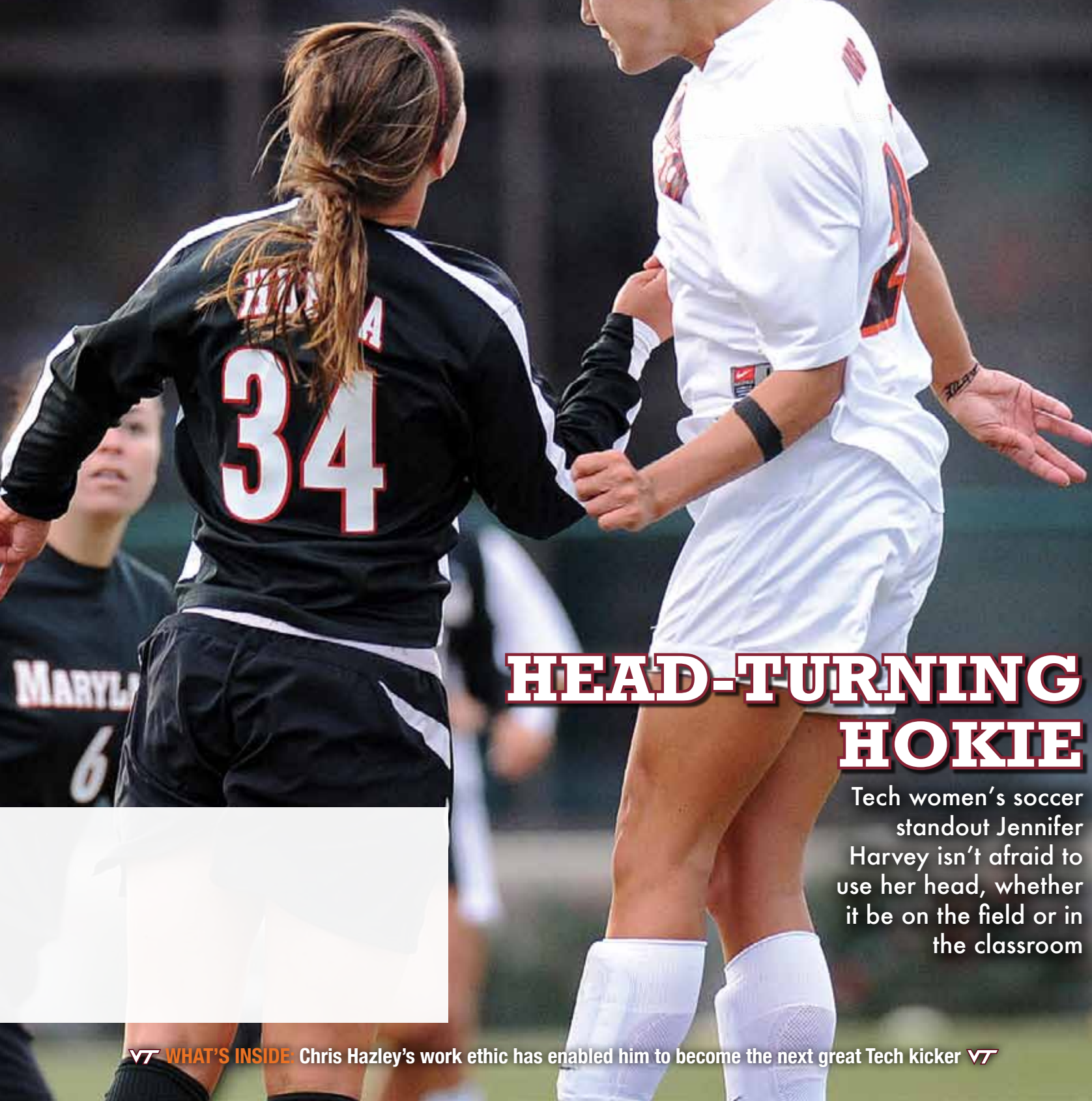


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University of Virginia Tech Athletics



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Chris Hazley's work ethic has enabled him to become the next great Tech kicker

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UPCOMING EVENT PROMOTIONS

NOVEMBER

18 Women's Basketball vs Elon 7:00 p.m.

21 Women's Basketball vs. VCU 2:00 p.m.
*Christmas Store Day, Donate a Toy to Charity!
HokieBird Growth Chart Giveaway!*

DECEMBER

1 Men's Basketball vs Purdue (ESPN) 7:30 p.m.
*Orange Effect!
Allan Bristow "Legends of Cassell" Button Giveaway!*

5 Women's Basketball vs Winthrop 2:00 p.m.

Men's Basketball vs Virginia (FSN) 6:00 p.m.
*Throwback Gray Game!
Dell Curry "Legends of Cassell" Button Giveaway
Christmas Store Day, Donate a Toy to Charity!*

11 Women's Basketball vs. Robert Morris 2:00 p.m.

12 Men's Basketball vs. Penn State (CSN) 1:00 p.m.

Admission is free to all Olympic sport contests.





DIVING INTO A NEW FACILITY

In the inaugural intercollegiate meet at the new Christiansburg Aquatic Center, the H2Okies took first in 31 events. "We had a fantastic turnout and the energy from our fans and team made it a fun morning. The facility is a wonderful place to enjoy a swimming and diving meet," Tech Head Coach Ned Skinner said.



THE STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPERIENCE

"To all the members of the Hokie Club who have made my experiences here as a student-athlete possible, I will always be grateful for your generosity."

Blake Trabuchi-Downey
Junior - Swimming and Diving - Distance Free/Fly

"Swimming for Virginia Tech has had a tremendous impact on my life. I'm shaped, for the better, because of the experiences I've had."

Lauren Ritter
Senior - Swimming and Diving - Distance Free



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Roy Burrows

Current Hokie Club level:

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Hokie Club member since:

First gave in 1962 but have been continuous since 1981.

Currently resides:

Williamsburg, Va.

Family members:

Audrey (wife); Sharon (daughter, Tech grad '87);
Chris (son, Tech grad '93); Mike (son);
Peyton, Kathryn, Benjamin, Andrew, Carter, Alyssa (grandchildren)



(Back row, L to R) Mike (son) holding Alyssa (grandchild), Chris (son), Sharon (daughter) and Wayne Helbert (son-in-law).
(Center, L to R) Peyton (granddaughter), Roy Burrows and Kathryn (granddaughter).
(Front) Benjamin (grandson).

Q: What year did you graduate?

A: 1960 (Mechanical Engineering)

Q: Being a member of the Hokie Club and supporting Virginia Tech athletics is important to me and my family because ...

A: It allows us to be a part of supporting the development of excellence in all sports, which reflects well on the our university.

Q: Do you have a specific moment when you realized that you were a fan of Virginia Tech athletics and knew without a doubt that you were a Hokie?

A: Not really, but I would guess it was my first football game at Miles Stadium in the fall of 1956.

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

A: Get there early, hoist our flag and leave late, welcoming anyone who comes by.

Q: Over the past decade, Virginia Tech athletics has undertaken tremendous facilities growth and renovations. Do you have a favorite project? Why?

A: The Merryman complex, Lane Stadium expansion and the Hahn-Hurst Basketball training facilities are top-of-the-line magnificent edifices that leave no doubt of Virginia Tech's commitment to be the best nationally in athletics.

Q: Looking at the 2010-11 academic year, what athletics event or game are you looking forward to the most and why?

A: Of course, I want all sports to win conference championships, but this year, I look forward to us getting into the NCAA Basketball Tournament and winning at least two games there. I feel we have been snubbed the last two years.

Q: My all-time favorite Tech athletes are ...

A: Michael Vick, whose athleticism is uncanny as proven by that first-down run in the West Virginia game that gave a chance to play in the national championship. Bruce Smith is a close second, as he gave it all on the field. Also Chris Smith, a 1960's basketball player who still holds Tech records. Even though he was a civilian, he adopted the Corps tradition of cadets speaking to all they passed on campus. Chris is a special person.

Interesting Hokie fact:

In 2008, I was inducted into the Virginia Tech Aviation Wall of Fame based upon research and development I conducted that significantly enhanced aviation flight and crash safety.

Also, in the late 1970's, I became a volunteer fundraiser for Virginia Tech athletics and received three Top Ten awards from the Student Aid Association in the 1980s. Also, I was President of Peninsula Hokie Club in the 1980's. Once the Hokie Rep system got going, I got involved and have been a Top Ten Hokie Rep for many years and am still active.

A Letter from Lu

Dear Hokie Club Members,

As our athletes are focusing in on finishing their fall seasons and the fall semester with a purpose, I feel that is important to stop and look around and enjoy the moment before it, too, slips away. As the often quoted Yogi Berra once said, "It ain't over 'til its over." This Yogi-ism, which makes us think about never giving up, rings especially true with me at this time of the year when I think about our fundraising efforts. With this in mind, I wanted to take a minute to talk to you about all of the activity going on here in the Hokie Club office as we look toward the end of the year.



By now, all Hokie Club members have received their Point Priority mailings, which serve to highlight each member's current rank and to give a snapshot of your current Hokie Club standing. We hope that this provides you with a helpful tool to use as you begin to position yourself for 2011 benefits. Also included in this mailing is our annual football parking projections information. While this is only to be used as a general guideline, we hope this breakdown will provide you with more understanding of the priority cutoffs in the 19 lots reserved for Hokie Club members for the 2011 season.

While we are talking about year end, it is always important for us to mention some of the deadlines that affect your membership. November 30th is the last day to set up or upgrade your membership using either "Hokie Matic" or "Employee Payroll Deduction" to qualify for privileges to be awarded before the Benefits Deadline. To make any changes to an existing Hokie Matic, including increasing your monthly deduction, please submit a new form indicating the updated information. Forms can be found by visiting our website, hokieclub.com.

The most important deadline for the Hokie Club, besides your current membership's annual anniversary month, is the Benefits Deadline. December 31, 2010, serves as the deadline for all Hokie Club benefits for the 2011 year. Due to the university's holiday schedule and the Hokies' bowl game schedule, please make every effort to speak with the Hokie Club staff or visit our office now. Remember, checks must be postmarked by December 31, 2010, and online contributions must be made at hokieclub.com by midnight EST, December 31, 2010.

As I think about our fundraising efforts at this point in 2010, I am encouraged. Looking back at the 2009-10 fiscal year, we were pleased to report \$25.2 million in gifts to athletics. In a down economy, this was a tremendous accomplishment and one that I attribute to the dedication of our Hokie Club membership and the diligent efforts of the Hokie Club staff. With the 2009-10 totals as a barometer, I feel that we are well positioned heading into the halfway point this year.

The best way that you can help us reach our fundraising goal is by increasing your annual gift or upgrading your membership level. A second way is to find new members. I encourage you to talk to your Hokie alumni and friends and ask them to join the Hokie Club. This past year, all new members who applied for season tickets for football and basketball received them. To me, that is a good incentive for many to become members. For others, simply being asked to support our student-athletes is reason enough to make their commitment.

As always, I am grateful for all you do to support this athletics program.

Go Hokies!
Lu Merritt

Director of Development, Intercollegiate Athletics

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NEWS & NOTES

HOKIES STRONG IN LATEST NCAA RELEASE OF GRADUATION SUCCESS RATES

The NCAA released the graduation success rates (GSR) for student-athletes on Oct. 27 and Virginia Tech checked in at 89 percent – its best number since the NCAA started this metric as a way of calculating graduation rates. The number is based on student-athletes who entered college in 2003.

The 89 percent tied for fourth in the ACC behind Duke (97 percent), BC (96) and Wake Forest (93). UVa was at 89 percent as well.

In football, the Hokies had a 79 percent GSR – that program's best number ever. That's up eight percent from football players who entered school in 2002. Of the football programs ranked in the top 25, Tech has the second-highest GSR behind Stanford (86 percent). In the ACC, the Hokies' GSR for football ranked fifth behind Duke (95), BC (90), Miami (81) and Wake (81).

In men's basketball, the number is 75 percent, up eight percent from those who entered in college in 2002. The Hokies' GSR for men's hoops ranked fifth in the ACC behind Wake (100), BC (88), UNC (88) and Duke (83).

The NCAA average stood at 69 percent for football players and 66 percent for basketball players for those entering college in 2003.

Five other programs at Tech achieved perfect 100 percent GSR's for those entering college in 2003 – golf, women's soccer, women's tennis, men's track and volleyball.

WEAVER WINS A STAGE AT PGA QUALIFYING SCHOOL

Drew Weaver's quest to make it to the PGA Tour got started on a strong note, as the former Virginia Tech golfer won a first-stage event at the PGA Tour's National Qualifying Tournament – better known as "q-school."

Playing at Pinewild Country Club just outside of Pinehurst, N.C., on Tuesday through Friday, Weaver shot a four-round total of 12-under-par to beat former PGA Tour player Stephen Gangluff by one stroke. Weaver shot rounds of 66, 71, 68 and 71 on the par-72 layout. His first-round 66 tied for the best round of the stage.

"I am very pleased to start out q-school on such a strong note," Weaver said. "It is a definite confidence builder, and I look forward to taking my momentum into second stage."

Also, former Tech golfer Nick MacDonald played in a first-stage event at Dayton Valley Golf Club in Las Vegas and shot 12-under-par for the stage. He finished in a tie for eighth place, five shots back. MacDonald shot rounds of 70, 70, 65 and 71.

Weaver, the 2007 British Amateur winner, and MacDonald will advance to a second-stage event to be held Nov. 16-20 at a course to be determined. The top 23 finishers and ties advanced to a second-stage event.

Second-stage survivors advance to a third and final stage held at Orange County National in Winter Garden, Fla., on Dec. 1-6. The final stage is unique in that it is six rounds as opposed to four.

The top 25 finishers of the final stage earn their PGA cards, while the next 50 (plus ties) earn Nationwide Tour cards.

The rest earn conditionally exempt status on the Nationwide Tour.


DALE'S GRANDSON DOING WELL

Former Tech football standout Carroll Dale recently reported that his 7-year-old grandson, Vincent Dale Cox, is doing well after undergoing a bone marrow transplant at the University of Minnesota's Medical Center on March 29.

For those who may have forgotten, Cox was battling an extremely rare blood disorder known as Fanconi anemia, a disorder that causes the bone marrow in the body to stop making blood cells needed for the body to function normally. The only treatment is a bone marrow transplant, and fortunately, Cox's mother, Valarie, served as a match. They left Bristol, Va., where they live, and went to Minnesota for the procedure, staying there for four months while doctors monitored the young man.

"Everything's going well," Dale said. "He came home in August and then went back up there at the end of September to get the port taken out of his chest. Since then, all his counts have been good. He went to the children's hospital in Johnson City [Tenn.] the other day and they checked his blood work. Everything is fine. He doesn't have to go back for another month. It's just a miracle everything is going so well."

Dale, who won two Super Bowls with the Green Bay Packers, spearheaded several fundraising efforts to help the family with the medical costs.

"I can't thank people enough, not just for the money, but for their prayers, too," Dale said. "People have been so kind. It's been touching." 

