

INSIDE

# HOKIESPORTS

The Official Magazine of Virginia Tech Athletics



## 2013 BASEBALL & SOFTBALL PREVIEW

Jasmin Harrell hopes to lead the Tech softball squad back to the NCAA regionals, while slugger Tyler Horan returns to a Hokie baseball team with high expectations this season



New coaches Jeff Grimes, Scot Loeffler and Aaron Moorehead join Tech's football staff as part of a shakeup by head coach Frank Beamer

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## PINNING DOWN ACC COMPETITION

David Marone dominated Virginia's Derek Papagianopoulos 7-1 and the Hokies dominated the Cavaliers 25-6 on Nov. 25. The Tech wrestling squad went undefeated in ACC competition this season and goes into the ACC Championships looking for its first league title.

## THE STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPERIENCE

"I am very thankful to the Hokie Club for its generous gifts that have made my time here at Tech possible. The Hokie Club made it possible to get where we are today."

**DAVID MARONE**  
Senior | Wrestling

"Your donations made it possible for me to attend school and wrestle at Virginia Tech. Thank you for all of your support."

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Senior | Wrestling



# THE DONOR FILE

## MIKE & LAURA HEWITT

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**WHAT YEAR DID YOU GRADUATE?**  
MIKE- VT, 1974  
LAURA- RADFORD COLLEGE, 1973

## Q&A

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

**A:** It gives us the ability to give young men and women the opportunity to experience Virginia Tech and all it has to offer. It gives them a chance to become a member of the Hokie Nation, which is something that is hard to describe but an experience they will never forget. We have been able to establish an endowed scholarship for an athlete majoring in engineering since we felt Virginia Tech has enabled three generations of our family to have successful careers in engineering.

**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:** We have loved Virginia Tech for many years. I grew up remembering my mom and dad, class of '38, occasionally bringing me to a game. But I think Laura and I really knew we were Hokies

when we were stuck in traffic on one of our many trips driving to Tech from Delaware, and we said, "Why don't we just build our retirement home in the Blacksburg area? That way we can get as deeply involved in Tech as we would like!" That decision has proven to be one the best decisions of our adult lives!

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

**A:** In the past, you might see us at 7:30 a.m. on Chicken Hill claiming our grassy area. We would spend the whole day hosting family, fraternity brothers, friends, students and staff and occasionally the opponent's fan base. We have done special seasonal game beers, Corona smoothies, VT's (Vodka Tonics) and even Virginia Tech wig visors looking for the charm to bring on a victory!

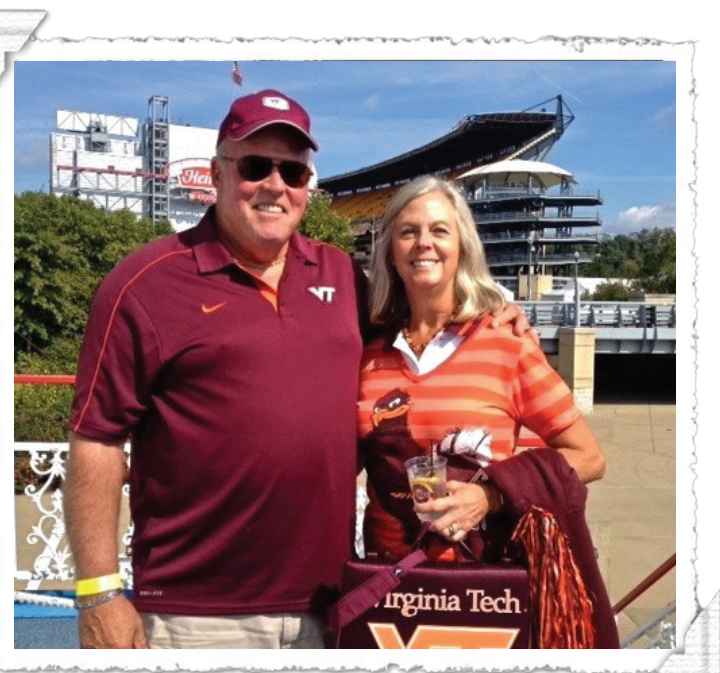
**Q: What lengths have you taken to travel to see the Hokies play?**

**A:** After Laura and I got married, we used to travel week in and week out

driving from Delaware to see Hokie football games. The years we had three home games in a row made it difficult, but we did it! Today, we follow the Hokies to all home and a good number of away and bowl games. We enjoy seeing the different cities and stadiums. Adding Pittsburgh (we loved that trip this year) and Syracuse will be interesting. We have wanted to play Notre Dame forever and can't wait for the day the Irish show up in Lane Stadium. Maybe we can get lucky and make it a Thursday night!

**Q: When you moved to Fairlawn, you got involved with the Blacksburg Hokie Club. How and why did you get involved and has it been a good experience for you?**

**A:** After we retired and settled in, we were looking to get more involved with Virginia Tech athletics. Becoming a Hokie Rep enabled us to get involved in many of the local fundraising events and meet more people who have a passion for Virginia Tech athletics similar to ours.



The following represents Annual Fund donors who have joined as "new" or "upgraded" Hokie Club members from late August through December 2012.

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**Custis, Houseright named ACC Legends**

Former Tech men's basketball player Ace Custis and women's basketball standout Michelle Houseright were named part of the 2013 ACC Legends class, as announced by ACC commissioner John Swofford. Each school is represented with a former male and female player or coach.

Custis guided the Hokies to the 1995 NIT championship and led the program to the 1996 NCAA Tournament. A three-time all-conference player, he led Tech in rebounding for four consecutive seasons and his total of 1,177 career boards ranks third in Tech history. The 6-foot-7 performer still ranks 10th on the Tech career list for points scored (1,706), sixth in field goals made (660), fifth in career rebound average (9.5) and seventh in career steals (199). He is one of only three players in Tech history to surpass the 1,500 mark in both points and rebounds.

The men's Legends will be honored at this year's ACC Men's Basketball Tournament in Greensboro, N.C., during the annual ACC Basketball Legends Brunch, which will be held on

Saturday, March 16, beginning at 10 a.m. at the Sheraton Four Seasons Hotel.

Houseright, whose maiden name is Hollister, was part of three teams that played in the NCAA Tournament (1995, 1998 and 1999), including one that made the Sweet 16 (1999). She finished her career at Tech with 1,112 points to rank 15th all-time in the Hokies' record book. She holds the sophomore record for scoring average at 17.3 and the sophomore rebound average record at 9.1. She ranks fourth in both career categories at Tech. In addition, she ranks 10th all-time in career field-goal percentage at 46.7. She also holds the mark for the third-most points scored in a single game when she knocked down 33 against Fordham.

The women's Legends will be honored at the ACC Women's Basketball Legends' Brunch on Saturday, March 9, at 10 a.m., and then will be introduced to the Greensboro Coliseum crowd at halftime of the first semifinal game of the ACC Women's Basketball Tournament on that same day.

**Exum out indefinitely with a torn ACL**

The news out of the Virginia Tech athletics department had been positive for nearly all of January, with quarterback Logan Thomas, defensive end James Gayle and cornerback Antone Exum coming back to school and then the hiring of three qualified assistant coaches on the offensive side of the football.

But the football program suffered a blow when Exum, a rising redshirt senior from Glen Allen, Va., tore the ACL and meniscus in his right knee

while playing in a pickup basketball game. Exum underwent surgery, and he figures to be out 6-9 months. He will definitely miss spring practice and possibly some of next season's games.

Exum, a second-team All-ACC selection and the MVP of the Russell Athletic Bowl, recorded 48 tackles (35 solo) and a team-leading five interceptions. He led the ACC with 16 pass breakups. His interception in the bowl game turned the momentum for Tech.

**Longtime Tech athletics department employee passes away**

Buford Meredith, the longest-tenured employee in the Tech athletics department, passed away on Jan. 23 at the age of 78.


Meredith, a grounds foreman, started working at Tech in 1962 and in the athletics department in April of 1966. He helped with the construction of Cassell Coliseum, and he helped build the Jamerson Athletics Center, which serves as the primary nerve center of the department. Meredith also helped maintain all of the athletics department's facilities over the years, including the mowing of the fields and the cross country course.

Meredith is best known, though, for painting the lines and end zones on Worsham Field before home football games. He performed this task until 2005 when he started concentrating

on other duties for home football games.

"He was so helpful and down to earth," said Casey Underwood, the director of outside facilities in the athletics department and Meredith's supervisor for the past 14 years. "He taught us a lot about athletics work and field painting. I picked up a lot of good habits from him. You just couldn't ask for a better person to work with."

"I know a lot of people would ask me when Buford is going to retire, and I told them I didn't know. I know he liked working, and as long as he wanted to, I was more than willing to have him around. He's going to be missed."

Meredith left behind his wife of 54 years, Shirley Stafford Meredith. The funeral was held Jan. 27 in Pembroke, Va. 



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editor's desk | by Jimmy Robertson

## Staff changes made with mind to improve Tech offense's consistency, particularly in the running game

Tech coach Frank Beamer sat on the stage at the Schott Media Center in the south end zone of Lane Stadium. His three new coaching hires flanked him, all sitting there with a throng of media anxiously awaiting to toss them questions and the bright lights shining squarely upon them – literally, for sure, and probably figuratively as well.

Following the 7-6 grind of the 2012 season, Beamer overhauled his staff on offense, a foundation-rattling move that he hopes catapults the program back to the upper tiers of college football's hierarchy. He cited the general inconsistency of the Hokies' 2012 offense as the motivation behind the move, but digging deeper reveals a more important factor.

Beamer wants his program to get back to running the football. With power. With speed. With aggression. With intensity.

"I haven't changed my belief in that the first thing you need to be able to do is run the football," he admitted. "There are times when you've just got to run the football. But with that, I think you've got to be able to throw the football. I think there are times when you need to be able to throw it. To be a championship team, you've got to be able to do both.

"There's no question we need to address how we can run the ball better. In talking with these three (new coaches), I think they're all three going to help us be stronger in the running game."

