group I've been around in 30 years."

– Bobby Bowden, Coach, Florida State football

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DE JONGE'S HUGE YEAR ON NATIONWIDE TOUR ALMOST COMPLETE

By Jimmy Robertson

Brendon de Jonge came into this year with rather lofty goals.

But not even he could have expected this.

He won his first tournament as a professional. He found out he's going to be a father for the first time. And thanks to the way he's played all year, he'll have plenty of money to pay for the kid's education.

That's because de Jonge, a former stand-out golfer at Tech, ranks at the top of the Nationwide Tour's money list by more than \$40,000 heading into the tour's final event of the season (the Nationwide Tour Championship at TPC Craig Ranch in McKinney, Texas on Nov. 6-9th) after playing consistent, if not spectacular, golf all year long. He's amassed more than \$415,000 in earnings, or nearly half of his career earnings since he became a pro back in 2003.

Oh, and there's one other thing. He locked up his PGA Tour card for the 2009 season – this after losing his card following his debut season on the PGA Tour in 2007.

"It's been a very rewarding season," de Jonge said shortly before taking the course to play in the WNB Golf Classic in Midland, Texas, on Oct. 9-12th. "It's been pretty exciting. I've been playing consistent golf all year. That's been the thing. I really don't have anything to complain about. I'm happy with where my game is."

Consistency doesn't begin to describe his game with justice. He's played in 27 events so far this year, making the cut in 21 of those. He finished in the top 25 on 15 occasions and the top 10 on nine occasions. He finished in the top three in three tournaments, claiming second place in one and winning the other.

His first career win as a pro came at the Xerox Classic in Rochester, N.Y., on Aug. 14-17th. He blistered the course at 13-under-par, shooting a final-round 69 to win by four strokes over Jarrod Lyle, an Australian who had already won twice and was atop the Nationwide Tour money list at the time.

"Brendon's too good a player to be hanging around here," Lyle said in a PGATour.com article. Lyle, like de Jonge, played on the PGA Tour in 2007, but failed to retain his privileges. "We're both headed to where we belong."

De Jonge probably knew it was his time to claim top prize when he found himself

in the bunker off the tee on the reachable par-4, No. 12. Faced with a horrible buried lie, he blasted out and the ball found the bottom of the cup for an eagle. He recorded pars the rest of the way in to secure his first victory.

"That was very nice," de Jonge said of his victory. "Obviously, that's what we all play for. That was big for me. I had given myself a bunch of chances to win, but I'd never been able to finish it. So getting that win was big for me. Plus, it locked up my [PGA Tour] card for me."

The top 25 money earners on the Nationwide Tour automatically receive their PGA Tour cards for the upcoming season. He won \$108,000 for his victory at the Xerox Classic, and that all but assured he would be heading back to the PGA next season.

He hopes to redeem himself after a shaky 2007 on that tour. He played in 26 events, but made the cut just 12 times. He did record two top-10 finishes, and overall, pocketed nearly \$450,000.

"It [the PGA Tour] was pretty much what I expected," de Jonge said. "I played well at the end once I got out of my own way. You're out there and you're around all these great golfers, and you can let it overwhelm you. But at the end of the day, it's still just golf. Once I realized that, I played a lot better."

"In a way, last year was a humbling experience. After the season, I sat down and thought about it, and maybe going back on the Nationwide Tour was the best thing for me. I needed to learn how to win. That was a big thing for me, so in the end, everything has worked out for the best."

De Jonge credits a 'tightening' of all aspects of his game as the key to his success. But a look at the Nationwide Tour stats is quite revealing. He ranks first on the tour in birdies (399), second in putting average (1.736), third in putts per round (28.92) and fifth in birdie average (4.11). As a result, he ranked fourth in scoring average (69.84).

Maybe the old saying 'Drive for show, putt for dough' rings true.



"Yeah, I've putted well, but that can be misleading," he said. "You have to hit it on the green and close to the hole to putt well and make a bunch of birdies, and I've done that."

"I've really made it a point to have a good all-around game. The areas I was weak in, I've gotten much better. I've been very consistent with my game, and if you're consistent, you're going to put yourself in position to do well."

That type of game figures to carry over to the PGA Tour. On the PGA Tour, the crowds are bigger and the money is better than the

goal, as the season ends in early November. Then, he plans on taking some time off and spending it with his wife, Mary, at the couple's home in Charlotte. He also hopes to maybe venture to a football game in Blacksburg at some point in November. He and former Tech teammate Johnson Wagner (and Wagner's wife) both live in Charlotte and both like to get up to Blacksburg at least once every fall for a football game. Both went to the Tech-East Carolina game in Charlotte in late August.

Nationwide Tour, winning two events on that tour in 2006 and ultimately earning his PGA Tour card for the 2007 season.

"His play has really inspired me," de Jonge said. "He's been a motivation for me. He hasn't really given me any flat-out advice, but I've learned a lot by watching him over the years. He's had a little more success than me, but our careers have taken similar paths."

"I'm just going to try and continue what I've been doing. My game is good and I'm playing at a high level. I've put in the hours



"In a way, last year [2007] was a humbling experience. After the season, I sat down and thought about it, and maybe going back on the Nationwide Tour was the best thing for me. I needed to learn how to win. That was a big thing for me, so in the end, everything has worked out for the best."

– Brendon de Jonge

Nationwide Tour, but other than that, there's not much of a difference.


"There really isn't," de Jonge said. "If you take out the top 15 or 20 golfers on the PGA Tour, then the two are about the same. Both are really competitive."

De Jonge hopes to finish the season as the Nationwide Tour's money leader. That's the

De Jonge, who won medalist honors at the 2003 Big East Championships his senior year and earned second-team All-America honors that season, closely follows Wagner's career. Wagner, finishing up his second year on the PGA Tour, won for the first time on the PGA Tour this season, but like de Jonge, he started his professional career on the

and the practice necessary, and I feel like I'm good enough to be on the PGA Tour."

Time will tell, of course. But no matter what transpires on the golf course, 2009 will get off to a great start for him and his wife once the little one arrives.

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GRAHAM GIVING TO CINCY ON THE FIELD AND OFF IT

By Jimmy Robertson

Shayne Graham works two jobs these days.

With one, he gets paid extremely well. With the other, he gets handsomely rewarded.

As most Tech fans know, Graham is still kicking it in the NFL, serving as the kicker for the Cincinnati Bengals. It's a job that he performs with the utmost precision, holding nearly every Cincinnati kicking record after joining the organization in 2003 and ranking as the most accurate active kicker in the NFL (85.8 percent). He also ranks second all-time among kickers ever to play in the NFL.

But Graham's accomplishments on the field pale drastically to the work he does off it.

The former Pulaski County [Va.] High School standout has become the king of charitable projects in the Queen City. Some of his endeavors include the following:

- Cincinnati Freestore/Foodbank – He serves as a board member and has helped raised more than \$100,000 toward providing meals for the hungry in the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky area. He found a sponsor that donates \$300 for every field goal that he makes to the Freestore/Foodbank, and he invites three children for every field goal made to an end-of-the-year banquet at the Cincinnati Hotel.

- Kicks for Kids – He has teamed with former Cincinnati kickers Doug Pelfrey – who started this organization – and Jim Breech and other corporate partners to provide area at-risk children with opportunities to pursue their dreams. This includes children who are mentally and physically challenged. With Graham helping, the organization has provided nearly \$1.25 million in assistance since 1995 and recently purchased 16 acres of land in Ohio to build a youth complex to reach even more kids.

- Shayne Graham Foundation – In August, his own foundation formed a partnership with the Cincinnati Ronald McDonald House. He and a team of kids built a go-kart in the shape of a football to participate in a soapbox race that helped raise money for the cause.

- Strikeouts for Troops – This organization was founded by San Francisco Giants pitcher Barry Zito as a way to assist America's war-wounded with 'comforts of home.' Graham read about this and approached Zito, wanting

to help. He became the first NFL player to hop on board, pledging \$300 for every field goal made this season to the organization. Helping the troops ranks high on Graham's list of priorities. His father, Tom Graham, served in Vietnam, and Shayne Graham often visits V.A. hospitals in Virginia and Cincinnati.

For all that work within the community, he was named the Bengals' nominee for the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year last year – an honor that ultimately went to Jason Taylor, then of the Miami Dolphins.

"I've really always wanted to be involved in the community," Graham said. "But until I got to Cincinnati, I was never in one place long enough to get involved.

"Now I am and I enjoy it. I would not have gotten to where I am without the help of others. My family's always supported me and I have had great coaches and great teammates. Since I've been here, I wanted to make this place my home and I want to help the people within this community. I've started my own foundation and we've gotten involved in 45-50 different events this year already."

The Shayne Graham Foundation (www.shaynegraham.com) is a non-profit organization that provides resources to under served children and other charitable initiatives. The mission is simply to lend assistance to those in need and be an organization that makes a lasting impression, empowers those who want to make a difference, and strengthens communities.

Even with a hectic schedule off the field, Graham makes sure to get plenty of practice time in to excel on it. This season marks his sixth in Cincinnati and he represents the model of consistency. He's made 163 of 190 field-goal attempts for his career, a success rate of 85.8 percent.

"I think just being consistent every day and with every kick has helped me the most," Graham said. "I'm not the type of person who gets down when I miss a kick and I don't get too excited when I make one.