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FIFTEEN YEARS LATER, HOLMES' HISTORIC CATCH STILL A TOPIC OF CONVERSATION

He wasn't named to any All-America squads. For that matter, he never even earned all-conference honors. He was just a good, solid football player, like the many who have come through Tech's football program over the years.

The difference is that Jermaine Holmes made arguably the biggest play in Virginia Tech's football history.

This November – Nov. 18 to be exact – marks the 15th anniversary of that memorable day in Charlottesville when the Hokies rallied from a 15-point, fourth-quarter deficit to knock off in-state rival Virginia. At the time – and until this year's 17-point rally over N.C. State – it marked the biggest comeback of Frank Beamer's tenure.

Holmes, a non-descript receiver from Florida, etched his name in Tech lore when he hauled in the game-winning touchdown with less than a minute to go.

"I hear it all the time," said Holmes, who now heads up Tech's Student-Athlete Academic Support Services. "I would say I hear about it more than I ever would have thought. Being in this community and on this campus ... I'll be somewhere and talking to someone and they'll recognize my name and say 'Hey, I remember that catch.'

"I never would have thought that it would be such a big thing 15 years later. But people are still talking about it."

Let's review the scene. Tech had lost its first two games of the season, but responded by winning eight straight and entered the game ranked No. 20, while Virginia

came in at No. 13.

Virginia out-gained the Hokies 420-319 and picked off three Jim Druckenmiller passes. The Cavaliers throttled Tech's rushing attack (79 yards) and led 29-14 going into the fourth quarter.

But the Hokies rallied and cut the lead to 29-23, and after Virginia kicker Rafael Garcia missed a 46-yarder with 2:12 left, the Hokies took over at their 29, albeit with no timeouts.

"I don't think any of us thought we couldn't do it," Holmes said. "It was just a matter of when it was going to happen. We had a touchdown before that on a quick screen and we started making some plays. The defense started making some plays, and then, we're at that moment."

Druckenmiller guided the Hokies to the Virginia 32. On first down, offensive coordinator Rickey Bustle called for a play that the Hokies had hardly used at all during the season. Holmes, who had switched with Cornelius White a couple of plays earlier, faked and Druckenmiller pumped. Holmes got behind UVA safety Percy Ellsworth, and Druckenmiller let it fly.

"When Jim threw the ball, I was like, 'Man, he overthrew me,'" Holmes said. "I wasn't worried about dropping it. I was worried about getting to it."

Holmes caught it with 47 seconds to go. Atle Larsen's extra point gave the Hokies their first lead of the game, 30-29.

The ending turned out to be bizarre. Virginia tried to mount a drive and got into Tech territory. But Antonio Banks intercepted Mike Groh's pass and sprinted

toward the end zone as time ran out – dodging the leg of UVA trainer Joe Gieck, who tried to trip Banks, along the way.


The impact of Tech's victory can't be understated. The Hokies, who had already clinched the Big East title, secured the school's first Alliance Bowl berth, receiving an invitation from the Sugar Bowl to play Texas. Tech rallied in that one as well, coming from 10 down to beat the Longhorns and cap, at the time, the most memorable season in school history.

That, in turn, started a tradition of winning seasons and big bowl appearances. The Hokies have appeared in three Orange Bowls and two more Sugar Bowls since then and played for the national championship in 1999. Those games have propelled Tech into the nation's elite.

"The thing that makes that game [UVA] so special is what it allowed us to do," Holmes said. "It established us as a team to be reckoned with and enabled us to get a Sugar Bowl bid.

"For us to go and beat Texas magnifies that game [the UVA game] even more. It set the stage for us to be a big-time national team. The UVA game was the catalyst for all that."

For sure, Holmes helped start the tradition with "The Catch against the Cavaliers." It changed a program's direction – and changed his life.

"It's kind of like you're a Virginia Tech hero for that particular situation," he said. "I've been very humbled by that experience and people's memory of that. I really have. It's a good feeling." 

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TAYLOR WILL GO DOWN AS MORE THAN JUST A GREAT QUARTERBACK AT TECH



It should come as no surprise that Tyrod Taylor will go down as one of the greatest quarterbacks and one of the most accomplished athletes in Virginia Tech history. He's won more games, gained more yards and delivered in more big games than anyone who's ever taken a snap wearing orange and maroon.

But what might surprise some – particularly those outside the Tech program who don't know him – is that Tech's all-time leader in total offense is also a humble, gracious and genuine guy. He deflects praise to his teammates. He accepts blame even when he's not at fault.

I sat down with Tyrod to learn more about what makes him go and what's made him such a unique guy.

BR: You've won more games than any other quarterback at Virginia Tech, and you're shattering records for total offense and passing and rushing at this school. Do you ever think about what your legacy will be here at Tech?

TT: No, I'll think about it once it's all over. I'm just thinking about playing football and being the best I can be each week.

BR: But you have to be aware of it, right? You're passing guys like Bob Schweickert and Don Strock and Bryan Randall and Michael Vick on the various lists here at Tech. The biggest names, the brightest stars we've ever had at quarterback, and you're passing them in total offense and touchdowns and yards.

TT: I'm just honored to be in the class of those guys. Bryan Randall hit me up on Facebook and said, 'Please don't break ALL of my records.' He's a good friend, though, and we just laughed about it.



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BR: You're a lot like Bryan Randall in a lot of ways, with your maturity and your poise and the way you handle yourself. Do you see the comparison?

TT: They way he handled himself on the football field, and off, he always showed a lot of class, and I'm trying to do the same thing.

BR: The Saturday night after the James Madison loss, when the Hokies were 0-2, and you went back to your apartment, what was your mindset?

TT: It just felt worse because we lost two games in one week. That never ever happened to me in my life. I just wanted to get back out on the practice field and preach to the guys that we have to turn things around. This is a big-time program. We expect to win, and that's that we're going to do.

BR: What's been the difference since?

TT: We have been finishing drives, putting the football in the end zone a high percentage

of the time and not settling field goals. That's one thing that Coach [Bryan] Stinespring has been preaching to us, and that's one thing I tell the offense on Fridays. We need to finish drives and put touchdowns on the board.

BR: You've made some amazing plays over the years, and especially this season. What do you have in store for us down the stretch?

TT: Hopefully, I can continue to do that. I'm just excited to play football at Virginia Tech and thankful for the opportunity they [the coaches] gave me to continue to play at a high level.

BR: You are in complete control on the football field. And it seems you're that way off the field, too. In your life and in the classroom, you're very much in control and poised. You like that feeling?

TT: I think so. I think a lot of people look to me to make decisions. Off the field, I try to make the best decisions. If I'm with my friends, I try to make the best decisions for all of us. We stay

out of trouble, things like that. On the field, it comes with experience. You gain experience, and as a result, the coaches have confidence in me to call plays and that gives me another sense of being in control."

BR: I'm curious about this. Whom do you talk with on a weekly basis outside of our program? Friends from home? Ex-teammates?

TT: I talk with Mike (Vick) just about every week. He tells me to go out there and keep the team together and keep winning, especially after the first two games. He just wanted us to turn it around. I also think a lot of guys on his team [Eagles] were trash-talkin' about our start, so he's happy now that we're winning.

BR: Do you have a closer relationship with Michael now than before?

TT: Yes. We started talking right before he got locked up. Once he got out and back on the field and I was on the field, it drew us back together, so we are closer now than before. We talk a lot.

BR: This might be a better question for Mike, but do you think he misses this – the life you have now, being Tyrod Taylor, the college quarterback, and living the experiences you are having here now?

TT: I think so. There's nothing like college football. You don't have to worry about the business part of it.

BR: You're having fun, aren't you?

TT: Oh yes.

It's been fun to watch Taylor's development. He's been a class guy and an elite performer at a high-level program.

The good news for Hokie fans: he's got a lot of football left to play before this 2010 season ends. 

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT TAYLOR

Mike Smith, head coach Hampton High School: "What's happening to Tyrod couldn't happen to a nicer guy. It's funny, my team was off today, but we were out on the field and I was talking about Tyrod to them. He's a good role model for them. When he was here, he always had great respect from everyone at this high school, from his teammates to his teachers. He's one of those people who just demands respect, especially in the huddle, but off the field, too. I remember when Coach Beamer and Curt (Newsome) came to offer him during his junior year. I had to pull Tyrod out of his business class just down the hall from my office. He ended up committing to Tech, and even when some other schools came in, like Oklahoma, he was going to stick with Tech. His mama deserves a lot of the credit here for all this success. She set the parameters for him. His parents did a great job. You know, his dad played for me, too, so he's got a lot of "Crabbers Blood" in him. I'm really happy and proud of what he's done up there."

David Cutcliffe, head coach, Duke University: "I think, without question, he's the best dual-threat quarterback I've seen. I would go as far to say he's the best in the country. There are guys running well that you see. You see Cam Newton [Auburn], a youngster at Nevada [Colin Kaepernick], certainly Terrelle Pryor [Ohio State]. He's as good a runner as any of them, maybe better. I think he may be the fastest. He's a drop-back passer. You see very few drop-back passers that are as gifted as he is in the pocket that can do that other (stuff) with their feet."



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KEEPING UP WITH COMPLIANCE

The compliance corner answers questions concerning the governance of intercollegiate athletics and its impact on our athletics department. Have a question? Please send it to hokipoki@vt.edu and we'll answer it in upcoming issues.

Now, here are a couple of questions that we've received from Tech alums and fans over the past few months, with responses from Tim Parker, senior assistant AD for compliance:

Q: *What's the latest on the possibilities of Kwamaine Battle and Barquell Rivers getting a medical redshirt this season? Coach Beamer brought up Barquell recently at one of his news conferences. Thanks.*

- Anne in Pembroke, Va.

TP: "To correct a common misconception, the term 'medical redshirt' does not exist in the NCAA Manual. A student-athlete either 'redshirts' during a season (i.e. does not compete at all), or Tech files a 'medical hardship waiver' on his/her behalf in the case of injury resulting in limited competition. To receive a waiver, the student-athlete must not have participated in more than 30 percent of the team's contests, with none of that competition occurring past the midpoint of the season. Obviously, appropriate medical documentation must exist regarding the injury or illness

"When a student-athlete misses all, or nearly all, of two seasons during his/her career, the issue becomes one of obtaining an extension of the five-year clock (or, as commonly described, getting a sixth year). To be granted a sixth year, a student-athlete must demonstrate that he/she missed the two seasons for reasons outside of his/her control. A standard freshman redshirt year

does not meet this requirement.

"I feel very confident about Kwamaine's case for a sixth year. He was unable to play as a true freshman because of shoulder injuries that necessitated surgery. This season, he tore his ACL in the second game. So he meets the criteria, and I see no reason why he won't be granted the extension.

"Barquell's situation is different for a couple of reasons – not the least of which because he's still trying to come back and get on the field this season. But I suspect that we'd have no real hope of getting a sixth year granted to him. He redshirted his freshman year, and to my knowledge, no injury was involved."

Q: *What was your take on the recent Sports Illustrated story about the former agent (Josh Luchs) who said he gave money to more than 30 players while they were in college in the early and mid-1990s?*

- Brian in Christiansburg, Va.

TP: "I can't say that I'm surprised. Given the issues at North Carolina, Southern Cal and other schools, I'm surprised that more stories like this haven't been broken.


"The issue of agents is one of the biggest facing compliance offices – and really, athletics departments – in college athletics

today. We're all constantly educating our student-athletes and reminding them that they cannot accept cash or extra benefits. It's that simple.

"You do see now some cooperation and proactive steps where the NFL and NCAA are working together in regards to this issue, and I think that's a good thing. I'm anxious to see what comes out of those meetings in the future."

Q: *What are the most-asked questions of you and your office?*

- Matt in Christiansburg, Va.

TP: "From the coaching staffs, most of the questions center on recruiting – generally about the permissibility of certain situations, actions, etc. A large portion of our work in the compliance office at Tech involves finding answers to the daily questions from coaching staffs." 

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CONTINUING A TREND

A WORK ETHIC DEVELOPED AT A YOUNG AGE HAS ENABLED CHRIS HAZLEY TO BECOME THE LATEST IN A LONG LINE OF GREAT TECH KICKERS

By Jimmy Robertson



Motivation comes in many forms. Money motivates many people. For others, titles serve as the motivating force.

Fear is often a motivator. So, too, is envy. Simple self-betterment often looms as a motivator.

One Tech football player found his motivation from a rather obscure task while working for his dad's construction company during the sweltering summer months of June and July. He performed many chores, but climbing into attics on hazy July afternoons and spreading insulation motivated him to strive for higher goals in life.

Oh sure, he performed other rigorous assignments. He often cleaned up the job sites, and loading and unloading lumber presented its challenges.

But spreading insulation ... that was the ultimate motivator.

"That [spreading insulation] was the worst part about it," Tech kicker Chris Hazley admitted of his summer job. "But after doing that, you can do anything."

His success these days is because of those days.

Those days working for the family's construction company – his parents own it and certain family members help run it – fine-tuned his work ethic. He learned the value of a hard day's labor, and he realized that jobs needed to be done on time and on budget, but more importantly, the right way.

That's why he ranks as one of the ACC's best kickers this season. He's put in his time, he's labored hard at his craft and he simply does things the right way.

You'd expect that from a Pennsylvanian. After all, they are a lot that takes pride in whatever they do and they possess a passion for football that is nearly unmatched on a national scale.

Hazley, though, is a tad unique in that sense. He grew up loving football of a different sort.

And no one would have ever guessed he'd be here, at Virginia Tech, kicking an oblong pigskin at Lane Stadium.

A quick Wikipedia search of Henderson High School in West Chester, Pa., proved to be enlightening when trying to gain insight of that community's love of soccer.

Henderson High's girls' team won the national championship in 1997 and state titles in 1995, 1998 and 1999. In the following decade, the boys achieved dominant status, claiming the state crown in 2002 and finishing second in both 2004 and 2005.

Such a tradition can be magnetic, and thus, Hazley grew up playing that sport.



Chris Hazley grew up playing soccer in his hometown of West Chester, Pa., but after years of waiting, he has thrived in the role of Tech's placekicker this season.

"I liked high school soccer a lot," Hazley said. "It was a pure sport to me. I grew up playing soccer and watching soccer. I just enjoyed it, especially at the high school level because our whole community gathered around the soccer team. It was a lot of fun. The whole stadium was packed for our games."

Like most teenagers, though, Hazley was susceptible to peer pressure. A couple of his buddies played on the football team, and essentially, they challenged him.

The summer before his senior season at Henderson, they summoned him out to the football field to see if he could actually kick a football. They knew of his soccer exploits, but expected his football-kicking abilities to be the subject of laughter.

"I remember we went out to one of the middle school fields and started kicking it around," Hazley said. "I had never really done any of the steps. I didn't know anything about kicking. I guess I hit it well, and they were impressed."

The football coaching staff contacted Hazley about coming out for the team that August, even though soccer season went

on at the same time. He kept soccer as his first priority, and the football coaching staff understood that, letting him be a part of the team and practice on a part-time basis.

"I went to football practice for about 20-30 minutes on Wednesday after I was done with soccer practice," Hazley said. "Then I'd show up for the games on Friday."