His reasons for wanting to get back to power running certainly are valid. This past season,

the Hokies finished 79th nationally in rushing offense at 145.6 yards rushing per game. That was the program's worst rushing effort since the 2007 season (133.6 ypg).

Since joining the ACC, Tech has finished third or better in rushing offense in the league on six occasions in nine seasons. Guess what? The Hokies played for the ACC title on five of those six occasions.

Getting back to that level is going to require work in several areas. It all probably starts up front, where new line coach Jeff Grimes goes into spring practice looking to build a capable front.

Tech lost starters Nick Becton and Vinston Painter at the tackle spots, and the backups who return combined for just 47 snaps last season. Inside, steady Andrew Miller returns, along with David Wang, Brent Benedict and Caleb Farris. All three of those possess potential, but need to play better.

Grimes wants to build "the toughest line in the ACC." The task has already started in strength and conditioning workouts.

"My approach is going to be one that hopefully will rub off on everyone in the program because I really think if your offensive line plays with attitude, toughness, aggression ... then your running backs will run a little bit harder," Grimes said. "If your receivers see 300-plus pound guys working their tails off, then they'll say, 'If those guys can do it at their weight, then I can do it.' Your quarterback will play with more confidence if he knows the guys up front will battle their tails

off and do everything they can to protect him.


"So I really think we have a chance to impact everything in the program."

The return of the running game also calls for a couple of tailbacks to emerge. Last year, Tech tried four – Michael Holmes, J.C. Coleman, Tony Gregory and Martin Scales – and only Coleman produced a 100-yard rushing game. Holmes, the opening-game starter, carried the ball just once the final four games. Will Trey Edmunds or Chris Mangus be of help?

Of course, the process also involves schemes. That's where new coordinator Scot Loeffler, with his background of having coached at Michigan, Florida, Temple, Auburn and the NFL's Detroit Lions, comes into play.

"It's the fundamental base thing you have to do well to be a successful offense," Loeffler said of the running game. "Even the spread teams, like Urban's (Meyer) offense (at Florida), we ran the ball. Spread, wishbone, two-back, one-back ... it's teams that protect the football and can run are the teams that are winning."

Beamer knows this. He watched Alabama win the national championship because of its power rushing attack. He watched the Baltimore Ravens get to the Super Bowl and win it because of their ability to run the football. And he's seen his teams do it this way in the past, having won four ACC titles in nine seasons.

Will his new hires help the program get back to that level? He's betting so. He and Hokie Nation will find out starting this spring. 



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# Intelligence and toughness are two of many things new offensive coordinator wants to see out of Tech's offense

"Intelligence" and "toughness."

Those are two words you hear frequently coming from Scot Loeffler, Virginia Tech's new offensive coordinator. He wants his players to play smart and be tough. He wants a quarterback who's smart and rugged, and he wants an offense that plays that way each and every snap.

If Loeffler learned anything during his playing days and early in his coaching career at the University of Michigan in the 1990's, he learned the recipe to win at the highest level. You win by playing physical, cerebral football ... like former coach Lloyd Carr's teams did in Ann Arbor.

A quarterback for the Wolverines from 1993-96, Loeffler earned his bachelor's degree in 1996. Then, as a student and graduate assistant coach under Carr, he worked on staff during the Wolverines' 1997 undefeated national championship season. He spent six seasons as the Wolverines' quarterbacks coach before moving to the NFL for a season. Stops at Florida, Temple and Auburn preceded his move to Blacksburg.

Loeffler came to Blacksburg to help install an identity to an offense that's been wildly inconsistent in recent years. At times, it's been explosive, and at other times, inept.

After searching the country and vetting out numerous candidates, coach Frank Beamer hand-picked Loeffler, who brings 15 years of coaching experience on the collegiate and NFL levels to Tech. Loeffler, who served as

the offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach at Auburn in 2012 and in the same role at Temple in 2011, has coached six college quarterbacks who went on to play in the NFL: Tom Brady, Tim Tebow, Brian Griese, Chad Henne, Drew Henson and John Navarre.

When an opportunity came open in Blacksburg, Loeffler eagerly jumped on it.

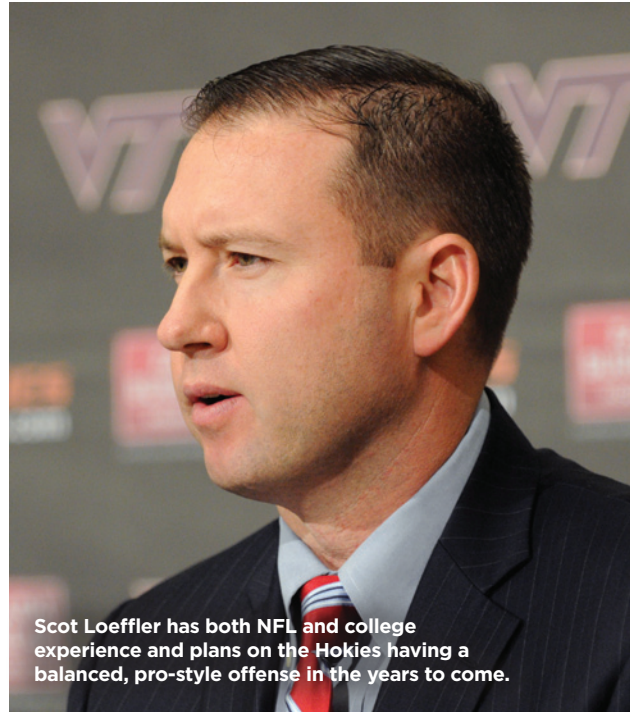
"Coach Carr, who is my mentor still, told me to 'run, not walk' for the chance to work for Frank Beamer at Virginia Tech," Loeffler said.

Even with other college and pro options on the table, Loeffler did eagerly pursue and quickly accept Beamer's offer.

"Coach Beamer has been here for 27 years, and I'm 38," Loeffler said.

"In my era, Virginia Tech, in my mind, has always been a storybook program. They win. They win by doing things the right way. They're going to graduate their football players. They're going to follow the rules and win with integrity.

"Any time you're at a place that does it the right way, wins on a consistent basis, graduates their kids, and makes sure their kids have a very successful career after football, you run to that



Scot Loeffler has both NFL and college experience and plans on the Hokies having a balanced, pro-style offense in the years to come.

place. That's what Virginia Tech is, and why I'm so thankful to be here."

Beamer, as many know, is close with Carr. They have similar personalities and goals. Their respect for the game itself, for their staffs, and for their respective fan bases is legendary. Beamer discussed the Hokies' offensive situation with Carr, and Loeffler's name quickly came up. Despite a tough 2012 at Auburn, where the

Tigers went 3-9, Loeffler is a proven commodity – NFL experience, SEC recruiter, been around demanding fan bases at Michigan, Florida and Auburn and worked for the NFL's Detroit Lions. Plus, he'll bring that intelligence and toughness Beamer wanted.

While he visited face to face with other candidates, Beamer knew rather quickly that Loeffler was his man. There was a connection.

"Coach Beamer is very similar to Coach Carr, who I consider a friend and a mentor," Loeffler said. "He (Carr) was my coach. Every time I hear Coach Beamer talk, it reminds me very much of Lloyd. These places (Michigan and Virginia Tech) have stood for the same values. Win. Do it the right way. Graduate their players. Care about their kids."

So what will Tech's 2013 offense look like? What are Loeffler's ideals?

"No. 1 is I want an offense that will protect the football," Loeffler said. "It's amazing the little things – the teams that turn over the football are generally the teams that lose the game. We want to protect the football, and we want to run the football. If you protect it and run it effectively in any league, you got a chance to win the football game."

But don't expect Loeffler and the Hokies to be a totally grind-it-out offense. He wants to be able to do both.

"We want to be balanced," he said. "As much as I like running it, I understand you have to throw the football, especially against today's defenses. We are going to be very multiple. I'd like us to be a big 'formation movement' team and be multiple, and have multiple personnel groupings."

In easy-to-understand words, what should Tech fans expect?

"We will be a pro-style offense that is multiple, with the ability to run the ball from the quarterback position," he said. "You have to be able to do that in college football today."

It's with the quarterbacks where Loeffler has excelled over the years, tutoring some of the best, such as Tebow, Navarre, Henson, Brady and others.

"My biggest strength is probably the quarterback position," Loeffler said. "I've been very blessed to have great teachers. Lloyd (Carr) was an ex-quarterback. Cam Cameron coached me in college. All the contacts I've made throughout my career. That's what I love to do. Take a guy out of high school, develop him and watch him grow into a great college player and then obviously an NFL player."

Loeffler is inheriting a guy who will rewrite most – if not all – Tech quarterback records during his career. Logan Thomas is back for one more year

in Blacksburg, and that means it's one year with Loeffler.

"I'm excited about Logan," Loeffler said. "He wants to be great. He loves Virginia Tech, and these are going to be eight great months with Logan."

He likes Thomas' brain, and he likes Logan's competitiveness.

"Exactly, intelligence and toughness, that's Logan," Loeffler said. "You never lose with intelligence and toughness. Moving forward, if we can find another guy who is super smart and who's tough and has some talent, we've got a chance. Leadership is right up there, too. That's what we're looking for."

He's 38 years old, working with college football's winningest active coach, at a program that reminds him much of his alma mater in Michigan. Loeffler isn't just excited because he's here – he's excited because of the potential of Tech's program.