That approach has been working well for me."


Graham finally got his big break right before the 2003 season after bouncing around with a couple of teams. He spent part of 2002 with the Carolina Panthers after John Kasay went down with an injury. But the Panthers decided to go with Kasay the following season, and Graham found himself looking for a job.

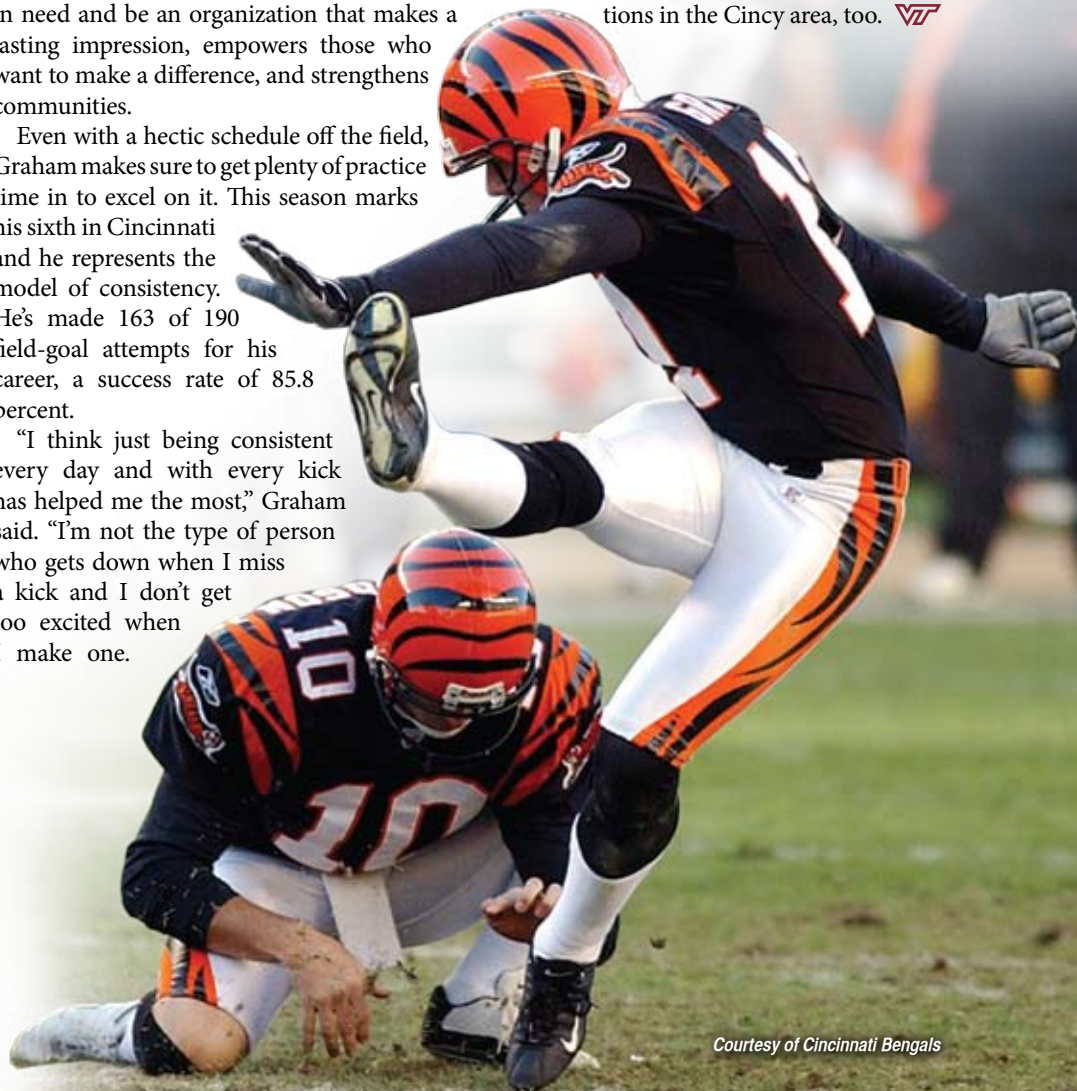
"I really hadn't been in a competitive situation no matter how well I had kicked," he said. "In the NFL, teams kind of go with the guy who has experience, the guy they know. John Kasay was a guy who had been around forever and had proven himself, so I understood.

"I was just hoping to catch a break at some point because I knew I had the confidence to kick in this league. I never had a lack of confidence. It was just a matter of opportunity, and once I got it, I prepared myself to make the best of it."

In 2003, Darrin Simmons, a Panthers' special teams coach, took the job as the special teams coach in Cincinnati. He encouraged the Bengals to sign Graham, and Graham's been getting in his kicks ever since. In 2005, he made his first Pro Bowl.

"I've really been comfortable here," he said. "Everything has worked out."

And not just for him. It's worked out quite well for a lot of local charities and organizations in the Cincy area, too. 



Courtesy of Cincinnati Bengals

HOKIES IN THE PROS

(As of Nov. 3rd)



ARIZONA CARDINALS

25 Eric Green -

The former Tech cornerback has started every game for the Cardinals this season. He has 23 tackles (19 solo), and an interception, the second of his career. A year ago, he started 11 games for the Cardinals and finished with 51 tackles (47 solo).



BALTIMORE RAVENS

Justin Harper -

Harper, a seventh-round pick of the Ravens, stuck with Baltimore throughout training camp, but was dropped during the last series of cuts before opening day. Still, he signed with the Ravens' practice squad and probably will spend the rest of the season there.



BUFFALO BILLS

93 Chris Ellis - Ellis,

whom the Bills took in the third round of April's NFL Draft, went into this season as a back-up at the end spots. He was not ac-

tivated for the first five games, but the Bills activated him for the sixth game (he did not play) and he played sparingly in the next two games, losses to the Miami Dolphins and the New York Jets.



CAROLINA PANTHERS

50 James Anderson -

Anderson went into his third season with the Panthers as a back-up at the weakside linebacker spot. He was not activated for the first six games this season, but has played in every game since. He recorded a solo tackle in the Panthers' win over the Saints, his first and only tackle this season.

87 Jeff King - King serves as the starter at tight end for the Panthers, and has started seven of eight games this season. He has 13 catches for 122 yards, an average of 9.4 yards per catch, but hasn't gotten into the end zone as of yet.



CHICAGO BEARS

34 Kevin Jones - After

spending four injury-plagued years with the Lions, Jones signed with the Bears in the offseason, and has played in seven games

thus far. He has rushed for 109 yards on 33 carries to rank second on the team.



CINCINNATI BENGALS

17 Shayne Graham -

Graham has started seven games with the Bengals this season, missing two games because of a groin injury. He made 11 of his first 12 field-goal attempts to start the season for the Bengals, with a long of 45 yards, and all of his eight extra-point attempts. A year ago, he made 31 of 34 field-goal attempts, with a long of 48, and all 37 of his extra-point attempts.



CLEVELAND BROWNS

27 Nick Sorensen -

Sorensen, now in his eighth NFL season, participates mostly on special teams for the Browns, while also serving as a back-up at the safety spots. He has played in every game thus far, and has 14 tackles (12 solo) and a half of a sack.



DENVER BRONCOS

60 John Engelberger

- Engelberger, a former defensive lineman at Tech, starts for the Broncos at end and

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started the first six games this season before missing a game with an injured knee. He has played in all seven games and has 15 tackles (14 solo) and a sack.

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 season. Powell tore his Achilles tendon during an offseason workout and will miss the entire season.

19 Eddie Royal - Royal started the first five games for Denver before missing the sixth game with an injured ankle. He returned to the starting lineup and has caught 46 passes for 461 yards and two touchdowns. He's also returned 10 punts for an average of 13.8 yards per return and rushed three times for 15 yards. And he returned five kickoffs for an average of 35 yards per return.



GREEN BAY PACKERS

37 Aaron Rouse -

Rouse, a third-round pick in 2007, moved into the starting role at free safety after two games and has started four of the Packers' seven games this season. His shining moment of the season came in the Packers' win over Indianapolis in which he intercepted a pass and returned it 99 yards for a touch-

down. He has 34 tackles (25 solo) and the one interception so far this season.



HOUSTON TEXANS

11 André Davis - Davis, now in his seventh NFL

season, serves as the third receiver for the Texans after signing a long-term deal with them in the offseason and has played in six of the Texans' eight games this season - he missed two games because of an injured finger. He has caught seven passes for 123 yards and returned 26 kickoffs for 576 yards, an average of 22.2 yards per return.

75 Brandon Frye - Frye went into this season hoping to get some playing time, but the Texans waived him right before the season began. They signed him to their practice squad on Sept. 4th, however, and he'll probably spend the season there.

76 Duane Brown - Brown went to the Texans in the first round of this past April's NFL Draft and started every game at left tackle for the team. He continues to fair pretty well - he's only committed two penalties thus far.

52 Xavier Adibi - The Texans drafted former Tech linebacker Xavier Adibi back in April and he plays as a reserve at linebacker.

He's played in one game so far, seeing action on special teams in the Texans' loss to Jacksonville.



JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

20 Pierson Prioleau

- Prioleau signed with the Jaguars in the off-season to be a back-up at both safety spots and to play on special teams after spending three seasons with the Redskins mainly in a similar role. He has played in every game thus far for the Jaguars, starting one of those, and has 18 tackles (17 solo) on the season.