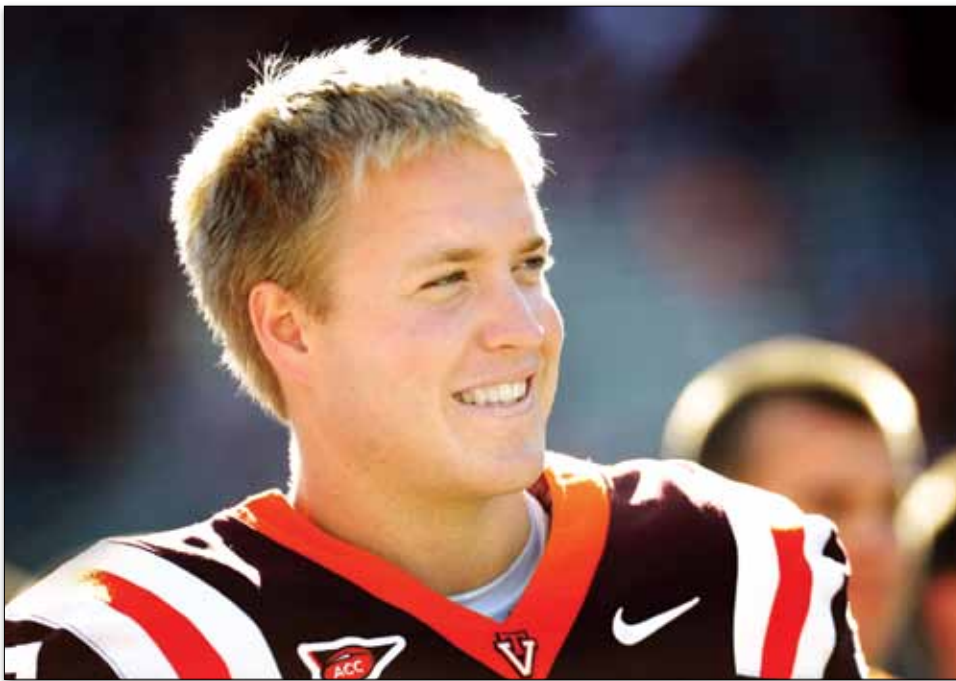
Hazley attempted two field goals his senior season. He said he nailed one from roughly 35 yards, but the other one got blocked.

Midway through the football season, his soccer team made the state playoffs. The soccer games started conflicting with football practices and games, so after playing in six football games, he decided to kick that sport to the side and stick with soccer.

"My first commitment was to soccer," he said. "The coaches understood."

It appeared at that point that his football days were over.

How Hazley came to end up at Virginia Tech isn't some enthralling, complicated, unbelievable tale. He visited, applied and was accepted.



For the most part, Hazley has been all smiles following his performances this season.

Not much more to it than that. "We were at my cousin's wedding in North Carolina and drove through [Blacksburg] on the way back," Hazley said. "We stopped, and I really liked it [Tech]. I was impressed with the campus and the facilities and everything. After

that, I applied and got in. I went on a whim and said I'd try it and see what happens." His first semester went well for the most part. He enjoyed his classes and he decided to join a fraternity, establishing friendships along the way.

Perhaps it could be chalked up to some-

thing as simple as boredom or that he missed competition, but he felt compelled to try out for the football team – and not the soccer team, the sport he grew up loving.

"I kinda got burned out from soccer and I wanted to try out something new," he said. "In the spring, I felt the urge to go out and see what would happen."

Tech's coaching staff holds tryouts regularly, and at this particular tryout, head coach Frank Beamer was looking for potential kickers and snappers. Hazley got wind of the date and decided to test his kicking skills in front of the "Big Whistle."

"It was pretty nerve-wracking kicking in front of Coach Beamer," Hazley said. "I don't think he said much. He just seemed to like what I could offer and thought it was worth it to keep me out there a little bit. I don't think I got into pads until the following spring."

At that time, Tech's kicking duties were handled by the ever steady Judson Dunlevy, and a couple of other older guys named Dustin Keys and Matt Waldron were in the hopper awaiting their turns. So, though Hazley got invited back, he realized his chances of ever getting into an actual game were quite slim.

Still, he took his job seriously – much

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like he did with his summer tasks at the family construction company – and put his work ethic to use. Beamer liked Hazley’s strong leg. He just wanted to see a little more consistency.

Whatever Hazley learned about the fundamentals of kicking, he learned by asking and watching Tech’s other kickers. Unlike most kickers, he didn’t receive instruction from a personal kicking coach. In fact, most kickers often spent large quantities of time with – and money on – their personal kicking coaches.

Hazley didn’t have that luxury. One of seven children – five boys and two girls (Hazley’s the third-youngest) – he refused to ask his parents, Michael and Christine Hazley, for more cash than they already were shelling out on him for out-of-state tuition. Plus, his wonderful parents had already helped put his two older brothers and two older sisters through college as well and planned on helping one of his younger brothers, who just started college this semester.

So Hazley took a thrifty approach.

“I saw one [a kicking coach] going into my junior year. It helped a lot, but I felt he had so much to say about my technique,” Hazley said. “I’m sure it could have made me better, but I really couldn’t afford to pay him weekly or however often he wanted to work with me.

“I just learned from the guys around me and learned what works and what doesn’t work. I’m sure there is a part of my kicking that could be improved.”

He worked and he watched them all. He watched Dunlevy (2007), then Keys (2008) and then Waldron (last year).

He got better. But never good enough to unseat those guys – so never good enough to get in a game.

“It’s tough, but then, there are benefits,” he said. “You get benefits that you wouldn’t get from belonging to any other club, whether it be getting the sweats or going to the bowl game or being around guys who are going to the NFL some day. I felt it was worth it.

“I always said that even if I didn’t get to play here, it’d be like a gym membership and it was free. I feel like it was good to have that structure in my life, too. It helped me with academics. The more I had going on, the better I did.”

After four years of practice and repetition and kicking competitions in all kinds of weather, after four years of watching and not playing, after four years of work and patience, Hazley earned the starting

nod at kicker heading into this season.

But in spring practice, he wondered if he would be able to kick this fall even if he won the job. Hazley graduated from Tech in May with a degree in marketing management, and he simply couldn’t afford to pay tuition for an extra fall of fun as Tech’s kicker.

He let Beamer know his financial situation back in the spring, and Beamer ultimately came through with the scholarship.

“I told him that I wanted to be here and I wanted to play, but unless I was on scholarship, I couldn’t do it,” Hazley said. “I couldn’t afford it.

“I don’t know what I’d be doing without it [the scholarship]. I’d be living at home. Hopefully, I’d have a job. I don’t know. I didn’t really think about it. I kinda put all my eggs in this basket, so I don’t know what I’d be doing if I wasn’t playing football.”

He delivered the big news to his grateful parents right after he received his scholarship offer.

Their response?

“They wish I had done it a year earlier,” Hazley laughed. “Nah, they were happy for me. If I hadn’t gotten it, then I wouldn’t have been able to stay here, and they knew how much I wanted to be here and play. It wasn’t an option. If I didn’t get it, then I wasn’t going to be here. It was either all or nothing.”

So far, he’s been everything for the Hokies. He pushed one right against Boise State in the season opener, but he hasn’t missed one since (heading into the Georgia Tech game).


He’s become the latest in a great line of senior walk-on kickers.

“We have a lot of competition within the program,” Beamer said. “I think being around and competing with other good kickers makes them better. In the end, the one who is the most consistent and who has the most consistent ball flight is the one who is going to kick. If you’re that guy, then you’re pretty good.”

Hazley isn’t sure what his future holds for him. He understands the odds of making it as a kicker in the NFL. Commercial real estate remains an option – he got a minor in real estate. He also mentioned coaching.

He admitted he’ll probably work several jobs before finding out what he wants to do. He knows there are always greater things out there.

If he forgets, well, he needs only to remember his days of spreading insulation.

For him, that’s the ultimate motivator. 

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HOKIE HALL OF FAME

FIVE MORE NAMED TO VIRGINIA TECH SPORTS HALL OF FAME

On Friday, Oct. 22, the Virginia Tech athletics department inducted five former student-athletes into the Virginia Tech Sports Hall of Fame. The five new honorees bring the total number enshrined to 152.

GENE BUNN

Sport played: Football

Years played: 1975-78

Notable accomplishment: Still holds the Tech career record for interceptions with 18

Gene Bunn's career accomplishments are pretty remarkable considering the era in which he played and the great players who have played at his position – cornerback – over the decades.

Bunn's 18 career interceptions amazingly still stand as a career mark at Tech. He played in the mid-1970s during a time in which most teams ran the ball more than they threw it. He also played in an era in which freshmen were not eligible to play. So he recorded his 18 interceptions in one less season than most of the players on Tech's career interceptions list.

He also played in a zone scheme, as opposed to a man-to-man scheme, and he attributes one man as the key to his success.

"Coach Buddy Bennett," Bunn said, referring to head coach Jimmy Sharpe's secondary coach. "There was something about Coach Bennett. He was like a scientific genius. We played zone. We didn't play man-to-man.

"There were way more people who ran a faster 40 time than me – I ran a 4.7 downhill with the wind at my back. And there were many more who bench-pressed more than me. But Coach Bennett always had me in the right spot."

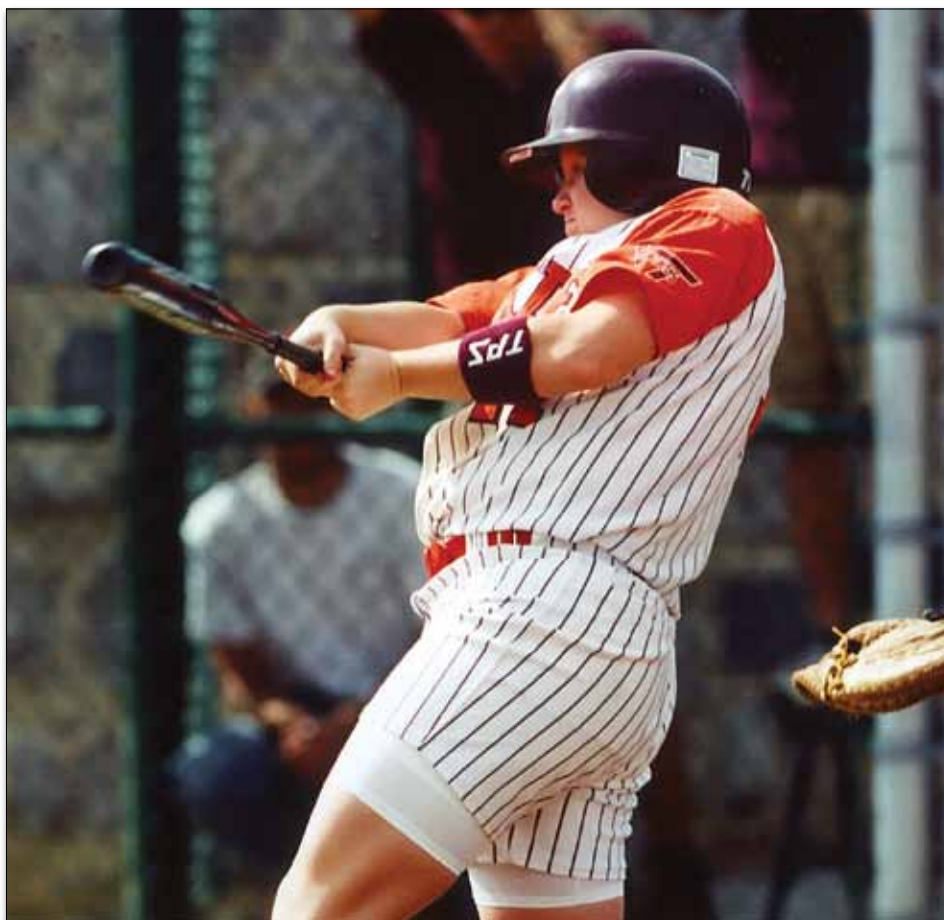
Bunn made an impact as soon as he got on the field. He intercepted seven passes during the 1976 season, including one in each of the Hokies' last five games. He finished the season tied for seventh nationally in interceptions.

As a junior in 1977, Bunn picked off six passes to tie the school career mark held by Ron Davidson and become the only Tech player ever to intercept six or more passes in more than one season. He also contributed 40 tackles on the way to being named second-team on The Associated Press All-South Independent squad and honorable mention on the AP's All-America team.

Bill Dooley replaced Sharpe in Bunn's senior season and moved Bunn to free safety. He became the Hokies' all-time intercep-



Coach AD Jim Weaver presented a Hall of Fame plaque to former defensive back Gene Bunn.



Michelle Meadows became the first Tech softball player to be inducted into the Tech Hall of Fame.

tion leader with a pick in the 1978 season-opening game against Tulsa. He posted five interceptions over the team's first six games, including a pair against West Virginia, to finish with a career total of 18 picks over 33 games.

Only a couple of players have come close to Bunn's record. Tyronne Drakeford intercepted 16 in his career (1990-93) and Macho Harris intercepted 15 in his career (2005-2008). But both of those players played well over 40 games.

"I thought both of those guys were going to break it," Bunn said. "I absolutely thought it was going to be broken because I didn't play as a freshman. To think that it would still be there 32 years later ... I wouldn't have had a clue."

Bunn still holds the current Tech season (5) and career (6) records for consecutive games with an interception. He currently lives in Charlotte, N.C., where he owns and runs BE Bunn Appraisals, a residential home appraisal company.

MICHELLE MEADOWS

Sport played: Softball

Years played: 1997-2000

Notable accomplishment: Three-time Academic All-American who still holds school records for career doubles (48) and ranks second in career batting average (.347) and hits (254)

Interestingly, despite her accomplishments, Michelle Meadows still wasn't sure she had made it into the Hall of Fame when she received her letter in the mail.

"When I got the letter in the mail, it said, 'You've been elected to go in the Hall of Fame,'" Meadows said. "But I thought it would have to go to a vote or something like that.

"Then I read it again and realized that I had made it. I was speechless."

Meadows made history by becoming the first softball player to be inducted into the Virginia Tech Sports Hall of Fame. She was a member of Tech's first recruiting class and became eligible for the Hall this year. Hall of Fame guidelines require a person to be out of school for at least 10 years.

"It's always nice to be a 'first,'" she said. "But I also know that the program will continue to grow and continue to get better, and there will be others who are better than me. I'm excited to see where the program goes. I'm excited to see how much it's already grown."

She essentially laid the foundation, wasting little time in making an impact once she arrived in Blacksburg out of Monacan High School in Richmond. As a freshman in 1997, she led the team with a .376 batting average. That average still stands as the second-highest single-season mark in program history, and helped her earn a spot on the Atlantic 10's All-Conference team.

Meadows hit .354 her sophomore year and then helped lead the Hokies to a program-record 54 wins and a spot in the conference championship game as a junior in 1999. She batted .338 that season.

During her senior season, Meadows again led Tech, batting .324 as the Hokies won 41 games and returned to the conference title game. That final year, she was named Atlantic 10 Player of the Year and Atlantic 10 Student-Athlete of the Year for softball.