## SCOT LOEFFLER AT A GLANCE

### PERSONAL

**Born:** 11/1/74, Barberton, Ohio  
**Hometown:** Barberton, Ohio  
**Wife:** former Amie Roland  
**Children:** Luke, Alexis

### EDUCATION

**High School:** Barberton High School  
**College:** Michigan (1998)

### PLAYING EXPERIENCE

**Michigan (1993-96)**

### COACHING EXPERIENCE

1996-97 **Michigan** (student assistant)  
1998-99 **Michigan** (graduate assistant)  
2000-01 **Central Michigan** (quarterbacks)  
2002-07 **Michigan** (quarterbacks)  
2008 **Detroit Lions** (quarterbacks)  
2009-10 **Florida** (quarterbacks)  
2011 **Temple** (offensive coordinator/quarterbacks)  
2012 **Auburn** (offensive coordinator/quarterbacks)  
2013 **Virginia Tech** (off. coordinator/quarterbacks)



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## Virginia Tech student-athletes are taking care of each other's families during difficult times

by Reyna Gilbert-Lowry

Two members of the Tech softball team share an unbreakable bond. Sisters Courtney and Bailey Liddle have shared the highs of playing college softball together and the lows of finding out their mother, Nancy, who was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer, was not responding to the most recent treatments. The sisters wanted to do something to lift their mother's spirits. They wanted her to feel the love that flows from Hokie Nation all the time and felt she deserved something for how hard she had been fighting. Early in the fall semester, Courtney had the idea of making a video for her mother after hearing what other teams were doing for Hokies who were battling different health issues.

Courtney told Bailey about the idea of creating a video for their mother, and Bailey suggested presenting the video to their mother for Christmas. An avid Hokie, Nancy Liddle is well known for her attendance at every home softball game since her oldest daughter began at Tech. The Liddle sisters knew hearing from fellow Hokies would be just what their mother needed to remain encouraged during such trying times. In November, the sisters borrowed a video camera from a teammate and started on their journey of collecting well wishes from fellow Hokies. When Bailey and Courtney told a few student-athletes about their idea, the outpouring of support was incredible.

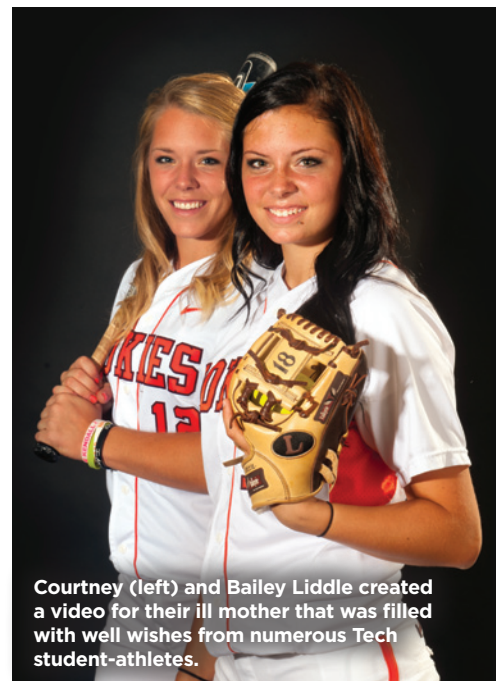
"Everyone was so helpful, and the video is just

really a small sample of the loving words that were shared," Courtney said. "I can't even count the number of people who wanted to be in the video but couldn't because of schedule conflicts or time constraints."

Student-athletes from football, softball, baseball, men's basketball, swimming and diving and women's cross country took the time to share a few words of encouragement. Coaches from several sports including softball, baseball, wrestling and swimming and football team chaplain Johnny Shelton also stepped up to show their support for Courtney and Bailey and the fight their mother was going through. Christmas day was full of emotion in the Liddle household, and Courtney and Bailey were thankful not only to share their present with their mother, but also of the unexpected volume of support they received from their Hokie family.

"Seeing my parents spill over with tears on Christmas morning was one of the most emotional moments of my life because, even though this cancer has brought our family so much heartbreak, my mom could finally see how inspirational she has been (and still is) to so many Hokies," Courtney said. "I don't think there's any better place to be loved and supported. God knew the Hokie family would take care of the Liddles."

With the amount of time Virginia Tech student-athletes spend together practicing, traveling and competing, it's no wonder they consider their



Courtney (left) and Bailey Liddle created a video for their ill mother that was filled with well wishes from numerous Tech student-athletes.

teammates and coaches to be an extended family. These, and so many others, are examples of the ways they support each other when it matters most. Although Hokie Pride isn't something that can be seen, it can definitely be felt in the hearts of Tech student-athletes.

Link to video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=GWgdjVnPg0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=GWgdjVnPg0)



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## Beamer shakes up staff

Longtime head coach brings aboard three new assistant coaches

by Jimmy Robertson

Virginia Tech football coach Frank Beamer has taken conservative approaches with the Tech program over the years, preferring a stable approach that has produced steady winning results.

But a 7-6 season and inconsistent performances on offense prompted a bold move just a few weeks ago by the Tech coach, who will be starting his 27th season in Blacksburg.

Beamer stepped outside of his comfort zone with a staff shakeup rarely seen in these parts, hiring three new coaches and changing his offensive coordinator. The 66-year-old coach hired Scot Loeffler to be his new coordinator, while also naming Jeff Grimes and Aaron Moorehead as the new offensive line and receivers coach, respectively. Beamer moved Bryan Stinespring, Tech's offensive coordinator for the past 11 seasons, out of the coordinator's position, but convinced him to stay on as the tight ends coach and added recruiting coordinator to his title.

The three new coaches take the spots vacated when receivers coach Kevin Sherman left to go to Purdue, and quarterbacks coach Mike O'Cain and Curt Newsome left to pursue other opportunities.

"Change is not easy for me," Beamer admitted. "At the same time, you've got to do what you think is right for your overall organization, and that's what I've done in this case. I really liked the people I had, and I really like the people I'm

bringing in. Both (sets) are good people and good coaches, but I think with different personalities and so forth, these guys can bring freshness to the organization."

Loeffler, a 38-year-old Michigan graduate (Class of 1996) who played quarterback for legendary Lloyd Carr, comes to Tech after spending this past season as the offensive coordinator at Auburn. In 2011, he spent the season at Temple as the coordinator, and the previous two seasons, he worked as the quarterbacks coach at Florida, where he tutored Tim Tebow. In 2008, he worked as the quarterbacks coach for the Detroit Lions, and from 2002-07, he worked as the quarterbacks coach at Michigan, his alma mater.

Loeffler's offense last season at Auburn struggled, and the Tigers, as a program, finished 3-9. That prompted a coaching change, with the administration firing Gene Chizik. Neither Loeffler nor Grimes were retained by new coach Gus Malzahn.

But Loeffler has enjoyed much success at other stops. In 2011, Temple finished 39th nationally in scoring offense (30.6 ppg) and seventh nationally in rushing offense (256.5 ypg). In 2009, his quarterbacks at Florida led the nation in pass efficiency. Also that year, the Gators finished second in the SEC in passing offense. Tebow left Florida with five NCAA, 14 SEC and 28 Florida records.

"I think you deal in what's real. The people I talked to were overwhelmingly positive," said Beamer, who listed John Harbaugh, Jim Harbaugh, Nick Saban, Pete Carroll, Lloyd Carr, Urban Meyer, Will Muschamp, Bobby Bowden, Mark Richt, David Shaw, Bruce Arians, Jim Tressel and Steve Addazio among those he consulted before naming Loeffler the coordinator. "I think you've got to take in what's real. Are you a good coach? Is he what you're looking for or not? I'm thoroughly convinced that I've got three excellent guys here."

"I think it's perfect," Loeffler said of joining the Tech program. "I grew up in a program almost identical to this one. Every time I see Coach Beamer, I'm like, 'Oh my gosh, this is like talking to Lloyd (Carr).'"

"Any time you can be a part of a place that has that type of head coach, that has that type of tradition, that wins and does things the right way and graduates players, you run and you stay as long as you possibly can. So I'm ecstatic to be here."

Loeffler, who has worked with Tebow, Tom Brady, Brian Griese, Chad Henne, Drew Henson and John Navarre – all of whom play or played in the NFL – takes over an offense that struggled much of last season. The Hokies finished 81st nationally in scoring offense (25.1 ppg), 79th in rushing offense (145.9 ypg) and 81st in total

offense (376.8 ypg).

Loeffler didn't get into specifics of style in the introductory news conference for the new coaches, but did say he believed an offense needed to "run the football effectively, play-action pass, be productive on third down, and in the red area, score touchdowns." He also looks forward to working with Tech quarterback Logan Thomas and getting him back to his 2011 form. Thomas, who came back to Tech for his senior season after contemplating making himself available for the NFL Draft, struggled some this past season, though a lot of that could be attributed to new and inexperienced personnel on offense, as that group returned just three starters.

"He's a big, strong guy," Loeffler said. "Some of the things he does that are difficult, he does amazing. You can't coach that. There are some things he does that are really hard. There are some things that are easy that I think we can make even easier for him to make him more productive."

"The one thing I'm encouraged about with Logan is that I think he's going to learn fast. I think he's a guy who's hungry. Any time you've had some setbacks, you're hungry. I think we both had some setbacks last year, so we're both hungry."

Beamer's hiring of Grimes as the offensive line coach makes perfect sense, given that Grimes worked with Loeffler at Auburn and thus knows his schemes. Grimes, a 44-year-old who graduated from UTEP (Class of 1991), comes to Tech after a four-year stint as the offensive line coach with the Tigers. His other stops over a 17-year span include ones at Colorado, BYU, Arizona State, Boise State and Hardin-Simmons.

Grimes takes over an offensive line that loses three starters and played inconsistently at times last year. The Hokies' offensive line has been a source of contention among the fan base over the past several years, and Grimes will be tasked with bringing some on-field consistency to the unit.

"I haven't taken inventory yet (of what Tech has on the offensive line), and I'm not worried about contention among the fan base," Grimes said. "What I'm worried about is developing the toughest offensive line in the ACC. That's something that is hard to measure and is one of those things that you can't put a statistic with it, but you know it when you see it. That's going to be my No. 1 goal and approach."

"For us to do the things we want to do on offense, particularly running the football, we have got to have the approach that we're going to try and dominant the game from the offensive line position. That's the only way it works."

That's the only way your offense takes a physical approach. We've got to be the big brothers of everyone else on the offense. We're the tip of the spear, so to speak. If we do our job with the right approach and right mindset, then I think the other guys will follow."