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

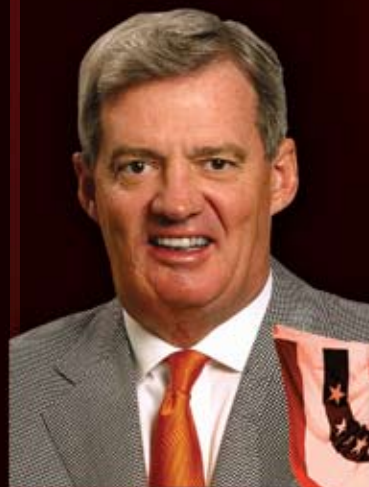
24 Brandon Flowers -

Flowers has picked up where he left off when he decided to leave Tech following his redshirt junior season, starting the first five games for Kansas City and seven of the first

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eight. The second-round pick came up big in the Chiefs' loss to the Jets when he picked off two Brett Favre passes and returned one 91 yards for a touchdown. He has 37 tackles (31 solo) on the season and the two interceptions.



MIAMI DOLPHINS

19 Ernest Wilford - Wilford, Tech's all-time leading receiver, signed a big deal with the Dolphins in the offseason, but has gotten off to a slow start. He had caught just one pass for 15 yards and has played in just three of eight games for Miami, which did not activate him for the other five games.



NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

61 Matt Lehr - Lehr's contract was terminated in early September, but the Saints re-signed him shortly thereafter and the former Tech offensive lineman started at guard in the Saints' 37-32 win over San Diego. The nine-year veteran has played in five games so far this season.



NEW YORK JETS

17 David Clowney - Clowney, now in his second season, was activated for the first time this season when the Jets activated him for their game against Kansas City. He played in that game, but did not catch a pass. The former Tech receiver landed with the Jets last fall after being drafted by Green Bay, and he spent the remainder of the season on the Jets' practice squad.



OAKLAND RAIDERS

64 Jake Grove - The former Tech center is now playing in his fifth season with Oakland and starts for the Raiders at center, beating out John Wade for the starting job. He has started every game thus far, bouncing back from last season when he played in just seven games, missing the majority of the season because of a knee injury.

23 DeAngelo Hall - Hall starts at cornerback for Oakland and has started every game this season. He struggled when matched up with former Tech receiver Eddie Royal during the teams' meeting earlier this season, but he has recorded 48 tackles (43 solo) on the year to go with a half of a sack and three interceptions.



SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

55 Darryl Tapp - After starting all of last season, the former Tech defensive end finally broke into the starting lineup this season after playing as a reserve in the first five games. He has 29 tackles (22 solo) so far this season and a sack. He recorded 49 tackles, including 41 solo stops, and seven sacks a year ago. He also intercepted a pass.




SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

84 Josh Morgan - Morgan, a sixth-round pick of the 49ers in April's NFL Draft, had a breakout game against the Giants when he caught five passes for 86 yards, including a 30-yarder that went for a touchdown - his first in the NFL. That performance earned him the starting nod against Seattle in the 49ers' next game - the first start of his career. He has caught 11 passes for 160 yards and the one score, and he also plays on special teams. He has four tackles on special teams, including three solo ones.



TENNESSEE TITANS

22 Vincent Fuller - The former Tech defensive back continues to flourish in Tennessee for the undefeated Titans, having seen action in every game, including the first start of his career. He has 34 tackles, including 24 solo stops, and he has recovered a fumble and forced a fumble. He served as the Titans' nickel back a year ago and he returned two interceptions for touchdowns.

Jason Murphy - Murphy, a former Tech guard, ended up being cut by the Titans in late August. But the Titans signed him to their practice squad a couple of days later and he'll probably spend the rest of the season there. 



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By Matt Kovatch

LEASER, FRESHMEN AT THE CENTER OF

Even on the day before Halloween, it still remained to be seen. Had the Virginia Tech volleyball team's success to that point been a trick? Or was it a treat?

Tech fans still have the month of November to find out, but the Hokies entered All Hallows Eve in a three-way tie for first place in the ACC with an 8-3 league record (17-5 overall), and that's certainly nothing to make faces at – especially considering that Tech finished 2007 in eighth place at 8-14.

And much like Halloween is characterized by youngsters in search of candy, the 2008 Hokies have also been driven by a group of youngsters – seven freshmen who have revitalized the program.

At the center of it all has been Erin Leaser, a rookie from Allentown, Pa., who has gradually seized the setting job – volleyball's equivalent of a quarterback or a point guard – since arriving in Blacksburg over the summer.

But ask head coach Chris Riley, or even Leaser herself, and not even they saw this type of success coming. Besides, Tech already had a two-year incumbent setter,

junior Michelle Lang, and at best, she and Leaser would be splitting the duties.

"I came in not expecting to play very much," Leaser remembered. "I was just going to work hard during summer school with open gyms and lifting, and I just planned on preparing for two years before starting in my junior year."

"There really wasn't a lot of pressure on her," Riley agreed. "We didn't expect too much, but she's really come in and settled our offense."

But something happened during the second session of summer school, which nearly the entire team showed up for. The seven freshmen (Leaser, Alison Blasingame, Kirsty Blue, Kirsten Higareda, Justine Record, Jenn Wiker and Jessica Woody) took to each other, and in turn, the rest of the Hokies. They developed a connection and a chemistry that has eased the transition from high school to college.

"Coming in for the summer helped a lot because that was when we really got to know each other," Leaser said. "We were always with each other playing, lifting and eating.

We even had classes together. I think that really gave us an advantage heading into the season because we basically had a two-month head start."

While Leaser and Record, an outside hitter who is among the team leaders in kills, have made a huge impact in Tech's matches, don't think that it is solely the newcomers who have sparked the Hokies' turnaround. Tech's veterans, like Kristen Cunningham, Sarah Munoz, Jill Gergen, Betsy Horowitz, Taylor Parrish and Felicia Willoughby ("Felicia is the go-to hitter for me," Leaser said. "She's one of those players who has a lot of drive, and when we're in tight situations, she'll look at me and say, 'Erin, give me the ball.' I know that she's ready for it and that she will get the job done for us.") are still the main weapons in the Hokies' arsenal. But they can't develop those weapons without quality practice time, and that's where the freshmen come in.

"It's obviously still a work in progress, but the freshmen have brought a different level of attitude and all-around volleyball skill that we haven't really had here in such a big class," Riley said. "They've allowed us to be

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VOLLEYBALL'S RESURGENCE



Setter Erin Leaser is just one of the seven freshmen who have aided in the Hokies' improvement this year.

more consistent on both sides of the net in practice so that we're competing against ourselves and pushing to get better and better every day. They're all taking their time, making their progression as a group and pulling our team along with them."

"I think we all contribute so much to practice every day," Leaser agreed. "We really add to the overall chemistry of the team."

As big of a role as talent plays in the success of any team, a good mental approach is just as important, and that's something that the Hokies are developing as well. Riley said the team got caught doing a little bit of scoreboard watching once it realized it was in first place, and that led to back-to-back losses against Duke and Florida State. But the Hokies bounced back with a win against Miami on Oct. 25th to get back on track.


One might think that late-September upsets of Georgia Tech and Clemson – the two teams predicted to finish atop the ACC before the season – might have been the highlights of the year, but Leaser cites the Miami match.

"I think the Georgia Tech and Clemson games were really exciting, but I think the win against Miami was the best feeling that I've had so far," she said. "We had just come off of two losses and we weren't really playing as a team. We were losing confidence, but I think that win was the best thing for us."

While that might sound like coach-speak, it's that level-headedness that has made Leaser one of the keys to Tech's success this season.

"Erin has really come in and settled our offense," Riley said. "She brings a calmness to what we're doing that allows our offense to run smoothly and our players to do their job. She makes good decisions and plays a consistent ball-control game, and that's what has really helped us take it to the next level."

The Hokies are still figuring out what that level is, and whatever it ends up being in 2008, expect it to be higher in 2009.

"We've got a great group with these freshmen," Riley concluded. "And we've also got a great group of girls coming in next year who will be equally as good – not as many – but just as talented, if not more so. We've got a great, young nucleus of players who are going to be able to bring this program to another level. What that level is, we'll have to see, but it will be better than it's been before – that's for sure." 