Meadows was equally successful in the classroom, earning Academic All-America honors three times, including first-team honors twice. She also earned an NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship and was award-

ed the prestigious Skelton Award by Tech.

She still holds the school's career record for doubles with 48, stands second at Tech in career batting average (.347) and hits (254) and ranks third in career RBI (131). She played in and started 250 games during her career, with almost all of those starts coming at shortstop or second base.

Meadows works as an associate AD for student-athlete enhancement and senior women's administrator at Longwood University.

LAURIE SHIFLET HACKBIRTH

Sport played: Women's tennis

Years played: 1987-91

Notable accomplishment: Was the first Tech female tennis player to be rated nationally in singles (123rd in 1989)

Laurie Shiflet appeared destined to go to the University of South Carolina. After all, her father, her older brother and her older sister all went to the Columbia, S.C. school, so the family connections ran quite strong.

But Virginia Tech's head women's tennis coach in the late 1980s, Anne Jones Thompson, convinced Shiflet to take an official visit to Tech, and to make a long story short, Shiflet became the first member of her family not to go to South Carolina.

"I knew a couple of girls on the team through junior tennis," Shiflet said. "But I had never been to Blacksburg. Then I went for my official visit, and three weeks later, I told my parents I wanted to go back just to be sure of my decision.

"My parents didn't really try to influence me. They told me to go where I felt the most comfortable. When I took my visit to Virginia Tech, I had never seen a campus so beautiful. It just felt like the right place for



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me. It's where I felt the most at home."

She obviously felt at home on the tennis courts at Tech as well – her star-studded career enabled her to become just the second female tennis player to be inducted into the Virginia Tech Sports Hall of Fame behind her coach, who was inducted in 2003.

Shiflet's first season, she won 19 matches (combined fall and spring) to lead a young team that won 16 matches overall. Shiflet became the first female tennis player at Virginia Tech to hold a regional singles ranking. She finished the 1988 season ranked 13th in the final Volvo Tennis Collegiate Regional rankings.

Shiflet took over the No. 1 singles duties as a sophomore and won the Eastern Collegiate Tournament Flight 1 singles championship at Trenton, N.J., during the fall of 1988.

She won All-Metro Conference honors in the spring and finished the season with a combined 27-15 record that earned her a No. 10 regional ranking. She was ranked 123rd nationally, becoming the first Tech female tennis player to be rated nationally in singles.

As a junior, Shiflet teamed with Leslie Seward to finish third in the No. 1 doubles competition at the Metro Conference Championships. A year later, Shiflet and Seward combined for a 28-8 record in doubles play, and Shiflet added 14 wins



Former Tech women's tennis player Laurie Shiflet Hackbirth was introduced at Lane Stadium during halftime of the Duke game, along with the other inductees.



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in singles to spark the team to an 18-6 record.

Her No. 10 ranking in 1989 still stands as the fourth-best all-time regional rating for a Tech women's singles player, further cementing her overdue inclusion into the Hall of Fame.

"It was a nice, big surprise," she said. "It's thrilling to be in with Anne. She was a wonderful coach and a good friend, and I have a lot of respect for her."

Laurie Shiflet Hackbirth – she married former Virginia Tech football player David Hackbirth – is currently the general manager of the Virginia Beach Tennis and Country Club, where she oversees all aspects of the facility. She has run the prestigious USTA Girls' 16 National Clay Court Championships for the past 18 years.

COREY MOORE

Sport played: Football

Years played: 1997-99

Notable accomplishment: Won the 1999 Bronko Nagurski Trophy and the 1999 Lombardi Award

For those who know Corey Moore well, they know that he absolutely hates to talk about his individual accomplishments during his playing days at Tech – and there were plenty of accomplishments.

The undersized defensive end with the oversized heart played with a passion that enabled him to become one of Tech's all-time great defensive players. His penchant for making big plays, whether it be sacking a quarterback or forcing a fumble or blocking a punt, often whipped Tech's crowd into frenzy. Because of that and because of his fearless spirit, he ranks as one of Hokie Nation's all-time favorites.

"I think the typical Virginia Tech fan appreciates hard work," Moore said. "They knew I was undersized, too, so I think the way I played meant a lot to them. It's not surprising because they can relate to hard work."

Moore, who spent a year at Holmes Junior College in Mississippi before enrolling at Tech, played in every game during the 1997 season. Then, as a junior, Moore moved into the starting lineup and made an immediate impact.

His 13.5 sacks led the BIG EAST Conference and helped him earn the league's defensive player of the year award. He finished the season with 67 tackles, 18.5 total tackles for loss and 20 quarterback hurries, while adding three blocked kicks on special teams. Moore capped the season by earning MVP honors during the Hokies' win over Alabama in the inaugural Music City Bowl and by

garnering first-team All-America honors.

"That season was the most fun I had," Moore said. "I grew up an Alabama fan, so beating them was a great accomplishment."

A year later, Moore was voted first team on all six major All-America teams to become only the second unanimous All-American (at the time) in school history. He earned the honor by posting a BIG EAST-record 17 sacks to go with 11 other tackles for loss and 60 total tackles. He was named the winner of the 1999 Bronko Nagurski Trophy as college football's defensive player of the year and won the 1999 Lombardi Award as the college football lineman of the year.

Moore ranks third all time at Tech in career sacks (35) and total tackles for loss (58). He graduated from Tech with a degree in finance and went on to get his master's at Michigan State in student affairs administration.

He is working toward a doctorate degree in higher, adult and lifelong education. He currently works as an undergraduate advisor in the college of communication arts & sciences at Michigan State, where his passion these days is helping students.

"I love the college environment and I love impacting students' lives," he said.

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DUKE THORPE

Sport played: Basketball

Years played: 1973-77

Notable accomplishment: His career 60-percent field-goal percentage is still the all-time record at Tech

Charles Elliott Thorpe's popularity extended to people of all ages – teammates, coaches, friends, and family members. But kids, in particular, adored him.

When Thorpe – better known as Duke Thorpe – went to pick up his kids at day care, he usually grabbed them and threw them playfully up in the air. The other kids wanted part of that action, and before long, his arrival became the most anticipated of each day, as he started tossing all of them playfully up in the air.

"That's just the way he was," said his wife, Anise Thorpe. "He loved kids and kids loved him."

Unfortunately for his family and the Tech family, this gentleman passed much too young in life. Thorpe passed away from cancer this past June, and his wife accepted his honor in his place.

"He got the letter on a Friday right before he went back in the hospital," Anise said. "He opened it and read it, and we both just sat there and cried."

During his first season, Thorpe managed to average 7.9 points and six rebounds a game despite a foot injury. He also led the team in field-goal percentage (.543), a sign of things to come.

After averaging 9.7 points and 7.1 rebounds per game as a sophomore starter, Thorpe took on a different role in 1975-76. Head coach Don DeVoe used his popular

front-liner as a sixth man to give the team a boost and reduce the risk of foul trouble. Thorpe responded by averaging 14.6 points, 6.9 rebounds and shooting a school-record 66.9 percent from the floor. The Hokies went 21-7 that season and appeared in the NCAA Tournament for just the second time.


Thorpe moved back into a starting role when Charles Moir took over the helm for the 1976-77 season. He led the team in scoring (15.6) and rebounding (8.3) as Tech advanced to the quarterfinal round of the National Invitation Tournament. He finished as the squad's top shooter for the fourth consecutive season.

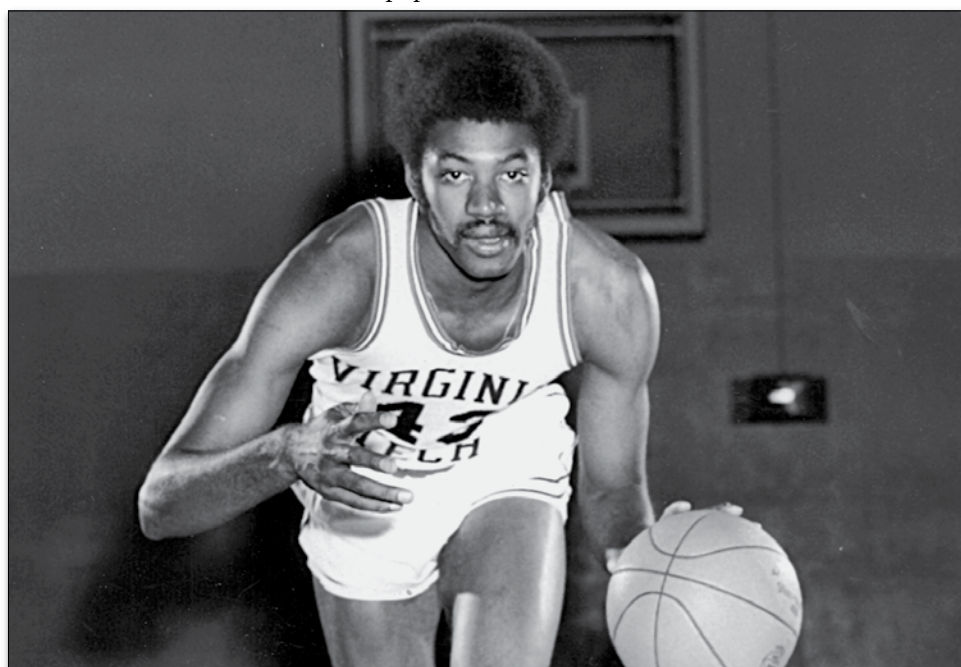
"Duke didn't brag on things he did," Anise Thorpe said. "But he was competitive. He'd be out playing with a group of kids and he'd never let them win. He was the same way with our children. If you played Duke Thorpe, you were going to earn every point."

Thorpe's career field-goal percentage of 60.0 still ranks as the top all-time shooting mark for a Tech player. He finished his career with 1,294 points.

After graduating from Tech, Thorpe played professionally overseas and served as a graduate assistant coach under DeVoe at the University of Tennessee. While at Tennessee, he met Anise, and the two later got married.

Thorpe worked for Chrysler for quite some time and was transferred to Florida. He ultimately left Chrysler and worked as a store coordinator for Walt Disney World in Kissimmee, Fla.

He passed away on June 23 and leaves behind his wife, his daughter (Jacquelin) and his son (Charles Elliott, IV). 



The late Duke Thorpe was inducted into the Tech Hall of Fame after a career in which he scored more than 1,200 points and still holds the career record for field-goal percentage.

FOOTBALL

EXTRA

HERO'S WELCOME

COREY MOORE, ONE OF TECH'S GREATEST DEFENSIVE PLAYERS EVER, RETURNED TO BLACKSBURG FOR A FOOTBALL GAME FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 11 YEARS – MUCH TO THE DELIGHT OF HOKIE FANS

He brought more attention to Virginia Tech and to the school's football program than arguably any other player in school history.

Yet Corey Moore shunned attention.

Still does.

However, Moore couldn't possibly avoid the attention he received when the athletics department and the Hall of Fame selection committee decided to induct him into the Virginia Tech Sports Hall of Fame on Oct. 22, and then a day later, retire his jersey in front of thousands of adoring fans. One of the most decorated players in school history, he returned to campus with his family for the Hall of Fame banquet that Friday night and for the Duke game the following Saturday.

His induction wasn't exactly the smoothest of processes. He received an e-mail from Donna Smith, the secretary in the athletics communications office, saying he'd been selected. But Moore had never heard of Donna Smith, so he simply deleted the e-mail without reading it through in great detail.

"I thought it was a joke," Moore said. "I get all types of e-mails and stuff like that, so I just automatically deleted it. Then Dave Smith [assistant AD for athletics communications and no relation to Donna] called me. That's when I realized what was going on.

"I was shocked. It's a great honor, I guess. I'm not trying to downplay it. But you know me. I never made a fuss over all that individual stuff."

Moore's visit to Blacksburg for the Duke game marked his first visit to Lane Stadium for a game since he departed in 1999 – a span of nearly 11 years. He dabbled in the NFL for a while with two different teams

(Buffalo and Miami) and then he put his finance degree to use by getting a job in real estate development. He contemplated law school at one point, but eventually decided to get his master's at Michigan State and got a job there as a student advisor.

Though not intentionally, Moore basically appeared to ... well ... disappear. Fans constantly asked the coaching staff about Moore and his whereabouts, but the coaches rarely knew. Occasionally, defensive line coach Charley Wiles managed to get Moore on the phone, but other than that, there was little contact. On the occasions when the coaches got in touch with Moore, they repeatedly tried to bring him back to Blacksburg to retire his jersey. But those plans never materialized.

That left Hokie Nation wondering what was the deal.

"People keep asking me that," Moore said. "I've moved on. I have a life and things going on, and it's not like I live in

Roanoke and can drive to Blacksburg any time.

"Would I like to come back more often? Yeah. Blacksburg is a special place to me. I miss it."

Tech fans love Moore because he reminded them of themselves – tough, gritty, hard working and passionate about football. The only difference was that he possessed running back speed and lineman strength.

No one could have expected him to change the direction of Tech's program when he arrived out of Holmes Junior College in Mississippi. Most jucos are misfits for various reasons, but Moore, a native of Brownsville, Tenn., only went to junior college after committing to Ole Miss and then seeing his scholarship pulled after the NCAA cut the school's scholarship allotment for breaking the rules.

Wiles used to work at Murray State and used to recruit Moore's high school. He sold Moore on Blacksburg and sold Frank



Beamer on a 6-foot defensive end.

His 6-foot, 200-pound frame made opposing coaches chuckle. But he got the last laugh when he transformed his body in Mike Gentry's strength and conditioning program, and that, matched with his fierce passion for the game, made him virtually an unstoppable force.

In 1998, his junior season, he finished with 13.5 sacks and 18 tackles for a loss on his way to becoming the BIG EAST's defensive player of the year. He also blocked three kicks and helped Tech knock off Alabama in the Music City Bowl. He earned All-America honors in the process.

His senior season was much of the same. He posted a BIG-EAST record 17 sacks and was the league's defensive player of the year again. He won the Nagurski Trophy and the Lombardi Award. More importantly, he led the Hokies to the national championship game, where they lost to Florida State in the Sugar Bowl.

"Still haven't watched that game," Moore said. "I'll get texts sometimes from friends and teammates saying that it's on ESPN Classic or something like that. I've seen a few clips, but I haven't watched it."

Too painful?

"No, I just haven't watched it," Moore said. "It's not painful. They were the better team. They deserved to win."

"To be honest, the 1998 season was more fun. I think we had a better team. People think I'm crazy, but if that whole team had returned, we'd have won it all [in 1999]. In 1999, there was too much pressure. In 1998, I just went out and had fun. No one had any expectations of me. As long as I didn't screw up, I was fine. But in 1999, I felt the pressure. I didn't want to be a one-year wonder."



Corey Moore was often harassing quarterbacks, and particularly ones from Clemson, as seen here when he pressured Brandon Streeter in a 1998 game at Clemson.

Bud Foster's Lunch Pail Defense Foundation



The purpose of The Lunch Pail Defense Foundation, a recently formed non-profit corporation headquartered in Blacksburg, VA, is to annually fund a need-based academic college scholarship to an eligible student from the New River Valley. In short, the eligible student will personify the focus and fortitude embodied in the spirit of "The Lunch Pail" by demonstrating hard work, good character and determination to succeed in all areas of life.