Moorehead – the youngest member of Tech's staff at 32 years old – moves into the role as the receivers coach. The 2003 Illinois graduate spent five seasons in the NFL playing with the Indianapolis Colts and quarterback Peyton Manning, and winning a Super Bowl ring in 2006. In 2009, he worked as a graduate assistant at New Mexico before moving to Stanford, where he has worked as an offensive assistant for receivers the past three seasons.

"We played these guys (the Hokies) three years ago in the bowl game (the Orange Bowl), and you just saw what athletes they had," Moorehead said. "They had athletes all over the field. The quarterback (Tyrod Taylor) was obviously a very good player. Anyone who is anyone knows that Virginia Tech has had very good players for a long time. It was an obvious choice for me (to come to Tech). I haven't had a chance to watch the receivers on tape, but I know we've got some good, young, talented players, and I can't wait to work with them."

Though they possess a lot of experience, both playing and coaching, the three new hires make Beamer's staff significantly younger. The three new hires are under the age of 44. O'Cain, Newsome and Sherman were 58, 54 and 44, respectively.

"Not only younger, but taller," Beamer joked. "Nah, first and foremost, you've got to have knowledge. You've got to know what you're talking about, and you can see it quickly if you don't. But I do think having a good blend of older guys and younger guys connecting with kids in recruiting can help. I feel very comfortable with where we are."

"I think the big thing is ending up with the right guys, and I feel comfortable we have. When I visited with these guys, and some of our other staff members visited with them ... I'm a people guy. I kind of connect and get into what you are all about. I think these guys are good stuff, and I think we've got the right people."

The Hokies' revamped staff will be tested quickly. Tech opens the 2013 season against defending national champion Alabama at the Georgia Dome.

"Oh my goodness," Loeffler said, laughing. "They (the Crimson Tide) do a great job and have great players. We're going to go in there. We're Virginia Tech now. Let's go play. Let's roll out the ball and go play." 

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## Tech staff brings in top-25 recruiting class for the second straight year

by Jimmy Robertson



Kendall Fuller

Photo courtesy of Rivals



Holland Fisher

Photo courtesy of The Times-Dispatch



D.J. Reid

Photo courtesy of The Times-Dispatch

It's been a busy six weeks for the man in charge of Tech's football program. First, he spent a countless number of hours hiring three new coaches to his staff. Then, he spent even more time than that helping his staff secure one of the nation's top recruiting classes.

But Frank Beamer doesn't mind working so hard when he reaps the results he wants.

The 2013 National Signing Day came and went quietly for Beamer and the Hokies, who have seen their share of drama over the years. But their 18-member talent haul spoke loudly to those in the ACC and beyond, as the staff members inked a class rated in the top 25 nationally by both Rivals and 247Sports, two organizations that focus on recruiting.

ESPN ranked the class 19th nationally and third in the ACC. Rivals ranked the class at No. 22 in its

team rankings and third in the ACC, while 247Sports ranked it 20th nationally and fourth in the ACC.

"We'll answer that question for sure in three or four years," Beamer said when asked about this being one of his highest-ranked classes ever. "But I do feel good about these kids. They have good athletic ability. They are good-quality kids, and they're a good fit for Virginia Tech."

Several recruits possess family ties to the Tech program, but the most important family connection centered on the Fuller family, as Kendall Fuller, the younger brother of former Tech players Vinnie and Corey Fuller and current player Kyle Fuller, followed his brothers to Blacksburg. The cornerback from Baltimore, Md., was the Hokies' lone 5-star recruit and ranked as the No. 9 overall prospect in the nation by Rivals and the No. 2 cornerback.

Fuller won every award imaginable after a senior season in which he caught 44 passes for 695 yards and seven touchdowns as a receiver and finished with 28 tackles and three interceptions on defense.

"The tough thing about Kendall Fuller is he's the last one," Beamer laughed. "We'd like to have a couple more come through here."

"Kendall is extremely athletic, and I think he'll have a chance to figure in somewhere in our secondary. I think he needs to get his hands on the ball some. We'll work with him as a return guy, and maybe after he gets settled defensively, we'll get him an offensive package. But he's quite a player. He's very athletic, very smart, very competitive – just like that whole family."

Fuller, though, wasn't the lone headliner of the class. Holland Fisher, a free safety from Richmond,



Bucky Hodges, a quarterback from Salem High School in Virginia Beach, Va., was one of the top in-state prospects to sign with Tech and a part of the Hokies' top-25 recruiting class.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HYUNSOO LEO KIM, THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

# THE 2013 RECRUITING VT EDITION

### INSIDE HOKIE SPORTS' TOP 5

**KENDALL FULLER** | The lone 5-star recruit in the class, Fuller is the type of shutdown corner that every program covets. He dominated at the high school level – so much so that few teams challenged him. His brothers say he's the best in a family of loaded athletes, and his numbers back that up. He possesses the type of ability to play early and often at Tech.

**WYATT TELLER** | Teller joined Fuller as the two Tech recruits in the U.S. Army All-America Bowl, and his selection was certainly warranted. Blessed with a tremendous motor and work ethic to go with his size (6-5, 250), he recorded 120 tackles and 11 sacks this past season.

Tech's defensive line is deep, but he's the type who could push for early playing time.

**BUCKY HODGES** | Hodges reminds many of Logan Thomas because of his size (6-5, 230) and speed, which made him a top draw among recruiters. He throws the ball pretty well, having tossed it around for more than 2,000 yards each of the past two seasons, and he knows how to escape the pocket, with nearly 1,000 yards rushing the past two years.

**BRAXTON PFAFF** | Pfaff is a big, powerful young man with good feet and someone who, judging from his highlight tape, loves



to put defensive linemen on their backs. He's also a winner, having been a part of two state championship teams. Though he played at a private school and wasn't well known by many of the big-name schools, he's got the ability to make a quick impact at Tech.

**HOLLAND FISHER** | Fisher battled injuries for much of this past season and his statistics suffered as a result, but that didn't stop Alabama and Ohio State from trying to get him to renege on his Tech commitment. He's a big, fluid athlete who can run, and he'll get a shot for early playing time in Tech's defensive backfield as a safety.


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NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	HOMETOWN	SCHOOL	RECRUITED BY	HOST	ALSO CONSIDERED	NOTABLE
Kyle Chung	OL	6-4	280	Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.	Ponte Vedra	Charley Wiles	Adam Taraschke	Arkansas, Miami, Clemson	Made the Florida Times-Union's Super 24 squad
Charles Clark, Jr.	FS	6-0	180	Suffolk, Va.	King's Fork	Bryan Stinespring	Der'woun Greene	UVa, Maryland, Tennessee	A two-time first-team All-Tidewater choice by The Virginian-Pilot
Brandon Facyson	DB	6-2	173	Newnan, Ga.	Northgate	Torrian Gray	Connor Jessop	Georgia Tech, Missouri, Ole Miss, UNC	Listed as the No. 39 CB prospect in the nation by 247Sports
Holland Fisher	FS	6-2	200	Richmond, Va.	Manchester	Shane Beamer	Joel Caleb	Alabama, Ohio State	Rated the No. 10 safety prospect nationally by Rivals
Kendall Fuller	CB	5-11	180	Baltimore, Md.	Good Counsel	Torrian Gray	Kyle Fuller	Clemson	Ranked the No. 2 CB prospect nationally by Rivals
Bucky Hodges	QB	6-5	230	Virginia Beach, Va.	Salem	Bryan Stinespring	J.C. Coleman	Ohio State, WVU, Maryland, UConn	Listed as the No. 4 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times
Cequan Jefferson	CB	5-9	175	Richmond, Va.	Henrico	Shane Beamer	Der'woun Greene	Did not consider any other schools	Rated the No. 31 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times
Jonathan McLaughlin	OL	6-4	310	Mauldin, S.C.	Mauldin/Fork Union	Shane Beamer	Nigel Williams	ECU, UVa, Miami, UNC	Ranked the No. 3 OT prospect at the prep school level nationally by 247Sports
Jamieon Moss	LB	6-2	210	Elizabeth City, N.C.	Northeastern	Charley Wiles	Dahman McKinnon	Michigan, ECU, N.C. State, South Carolina	Listed as the No. 34 overall prospect in North Carolina by 247Sports
Andrew Motuapuaka	LB	6-0	225	Virginia Beach, Va.	Salem	Bryan Stinespring	J.C. Coleman	Stanford	A two-time first-team All-Tidewater choice by The Virginian Pilot
Deon Newsome	ATH	6-0	180	Hampton, Va.	Hampton	Bryan Stinespring	Joel Caleb	UVa	Rated the No. 29 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times
Parker Osterloh	OL	6-8	301	Williamsburg, Va.	Warhill	Bryan Stinespring	Augie Conte	UVa, JMU	Listed as the No. 28 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times
Carlis Parker	QB	6-3	180	Statesville, N.C.	Statesville	Kevin Sherman	Brenden Motley	ECU, UNC, South Carolina, Duke	Ranked the No. 20 dual-threat QB nationally by 247Sports
Braxton Pfaff	OL	6-4	285	Lynchburg, Va.	Liberty Christian Academy	Cornell Brown	Nigel Williams	UVa, WVU, Liberty	Listed as the No. 27 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times
David Prince	ATH	6-0	185	Roanoke, Va.	Patrick Henry	Cornell Brown	Brenden Motley	UVa	Rated the No. 25 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times
D.J. Reid	TB	6-0	205	Chester, Va.	Thomas Dale	Shane Beamer	Desmond Frye	South Florida	Ranked the No. 12 athlete prospect nationally by 247Sports
Anthony Shegog	FS	6-2	200	Stafford, Va.	North Stafford	Bud Foster	Kyshoen Jarrett	UVa	Listed as the No. 16 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times
Wyatt Teller	DE	6-5	250	Bealeton, Va.	Liberty	Torrian Gray	Adam Taraschke	UVa, Clemson, Michigan, Oregon	Ranked the No. 59 prospect nationally by Rivals

and Wyatt Teller, a defensive end from Bealeton, Va., joined Fuller as top-100 recruits by Rivals. According to 247Sports, Fuller, Fisher, Teller and Bucky Hodges, a quarterback from Virginia Beach, Va., were among the top 115 prospects in the nation.