(See next page for more on the seven freshmen)

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THE VOLLEYBALL FRESHMEN TELL ALL

# Name:	17 Alison Blasingame	18 Kirsty Blue	16 Kirsten Higareda	5 Erin Leaser	7 Justine Record	13 Jenn Wiker	9 Jessica Woody
Position:	Outside Hitter	Middle Blocker	Libero	Setter	Outside Hitter	Outside Hitter	Libero
Hometown:	Yorktown, Virginia	Geneva, Florida	Woodbridge, Virginia	Allentown, Pennsylvania	Redwood City, California	Charlotte, North Carolina	Rowlett, Texas
							
What you miss about home:	Being close to the beach!	The beach	My boyfriend	My friends	Woodside Deli, Cowells and Nelson Love West End Market	Warm weather	The landscape – it's a lot different than here
What you like about VT:	Beautiful scenery	The changing seasons and colorful leaves	A Main Street and a bus system	School spirit is everywhere		Mountains	The potential for a lot of snow
You may not know:	I was born in Rome! (New York)	I've won two gold medals in hot dog eating contests	I'm ambidextrous	I'm ambidextrous	I have seven birthmarks	I'm 6'3" but the shortest in my family	I got my blonde hair from my dad
Last movie you saw:	Mamma Mia!	Mamma Mia!	Max Payne	Mamma Mia!	Pineapple Express	Eagle Eye	Eagle Eye
Superstition:	Paint my nails before games	Hold hands with Jenn in every huddle	I'm always first in line on the bench	Do the same thing each day before a home game	I don't have any	I have to say goodnight before going to bed	I don't have any
Your bad habit:	I'm a sore loser	Raising my pinky when I drink	Biting my nails	Pulling at my spandex	I don't have any	Biting my nails	Perfectionist
For one day I would like to be:	Bill Gates	Marilyn Monroe	Jenn Wiker	Frank Beamer	Audrey Hepburn	Donald Trump	My sister Rachel
Favorite meal:	London broil from West End	Cornbread from West End, sushi from Poor Billy's	Filet mignon	Chicken, mashed potatoes and cornbread	West End steak medium rare	Barbeque with mac and cheese	Steak with mashed potatoes
3 things I would do before I die:	Travel to Europe, conquer my fear of roller coasters, meet Tom Brady	Skydive, go to Greece, meet T.I. (rapper)	Bungy jump, go to Europe, see the pyramids	Live in Ireland, meet Brett Favre, see a Lil' Wayne concert	Skydive, travel the world, climb Half Dome with my dad	Go on a shopping spree, be on TV, go to Hawaii	Skydive, scuba dive, hang glide
Your 'welcome to the NCAA' moment:	First time getting up for 6:30 a.m. lifting	Coming to summer school and staying through December without going home	Not being as good at serve receiving anymore	Coming to Summer Session II	Coming to Summer Session II	Coming to summer school after only two weeks of summer	Early-morning lifting
Favorite pastime:	Listen to music	ANYTHING	Bowling	Swimming	Sleeping	Shopping	Go to church, hang out with friends and family, go to movies
Your one word describing...							
Blasingame:	---	Food	Bobble	Hot chocolate	Food	Sketchy	Bobblehead
Blue:	Apple-lover	--	Oohh	Rap	Apples	Healthy	Apples
Higareda:	Little	Crazy	---	Little	Little	Tiny	Tiny
Leaser:	Swagger	Frank Beamer	Confident	--	Swag	Smooth	Subtle
Record:	Confused	Questions	Scatterbrained	Spacey	--	Clueless	Dazed
Wiker:	Goofball	Oooooooo!	6'5"	Bro	Funny	--	Crazy roomie!
Woody:	Scholarly	Smiling	Gazelle	Studious	Giving	Studious	--
Dish some dirt on a fellow freshmen:	Jenn gets really heated when I beat her at Mario Kart 64, which is always.	Frank Beamer, if you are reading this, please come to one of our games and make a sign for Erin Leaser (#5). She'd absolutely lose it.	Kirsty has way too many apples in her fridge.	One of the freshmen is really good at toilet-papering a room :)	No response	Alison freaked out when I wrote her a fake note from a "stalker."	Jenn has some crazy, but funny, songs on her iTunes list, and she sings and dances to all of them.

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ADVERSITY BREEDS CHARACTER

What a difference a year makes. The 2007 Virginia Tech men's soccer team made school history by advancing to the national semifinals, but the 2008 squad has been stuck at the bottom of the ACC for the entire season. What's been the reason for the downturn? James Gilson, a junior from Glenwood Lake, N.Y., who led the team in goals (six), assists (four), points (16) and shots (33) at the end of October, recently sat down to discuss the mindset of the Hokies as they wrap up the fall campaign and begin to prepare for a turnaround in 2009.

IHS: The season hasn't quite gone the way you would've liked. Did you guys know it would be a tougher struggle or has it been kind of a shock to you?

JG: "We knew it was going to be tough coming in because we lost so many starters. We

JAMES GILSON OFFERS HIS THOUGHTS ON THE '08 MEN'S SOCCER SEASON

By Matt Kovatch

don't have a whole lot of older guys either, so we knew it was going to be tough to acclimate the younger guys to the whole culture. We had those things going against us. We could tell in the spring that it was going to be hard for the new guys coming in to mesh with the team because we were low on numbers. It's especially tough for the younger guys because they had to mature so quickly – we needed them to play. Some of them had to become key players right away, which is hard to do. Some liked the challenge and took it on, while others kind of went by the wayside."

IHS: What's been your impression of the newcomers? Do they have what it takes?

JG: "There is a lot of skill in the freshman class – more skill than any of the other classes I've seen. Having been a freshman two years ago, I know how hard it is to come onto the

field with older guys who are expecting a certain level of play. It's hard to analyze what is soccer ability and what is nerves or stress, but they all give 100 percent and are trying to learn, and that's really all you can ask for out of freshmen."

IHS: Another difficulty has been season-ending injuries to key guys like Charlie Campbell and Alexander Baden. How rough has that made things?

JG: "That's been really frustrating. We already knew that this year was going to be tough, and then we lost Alex in the spring – he is our key component in the back line. But then we said, 'OK, maybe someone will step up. At least we still have something going forward. We still have Charlie.' And then Charlie got hurt in the first game of the season. It was like, 'Jeez, nothing is going our way.' It would've been easy to throw in the towel and make excuses, but that's not what we wanted the season to be like. As much as those missing players are in the back of your mind, you have to keep going forward and moving on."

IHS: It obviously hurts to have lost a scoring threat from last year like Patrick Nyarko, but what about all of the other pieces that didn't return from last season?

JG: "We lost a lot of key components and some things that you can take for granted. For example, Georg Zehender didn't score a ton of goals, but you never really know how valuable it is to have someone switching the ball and calming the game down. He was so good at slowing things down and keeping possession. Ben Nason was just a leader who came up with huge plays, which is kind of what we're missing this year. When he was on the field, you always thought you had a chance to win. Scott Spangler was just a workhorse who could get anything done and came up big in big games. Marcus Reed could play any position on the field, which is a huge asset to have. All the foreigners – like Robert Edmans, Stefan Hock and Markus Aigner – were awesome players, and our bench was so

deep. Then there was Patrick. I've never seen anything like him, and you're probably not going to see anything like him again."

IHS: In your three seasons here, the team has been in the middle of the pack in '06, to the NCAA College Cup in '07, and now at the bottom of the ACC in '08. Do you think you guys caught lightning in a bottle last year or is that something you can get back to?

JG: "I think we had a really special group last year. We had fifth-year seniors all the way down to freshmen who were playing. That's pretty hard to get, especially playing at the level we were playing at last year. But I don't think it was a one-time thing. A big part about last year was that we had a lot of players who had played together for a while. I think that learning how to play together is a huge asset to have. This year, we only had about a month to try to get everyone to learn one another, with only four or five of us having played together on a field before. And as much as last year might seem hard to get back to, a lot of it has to do with the team's mentality. We were really confident last year, and that's something that was missing my freshman year and something that is missing this year. As much as skill has to do with everything, a huge part of the college game is the right mentality, and that's something we need to develop for next year."

IHS: You mentioned how guys need to learn how to play with each other. With so many goalkeeper changes and the mixing and matching of lineups, how much of that got accomplished this year that could help out down the road?

JG: "Personally, I think I've played every position on the field except center back and goalie. There hasn't been a lot of continuity in

the lineup, but what we've learned by doing that this year is who you can count on and who you can't count on, as well as who has enough soccer IQ to learn certain positions and where we can put them. We've just had trouble finding the right combinations of players who work well together for 90 minutes. Do you stick with something that you've been losing with just to have something to keep learning with and keep moving forward with? Or do you try to mix it up and go for it all? I don't know which method is better, but we're trying to figure it out."

IHS: Touch on your individual success this season. How have you improved since you arrived here in 2006?


JG: "I came in off of an injury as a freshman, so it was really hard just to keep up with the level of play. The hardest part for me was the speed of the game – it was so much faster than anything I had encountered before, but I got used to it. Personally, I am very competitive, and I really wanted to start. Coach Weiss met with me at the end of my freshman season and asked me where I saw myself, and I told him I thought I should start the next year. He was skeptical because I didn't have a good fall, but in the spring, we were low on numbers and he put me up top at forward. I ended up scoring three or four goals out of nowhere after playing as a defender in the fall. It boosted my confidence as a player. I think the biggest part of my game that has improved is my maturity level. Coach always called me a cocky New Yorker, and that's still a little true, but I learned how to control it a little bit. When you're surrounded by such good players all the time, it's kind of hard not to improve, and now it's my duty to pass things on to the new kids who have come in."

IHS: You have three goals on penalty kicks

this year. Talk about your strategy when you step up to the ball and what it's like to be the guy who is trusted to take those shots.

JG: "I was never that guy who took that responsibility, even on my club team in high school. But this year, I kind of felt the need to take control as one of the older players, and this is one of the ways that I can show that I'm a leader and that I want the best for the team. I kept making them in practice and thought, 'Hey, maybe I'm pretty good at this,' so I told Coach that I was willing to be the guy to take them. When I go up there, I already know where I'm shooting. Most of the time, I don't even look at the goalie or the net. I just put the ball on a good spot and kick it where I want it to go. I missed one because I accidentally kicked the ground before I hit the ball, but we wound up scoring off of it anyway."