To find out more about the scholarship and eligibility please visit <http://lunchpaildefense.com>.

Moore and some guy named Vick spearheaded Tech's march to the national championship game in 1999. Moore drew national headlines when he single-handedly dismantled Clemson in the third game of the season. He had five tackles and two sacks, and he also caused a fumble, recovered it and returned it for a touchdown in a 31-11 Tech victory.

During the course of the game, Moore could be seen looking into the ESPN cameras. Then he mouthed something that Tech fans grabbed on to and still say occasionally today.

"Welcome to the Terror Dome, baby," Moore yelled, referring to Lane Stadium.

One can still catch that on YouTube.

Following the game, Tech's defensive coaching staff gave him 71 points on their productivity chart – one of the highest point totals ever.

"People bring up that game a lot," Moore said of his Clemson performance. "I didn't do anything special."

Of course, most would disagree, maybe all, but that's typical Moore – brutally blunt. He never saw himself as a great player, but rather as someone just doing his job. Even today, he doesn't rehash the old days or his tremendous exploits.

"I honestly don't miss it," Moore said of his playing days. "I miss being around Virginia Tech and being around the football program. I still watch these guys every chance I get.

"But I don't miss playing. The only time I even talk about the old days is when I'm talking with old friends. Me and Larry Austin chat just about every day and sometimes we'll bring something up. But to be honest, we talk more about the current state of the program. I don't care to think about that other stuff."

At one time, Moore contemplated getting into coaching. He loves teaching and he loves helping out. But he admits his connection with football – other than watching it as a fan – is just about over.

"I have no interest in coaching," he said. "Six or seven years ago, I thought I might give it a try, but there are only a couple of head coaches whom I'd work for.

"Coach Beamer would be at the top of the list. I also like Mark Richt [University of Georgia head coach]. I really respect him as a person and the way he conducts himself and the way he's handled the adversity this year. I also have a thing for Nick Saban [University of Alabama


head coach]. They say he's hard to work for, but he'd be intriguing to me as well. That's about it."

His passion these days is helping young students at Michigan State. He works as an academic advisor and special assistant to the dean for diversity in the College of Communication Arts and Sciences – a job he's held since 2006. He's also working toward his doctoral degree in higher, adult and lifelong education.

"I love students," he said. "I love the college environment and impacting students' lives. I work with a lot of first-generation college students and a lot of students who aren't prepared for college. I try to help them with the transition and make their experience the best it can be."

He'd be great doing something like that here in Blacksburg, too. Tech fans would certainly welcome him back.

He received a standing ovation when he walked out onto the field before the game during the jersey retirement ceremony. And he received plenty of hugs and handshakes, fist bumps and high-fives before, during and after the game.

Judging from the smile on his face, he enjoyed his return home – no matter how much attention he received. 

CCS-Inc. presents the Word of the Month...

labile (adj.) apt or likely to change

It is often said that the only constant is change. This is certainly true in the realm of commercial computers where technology is updated (and becomes outdated) as regularly as the seasons. While the "latest and greatest" may be perfect for a standalone PC, consistency and availability over time are crucial when a computer interfaces with other systems.

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GOLF

EXTRA

ON COURSE

DREW WEAVER'S PERFORMANCES ON THE EGOLF TOUR HAVE HIM LOOKING FORWARD TO BIGGER AND BETTER THINGS

When Drew Weaver graduated from Virginia Tech after a decorated golf career, he fully expected to head to the Nationwide Tour, or if a few breaks went his way, the PGA Tour.

He never expected to spend his summer on a tour called the eGolf Professional Tour.

But that's where Weaver humbly began his professional career, playing in events held on courses within a four- or five-hour drive of the tour's base city of Charlotte. This tour of roughly 200 players serves as a "feeder" tour of sorts, allowing players to work on their games in a competitive environment in hopes of eventually moving on to the Nationwide Tour or PGA Tour.

"It was good," Weaver said of his experience. "It surpassed my expectations. I tried to make the best of it and I feel like I did that."

"Wherever you go, you've got to play good golf. I wasn't ready to play the Nationwide Tour. But I feel good about the strides I've made. I had a great second half."

Weaver, who recorded seven top-10 finishes in the final eight events of the eGolf Tour, won his first event as a professional. In late September, he won the Caddy For A Cure Classic held at Cabarrus Country Club in Concord, N.C., shooting 17-under-par and edging out two others in a playoff. For his efforts, he pocketed \$17,000, which is a far cry from the dollar amounts on the Nationwide and PGA Tours.

But Weaver, who hadn't won since his stunning victory in the 2007 British Amateur, took much more out of that win than a nice paycheck. After finishing second on two occasions on the eGolf Tour this summer – including once when he shot a 65 in the final round and the winner shot a 62 to edge Weaver by a stroke – he finally had snagged that elusive victory.

"It was nice to finally get it done," he said. "Golf is a hard sport because you lose more than you win. Just look at Tiger [Woods]. You've got to build on each week, but when it all boils down, the win is what you're shooting for."



"I've been in contention three or four or five times, but I just got beat. There wasn't anything I did wrong. This time, I made some putts when I needed to, and to win was very gratifying."

Weaver finished fifth on eGolf's money list, bringing home more than \$71,000. The leader, Jason Kokrak, won two events and led the way with more than \$115,000 in earnings.

He also received a sponsor's exemption to play in the PGA's Wyndham Championship at Sedgefield Country Club in Greensboro, N.C., not far from his home in High Point, N.C. In front of family and friends, he shot four rounds of 70 or better and made the cut, finishing tied for 41st at 11-under-par.

"Consistency in putting is something I've struggled with," Weaver said. "You've got to minimize damage. You're not going to make every putt."

These days, Weaver lives in Sea Island, Ga., and latched on with Crown Sports Management, the management group that former Tech standouts and current PGA players Brendon de Jonge and Johnson Wagner use. Weaver made a decision earlier this year to use Mark Love, the brother of Davis Love III, as his swing coach, moving on from Jim Brotherton, a former Tech

golfer who serves as the golf director at High Point Country Club.

"Mark is in Sea Island and my trainer, Randy Myers, and my short game coach, Mike Shannon, are there, too," Weaver said. "So it seemed the right thing to do to move on, and Mark has been great. Things have really worked out well."

Those changes and the experience gleaned from the eGolf Tour have paid dividends for Weaver. He recently won a first-stage event at the PGA Tour's qualifying tournament – better known as "q-school" – shooting 12-under-par at Pinewild Country Club outside Pinehurst, N.C., to win by a stroke. He advanced to the second stage of the three-stage qualifying school, and if he makes it to the final stage, he will at the least be conditionally exempt on the Nationwide Tour (the top 25 finishers of the final stage earn their PGA cards, while the next 50, plus ties, earn Nationwide Tour cards).


But he won't forget where he's been.

"You know, you get really spoiled when you're playing in college," Weaver said. "You play a lot of great courses, stay at a lot of great places, and your teammates and coaches are always around."

"But professionally, you're out on your own. You've got to make decisions on your own. I wasn't in the right mindset when I

left Tech. I was a little naïve and thought I'd be successful right off the bat. In a way, it [not qualifying for the Nationwide or PGA Tours] was a blessing in disguise. It's hard to put into words how I've grown, but I really feel ready to take my game to the next level."

Weaver also reported that his mom, Cathy, is doing well after being diagnosed with breast cancer a year ago and undergoing all the treatments. He also said that he missed Blacksburg and Tech.

"There are certain things that I don't miss, like the studying and the tests," he laughed. "But I do miss my teammates and my friends. I miss West End and football games. I look forward to coming back up there and visiting." 



Drew Weaver

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HOKIES IN THE PROS

KING CONTINUES STEADY PLAY FOR THE CAROLINA PANTHERS

Most Tech fans remember the day that Jeff King committed to come to Virginia Tech and the excitement that a relatively local boy – King went to Pulaski County High, just 30 minutes or so from the Tech campus – created with that commitment.

Hard to believe, but that day was nearly 10 years ago.

The former Tech tight end is now in his fifth season with the NFL's Carolina Panthers, and he does more than just fill a roster spot. King starts for the Panthers and has been doing so since his second season.

"I don't know if I would say I'm surprised," King said. "If you can just get in somewhere and show the coaches that you can work hard and be consistent, you can carve a niche for yourself in this league. There is no magic formula.

"It really goes back to the things that Coach Beamer and his staff preach at Virginia Tech. Just work hard, be consistent and take care of the little things. They really prepared me for the NFL."

The Panthers drafted King in the fifth round of the 2006 NFL Draft. That happened after a senior season in which King set career highs in catches (26) and touchdown receptions (6) at Tech. He earned second-team All-ACC recognition for his efforts.

It also occurred after a career in which he played in 53 games, most as a starter, and caught 58 passes, 11 for touchdowns.

The Panthers drafted him as a back-up to tight end Kris Mangum and also as a special teams contributor. His first season in the NFL, he caught just one pass – for a touchdown against Atlanta – but he played in 12 games, which showed the confidence that the coaching staff displayed in him.

His second season turned out to be his breakout campaign. He started all 16 games and caught 46 passes for 406 yards. Two of his catches went for touchdowns.

Since then, he's started every game but two.

"I've just tried to get better from year to year," King said. "I don't really look back. I'm sure at some point, I'll look back on it and be proud, but right now, my focus is on keeping my job and working hard. I take things day to day."

King credits a lot of his success to Mangum, who served as the starter in 2006, the year King arrived. But Mangum, who



retired after that 2006 season, shepherded King in King's rookie season, showing him the ropes and what it took to be a professional in the NFL. Mangum played in the league 10 years, all with the Panthers, so he knew his stuff.

"He really took me under his wing and I appreciated that," King said. "He showed me how to be a pro and how to get better each and every day. You couldn't ask for anyone better to help you. He did things the right way. He's a guy I give a lot of credit to."

Of course, it also helped to have some former Hokies around. James Anderson, a whip linebacker at Tech, also plays for the Panthers, having been drafted in the third round in the same year that King was drafted. Anderson, too, starts, having done so in every game this season.

Fellow former Hokies Kevin McCadam, Chad Beasley and Will Montgomery have spent time with the Panthers as well over the course of the past five years. None remain with the team, but at least during their time in Charlotte, they provided King with familiar faces to help with the transition.

"They definitely made it easier," King said. "It's always good to have some famil-

iar faces around. When you don't know what's going on, it's good to have a person that you know in the same situation as you."

King's numbers on the field have dipped the past few seasons, but that goes more back to the Panthers' struggles at the quarterback position. Jake Delhomme spent much of 2007 injured, and then last year, Delhomme struggled before going on injured reserve with a broken finger on his throwing hand.

The Panthers scuttled Delhomme after last season. This season, head coach John Fox has used both Matt Moore and rookie Jimmy Clausen with little success.

"It's been disappointing," King said. "To start out 0-5 and struggle, and to struggle like we did as an offense, has been disappointing. The NFL is not fun unless you are winning.

"But I think we're getting better. We've continued to work hard. There's some light at the end of the tunnel. We've just got to keep digging ourselves out."

King's contract expires at the end of this season. Before the season began, he signed a one-year, \$1.759 million contract with Carolina. He hopes to stick around with the organization but admitted he

gave it little thought.

"It's day to day with me," he said. "I'm only thinking about how I can get better that day. Whatever the future holds, it holds. I'm not focused on it."


He does remain focused on his alma mater. Between lifting, watching film, attending practices and playing games, King still manages to keep up with the Hokies and occasionally makes it back to Blacksburg during an off week for a game.

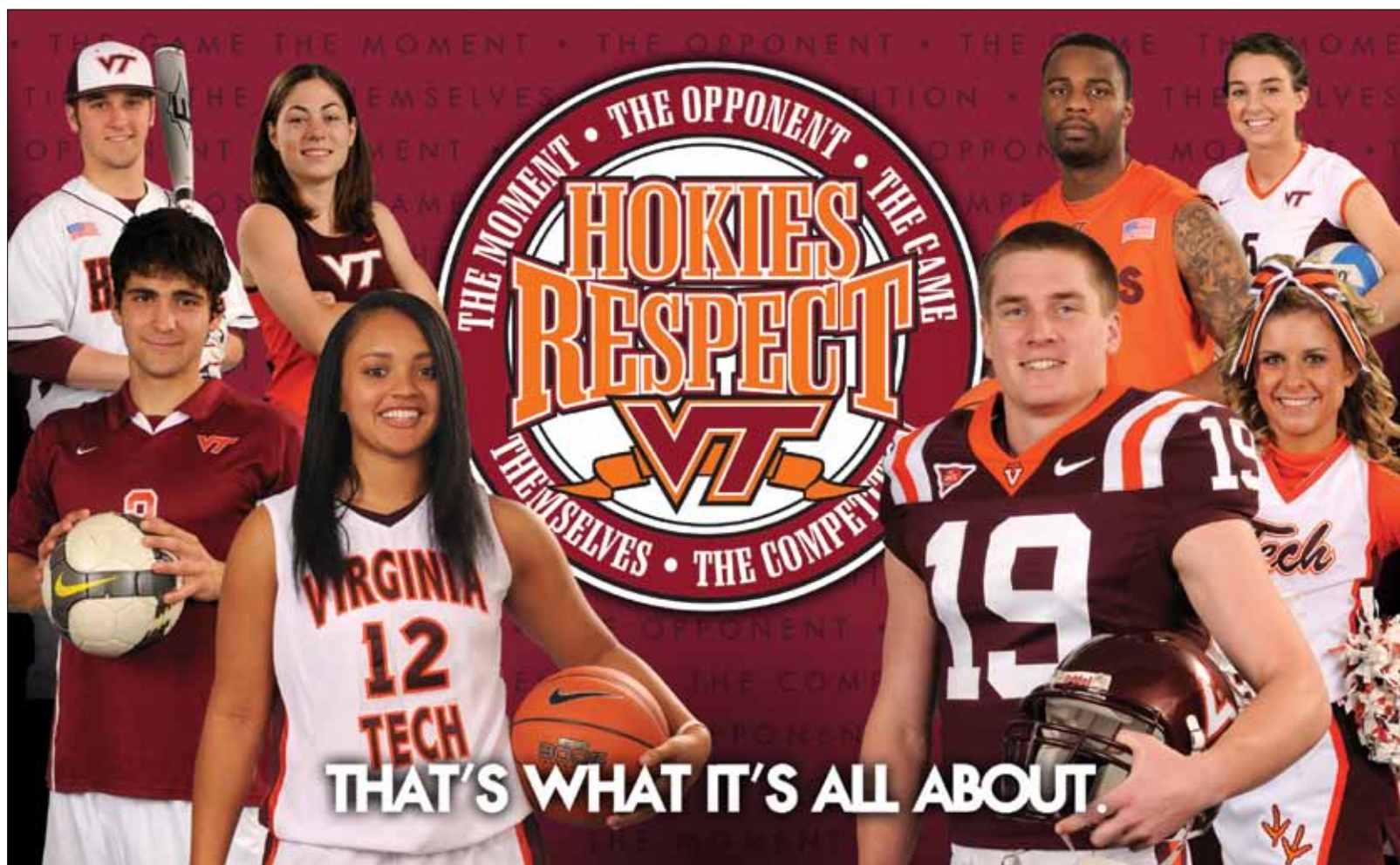
"If there's not a TV around, I'm always finding something to check the score," he said. "I'm constantly keeping in touch with Coach Billy Hite and those guys. I keep up as much as I can."