Hodges threw for 2,000 yards each of the past two seasons. In his junior and senior years combined, he threw for 44 touchdowns and only 12 interceptions. Teller, who joined Fuller in playing in the U.S. Army All-America Bowl in San Antonio – an all-star game that features the nation’s top high school talent – recorded 120 tackles and 11 sacks as a senior. That came on the heels of an 85-tackle, 9.5-sack junior season. Fisher recorded 72 tackles in an injury-plagued senior season.

The class overall features a nice balance of players, as the staff signed no more than four players at any one position. The coaches focused on the offensive line, cornerbacks, safeties and linebackers, signing four, three, three and two, respectively, at those spots. Those numbers, though, could vary depending on where the two prospects listed as “athletes” end up.

Four of the 18 members in the class enrolled for the spring semester – offensive linemen Jonathan McLaughlin and Parker Osterloh, quarterback Carlis Parker and defensive back Brandon Facyson. Doing so gives them the advantage of going through spring practice and perhaps helping the Hokies next season.

But that’s not to sell the rest of the class short. Despite dealing with a lack of scholarships – this is the smallest class since 1995 – the coaches put together a class that ranks among the top 25 nationally for the second straight year. Back-to-back top-25 classes should be the foundation for

getting this program back in the hunt for future ACC championships.

**IN-STATE SUCCESS**

Two years ago, Tech’s staff signed just eight prospects from the state of Virginia, one of the smallest hauls in Beamer’s tenure. But that changed last year when Beamer and his staff brought in 17 prospects from Virginia, including 12 of the top 25 according to The Roanoke Times.

This year, more than half of Tech’s class hails from the state. Of the 18 recruits, 12 come from Virginia, giving the program 29 of the state’s best players in the past two years combined. Eight of this year’s 12 prospects found their names on the state’s top-25 list produced by Doug Doughty of The Roanoke Times.

Doughty ranked Hodges No. 4 on his list, while Fisher came in at No. 8 and Teller at No. 11. Last year, the staff signed the No. 2 (Joel Caleb), No. 4 (Ken Ekanem), No. 6 (J.C. Coleman) and No. 8 prospects (Trey Edmunds) on Doughty’s list.

“We’re going to work hard and get the best players out of the state of Virginia,” Beamer said. “Virginia is a highly recruited state. There are a lot of coaches out there who realize Virginia is a good state for football. But that needs to be our foundation – that we get the best players out of the state who can help us win the ACC.”

As usual, the staff cast a wide net throughout the state. Bryan Stinespring and former offensive line coach Curt Newsome signed a combined five prospects from the Tidewater/Peninsula areas, including Hodges. Running backs coach Shane Beamer – who inked six prospects out of Richmond last year – delivered three this time, including Fisher, tailback D.J. Reid and cornerback Cequan

Jefferson. Defensive coordinator Bud Foster landed North Stafford High safety Anthony Shegog, while defensive backs coach Torrian Gray brought Teller into the fold – both from northern Virginia. And whip linebackers coach Cornell Brown signed one each from Roanoke and Lynchburg, with the inking of athlete David Prince and offensive lineman Braxton Pfaff, respectively.

The rest of the class follows Tech’s blueprint for recruiting. The staff concentrates heavily on Virginia kids and then branches out through the mid-Atlantic. They signed two from North Carolina, one from South Carolina, one from Maryland, one from Georgia and one from Florida.

**TECH STOCKS UP ON QUARTERBACKS, O-LINEMEN**

Most of the attention with any recruiting class centers on the quarterback position, and justifiably so given the importance of the position. No program wants to lack quality at that spot, so Tech’s staff signed two quarterbacks in this class after signing one – Brenden Motley – a year ago.

In many respects, Hodges and Parker, a Statesville, N.C., native, are similar. Both possess height, speed and athleticism, with the ability to run. Both need to work on their throwing mechanics, but both possess a ton of potential.

Hodges, who outweighs Parker by 40 pounds, threw for more than 4,000 yards the past two seasons, so he knows how to get the ball to the right spots. He also rushed for nearly 1,000 yards combined in his final two seasons. He gives Tech a dual-threat presence.

So, too, does Parker. The left-hander, who draws comparisons to former Tech signal caller Michael

Vick, threw for 1,181 yards as a senior despite platooning with another player because of an injured knee suffered early in the season (the coach wanted to preserve him). Even missing some time, he still rushed for 959 yards and 10 touchdowns.

Parker has incurred some knee troubles over the years – he tore his LCL in his right knee in the first game of his junior year and missed the rest of that season. But with added size and strength, he possesses immense potential.

“We evaluated all of them,” Beamer said of the quarterbacks in Virginia. “But for us, Bucky was the best fit, and then when we got on Carlis, that was a good fit, too. We added the quarterbacks that we thought were the best for us. There were a lot of good quarterbacks around, but we’re pleased with the two we got.

“We’re hoping to get a commitment for one next year, too. That’s one place (quarterback) where you better be good. I think it’s a proven fact that you better have a quarterback.”

Tech’s staff also took steps to replenish the offensive line. For the second year in a row, the staff signed at least three offensive linemen, this time bringing in four. McLaughlin, from Mauldin, S.C., by way of Fork Union, may be the closest of the group to playing, given his experience this past season at the prep school level. But Osterloh, from Williamsburg, Va., and Pfaff bring some serious size and athleticism to the program for big guys.

Kyle Chung has a last name that most Tech fans will notice – he is the son of former All-America offensive tackle Eugene Chung. Kyle, a Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., native, played mostly tight end in high school, but the staff envisions him putting on weight and helping down the road on the offensive line. In

the short term, he could be a much-needed blocking tight end.

“We’d like to start all of these guys at the tackle spot,” said Stinespring, who also serves as Tech’s recruiting coordinator. “That’s how you want to approach it. All these guys have shown the ability to play in space. Their footwork ability is what you’re looking for at that spot. Obviously, it’s one of the toughest spots to recruit to, so each of these guys will start off at tackle. There’s a need, and if it doesn’t work out, we can move them inside.”

**TAKING CARE OF THE “D”**

Tech’s staff went light on the defensive line this year for the first time in four years. After signing 23 defensive line prospects combined the past four years, Beamer and his staff only signed one listed as a defensive lineman – Teller. According to most recruiting services, Teller ranked as the second-best defensive line prospect in Virginia, only behind Jonathan Allen, a Stone Bridge High product who signed with Alabama.

But the staff filled needs at other spots, signing six prospects in the secondary – including three cornerbacks and three safeties. Fuller, Jefferson and Facyson, a native of Georgia, figure in at the corner spots, while Fisher, Shegog and Charles Clark, Jr., are the safeties.

Fisher battled injuries this past season, which limited his production, but Shegog, who played both ways, recorded 63 tackles, five forced fumbles and two interceptions as a senior. Clark, Jr., from Suffolk, Va., recorded 57 tackles and four interceptions – three of which he returned for touchdowns.

“It just kind of happened that we hit on some,” Beamer said, referring to the signing of six defensive

backs. “Some of those guys have flexibility in terms of where they end up playing. If they can run and redirect, that gives you some flexibility elsewhere.”

Tech’s staff also brought in two linebackers in Andrew Motuapuaka, from Virginia Beach, Va., and Jamieon Moss from North Carolina. Though undersized, Motuapuaka was a productive player in arguably the best district in the state, recording 115 tackles, including 21 for a loss, and eight sacks his senior year. Moss finished with 135 tackles, including 12 for a loss, as a senior.

Tech loses both Tariq Edwards and Jack Tyler after next season, and Chase Williams will be a senior after next season, so shoring up this position was important for the staff.

**ROUNDING OUT THE CLASS**

Finally, Tech’s staff signed two prospects listed as athletes – skill players with the ability to fit at any number of positions – and one tailback.

The duo listed as athletes are Prince and Deon Newsome from Hampton, Va., who is the son of former Tech linebacker Myron Newsome. Prince and Newsome were quarterbacks in high school, but project as either receivers or defensive backs at Tech.

“I like recruiting quarterbacks out of high school, even though they may not be a quarterback (in college),” Beamer said. “They’ve generally got good leadership skills. They may be the best athlete on the team in high school. There are a lot of reasons to like them, and they can play other positions if they’re athletic enough.”

Reid was an outstanding tailback at Thomas Dale High in Chester, Va. He rushed for 1,000 yards in each of the past two seasons, and he brings a nice

**INSIDE HOKIE SPORTS' SLEEPERS**

**ANTHONY SHEGOG** | Playing on both sides of the ball, Shegog amassed more than 1,000 yards of total offense and 63 tackles on defense. He forced five fumbles and picked off two passes. He lives around the ball, which makes him perfect for Tech's secondary.

**ANDREW MOTUAPUAKA** | Motuapuaka is a two-time, first-team All-Tidewater honoree by The Virginian-Pilot, so he played against some of the best competition in the state. He's not the biggest guy in the world, but he's always around the ball and similar players have thrived in the Hokies' defense.

**D.J. REID** | Oregon thought enough of Reid to send an assistant to Richmond to check on him, so the kid obviously possesses talent. He rushed for more than 1,000 yards in each of the past two seasons and reached the end zone more

than 20 times. He possesses a nice blend of size (6-0, 205) and speed (4.3-4.4), and he gets stronger as the game goes along.

**KYLE CHUNG** | Chung has the bloodlines, as his father, Eugene, was a former All-American and a first-round pick in the NFL Draft. He's not quite as big as his father, but he possesses the same footwork and knows how to use his hands. If he gets bigger, he could help Tech's offensive line quickly.