IHS: Finally, for readers who might not get to watch the games and only see the scores on hokiesports.com, what would you say that this team does well that has you excited going forward?

JG: "As much as it doesn't show in the scores or the stats, we keep improving. In the beginning of the season, we really couldn't play a lick as a team. It was just kick and run. But lately, we've begun to look a little like the team that we were last year. There are a lot of positives to take out of this year – adversity breeds character. This was a tough year for the freshmen to come in, but they're going to be that much hungrier to do well next year because of it. With the exception of Scott Dillie and Taylor Walsh, we have everybody coming back. Then you add in Charlie and Alex, who have the College Cup experience. We'll have more game experience on the field, and we have a good recruiting class coming in, too. I'm really excited about what's to come next year." 



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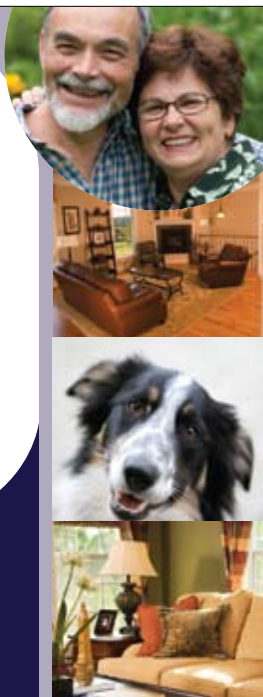
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NEW NCAA QUALIFYING SYSTEM PUTS MORE ON THE LINE

FOR HOKIE WRESTLERS

IN '08-09

By Matt Kovatch



Matt Epperly was the 2008 most outstanding wrestler at the ACC Championships.

It's just a simple chart, a white sheet of paper with some numbers on it that are highlighted with a marker. But that it is taped to an office wall just catty-corner from a framed photo of himself as a national champion in 1986 shows just how important those numbers are.

Yes, third-year Virginia Tech head wrestling coach Kevin Dresser looks back fondly on his days as a collegiate star at the University of Iowa, but that photo is just a reminder of what the numbers on that sheet of paper could one day represent.

You see, up until this season (which begins Nov. 9th against George Mason at Cassell Coliseum), the NCAA had an almost archaic method of selecting its postseason participants in the sport of wrestling, relying on historical data to dole out its qualifying bids. It was nothing like how the postseason field is selected in any other sport. The NCAA would look at how a particular conference performed at the NCAA Tournament over the previous five years and then hand out a certain number of qualifiers for that conference accordingly.

"Up until three or four years ago, there was very little money put into the sport of wrestling by ACC programs," Dresser explained. "But

about four years ago, everybody (Maryland, UVa, Virginia Tech, UNC, N.C. State) kind of stepped up to the plate, and it's shown. ACC wrestlers were going out and competing well at tournaments all year long. Yet when we got to the end of the year, the NCAA was still only giving the conference 14 qualifiers to hand out at the ACC Championships."

That's right – 14 spots for the ACC at the NCAA Tournament out of a possible 330. And while that may have been righteous four years ago before the ACC improved by leaps and bounds, it wasn't fair in 2008. Because the ACC had a weak history, it never got the bids it deserved – even when it began improving. The sample size of ACC wrestlers at the NCAA Tournament never got large enough to make a difference for the following season.

"We've got five programs that are putting the same amount of money into wrestling as some Big Ten and Big 12 programs," Dresser continued. "And now it's even starting to show on the mat, except we were still getting screwed at the end of the year by not getting any more qualifiers. The Big Ten got to take 72 guys and the ACC took 14. It's a huge difference."

Suddenly, Dresser hopped out of his chair

and made his way to that chart on the wall, which breaks down the number of qualifiers that each conference received in 2008 compared to the number of qualifiers each conference would have gotten had the new ranking system been in place.

"You can see right here what it would've been last year," he said. "The ACC only got 14 qualifiers, but if this year's formula would've been in effect, the ACC would have qualified 28 – it would've doubled. In fact, the conference was so loaded at 184 pounds that first through fifth place at the conference championships would've advanced to the NCAA Tournament."

The ranking system in place for this year will evaluate wrestlers throughout this season only based on winning percentage, a rating percentage index and a coaches' poll, thus making the postseason qualifiers a much more accurate representation of the best in nation.

It's a change that came about because of "coaches like us raising hell," Dresser said. "Before I even got hired here, ACC coaches were going to Maryland AD Debbie Yow (who Dresser credits as the most instrumental person in getting the NCAA's attention on

the matter) and saying, "This isn't fair. We're trying to build our sport by adding programs instead of dropping them, but we can't do that without having any qualifiers to attract kids to our conference."

Dresser pointed out that while Virginia Tech sent just one wrestler to the postseason last year – 165-pound ACC champion Matt Epperly – it would've sent five Hokies, all freshmen, to the NCAA Tournament under the new ranking system. While that was tough to swallow, it's nice knowing that they could get rewarded more fairly this season.

"We're excited about that," Dresser said. "That's what our sport is all about – getting to the NCAA Tournament."

The ACC will know how many NCAA qualifiers it gets before the conference championships begin, which makes those championships infinitely more important than a year ago – there is something besides a league crown to fight for now. And guess where the ACC Championships are being held this March? Right in the friendly confines of Tech's own Cassell Coliseum.

"We talk about that every day in practice," Dresser said of the excitement of having so much at stake on the Hokies' home mat.

"On paper, we're probably picked fourth out of six in the ACC (which is where Tech finished in 2008 with a 7-9 record), but I think that if everything jells, we can compete this year. I'm not going to step out any farther than that statement, but I think we can compete hard for that title if everything jells."

So what is it that needs to jell? Well, pretty much everything, as Dresser said. There's a very good chance that the Hokies could start freshmen or sophomores in all 10 weight classes – or one junior at the most. Dresser guarantees that no team in Division I wrestling will trot out a younger group of starters, and because of that, he expects to lose some close matches due to inexperience. At the same time, though, that naivety could allow the Hokies to upset some people whom they probably shouldn't.

While the young Hokies will certainly take their lumps throughout the year, you get the sense that Dresser would take this group of inexperienced grapplers over any other group of the same ilk.

"I know we have more guys right now than we did last year who have bought into what it takes to be good at Division-I wrestling," Dresser said. "When we sat in front of our team the past two years and said, 'OK this is what you need to do,' I think there was a lot of eye rolling and 'Yeah, right,' and 'in one ear and out the other.' You always have a little bit of that,

but we have very little of it right now. It's about buying into the philosophy and the lifestyle of being a Division-I athlete, and we've got that now.

"We as a coaching staff are excited to coach all 10 weight classes because I think we're looking into the eyes of 10 guys who really want to be here."

So who are those 10 guys? The headliner, at least based upon last season, is Epperly, who was named the ACC's Most Outstanding Wrestler for his run through the league championships as a rookie. Tech will look for leadership from him, but also from four other sophomores who were thrown to the wolves as freshmen – 141-pounder Chris Diaz, 184-pounder Tommy Spellman, 197-pounder D.J. Bruce and heavyweight David Marone.

Those five know what to expect now and should be able to help out the new crop of freshmen who might not realize what they're in for. That group includes: 125-pounders Brock LiVorio and Jarrod Garnett, who are battling it out for the starting role in the lightest weight class, 149-pounder Pete Yates and 157-pounder Jesse Dong.

Rounding out the lineup will be redshirt

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2008-09 SCHEDULE

Nov. 9	GEORGE MASON	5 p.m.
16	at Hokie Open	All Day
22	at Navy Classic	All Day
30	at Chattanooga	1 p.m.
30	vs. Anderson	3 p.m.
Dec. 5	at Las Vegas Invitational	All Day
6	at Las Vegas Invitational	All Day
29	at Southern Scuffle	All Day
30	at Southern Scuffle	All Day
Lone Star Duals		
Jan. 3	vs. Brown	11 a.m.
3	vs. Central Oklahoma	5 p.m.
3	vs. Cal Poly	9 p.m.
Bulldog Duals		
Jan. 10	at Gardner-Webb	11:30 a.m.
10	vs. The Citadel	1 p.m.
10	vs. Davidson	2:30 p.m.
16	at Appalachian State	5 p.m.
16	vs. Campbell	7 p.m.
18	RUTGERS	3 p.m.
18	VMI	5 p.m.
24	vs. Binghamton	Noon
24	at Michigan	4 p.m.
25	vs. Nebraska	11 a.m.
25	at Central Michigan	3 p.m.
31	vs. Virginia *	1 p.m.
Feb. 1	at North Carolina *	1 p.m.
8	MARYLAND *	5 p.m.
15	DUKE *	5 p.m.
15	NC STATE *	7 p.m.
19	at Old Dominion	7:30 p.m.
Mar. 7	ACC Championships	All Day
19	at NCAA Championships	All Day
20	at NCAA Championships	All Day
21	at NCAA Championships	All Day

* Atlantic Coast Conference matches
Home matches in CAPS

freshman Anthony Trongone, who looks to be the guy at 174 pounds, and either sophomore Jared Jones or redshirt sophomore Will Livingston (a transfer from Ohio State), who will vie for the 133-pound role.