He also keeps up with the basketball program. He played for Seth Greenberg and the Hokies during his junior year, seeing action in 16 games, and he makes sure that his Carolina Panther teammates have heard about his basketball prowess.

"Oh, they've heard about them," King laughed. "I bring it up every now and then.

"I saw where those guys were picked to finish second [in the ACC]. That's great. I wish them well."

And Tech fans certainly continue to wish him well. After watching a local boy make good, it's the least they can do. 



A dynamic action shot from a soccer game. In the foreground, a player in a black jersey is diving horizontally towards the right, her head near the ground. In the background, a player in a white jersey with "VIRGINIA TECH" printed on it is jumping high, her head tilted back as she heads a soccer ball. The ball is suspended in the air above her. The background shows a green field, a chain-link fence, and trees under bright daylight.

USING HER HEAD

JENNIFER HARVEY HAS USED HER HEAD
– LITERALLY – BOTH ON AND OFF THE
FIELD DURING A SOLID CAREER

By Matt Kovatch

Jennifer Harvey has been as reliable as they come over the course of her four-year career as a Virginia Tech soccer player. She's tied for the program's all time lead with 85 matches played, and she ranks second in matches started with 82 (as of Nov. 4). The 5-foot-6 midfielder is also tied for seventh all time in both goals and points, while she's knotted at 10th in shots and 11th in assists.

Her peers will likely point to her toughness as her defining quality. But for most Hokie fans, Harvey just may be remembered for what is jokingly referred to on the team as the "jockstrap."

"When Jen broke her nose for the first time years ago, we tried to use the typical 'phantom-of-the-opera' mask that you see in basketball," Baer explained further. "However, with a lot of her role on the team being to win head balls, we needed something that allowed her to have more of a true forehead."

So Baer and the training staff put their thinking caps on, broke out some tools and went to work. There was a lot of trial and error involved, but they eventually settled on malleable Orthoplast and some elastic bands. Though the final appearance inspired the comical name and

"I think Jen is one of the toughest athletes that I have seen," Baer said. "She is such a competitor that she wants to be out on the field no matter what kind of pain she is in. Even more than that, I am always impressed that, no matter what kind of injury happens, she always plays with no fear, as though she has never been hit in the head before. It's like she has selective memory of her injuries and forgets about them once she steps onto the field."

"She always wants to play, so we have to rein her in and keep her resting when it is appropriate, but we also try to do whatever we can to keep her on the field."

“I would say that my toughest injury was probably against James Madison this year when I sliced my forehead open and got a concussion in the middle of the game. They had to stitch it up and it was really sore, but the hardest thing was being scared that I wasn't going to be able to play with it for our next game. That's probably the toughest thing – just thinking, 'What if I actually can't play a game because of this?'” – Jennifer Harvey

You see, one of Harvey's main duties on the women's soccer team for the past four seasons has been to win balls in the air with her head. If she's not being targeted on throw-ins, she's trying to redirect the ball into the goal off of corner kicks and free kicks. It's a task that requires not only exceptional leaping ability, which Harvey possesses from her days as a high school volleyball star, but also the mental capacity to throw caution to the wind and risk injury on every mid-air battle.

With skulls, elbows, feet – and occasionally, the ball – colliding during every joust, injuries are inevitable. Harvey is living proof of it, having suffered four broken noses, several concussions, and numerous black eyes, cuts and gashes over the years. But it's all business as usual for the senior from Roanoke, Va.

"It's second nature to me now – I don't really think about it anymore," Harvey said of her various bumps and bruises. And of her nose, she joked, "I'm not even sure that I care if it breaks again at this point."

In hopes of preventing additional breaks, Harvey has turned to the aforementioned "jockstrap," an unconventional device dreamed up by athletics trainer Katie Baer. Though Baer joked that she hasn't yet applied for a patent on the unusual nose guard, she admitted it has proven to be effective for Harvey in her own way.

"They had the general nose guards that go up to your forehead, but I couldn't really play and head the ball with that one," Harvey said.

even got a mention on the Web site www.uniwatchblog.com, a blog that documents the trends and aesthetics of sports equipment and uniforms and is routinely linked to by ESPN, the "jockstrap" serves its purpose.

"At first, we forgot to figure out how to incorporate her hair into the mix," Baer said. "But after a couple of years now, we have it down to a science and her ponytail actually helps to keep the mask up."

The mask has not only helped to protect Harvey's brittle nose, but it also has aided in soothing any lingering concern over her getting hurt again. Harvey isn't worried about the next injury to her face because she knows it's likely to happen anyway. What she's most scared of, though, is that those injuries are going to force her off the field.

"I would say that my toughest injury was probably against James Madison this year when I sliced my forehead open and got a concussion in the middle of the game," Harvey explained. "They had to stitch it up and it was really sore, but the hardest thing was being scared that I wasn't going to be able to play with it for our next game. That's probably the toughest thing – just thinking, 'What if I actually can't play a game because of this?'"

Harvey said she has reached the point where she won't stop playing unless her nose is actually bleeding, and because she is one of the training room's most frequent customers, Baer can attest to Harvey's dauntless nature.

Despite Harvey's reckless style of play, don't go thinking that she came to Virginia Tech simply to knock heads with the Hokies' ACC rivals. While her noggin has been her most valuable weapon on the field, it's also been her most useful tool off of it.

Harvey came to Tech to hit the books, and after recently being named to the CoSIDA/ESPN The Magazine All-Academic District III first team, she may be even better at school than she is at soccer. It's actually the third time that she's been honored by the College Sports Information Directors of America committee, which requires at least a 3.30 grade-point average for consideration, and it's the second consecutive year in which she made the first team.

Coming to school at Virginia Tech was pretty much a foregone conclusion for Harvey. Not only was she born and raised in nearby Roanoke, but also the list of her friends and family members who attended Virginia Tech goes on and on.

"I think my grandfather first came here in 1932," Harvey said. "Both of my sisters went here, and so did my dad and a bunch of my cousins. I don't know if I'd say it was my dream to come here, but I was kind of always a Hokie. I always just kind of knew that I was going to come to Virginia Tech and that I would play soccer here."

Harvey is majoring in chemistry, and she's in the process of applying to medical schools – her list of possible destinations includes VCU, Wake Forest, Georgetown

and South Carolina – to begin pursuit of a future career as a doctor. It’s something she’s known that she’s wanted to do for years now, and even Baer has noticed it.

“I think that Jen spends time in the training room not only because of her injuries, but also because she enjoys being around sports medicine,” Baer said.

“I’m really curious,” Harvey agreed. “I enjoy finding out about everything that I don’t know. I love to know random facts and how things work and things that nobody else really knows.”

It’s because of that curiosity that Harvey wants to focus on research when she earns her doctorate.


“I want to be able to do clinical research in my own lab and to be able to test stuff with patients,” she said. “I like thinking about how I could actually help save lives. I often dream of being in a research group that comes up with something that could save lives for hundreds of years. That thought is what really just keeps pushing me toward that career.”

Harvey said she is particularly drawn to studying neurology.

“The whole nervous system really interests me,” she added. “I like the thought of having a specialty and being really knowledgeable about one particular thing. I also want to have patients over long periods of time so I can work on their cases and get to know them and build relationships. I think I would be good at that.”

After witnessing Harvey become the Hokies’ leader both on the field and in the classroom over the past four years, Baer has little doubt that Harvey will conquer whatever her future holds.

“I think that Jen has the desire and the drive to do anything that she sets her mind to,” Baer concluded. “I hope that she can live her dream of going to medical school and I’m sure she will compete to be in the top of the class. Her competitiveness, toughness and leadership, in combination with the high standards that she has for herself, will make her successful in any career that she chooses.”

Especially if her career involves researching new nose guard technologies – she has plenty of experience to draw from there. 



Jennifer Harvey has been terrific both on and off the field and has plans for a career in medicine once she finishes at Tech.



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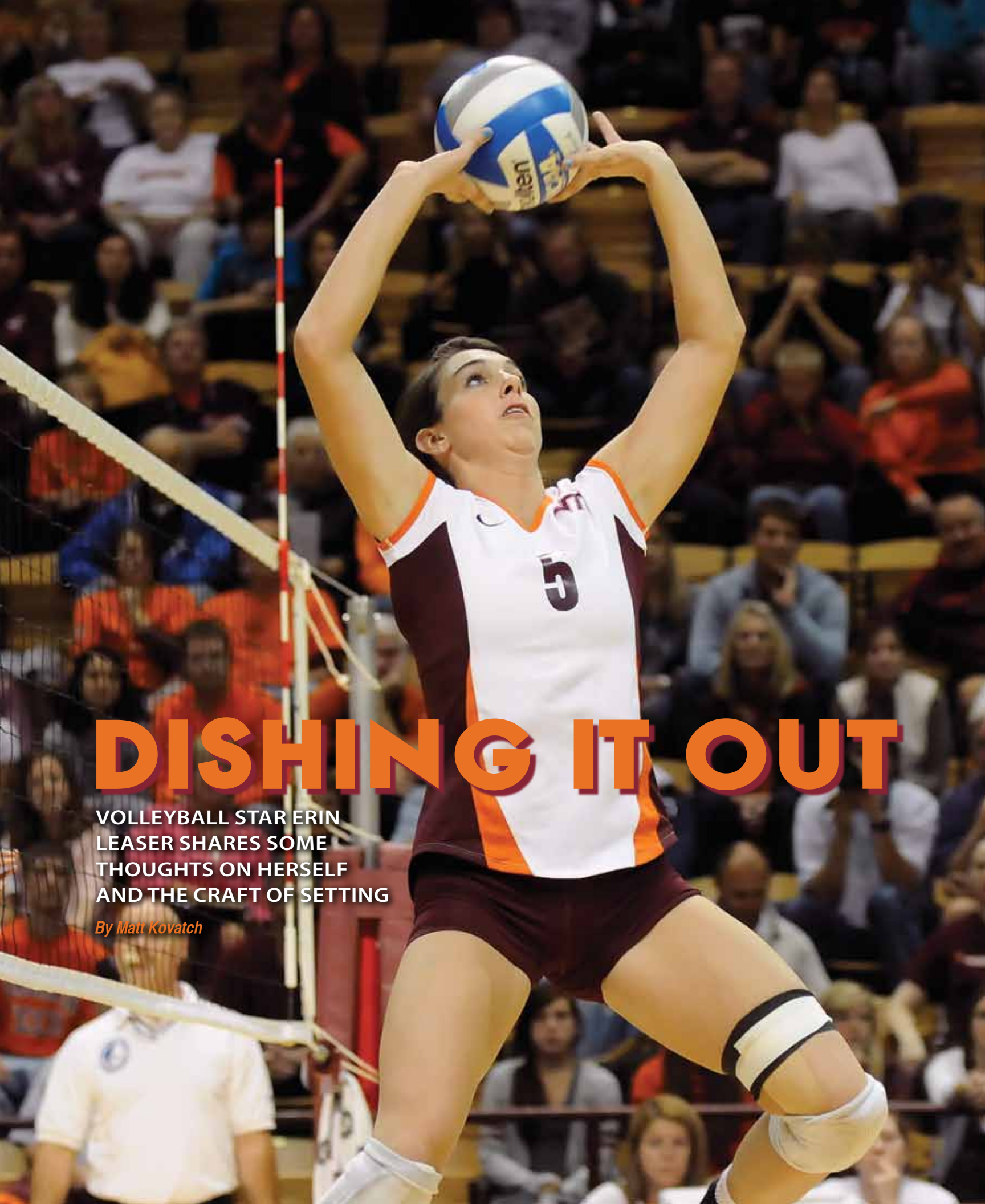
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DISHING IT OUT

VOLLEYBALL STAR ERIN LEASER SHARES SOME THOUGHTS ON HERSELF AND THE CRAFT OF SETTING

By Matt Kovatch

With a 15-8 record at the start of November, the Virginia Tech volleyball squad once again was turning in a solid season. At the helm of the team is setter Erin Leaser, a junior whom, through the month of October, ranked second in the Atlantic Coast Conference with 10.98 assists per set.

She recently surpassed Laura Hanner (1993-97) for fourth place on Tech's all-time assist list – Leaser had dished out 3,385 helpers through 85 career matches played – and is on pace to reach second on the chart by the time her career is finished.

Born and raised in Allentown, Pa., Leaser was understandably bummed when her Philadelphia Phillies were bounced from the Major League Baseball postseason in late October, but she pleasantly agreed to sit down and fill us in on how she got here and where she's going.

IHS: How did you get started playing volleyball and how did you come to like it so much?

EL: I started playing in fifth grade. I was interested because my sister had been playing, and my mom played in high school. It was just something that I came to love. I can't really explain why, but I was always looking forward to going to practice. It just really became a big part of my life. It still is and I think it always will be.

IHS: When did you learn the position of setter? Did it come naturally to you?

EL: I've always been the setter. In fifth grade, we didn't really have set positions so everyone did everything. But in sixth grade, when I first started playing club volleyball, is when I first became the setter. It was just something that I fell in love with. I loved having control and helping others. Everyone wanted to be a hitter when they were younger, but I never really had that desire. I wanted to be the quarterback of the team, if you can say that.

IHS: Did you play any other sports growing up?

EL: I was a swimmer. My two events were the 50 freestyle and the 100 breast stroke.

IHS: Was there any thought of doing that in college or were you always set on volleyball?

EL: I had a lot of people ask me if I was going to swim at Virginia Tech as well as play volleyball, but that would have been crazy. I had swam competitively since I was 6, but I never really had the same passion

FOUR THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SETTING

The novice volleyball watcher will always notice the powerful spikes and the fearless digs of those spikes, but rarely the seamless intermediary of the two – the set. A defensive player can't return an attack skyward without trusting that the setter can retrieve it, while an offensive player won't have a chance at the crowd-pleasing kills if the setter can't deliver the ball with supreme accuracy. As Virginia Tech's setter, Erin Leaser has mastered the art of the all-important second touch, and she shared some tips about what her position entails.

KEEP STUDYING.

Because volleyball is played at such a fast pace, much of the game is based on reaction and instincts. But that doesn't mean that Leaser isn't mentally prepared.

"I think the most important part of my job is to read the defense on the other side of the net and to set what is available there," Leaser said. "When we watch game film, I'm mostly looking for what the middle blocker does on the other side so that I can set the ball to whoever has one blocker. That's a big part of my job during the game as well. If the middle blocker is committing to our middle hitter, then I can set our outside hitter to give her that one-on-one opportunity."

USE THE BREAD AND BUTTER.

Though the blockers on the other side of the net often cause Leaser to call on-the-fly audibles, à la Peyton Manning, the Hokies have plays to run, and it is important to stick to them when possible.