**CEQUAN JEFFERSON** | Jefferson only received a little interest, but the staff thinks he could be a good one. He's not the biggest guy in the world (5-9, 175), but he plays much larger. He played on both sides of the ball at Henrico High, and the Tech coaches envision him as a corner and for good reason – he intercepted 10 passes in his high school career.

combination of size (6-0, 205) and speed (in the 4.3-4.4 range).

He also catches the ball well, and the coaching staff saw value in him as a punt and kick returner. Or even possibly as a slot receiver. Like many of the recruits in this class, Reid gives the staff some versatility.

"Within this recruiting class, there are a lot of individuals with versatility," Stinespring agreed. "In a recruiting class, you like to have versatility. You don't want to be locked in. What we liked with this class, when you watched the tape, there were guys playing free safety, playing receiver, playing tailback, returning punts, covering kicks ... when you have that type of versatility, that gives you options, and that's an advantageous situation."

Tech's staff did not sign a "true" receiver, perhaps the only thing lacking in this class. But the Hokies have some depth at those spots – and any number of versatile athletes to move around.

In all, this is another well-rounded class. It's loaded with speed, and the offensive linemen give the program some needed size and muscle. For that reason, the class has been ranked among the top 25 by several recruiting outlets.

Beamer and company could care less about that, though. They're more interested in whether the class can get them back to the top of the ACC – and they're pretty confident that this group can. **VT**

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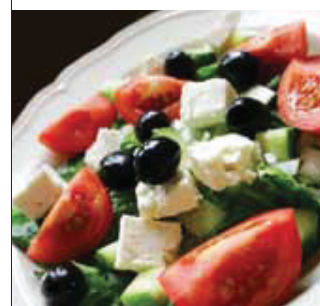
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**KYLE CHUNG**

6-4, 280, OL  
Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.  
Ponte Vedra High School  
**Also considered:** Arkansas, Miami, Clemson

**Top honors:** Rated a 3-star recruit by both Rivals and 247Sports ... Listed as the No. 26 tight end prospect nationally by 247Sports ... Made the Florida Times-Union's Super 24 squad as one of the top 24 recruits in that newspaper's coverage area.

**Why he chose Tech:** "It just felt like home to me. I took a (unofficial) visit there this summer, and I liked what I saw, and I've grown up around the program. I've been (to Tech) with my dad when I was little, and I've probably been up there five times since I started getting serious about football. It just felt right for me."

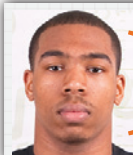
**On the influence of his dad, Eugene, who was an All-American left tackle at Tech:** "He didn't really influence me. He told me to do what made me happy, and that it was my decision and it was going to affect me for the rest of my life. So he pretty much left it up to me."

**On his position:** "Coach (Charley) Wiles told me they were going to start me at tackle first and go from there. If that didn't work out, then I could play guard or center."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I think my technique and my strength are my two strong points. I need to work on being explosive off the line. This was my first year starting at guard. At the beginning, I was shaky, but as the season went along, I got it down."

**Most memorable moment as a player:** "I would say when we beat our rival high school, Bartram Trail, this season by scoring a touchdown with two seconds left (to win 32-31). The place went crazy, and the students rushed the field."

**Personal:** Born Jan. 6, 1995, in Cape Cod, Mass. ... Son of Eugene and Liza Chung ... Has a younger brother ... Contemplated major is business marketing.



**CHARLES CLARK, JR.**

6-0, 180, FS  
Suffolk, Va.  
King's Fork High School  
**Also considered:** UVa, Tennessee, Maryland

**Stats:** Had 57 tackles and intercepted four passes as a senior, returning three of them for touchdowns ... Recorded 58 tackles and recovered five fumbles as a junior.

**Top honors:** A 3-star recruit by Rivals and a 4-star recruit by 247Sports ... The No. 27 cornerback prospect in the country by 247Sports ... Ranked the No. 21 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times ... A second-team All-Group AAA choice as a defensive back his senior season by Virginia Preps ... A two-time first-team All-Tidewater choice as a defensive back by the Virginian-Pilot.

**Why he chose Tech:** "I just thought it was a good family place. I thought they had a family atmosphere there. I've been going to camps up there since I was in the ninth grade, and I had built relationships with the coaches. I just thought it was the place for me."

**On his position:** "I'll probably be a safety or a corner, and it doesn't matter to me. If I had to choose, it would be safety. I know it's a cliché, but safety is like the quarterback of

the defense. You can see everything on your side and everything on the other side. You see the whole field. You're the field general. You lead the team."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I think I bring a great work ethic. I'm never going to let you know that I can't do something. I'm dedicated to doing what it takes, and I stay humble. "I'll probably have to watch more film of myself. I know I have a lot to work on, and I'll try to get better each and every day."

**On his favorite players:** "On offense, I like DeSean Jackson (Philadelphia Eagles receiver). He brings a lot to the table, and he can do so much. On defense, I like Ray Lewis (Baltimore linebacker), Champ Bailey (Denver cornerback) and Ed Reed (Baltimore safety)."

**Personal:** Born April 19, 1995 in Philadelphia ... Son of Charles, Sr., and Lashonda Clark ... Has an older brother and two younger sisters ... Contemplated majors are human nutrition, food and exercise or human development.



**KENDALL FULLER**

5-11, 180, CB  
Baltimore, Md.  
Good Counsel High School  
**Also considered:** Clemson

**Stats:** Caught 44 passes for 695 yards and seven touchdowns as a receiver his senior season ... As a cornerback, had 28 tackles, three interceptions and eight pass breakups ... His junior year, caught 26 passes for 527 yards and five touchdowns, while recording three interceptions and 25.5 tackles on defense.

**Top honors:** Rated the No. 2 cornerback prospect in the country by Rivals and No. 3 by 247Sports ... A 5-star recruit by both Rivals and 247Sports ... Named defensive player of the year at the U.S. Army All-American Bowl ... The Washington Post's offensive player of the year his senior season ... First-team Big School All-State in Maryland as a receiver and the state's offensive player of the year.

**Why he chose Tech:** "It was somewhere I felt comfortable. I was familiar with the coaches because my brothers went there, and I just thought it was a program that could get the most out of me as a player and a person."

**On the impact his brothers (all of whom went to Tech) had on his**

**decision:** "When the process first started, they told me to decide what I wanted, and when I got the feeling that I was 100 percent sure, then that's where I should go. Kyle told me he would take it personally if I didn't go to Tech, and my mom would have been upset, but I think they know I made my choice for the right reasons."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I think I need to work on everything. I need to work on things technique wise, and I need to watch more film. I've got a lot of different things I need to do to make myself better."

**On his favorite player:** "My brothers, obviously, but if not my brothers, then I guess Champ Bailey (Denver Broncos cornerback) or Charles Woodson (Green Bay Packers cornerback). They're both around the ball a lot, and they play with good technique, and they're physical."

**Personal:** Born Feb. 13, 1995, in Baltimore, Md. ... Son of Vincent Fuller and Nina Dorsey-Fuller ... Has three older brothers ... Contemplated majors are accounting or business.



**BUCKY HODGES**

6-5, 230, QB  
Virginia Beach, Va.  
Salem High School  
**Also considered:** Ohio State, WVU, Maryland, UConn

**Stats:** Completed 126 of 206 for 2,214 yards, with 18 touchdowns and six interceptions his senior season ... Also rushed for 505 yards and 11 touchdowns as a senior ... Completed 64 percent of his passes for 2,142 yards and 26 touchdowns, with six interceptions as a junior ... Ran for 434 yards and nine touchdowns his junior season.

**Top honors:** A 4-star recruit by both 247Sports and Rivals ... Ranked the No. 2 dual-threat quarterback prospect in the nation by 247Sports ... Listed as the No. 9 pro-style quarterback prospect in the nation by Rivals ... Rated the No. 4 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times ... A first-team All-Tidewater selection as a quarterback by the Virginian-Pilot his junior season ... A second-team selection as a senior ... Played in the Offense-Defense All-American Bowl in Houston.

**Why he chose Tech:** "It's a good fit for me. I grew up watching them as a kid. They made me feel at home when I've been there. I went up there my freshman and sophomore years, and then my junior year, I went up for a

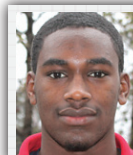
camp. I've been to games, and they've always made me feel welcome."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I'm a passer first, but I can make things happen with my feet. I would describe myself as a playmaker. I need to work on my mechanics and getting bigger, stronger and faster. I need to get better in everything."

**On his favorite player:** "My favorite players are Michael Vick (Philadelphia Eagles quarterback) and Cam Newton (Carolina Panthers quarterback). I think I'm similar to them. I grew up watching Michael Vick, and I try to pattern my game after his. Cam is bigger than me, but I'd like to think we have some similarities."

**Most memorable moment as a player:** "Whenever we win, that's pretty much it. I had a good season and made all-state, but I'm more about winning."

**Personal:** Born Aug. 8, 1995, in Virginia Beach, Va. ... Son of Temuchin Hodges and Kimberly Thompson ... Has an older brother and a younger sister ... Contemplated major is political science.



**BRANDON FACYSON**

6-2, 173, DB  
Newnan, Ga.  
Northgate High School  
**Also considered:** Georgia Tech, Missouri, Ole Miss, UNC, Wake

**Stats:** Recorded 27 tackles and six pass breakups as a senior ... Also caught 31 passes for 439 yards and four touchdowns his senior season.

**Top honors:** Rated the No. 40 cornerback prospect in the nation by 247Sports and No. 55 by Rivals ... Selected to play in the Georgia Athletic Coaches' Association North-South All-Star Game.

**Why he chose Tech:** "Coach (Torrian) Gray really influenced me, and then I came for my official visit and loved everything about Virginia Tech. I loved the campus. I loved the coaches, and they made me feel like I was important. Coach (Frank) Beamer said that even if I got hurt, I'd still have my scholarship, and education is the most important thing to me."

**On enrolling early:** "Me and my dad and mother talked about it, and it was probably the best thing for me. My classes were done with, and I can come here and get bigger, faster and stronger. I just wanted to get a head start on everyone else."