This group will travel the country competing against teams like Michigan and Nebraska, all in hopes of jelling just in time for the last few weeks of the season before the all-important ACC Championships in Blacksburg. Three of the Hokies' last four contests take place at home, and Dresser said he planned it that way.

"I did that for a reason," he admitted. "Hopefully, we can get some momentum from the crowd and some momentum as a team during those matches. That was the whole plan in my mind - to really push toward the end of the year."


So we know this team will be young, we know it will be talented, and we know it will have its ups and downs. But what is the coaching staff preaching to such a young group? What is the identity of those 10 guys who will take to the mat every meet?

"To be good at an individual sport like wrestling, you have to be really competitive," Dresser said. "So I hope the mantra among our guys is a competitive one and that they are trying to out-do each other in the practice room, even though they're not in the same

weight class. If we can compete like that, everything should take care of itself."

Because many of the Hokies still have three or four seasons ahead of themselves to develop under a former national champion like Dresser, it doesn't sound so far-fetched

when he says that he routinely asks his pupils which of them wants to be the first national champion in Virginia Tech wrestling history.

Besides, another framed photo would look a lot nicer on Dresser's office wall than that white sheet of paper. 

2008-09 WRESTLING ROSTER

Name	Weight	Year	Hometown	High School/College
Adam Broda	149	So.	Lynchburg, Va.	Brookville
D.J. Bruce	197	So.	Naperville, Ill.	Naperville
Scott Chené	141	Fr.	Anaheim Hills, Calif.	Irvine
Chris Diaz	141	So.	Camden, Del.	Caesar Rodney
Jesse Dong	157	Fr.	Westerville, Ohio	Westerville North
Matt Epperly	165	r-So.	Christiansburg, Va.	Christiansburg
Erik Fowlie	125	Fr.	Concord, N.C.	Concord
Jarrold Garnett	125	Fr.	Newark, Del.	Caravel Academy
Andre Johnson	157	Jr.	Royal Palm Beach, Fla.	Jupiter Christian
Jared Jones	133	So.	Pittsburgh, Pa.	Penn-Trafford
Will Livingston	133	r-So.	Newton, N.J.	Kittatinny/Ohio State Univ.
Brock LiVorio	125	Fr.	Irwin, Pa.	The Kiski School
Colin MacDermott	141	So.	Norfolk, Va.	Granby
David Marone	285	So.	Broomfield, Colo.	Broomfield
Josh McCowan	165	Fr.	Grundy, Va.	Grundy
Tim Miller	197	Jr.	Bassett, Va.	Bassett
Nick Murray	141	So.	Bound Brook, N.J.	Bound Brook
Kevin O'Connor	197	r-Jr.	Woodbine, Md.	Mount Saint Joseph
Eddie Obendorfer	141	Fr.	Germantown, Md.	Demascus
Matt Rosen	149	Jr.	Chesapeake, Va.	Great Bridge
Matt Ryan	184	r-Fr.	Eighty-Four, Pa.	Canon-McMillan
Will Snyder	184	Jr.	Elizabeth, Pa.	Elizabeth Forward
Tommy Spellman	184	So.	Newton, N.J.	Kittatinny
Schuylar Swanton	125	Fr.	Spring Hill, Fla.	F.W. Springstead
Anthony Trongone	174	r-Fr.	Glendora, N.J.	Camden Catholic
Pete Yates	149	Fr.	Conyers, Ga.	Salem

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Briefly recapping the baseball and softball teams' fall seasons

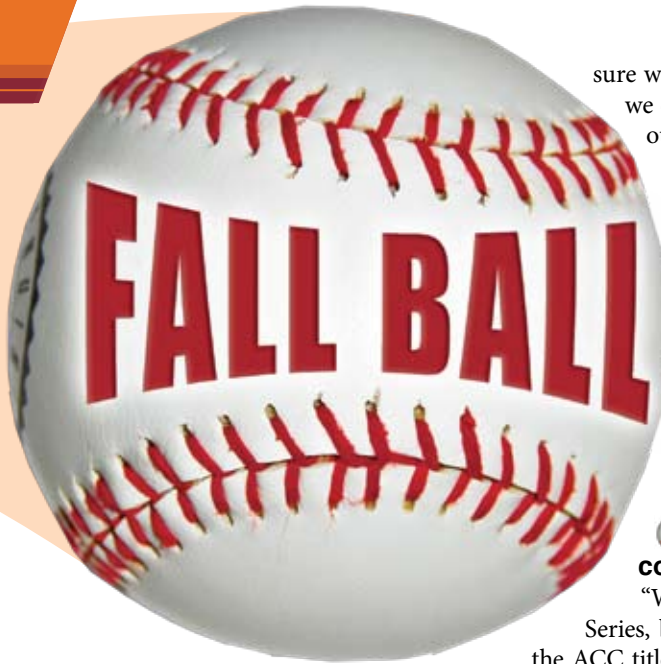
By Matt Kovatch


THREE THOUGHTS WITH SOFTBALL COACH SCOT THOMAS

 The questions start and end with the pitching staff.

"How do we account for the loss of Angela? I hear that a lot. The bad news is that we don't have another Angela Tincer. But the good news is that nobody else does either. I thought the pitching staff did a pretty good job in the fall. The only thing they'll have to continue to work on is getting ahead in counts and cutting down on walks. But one good thing is that they didn't give up a home run all fall.

"We were a little beat up - 50 percent of our staff was hurt and that's not good when you're rebuilding a staff - but we're hoping that gets better. Kenzie Roark threw really well for us and Abbie Rexrode has been working really hard. We need Kristin Graham to be healthy. I think we can pitch by committee and do a decent job. People might have to be patient with us, but I think we're going to be fine."




 Scoring more runs will be imperative.

"We've never had a problem with setting the table, but we've been leaving too many runners on, and I think a lot of time it's the mentality of things. I think that sometimes when you don't feel like you have to score runs, then you don't really press to score those runs. I think that can happen a lot when you have a great pitcher, and that certainly happened to us. We've got to make

sure we don't get complacent and that we continue to score runs and play out the games.

"This fall, I thought we scored and manufactured runs when we needed to. We got a lot of sacrifice flies and we got the ball out of the infield. We did things with runners in scoring position, which is something we've been trying to focus on, so I feel good about that. We've got the kids who can do it."

 Don't count us out come spring.

"We're not talking about the World Series, but we're talking about winning the ACC title and peaking at the right time, and I think we have the players who can make that happen. We're going to have a much different look. You may see Misty Hall behind the plate a lot more, and you may see Erin Ota playing some shortstop. You may see some new faces inserted into different places in the lineup. Charisse Mariconda, Jess Everhart, Whitney Davis and Jenna Rhodes are all back, too, and Richelle McGarva is going to be a major addition to our program. I think we have the makings of really solid offensive lineup."

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THREE UP, THREE DOWN WITH THE BASEBALL TEAM

1 UP – In the Hokies' three-game intrasquad Fall World Series, Tech hitters swatted a combined eight home runs and banded out 60 hits, numbers that rated high above their per-game rates from the spring. Three of those dingers came from series MVP Steve Bumbry, but five others hit one each, and eight players batted at least .364 in the series. And that list of eight doesn't even include Anthony Sosnoskie, Sean Ryan and Matt Blow, who hit .315, .305 and .290, respectively, a year ago. So have the Hokies improved their hitting ...


1 DOWN – Or have the pitchers stayed the same? It's too early to tell. Tech sported a 5.76 team ERA in the spring, and that number was about the same in the series. But let's keep it in perspective. The Hokies' best pitchers all turned in limited duty this fall after having successful summer league campaigns, so many of the runs given up in the series were allowed by either a trio of freshmen pitching in their first game-like collegiate action, a walk-on eating innings, or a utility infielder who was moonlighting on the mound for a few batters.

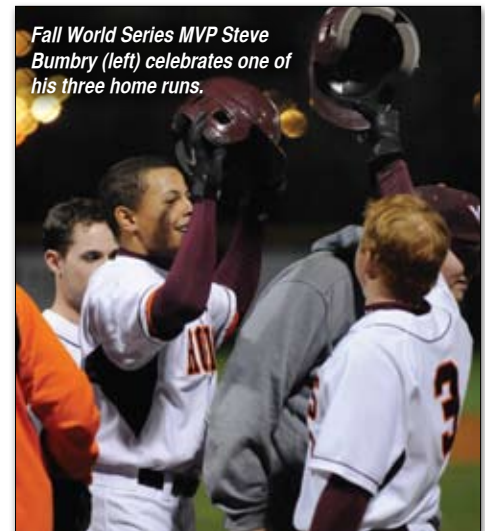
2 UP – Speaking of Tech's best pitchers, they were solid when they did pitch this fall. Workhorse Rhett Ballard was scheduled for just three innings in the series but ended up throwing six scoreless frames with eight Ks, while Justin Wright, Jesse Hahn and Brandon Fisher – all dependable in the spring – combined to toss 10.2 shutout innings with 10 more strikeouts.

2 DOWN – Tech needs to iron out the rest of its staff. Transfer Ben Rowen allowed a run in two innings, but his awkward, from-down-under delivery will prove troublesome for hitters who've never seen him. Sean McDermott and Kyle Cichy turned in lots of streaky innings last season and looked vulnerable in the series, but McDermott wasn't at full go and Cichy was working on a new arm slot. Freshmen Luke Erickson, Clark Labitan and Mathew Price (a draft pick of the Atlanta Braves) will also factor in.