"I would say all of our sets are crucial for us to execute, but the one that works the most for us is our slide," Leaser said of the play that features a running, jump-off-one-foot attack with an incalculable angle for the defense. "That's the one that has to be the most consistent for me because it's so effective. If it's not, then our offense will probably struggle. I'd say that the slide is also my favorite to set because it's so quick and it's just so efficient."

STAY UNPREDICTABLE.

Though setters are usually racking up the assists, sometimes it's fun (and effective) for them to do a little attacking of their own. They can do this with a 'dump,' which is when they – oftentimes inconspicuously – send the ball over the net on the second touch rather than setting it to a teammate.

"I've been dumping a lot more this season," Leaser said. "Sometimes, you need to be more offensive so the blockers can't stay committed to the hitters. Over the years, I've had to learn to wait and not to dump right away because they are expecting it. They've watched our game film and they know that I like to be offensive, so I try to wait a couple of games into the match before I start to do it a lot.

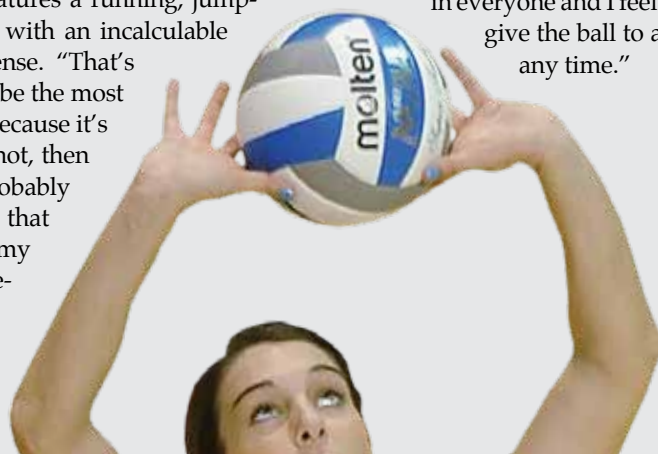
"I think the most effective time to dump is during a rally and not off the first serve receive. Once the ball is in play, the defense is thinking about the hitters instead of thinking about me. I think it's easier to catch them off guard then."

FIND A SAFETY VALVE.

Much like a quarterback dropping back to pass, a setter must keep all options open. But also much like a quarterback, it's important to have a go-to teammate whom you can get the ball to in a pinch.

"I have a lot of people whom I can look to this year, but I'd say my No. 1 is [middle hitter] Felicia [Willoughby]," Leaser admitted. "She is really effective with everything that I give her. She is a really smart player and she scores more often than not. Even against a double block, she does great.

"But I know I can always look to Cara [Baarendse], as well as Jenn [Wiker] and Justine [Record]. I have a lot of confidence in everyone and I feel like I can give the ball to anyone at any time."



for it as I did for volleyball. I got recruiting letters from Division II and Division III schools around me in Pennsylvania, but volleyball was always my main focus and the thing that I had the most passion for.

IHS: How did you first learn of Virginia Tech and how did the recruiting process go?

EL: I was actually being recruited by [Tech head coach] Chris [Riley] while he was coaching at Towson in Maryland, but he moved to Virginia Tech between my sophomore and junior years of high school.

IHS: Was there any worry after he made the switch whether he or Towson still wanted you?

EL: Yeah, a little bit, because Tech was a higher program and I wasn't really sure if I played a part in his future plans. He was really interested in me going to Towson, but I didn't know if that would roll over to Virginia Tech because the programs were so different. But I stayed in contact with him, and he was still interested, so I came down for a visit. I loved the players and I loved the atmosphere. I was really happy that I came down and that he chose me to come here.

IHS: You were no slouch in high school (Leaser was the MVP of the 2007 Pennsylvania state tournament and a Gatorade state Player of the Year runner-up at Allentown Central Catholic). Did you get any interest from Penn State or any other big-time programs?

EL: I got a little attention from Penn State early on because I went to their camp the summers before and after my freshman year, but after that, no, there wasn't really any interest. I was being recruited the most by Towson, Notre Dame and Georgetown.

IHS: What are you majoring in and do you have any plans for how you want to use it?

EL: I am majoring in psychology. I don't know what I want to do with it yet, but it's just something that I'm really interested in. I feel like it can help me in whatever I decide to do after school, whether it be coaching or teaching or something along those lines.

IHS: Do you see more volleyball in your future?

EL: I really want to play in Europe after college. This past summer, [Tech

teammate] Felicia [Willoughby] and I actually went on a tour with this agency called Bring It Promotions. It's an agency for college players who are interested in playing overseas, and we actually went to Brazil for 10 days and played with a team of girls from around the U.S. that they put together. We played some Brazilian club teams and some pro teams there, so it was a good way to expose ourselves to that agency and for them to get to know us, just in case we decide to go through them when college is over. I had never been out of the country before, so it was really an eye-opening experience and it helped me to see where I'm at in that decision-making process.

IHS: How did you like going to Brazil?

EL: It was really cool. We did a bunch of sightseeing and we saw the Christ the Redeemer statue. We went to a Brazilian rodeo. It was really neat to see the differences in culture. It was really difficult, though, because they speak Portuguese. We had a liaison, but she couldn't always be there to help us. It was hard communicating, but it was a really interesting experience and I'm really glad that I did it.

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Erin Leaser, who is one of the best setters in Tech history, is thumbs up after helping the Hokies to another solid season.

IHS: Is the food down there like the Brazilian-themed restaurants in the U.S.?


EL: Yes, a lot of the places that we went to were buffet style, and we actually went to a Brazilian steakhouse one night and they came out with the skewers and served us. You eat a lot of meat, but they also eat lots of fruits and vegetables. The breakfasts are really interesting as well. They eat bread and lunchmeat and lots of fruit – no eggs or anything like that.

IHS: How about the volleyball? Did it differ any from the way the game is played in the U.S.?

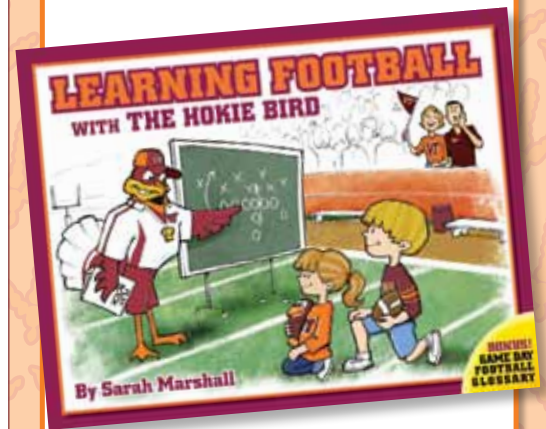
EL: I learned a lot. It's different than volleyball in the U.S. They play at a lot faster of a pace. The players weren't towers or anything – there were no 6-foot-5 girls like there are here – but they were all very athletic and they played all the way around. I mean, there were setters and outside hitters, but they all did pretty much

everything. I think that's the difference between the volleyball culture in the U.S. and elsewhere. They kind of train their girls to do everything and we train for a specific position. It was neat to see how everyone was so good at everything. They were very well rounded.

IHS: Felicia has said that she wants to play overseas after college as well. Do you two talk about playing together and what country would you like to play in?

EL: We're not sure if we could ever be on the same team because they only allow two foreigners on each team, but we would love to play together and we do talk about it. I would love to play in Italy or France. I know two girls who are playing in Switzerland right now and they say that they love it, so that might be a good transitional place to play where I could just get used to the lifestyle, but I would say Italy would be my top choice. 

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THE TIME IS NOW

THAT'S THE THEME AS A STACKED VIRGINIA TECH WRESTLING TEAM BEGINS ANOTHER PROMISING SEASON

Thanks to the Virginia Tech athletics facilities boon, the Hokie football team is enjoying life in their brand new locker room facility that was built adjacent to Jamerson Athletic Center this past summer. But an added bonus to the facility – likely unknown to most, aside from Virginia Tech wrestling fanatics – is the top level of the new building.

The top floor of the addition was bestowed upon the up-and-coming wrestling program, and head coach Kevin Dresser and the Hokies couldn't be more appreciative.

"I can tell the guys love it," Dresser said. "In the past, when we got done with practice – boom – everybody was out of there. But now guys are sticking around after practice, whether they're getting their weight down or just doing some extra stuff. They're hanging out in there a lot more."

The new facility not only helps the current

Hokies by providing much more space, but it also should boost their recruiting efforts with any prospect who gets a chance to see it.

"The curb appeal and the 'wow factor' is awesome," Dresser said. "No matter what school a recruit has been to, we're not taking a back seat in facilities to anybody right now."

A video tour of the new facility can be viewed by clicking on "wrestling" at www.hokiesports.com/videos. In that video, which was filmed when the Hokies moved in during late August, Dresser navigates his way through the facility like a proud new father. In late October, however, one could get the sense that Dresser was ready to move past the shiny, new toys and get on to the nitty gritty of the upcoming season. Maybe that's just the tough-as-nails nature of wrestling coaches, but it's clear that Dresser is psyched about getting his Hokies out on the mat.

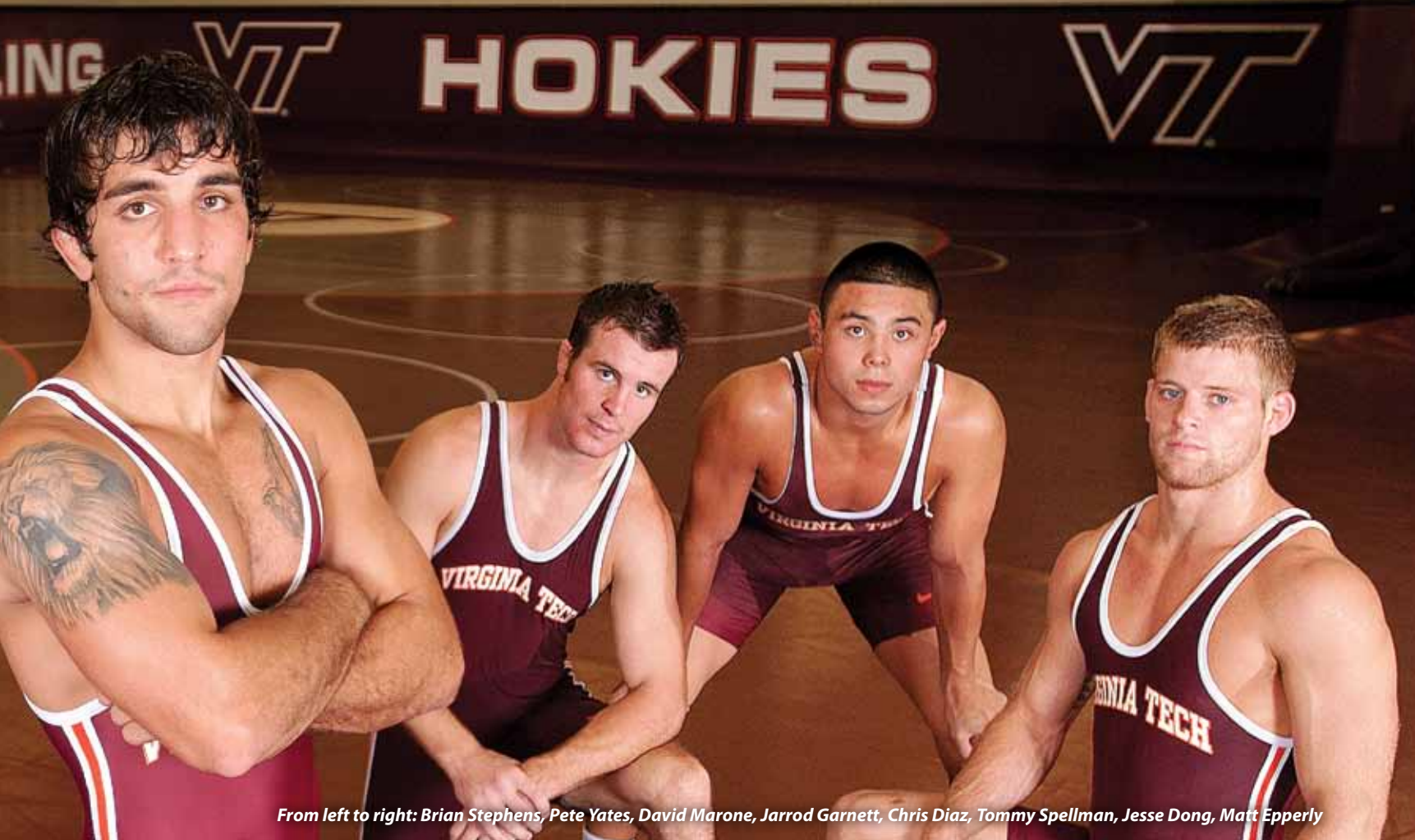
"We have a lot of experience in a lot of weight classes right now," Dresser explained. "We still have some young guys,

but we have a good mix right now that we haven't had before. We can't say we're young and inexperienced anymore. It's time for us to make it happen now. We need to get it done from day one."

There will be three seniors and two juniors in the starting lineup this year, all of whom enter the season ranked among the nation's top 15 in their respective weight classes. Two other sophomores find themselves ranked in the top 20, and the lineup will feature a true freshman who is sure to be ranked once he qualifies by wrestling his first match.

That group does not even include 157-pounder Jesse Dong, an Atlantic Coast Conference champion who earned the third seed at the NCAA Championships last year. While Dresser is focused on winning this season, he's also mindful that, to be a national power, you can't just burst onto the scene once every few years. That's why the Hokies have made the tough decision to redshirt Dong in 2010-11.

"While we feel that the time is now for this year, you know what?" Dresser asked.



From left to right: Brian Stephens, Pete Yates, David Marone, Jarrod Garnett, Chris Diaz, Tommy Spellman, Jesse Dong, Matt Epperly

"It's got to be a year-in, year-out thing. We need to step up to the plate every year – not just when we have the right guys at the right weights. It needs to be a yearly thing and a program-building thing if we are going to be a national-caliber program."

Sitting down one of your best wrestlers might not make sense at first glance, but when you're looking to the future – as Dresser surely is, knowing that those three seniors will be gone next year – it's the right thing to do to ensure continuing depth.

Even without Dong, the Hokies are expected to contend for the ACC crown this year. In fact, the preseason National Wrestling Coaches Association/*USA Today* Coaches Poll has Tech pegged 13th nationally, due largely to the contributions that those seven ranked individuals will make.

"If I picked up the newspaper the Sunday after the NCAA Championships and it said we had six All-Americans, it wouldn't surprise me," Dresser admitted. "But with that said, there is such a fine line. Those six guys – I'm not worried about them qualifying – but are they good enough to get to the final day? That is the question. They're good enough, but they've obviously got to pick up the slack and make sure that they

go from just being a qualifier to being good enough to go and actually get it done."

And with that said, here's a look at how each of the weight classes could shake out:

125: Jarrod Garnett will start here for the third consecutive year after he claimed the ACC title last season. The junior from Delaware also advanced to the round of 12 at the NCAA Championships, falling one win short of All-America status. He should be right back in the thick of things come March. Freshman T.J. Mitchell and junior Schuyler Swanton will back up Garnett, but Tech coaches are also excited about another true freshman who is coming in to redshirt, Ohio native Ty Mitch.