**On his position:** "I'll start out at

corner. I played corner and receiver in high school. Coach Gray recruited me to play corner, and that's where I'm going to play."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I'm intelligent, and I can read defenses. It's going to take practice, and I've got to study it. I'm tall and lean and fast, and Coach Gray said he wanted taller, longer corners. There are a lot of things I can get better at. I want to get faster and bigger. I want to get with some of the DB boys and work with them and continue to get better."

**Most memorable moment as a player:** "We played Whitewater, and that's our rival. We were down 17-0 at the end of the third quarter and rallied to beat them 24-20. That led us to the regional championship, and we won that."

**Personal:** Born Sept. 8, 1994, in Jacksonville, Fla. ... Son of Karen Riggins-Taylor and Frederick Facyson ... His mother and stepfather are currently principals in Dubai ... Contemplated major is pre-med, with a goal of becoming a heart surgeon.



**HOLLAND FISHER**

6-2, 200, FS  
Richmond, Va.  
Manchester High School  
**Also considered:** Alabama, Ohio State

**Stats:** Recorded 93 tackles, including 11 for a loss, and four sacks as a junior ... Also caught 10 passes for 207 yards and three touchdowns as a tight end his junior season.

**Top honors:** A 4-star recruit by both Rivals and 247Sports ... Rated the No. 4 outside linebacker prospect in the country by 247Sports and No. 8 by Rivals ... Listed as the No. 8 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times ... Received invitations to play in the Army All-American Bowl and the Under Armour game, and elected to play in the Under Armour game.

**Why he chose Tech:** "Tech was my favorite team growing up. I used to watch them play every weekend, and then when I got the (scholarship) offer, I thought, 'Virginia Tech's my favorite team, so why not go there?'"

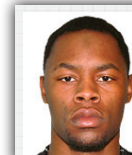
**On the frustration of missing time this past season:** "I had a high ankle sprain and missed five games. It was frustrating not to be on the field making plays. That kind of got to me, but there's nothing you can do."

**On his position:** "I think I'm going

to start out at safety there. I was a middle linebacker in high school, but I think being a safety will give me an opportunity to show my athletic ability and make big plays. Plus, you don't have to be as big as you do at linebacker. I played middle linebacker this year, but I didn't really like it. I just did it for the team."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I think I diagnose plays before they happen. I can tell if it's going to be a run or a pass, and I have good instincts. I can get to the ball quickly. I probably need to work on being more fundamentally sound."

**On his favorite player:** "My favorite was Sean Taylor (deceased Washington Redskins safety). I liked everything about him, just the way he played and the way he carried himself and the love he had for the game."



**CEQUAN JEFFERSON**

5-9, 175, CB  
Richmond, Va.  
Henrico High School  
**Also considered:** Did not consider any other schools

**Stats:** Caught 25 passes for 653 yards and seven touchdowns as a receiver his senior season ... Finished with 35 tackles, including three for a loss, five pass breakups and two interceptions as a senior ... Combined for eight interceptions his sophomore and junior seasons ... Caught 25 passes for 664 yards and six touchdowns as a receiver his junior season.

**Top honors:** A 3-star recruit by both Rivals and 247Sports ... Ranked the No. 43 athlete prospect in the nation by 247Sports and No. 56 by Rivals ... Rated the No. 31 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times ... Second-team All-Met selection as a defensive back by the Richmond Times-Dispatch as a senior.

**Why he chose Tech:** "Nobody showed interest in me but Virginia Tech. I like the coaches there and the players, and it's a good academic school. It's close to home. No one else was giving me any feedback, so I chose Tech."

**On his position:** "I'll start off at cornerback. I'll play anywhere they want me to play. I don't care. I've

played a bunch of positions before, but I like corner. I like shutting down people and making tackles. I've played on both sides of the ball, so I know what's going on. I think that gives me an advantage."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "My strengths are my speed and my knowledge of the game. I have a good football IQ, and I'm versatile. I think I probably need to work on my technique as a corner and work on looking back at the ball."

**On his favorite player:** "Deion Sanders (former Atlanta, Dallas, San Francisco and Washington cornerback) was my favorite player growing up. My dad would always talk about him and tell me how good he was, and then he took me to a Cowboys game once. I saw how fast he was and just tried to imitate the way he played."

**Personal:** Born Oct. 28, 1993, in Richmond ... Son of Larry Owens and Katherine Jefferson ... Has four younger brothers and three younger sisters ... Contemplated major is management.



**JONATHAN MCLAUGHLIN**

6-4, 310, OL  
Mauldin, S.C.  
Mauldin High School/  
Fork Union  
**Also considered:** ECU, UVa, Miami, UNC, UConn

**Top honors:** A 3-star recruit by both 247Sports and Rivals ... Rated the No. 3 offensive tackle prospect at the prep school level in the nation by 247Sports ... Also ranked the No. 27 prospect overall at the prep school level in the nation by 247Sports ... Played in the Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas all-star game following his senior season at Mauldin High ... A first-team Division I-4A All-State honoree after his senior year at Mauldin.

**Why he chose Tech:** "I just liked the atmosphere there. I met with both Beamers, Coach Shane and Coach Frank, and Coach Frank Beamer flew down and saw my parents. I liked what they had to offer. There's a chance for early playing time, and I'll get a good education. I just wanted to be a part of the family."

**On his position:** "I played both left and right tackle, and they're going to start me out at tackle and go from there. I like playing it. I like playing fast defensive ends. I'm used to it, and I like to rough

people up."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I'm good with my pass set. My pass blocking is good. I have quick feet, and I'm able to get out and beat defensive ends. My run blocking is not as strong. I'm good at it, but it's not as strong as my pass blocking."

**Most memorable moment as a player:** "I have a couple. I'd say my first start. I started my junior year and my first came against our rival high school. Then I played in the Shrine Bowl against the No. 1 defensive end in the nation (Jonathan Bullard, who plays at Florida). I held my own against him. He didn't have a sack, and I don't think he had a tackle against me."

**Personal:** Born Oct. 27, 1993, in Greensboro, N.C. ... Son of Jonathan, Sr., and Connie McLaughlin ... Has a younger brother and an older sister ... Contemplated major is business.



**JAMIEON MOSS**

6-2, 210, LB  
Elizabeth City, N.C.  
Northeastern High School  
**Also considered:** Michigan, ECU, N.C. State, South Carolina

**Stats:** Tallied 135 tackles, including 12 for a loss, as a senior ... Recorded 107 tackles, including eight for a loss, and three sacks his junior season.

**Top honors:** A 3-star recruit by Rivals and 247Sports ... Rated the No. 34 overall prospect in North Carolina by 247Sports ... Earned a spot on the NCPreps.com 2A all-state squad as a linebacker this past season ... A first-team All-Northeastern Coastal Conference choice at linebacker his senior season ... A two-time all-area choice at linebacker by The Daily Advance in Elizabeth City ... Led his team to the state playoffs the past two seasons, including a state championship game appearance his sophomore year.

**Why he chose Tech:** "It's really all I know. I grew up as a Virginia Tech fan. I love Virginia Tech, and my family always loved Virginia Tech. When I got that (scholarship) offer, it was like a dream come true."

**On his position:** "They've (Tech's coaches) told me they view me as a backer. I'll be doing a lot of the same

things I did in high school. I'm used to blitzing off the edge and covering running backs and tight ends."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I think I'm good at chasing the ball. I'll chase the ball all over the field. I have a motor. No matter where the ball is, I'm chasing it. I probably need to work on my footwork and coverage skills."

**On his favorite player:** "I've always watched all the Virginia Tech linebackers and tried to model my game after what they do. Outside of college, I like Ray Lewis (Baltimore Ravens linebacker). He's passionate about what he's doing."

**Most memorable moment as a player:** "The first game (this season), we came out to play, and we were so hyped. In the game, the defensive back tipped a ball, and it almost hit the ground. I picked it off and ran it back for a touchdown."

**Personal:** Born Jan. 13, 1995, in Ruston, La. ... Son of Ernest Winston and Aline Moss ... Has three younger sisters ... Contemplated majors are business or creative writing.



**ANDREW MOTUAPUAKA**

6-0, 225, LB  
Virginia Beach, Va.  
Salem High School  
**Also considered:** Stanford

**Stats:** Registered 115 tackles, including 21 for a loss, and eight sacks as a senior ... Also had three interceptions and forced five fumbles ... Had 97 tackles and three interceptions his junior year.

**Top honors:** A 3-star recruit by both Rivals and 247Sports ... Listed the No. 13 overall prospect in Virginia by Rivals and the No. 19 inside linebacker prospect in the nation ... Rated the No. 24 overall prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times ... A second-team All-Group AAA choice as a defensive back his senior season by Virginia Preps ... A two-time, first-team All-Tidewater choice by The Virginian-Pilot.

**Why he chose Tech:** "Virginia Tech was the first to offer (a scholarship) and the first school I fell in love with. When I saw the campus and the facilities there, I fell in love with the place and thought it was the right place for me."

**On his position:** "I think they recruited me for the whip linebacker position. I think I'll fit in well there and that I can be the best of my ability at

that position. I have the speed for a linebacker, and I'm a good open-field tackler and good in coverage, so I feel like I have it all for that position."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I always give 100 percent, and I'm a hard worker. I'm a sure tackler, and I have a motor. I love the game. I probably need to work on my coverage skills since I'll be going up against physical and faster people. I'll have to work on my speed and getting off blocks since I'll be going against smart offensive linemen."

**On his favorite player:** "Troy Polamalu (Pittsburgh Steelers safety) is my favorite. I love his motor and the way he plays. I have long hair, too, and I probably kept mine that way just from watching him."

**Personal:** Born June 29, 1995, in Auckland, New Zealand ... Son of Siaoisi and Manu Motuapuaka, who are from Tonga and went to school in New Zealand ... Has a younger brother and younger sister ... Family migrated to the U.S. and Siaoisi joined the U.S. Army ... Contemplated major is mechanical engineering.