3 UP – The Hokies have depth in the field, something they didn't have at the end of last season. Ty Hohman, Nate Clark, Buddy Sosnoskie and Luke Padgett all return from injuries in the spring, and no one was hurt when the series wrapped up. But the two biggest additions may be the in the form of

two junior college transfers, OF/DH Mike Kaminski and C/OF Steve Domecus, a pair of players who could easily find themselves as opening day starters.

3 DOWN – Who steps up in the place of the graduated Sean O'Brien? Not only was he a virtual lock to get on base twice per game after leading the team in hitting for four years, but he started nearly every game at first base and rarely committed an error. Someone needs to man first and find ways to get on base at the rate O'Brien did. 



Fall World Series MVP Steve Bumbry (left) celebrates one of his three home runs.

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By Matt Kovatch

TECH MEN, FANNING HAVE HUGE DAY AT ACC CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS



Devin Cornwall placed third individually at the ACC Championships.

The Virginia Tech men's cross country team made a little bit of history on Nov. 1st, and women's team member Tasmin Fanning was awfully close to doing the same. All in all, the ACC Championships in Chapel Hill, N.C., were a huge success for the Hokies as they continued to prepare for the NCAA Southeast Regional on Nov. 15th.

The men's squad turned in its best finish at the meet since joining the conference in 2004, taking third place behind Virginia and N.C. State. With 75 points, Tech finished five points ahead of 15th-ranked Florida State and set a standard for itself to shoot for at the regional meet.

"Everyone really came through," Tech head coach Ben Thomas said. "Our whole top seven ran a really solid race. Coming into the meet, I felt that if we ran the way we had been running, then we could definitely be fourth, but with an excellent race, we could be in the top three. Looking ahead to the regional meet, if we can run that same kind of race, it will give us a chance to be in the top-three there and that gives a good chance of making nationals."

Individually, junior Devin Cornwall and senior Billy Berlin placed third and 11th, respectively, to earn All-ACC honors. That's the first time two Tech men have made the all-conference team at the same time since joining the league, and in fact, they became

the only two male Hokies other than Paul LaPenna in 2007 to earn all-conference honors since three Hokies did so at the Atlantic 10 meet in 1999.

Rounding out the top five for Tech was freshman Michael Hammond in 15th, freshman Will Mulherin in 20th and senior Phil Padilla in 26th. Hammond was just one place shy of earning all-conference honors himself and was just two spots from being the top rookie finisher and earning Freshman of the Year honors like Cornwall did in 2006.

"I always felt that Devin had the ability to do that," Thomas said of the performance by Cornwall, who jumped to third all the way from 18th a year ago. "He just needed to be able to stay consistent with his volume of training and to stay healthy. He was finally able to do that for an entire summer and fall. He's been ultra-consistent.

"But we had some other guys really step it up. Phil did a really nice job to be 26th in his last ACC Championship – that was huge. And it's really a credit to Michael and Will. It's hard to come in as freshmen and be that competitive right away, but they've done a great job of not being afraid to step in and compete with older, more experienced runners."

The women's team didn't fare as well, finishing seventh out of the 12-team pack that was dominated by Florida State, but Fanning nearly made up for it all by herself. The senior from Charlottesville, Va., who earned All-America honors as a junior, fell just short of claiming the Hokie women's first individual conference championship since 1986. It was a cross country equivalent of a photo finish, as Fanning lost to Susan Kuijken of Florida State, now the two-time reigning champ, by six-tenths of a second.

"It was one of the most exciting individual finishes I've ever seen at any championship race," Thomas said. "Tasmin was ahead about 50 meters out, but it went neck-and-neck to the line and Kuijken just had a little more left at the end."

While Thomas said he's seen cross country races come down to the finish like that before, it was the overall nature of this race that made it so special.

"Everyone was still in it after the first mile, but the second mile got strung out with a lead pack of about six, and Tasmin was always at the front or sharing the lead," Thomas described. "Then at the four-kilometer mark, she really decided to make a strong push, but the whole group followed her. It wasn't until they came to the finishing field that Tasmin

and Brie Feltnagle (the third-place finisher from North Carolina) kind of broke away from Kuijken.

"It was strange to see what looked to be like three different winners take over in the last 800 meters. It looked like Feltnagle was going to win at first, and then Tasmin, but Kuijken finally stole it at the end."

The rest of Tech's top five looked like this: senior Erin Reddan in 21st, senior Jess Fanning in 34th, junior Natalie Kretzer (a former Hokie tennis player) in 41st and freshman Sammy Dow in 59th. While Thomas would obviously like to see a better team effort at the regional meet in Winston-Salem, N.C., on Nov. 15th, Tasmin Fanning's effort certainly shows that she has the ability to match or improve upon her 12th-place finish at the NCAA Championships from a year ago.

"I didn't even turn her loose [at the ACC meet]," Thomas said of Fanning. "For her, we're really looking toward nationals, so this was more of a stepping stone and we wanted to run a controlled race. So the pace wasn't to her strength, but she still almost pulled off the win.

"It gives her a lot of confidence that she can run with Kuijken, who is a national champion in the 1,500 meters and one of the fastest girls in the country in the mile. If Tasmin can finish that close to her, we're hoping that with a faster pace, she'll be that much more able to run with anyone by the time nationals come around."

Women's soccer clinches ACC's seventh seed

With a 1-0 defeat of No. 11 Duke on Nov. 2nd, the Virginia Tech women's soccer team clinched the seventh seed in the ACC Tournament by finishing with a 4-4-2 conference record. Tech hasn't been to the ACC Tournament since 2004 when it bowed out to Virginia in the first round. Overall, the Hokies finished the 2008 regular season with a 10-7-2 mark. That's the second-highest win total for Tech since, coincidentally, 2004, which was the only time in program history that the Hokies were selected to the NCAA Tournament. They went 11-9 overall and 4-5 in the ACC that season.

The win over Duke certainly strengthened Tech's NCAA resume for this season, especially considering that it already upset then-No. 8 Virginia back on Oct. 9th and then-No. 21 Cal State-Fullerton in September. Tech won't know for sure, though, if it will be



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invited back to the postseason until the conference tournaments are complete. The ACC Tournament takes place Nov. 5-9th in Cary, N.C.

In other news from the soccer team, Emily Jukich and Jennifer Harvey were named to the 2008 *ESPN The Magazine*/CoSIDA Academic All-District III Team, with Jukich getting a second-team nod and Harvey making the third team. James Gilson of the men's soccer squad was named a second-team honoree on the men's ballot.

Also of note

The men's and women's swimming and diving teams began the 2008-09 season on Oct 25th, and each swept West Virginia and N.C. State at War Memorial Pool. Senior

Sara Smith led the way with individual wins in the 200 free and 200 IM, while also helping Tech to capture the 200 medley relay in record fashion. The H2Ookies then lost at Virginia on Oct. 29th ... The golf team completed its fall season on Oct. 26th with a fourth-place team finish at the Landfall Tradition in Wilmington, N.C. Sophomore Garland Green tied for fifth individually with a 5-over-par 221 ... The men's tennis team wrapped its fall schedule on Oct. 26th when freshman Corrado Degli Incerti Tocci won his bracket at the Crimson Tide Invitational in Tuscaloosa, Ala. The women completed their fall slate by sending five singles players and three doubles teams to various bracket finals of the Hokie Fall Invitational on Nov. 2nd.

OLYMPIC SPORTS SCOREBOARD

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	L, 2-3
6	vs. Western Kentucky	L, 2-3
6	vs. East Tennessee State	W, 3-0
Arkansas Tournament		
12	vs. UT-Martin	W, 3-0
13	vs. Lamar	W, 3-2
13	at Arkansas	W, 3-2
UNC Wilmington Tournament		
19	at UNC Wilmington	W, 3-0
20	vs. UNC Asheville	W, 3-0
23	VIRGINIA*	W, 3-0
26	CLEMSON*	W, 3-1
27	GEORGIA TECH*	W, 3-0
Oct. 3	at Maryland*	W, 3-0
5	at Boston College*	W, 3-0
9	at North Carolina*	L, 2-3
10	at NC State*	W, 3-2
17	WAKE FOREST*	W, 3-1
18	DUKE*	L, 1-3
24	FLORIDA STATE*	L, 0-3
25	MIAMI*	W, 3-1
31	at Georgia Tech*	L, 0-3
Nov. 1	at Clemson*	L, 0-3
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	L, 1-3
7	GEORGE WASHINGTON	W, 2-0
Wake Forest Tournament		
12	vs. Cal State-Fullerton	W, 3-0
14	vs. Charlotte	W, 5-1
21	JAMES MADISON (2 OT)	L, 3-4
25	at Miami* (2 OT)	T, 1-1
28	at Florida State*	L, 1-3
Oct. 2	at Clemson* (2 OT)	T, 2-2
5	NC STATE*	W, 3-0
9	VIRGINIA*	W, 1-0
12	at North Carolina*	L, 0-4
15	LONGWOOD	W, 2-0
19	MARYLAND*	W, 1-0
26	at Boston College*	L, 1-2
30	WAKE FOREST*	L, 1-2
Nov. 2	DUKE*	W, 1-0
5-9	ACC Tournament at Cary, N.C.	