"He is going to be the heir apparent to Jarrod Garnett," Dresser said. "He is really special."

133: Local product Devin Carter, a true freshman from Christiansburg who won the state title three times and compiled a career record of 199-15, will have the starting spot from the beginning, and Dresser couldn't be more excited.

"Devin is going to open guys' eyes up," Dresser said. "He is one of the most excit-

ing freshmen we've ever had, and we've had some good ones. Wrestling is one of the most important things in his life, and it shows every day when he comes in here. He is going to be really good from day one, and I'm just going to leave it at that."

The most promising wrestler behind Carter is sophomore Erik Spjut from Texas, though he may end up redshirting due to a knee injury he suffered in January.

141: Chris Diaz returns for his senior season and is expecting big things, as are the coaches. He became the first All-American in Dresser's tenure when he placed eighth at the NCAA Tournament in March by

INTERMAT PRESEASON INDIVIDUAL RANKINGS

125: #10 Jarrod Garnett

141: #8 Chris Diaz

149: #16 Brian Stephens

157: #15 Pete Yates

165: #15 Matt Epperly

184: #11 Tommy Spellman

HWT: #12 David Marone

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storming through the consolation bracket after a first-round loss. Though the starting spot is his to lose, Diaz will be pushed by some good depth this year.

"We have a pretty good transfer in red-shirt freshman Zach Neibert from Northern Illinois," Dresser said. "He went to the same high school as [149-pounder] Brian Stephens. Zach is going to push Chris, and then we've got Nick Murray, who has seen some starting duty in his time here."

149: Sophomore Brian Stephens returns following an outstanding freshman campaign in which he earned ACC Freshman of the Year honors. It was an effort that almost never happened, as he was scheduled to redshirt behind Pete Yates before Yates went down with an injury. Stephens responded by going 13-5 and winning the conference title in his weight class.

"We're expecting big things out of Brian this year," Dresser said. "He's a guy who could really make things happen for us. We don't have a lot of depth at 149 right now, but it looks like Chris Mears, a prep school national runner-up from Texas, is going to back him up."

157: As mentioned earlier, the Hokies are planning on redshirting standout Jesse Dong, but they wouldn't be doing it if they didn't have a supreme option behind him in Yates, a third-year sophomore.

"Normally, people would say, 'What the heck are you redshirting Jesse Dong for?'" Dresser said. "Well, that's how much confidence we have in Pete Yates."

Yates qualified for the NCAA Championships at 149 pounds during his freshman season in 2008-09, but sat out last year with a knee injury. He returns in a new weight class and with All-America potential.

"Pete really struggled last year to make weight at 149, so moving to 157 was inevitable," Dresser said. "In fact, he might be at 165 next year – that's how big he is. He's going to be a big 157."

165: Two-time ACC champion Matt Epperly returns for his fifth year in the program, and coaches are looking for him to take the next step forward.

"Matt hasn't been able to get it done at the NCAA level, but he needs to do that this year," Dresser said.

Behind Epperly is some solid depth that includes a pair of promising true freshmen in Chris Moon and Harrison Hightower. Moon was a prep school national champion in 2010 and Hightower went 43-2 during his senior season, while winning his third Ohio state championship.

174: This is the weight class with the most question marks entering the season, and it will come down to one of four guys – all of whom are freshmen. According to Dresser, the options are Nick Vetterlein from New Jersey, Angelo Malvestuto from New York, Sam Law from Virginia and Tanner Eitel from Texas.

"This weight class is up for grabs right now, but it's going to be some good competition all year long," Dresser said.

For what it's worth, the Hokies had their intrasquad wrestle-offs in late October, and while Malvestuto defeated Law, Vetterlein later defeated Malvestuto.

184: Tommy Spellman has been reliable here for the past two seasons, but the coaching staff is ready for him to step it up a notch as a senior. Spellman is a two-time NCAA Championships qualifier and he has twice been the runner up at the ACC Tournament.

"Tommy needs to get it done this year and win an ACC title," Dresser stressed. "We're excited to see what he can do."

Virginia Beach native John Dickson will be the top backup to Spellman.

197: Sophomore Chris Penny is the clear-cut option in this weight class despite going just 3-16 last season.

"Chris got thrown to the wolves last year as a true freshman and kind of had to survive all year, but he's a guy whom we're really excited to see," Dresser said. "He's probably one of the most improved guys from last year to this year."

Former starter D.J. Bruce, now a red-shirt junior, dealt with a torn ACL last year but should share backup duties with freshman Bobby LaVelle.

HWT: Fourth-year junior David Marone returns to the lineup this season after taking last year off to have shoulder surgery and to pack on some needed bulk. He did just that, adding about 25 pounds to get himself up to the 240-pound range. It should pay dividends for an athletic heavyweight who was one win away from being an All-American as a sophomore.

"We're really excited to have David back," Dresser said. "He is looking great. We think he can be right there in the hunt at the end of the year."

Andrew Miller, an offensive lineman on the football team, is expected to join the squad after the Hokies' bowl game.

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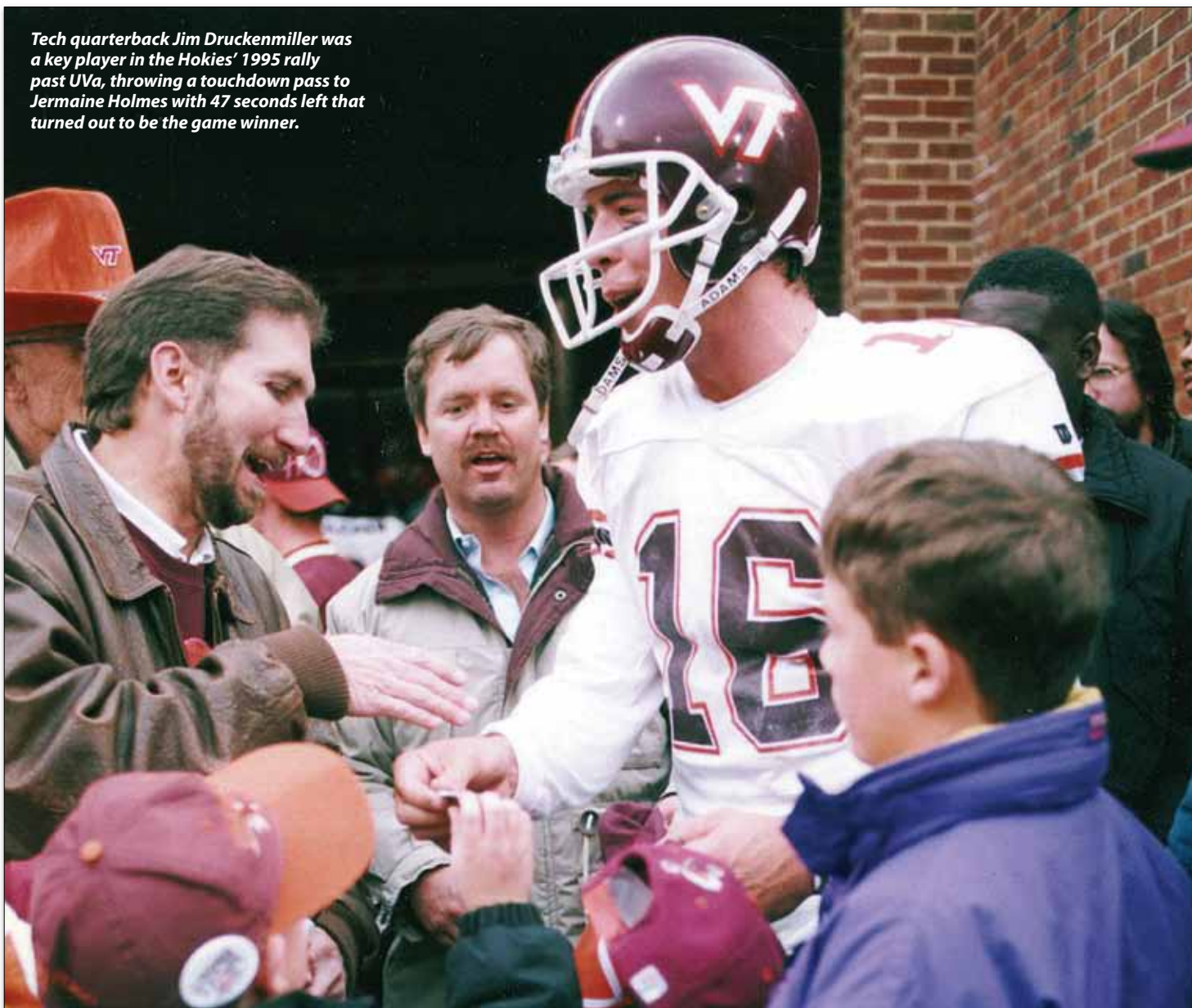
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Tech quarterback Jim Druckenmiller was a key player in the Hokies' 1995 rally past UVa, throwing a touchdown pass to Jermaine Holmes with 47 seconds left that turned out to be the game winner.



HOW THE HOKIES DID IT

By Chris Colston

(Reprinted from Vol. 13, No. 12 edition of the Hokie Huddler)

It was a game Virginia should have won. A game the Cavaliers HAD won. A game where they out-gained Virginia Tech 420-319, collected nine more first downs and intercepted three passes. A game played on the same field where they beat No. 2 Florida State. A game where they led 29-14 early in the second half and had shut down Tech's rushing attack.

Things looked bad for the Hokies when, trailing 29-23, UVa's Todd White

intercepted a Jim Druckenmiller pass with 4:08 to play.

"That should have been the difference," UVa head coach George Welsh said.

Tech needed to stop Virginia and get the ball back – quickly. But on third-and-5 from the Tech 49, UVa quarterback Mike Groh threw downfield to tight end Bobby Neely. Torrian Gray hit Neely before the ball arrived, giving the Cavaliers a first-and-10 at the Tech 34 with just 2:40 remaining.

It looked like the game was lost.

"I felt like that was our last chance," junior outside linebacker Brandon Semones said. "I thought Virginia would run out the clock."

The Cavaliers tried to do just that, but fortunately, the Hokies still had all three of their timeouts.

Tailback Kevin Brooks rushed the right side for four yards, forcing Tech to use its first timeout at 2:30. Hank Coleman then dropped Brooks for a four-yard loss, and Tech took its second timeout at 2:24. "That was a big play," Tech co-defensive coordinator Bud Foster said. "It knocked Virginia out of field-goal range."

Tailback Tiki Barber got five yards back on the next play, bringing up fourth-and-5. The Hokies burned their last timeout at 2:17.

Virginia lined up for a field-goal attempt, but holder Tim Sherman was set eight feet back instead of the normal seven. Welsh saw that his team was disorganized and called timeout, a ploy ESPN thought "iced their own kicker."

Rafael Garcia's attempt, from 46 yards

out, was wide left by three feet. Down six with 2:12 to play, the Hokies were still alive – albeit with no timeouts.

“They were rushing three linemen, so I knew I would have time to throw,” Druckenmiller said.

“When you have time to throw, which we did, you have a chance,” Tech head coach Frank Beamer said.

Druckenmiller’s first three passes fell incomplete. Then, on fourth-and-10, he found Cornelius White across the middle for 14 yards. “I looked the middle linebacker off,” Druckenmiller said. “and Cornelius held on to the ball after a good hit.”

Druckenmiller completed his next two straight passes – to reserve tailback Ken Oxendine for seven yards to the Tech 43 and then six yards to Jermaine Holmes at midfield. After an incompletion, he found Bryan Still for six. An illegal motion penalty moved the Hokies back five yards, but Druckenmiller found reserve Michael Steuwe for 11 on third-and-9.

“Tech is a team that will fight, claw and scratch its way back into a game,” UVa defensive tackle Todd White said. “We should have expected it.”

Druckenmiller had been calling most of his own plays Saturday, but this time,



Jermaine Holmes made one of the biggest plays in Tech history when he hauled in this touchdown catch in the final minute to help the Hokies rally past UVa.

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offensive coordinator Rickey Bustle knew exactly what he wanted. It was a play Tech had run on the second play of the series, one it had put in just this week.

"I was going to call the play again myself," Druckenmiller said. "When I saw Coach call it in, I said, 'yeah.'"

The play – "call it a 'pump and go,'" Druckenmiller said. – was designed to take advantage of Virginia's aggressive secondary.

It worked to perfection. Holmes made a quick feint toward the outside. Druckenmiller pump-faked. Eager to make an interception, free safety Percy Ellsworth bit on it. All Holmes had to do was turn his route downfield and make the 32-yard catch in the end zone.

"I didn't want to under-throw it," Druckenmiller said. "So I heaved it."

"I thought it was thrown kind of far," Holmes said. "So I just put my head down and ran under it."

Atle Larsen converted the all-important extra point, and Tech led 30-29 with 47 seconds left. Still plenty of time left for the Cavaliers to get in field-goal range.

"I'll be damned if we let them score," senior tackle Jim Baron said, ranting and pacing on the sideline.

Tech had good kick coverage, stopping Demetrius Allen at the UVa 18. Now it was up to the defense. "We just didn't want to make any mistakes," Semones said. "We didn't want to give up the big play."

Groh's first two passes were incomplete, but he found Tiki Barber for 11 yards on third down. Then he hit Bryan Owen for 11 more and Barber for 20 to the Hokie 40-yard line.

"Every one of those plays down the stretch, my heart skipped a few beats," Foster said. "Every play counted."

Without another completion, the Cavaliers would have to convert a 57-yard field goal to win. "That's a little bit long for me," placekicker Rafael Garcia said, "especially with the wind gusting like it was."

Groh found wide receiver Brian McCarthy over the middle, but Semones reached in and deflected the ball. "The way the officials had been calling things," Semones said, "I thought they might throw a flag."

Now there were six seconds left. Welsh pondered what to do: attempt the field goal, try a quick sideline pass to get Garcia a closer shot, or go for the end zone. He called timeout to think about it.

"I didn't understand the philosophy of


calling time," Semones said. "But it helped us. We knew they either had to run an out-route or go deep."

Virginia opted for the sideline pass. "If we had executed the play, I think we could've gotten out of bounds with one second to go," Welsh said. "In hindsight, I think we should've thrown the ball into the end zone."

Instead, Tech cornerback Antonio Banks darted in front of Groh's pass intended for Owen and ran 65 yards for a score. He avoided the leg of Virginia head trainer Joe Gieck, who made a semi-attempt to trip him from the sideline, but couldn't miss a mob of ecstatic Hokie students in the end zone.

Final score: Tech 36, Virginia 29.

"I never thought it was over," senior middle linebacker George DelRicco said. "Their No. 56 [offensive tackle Chris Harrison] was talking. On the first run after the interference call, he said, 'you guys lost this game.' He was in my face going off.

"I said, 'No way. We haven't lost it yet.' Then when Banks got the interception, I was talking his ear off the whole way down the field. And he didn't have a word to say." 

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