MEN'S SOCCER

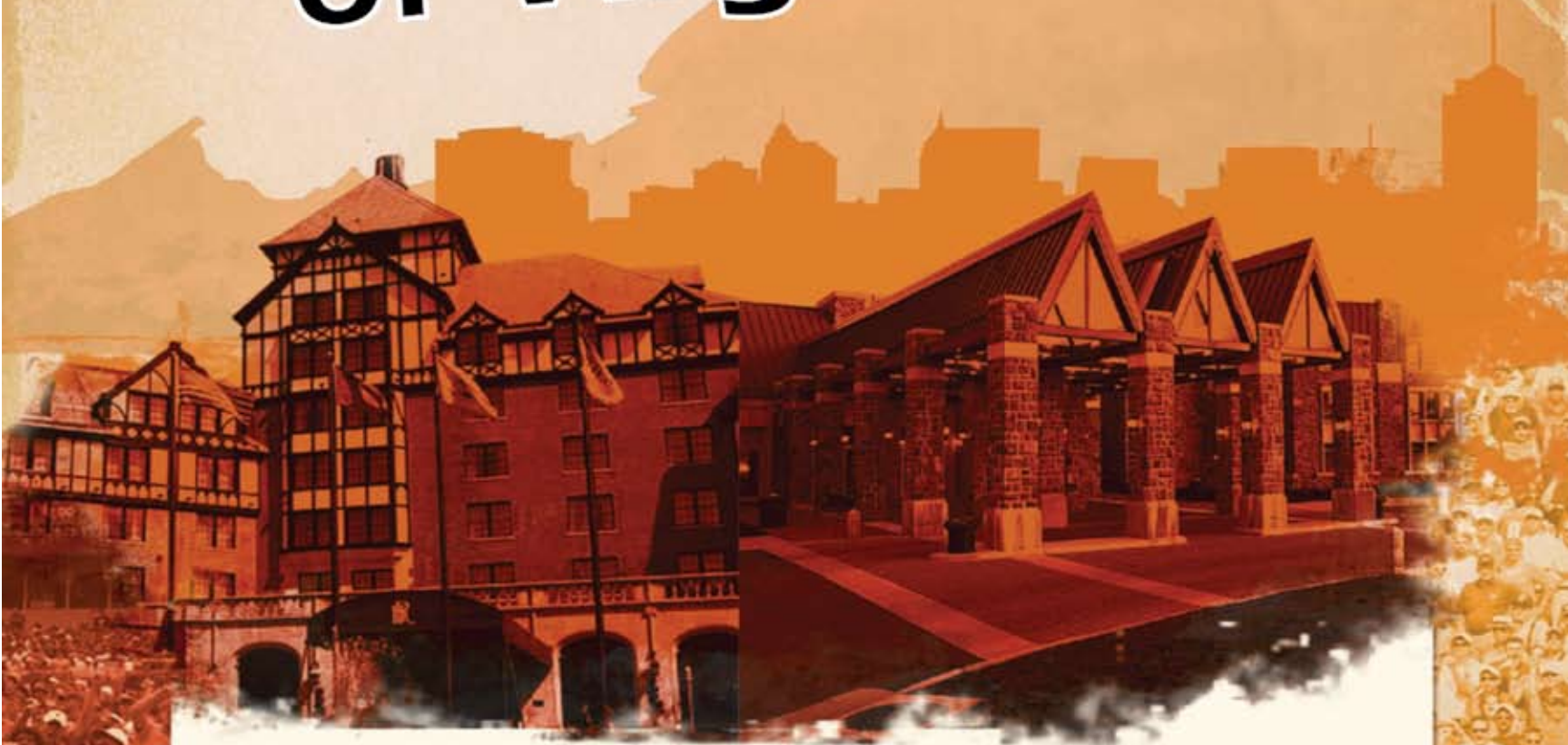
The UP Nike Invitational		
Aug. 29	at Portland (2 OT)	T, 2-2
31	vs. Washington (2 OT)	W, 2-1
HAWTHORN SUITES HOKIE INVITATIONAL		
Sep. 5	HOFSTRA	L, 1-4
7	XAVIER	W, 2-1
12	DUKE*	L, 1-3
14	at St. John's	L, 0-3
21	at Clemson* (2 OT)	L, 2-3
26	VIRGINIA*	L, 1-2
30	GEORGE WASHINGTON	W, 2-1
Oct. 4	at Wake Forest*	L, 2-8
7	RADFORD	W, 1-0
10	MARYLAND*	L, 0-4
14	UMBC (OT)	W, 2-1
18	at North Carolina*	L, 2-3
21	APPALACHIAN STATE	L, 1-2
25	at High Point	L, 1-2
Nov. 1	at NC State*	L, 0-2
7	BOSTON COLLEGE*	7 p.m.
11-16	ACC Tournament at Cary, N.C.	

CROSS COUNTRY

Sep. 5	VIRGINIA TECH CROSS COUNTRY RELAY	women 1st men 3rd
19	VIRGINIA TECH ALUMNI INVITATIONAL	women 2nd men 2nd
Oct. 3	Highland Duel at Boone, N.C.	Fanning 1st Cornwall 1st
18	Chile Pepper Invitational at Fayetteville, Ark.	Men 4th Women 4th
Nov. 1	ACC Championships at Chapel Hill, N.C.	Men 3rd Women 7th
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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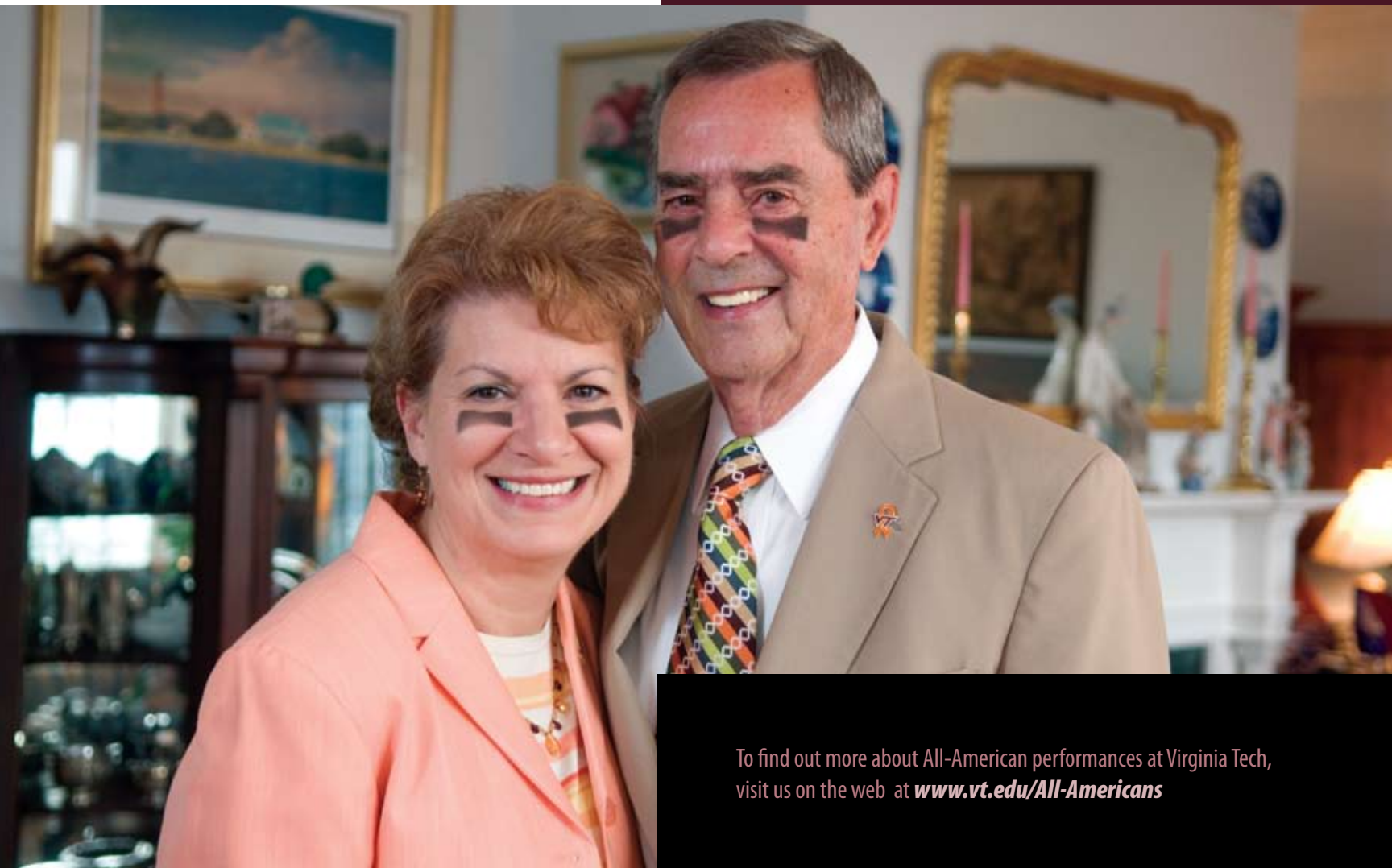


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