**CARLIS PARKER**

6-3, 180, QB  
Statesville, N.C.  
Statesville High School  
**Also considered:** ECU, UNC, South Carolina

**Stats:** Threw for 1,181 yards and 12 touchdowns his senior season ... Also rushed for 959 yards and 10 touchdowns as a senior ... Had 44 tackles as a safety on defense his senior year ... Sat out nearly all of his junior season after tearing an ACL in the first game, but as a sophomore, threw for 1,892 yards and 11 touchdowns, while also rushing for 1,180 yards and 13 touchdowns.

**Top honors:** A 3-star recruit by both Rivals and 247Sports ... Rivals rated him the No. 17 dual-threat quarterback in the country and the No. 21 overall prospect in North Carolina ... Ranked the No. 20 dual-threat quarterback in the nation by 247Sports and the No. 18 overall prospect in North Carolina ... Selected to and played in the Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas and the Offense-Defense Bowl in Houston.

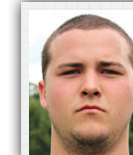
**Why he chose Tech:** "I chose Tech because I loved the campus when I came up there. I think I can focus on school and be focused in football.

They have a winning program there, and Frank Beamer was serious about me being a quarterback. A lot of schools wanted me to move to receiver, but he really wanted me as a quarterback. That said a lot."

**On enrolling early:** "I talked with the coaches, and it gives me a head start. I'll be able to put on some weight and learn the system. It's really tough leaving high school and all your friends, but it's something you've got to do."

**On injuring his knees:** "I tore my LCL (lateral collateral ligament) in my right knee my junior year and then I had a slight tear in my MCL (in his left knee) this year and missed three weeks. That was a difficult situation because I had missed the season before, but my teammates kept me up, and I stayed strong and it worked out for the best."

**Personal:** Born Nov. 24, 1993, in Statesville, N.C. ... Son of Teresa Vines and Carlis Parker, Sr. ... Has an older sister and a younger brother ... Contemplated majors are communications or business.



**BRAXTON PFAFF**

6-4, 285, OL  
Lynchburg, Va.  
Liberty Christian Academy  
**Also considered:** UVa, WVU, Liberty

**Top honors:** Helped lead LCA to its second straight Virginia Independent Schools Division I state crown ... A 3-star recruit by both Rivals and 247Sports ... Ranked the No. 61 offensive tackle prospect in the nation by Rivals and the No. 20 prospect overall in Virginia ... Listed as the No. 14 offensive guard prospect in the nation by 247Sports and the No. 17 overall prospect in Virginia ... Rated the No. 27 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times ... A first-team VIS Division I all-state selection as an offensive lineman and a second-team selection as a defensive lineman ... Selected to and played in the 2012 Chesapeake Bowl ... Also selected to and played in the Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl.

**Why he chose Tech:** "I took a couple of visits, and I really bonded with the players and coaches there at Virginia Tech. It's a great place for a lineman coming in, with the new coaches, and there's an opportunity for early playing time."

**On his position:** "I'm not sure. I was a tackle my sophomore and junior years, and I was a guard this past year. We

lost all our guards, and we had a tackle come in, so coach thought it was best for me to play guard. I liked it, but I'll play anything to get on the field."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I think I move my feet well, and I'm quick. I don't stop until the whistle is blown. I need to get bigger and stronger. I think you can always do that."

**On his favorite player:** "I would say David DeCastro (current Pittsburgh Steelers guard). I like the way he plays the position. He's nasty and fast. He's a great offensive lineman."

**Most memorable moment as a player:** "I don't have one time, but just the journey the last three years. I made some of my best friends, and we won two state championships. I won some awesome awards and had great experiences, and my coaches and players did that for me."

**Personal:** Born Sept. 22, 1994, in Lynchburg, Va. ... Son of Darren and Fran Pfaff ... Has three younger brothers and a younger sister ... Contemplated majors are business or education.



**DEON NEWSOME**

6-0, 180, ATH  
Hampton, Va.  
Hampton High School  
**Also considered:** UVa

**Stats:** Played quarterback as a senior and accounted for 2,168 yards and 29 touchdowns ... Threw for 1,027 yards and rushed for 1,141 yards ... Caught 15 passes for 462 yards and three touchdowns as a receiver his junior year ... Also played running back and carried the ball 40 times for 287 yards and two touchdowns his junior season.

**Top honors:** A 3-star recruit by Rivals and 247Sports ... Ranked the No. 25 overall prospect in the state by 247Sports and No. 28 by Rivals ... Rated the No. 29 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times ... First-team All-Eastern Region as a defensive back his senior season ... First-team All-Peninsula District as a quarterback his senior year.

**Why he chose Tech:** "It felt like the right thing to do. It's not far from home. It was down to UVa and Tech, and I didn't want to go to UVa."

**On the influence of his father, Myron, who was a Tech linebacker in the late 1990s:** "He had some influence, but he tried to stay out of it as much as he could. He let me make

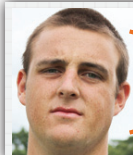
my own decision."

**On his position:** "They (the coaches) haven't told me. They said they're bringing me in as an athlete and then will see where I fit in. I like that option. I think I'll be on offense. I like having the ball in my hands. I can play defense, but I'm mostly an offensive guy."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I can make plays. I can turn a play that isn't a play into one. If I'm on defense, I'm going to need to learn and playing."

**Most memorable moment as a player:** "I'd say the first time I got interviewed after a game. That caught me off guard, but it was a nice thing. It was either my sophomore or junior year. I can't remember exactly which."

**Personal:** Born Feb. 5, 1995, in Newport News, Va. ... Son of Myron Newsome and Aisha Rogers ... Has two younger brothers and also has two stepsisters and a stepbrother ... Contemplated majors are engineering or building construction.



**PARKER OSTERLOH**

6-8, 290, OL  
Williamsburg, Va.  
Warhill High School  
**Also considered:** UVa, JMU

**Stats:** Caught seven passes for 265 yards as a tight end his junior season.

**Top honors:** A 3-star recruit by both Rivals and 247Sports ... Rated the No. 27 overall prospect in Virginia by 247Sports ... Listed as the No. 28 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times ... A first-team All-Bay Rivers District selection as a tackle his senior season ... Selected to and played in the 2012 Chesapeake Bowl

**Why he chose Tech:** "I really liked the academics. They have what I'm looking to study (biological sciences). The coaches and the program are nationally recognized. I just thought it was the best place for me."

**On enrolling early:** "I wanted to do it because I possibly can get early playing time. If I add muscle and get quicker and get smarter as far as the playbook goes, I think there's an opportunity. I talked to J.C. Coleman about it, and he said it helped a lot."

**On his position:** "Preferably, I'll be at tackle. I don't know which side. I've played both sides, and I'm more

at home on the left side. With my pass set and run blocking, it's more smooth and natural to me."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I think I'm versatile. I can play any position - I played three this year (center, tackle and tight end). They (the coaches) can put me where they need me, and I'll feel like I can get the job done. I think I need to improve my strength and speed, and learn new schemes."

**On his favorite player:** "I'd say Duane Brown (former Tech and current Houston Texans offensive tackle). He's a tenacious player and aggressive. I like the way he plays."

**Most memorable moment as a player:** "My brother is a sophomore, and he got some starts this year. In one game, I blocked a punt, and he recovered it and returned it down to the 10-yard line. That was pretty cool."

**Personal:** Born Sept. 1, 1994, in St. Louis, Mo. ... Son of Jeff and Betsy Osterloh ... Has a younger brother ... Contemplated major is biological sciences.



**DAVID PRINCE**

6-0, 185, ATH  
Roanoke, Va.  
Patrick Henry High School  
**Also considered:** UVa

**Stats:** Threw for 764 yards and rushed for 772 yards as a quarterback his senior year ... Completed 70 of 121 passes for 1,005 yards and nine touchdowns as a junior ... Rushed for 725 yards on 110 carries as well his junior season.

**Top honors:** A 3-star recruit by both Rivals and 247 Sports ... Rated the No. 45 athlete prospect in the nation by 247 Sports and the No. 21 overall prospect in Virginia ... Ranked the No. 68 athlete prospect in the nation by Rivals and the No. 23 overall prospect in Virginia ... Listed as the No. 25 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times ... The Western Valley District offensive player of the year as a senior.

**Why he chose Tech:** "I wanted to go in-state, so it was between Tech and UVa. I just couldn't see myself waking up every morning at UVa. Plus, the atmosphere at Tech is great, you've got great people surrounding you, and you're going to get a good education."

**On his position:** "I can play both sides of the ball, but I'm more than likely going to be at receiver. I haven't

really played it before. I played it some my freshman year, but we didn't really throw the ball. I'll do whatever they want me to do."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "My strength is my speed. I accelerate fast, and as soon as I get in the open field, I'm gone. I need to get stronger, and I need to learn the receiver position."

**On his favorite player:** "I liked watching Pat White (former Miami Dolphins quarterback). I liked the way he ran it and threw it. He was an electrifying player."

**Most memorable moment as a player:** "My sophomore year, we played GW (George Washington High), and I had a career game (rushed for 205 yards and two touchdowns and threw for 110 yards). It was two games after I had been switched from receiver to quarterback."

**Personal:** Born Nov. 17, 1994, in Roanoke, Va. ... Son of Monica Jones and stepfather Stark Jones ... Son of David Prince, Sr. ... Has one younger brother and two younger sisters ... Contemplated major is business.



**D.J. REID**

6-0, 205, TB  
Chester, Va.  
Thomas Dale High School  
**Also considered:** South Florida

**Stats:** Rushed for 1,159 yards on 170 carries and scored 10 touchdowns his senior year ... Also caught 10 passes for 190 yards and a score ... Rushed for 1,072 yards on 140 carries and scored 10 touchdowns as a junior.

**Top honors:** A 4-star prospect by 247Sports and a 3-star prospect by Rivals ... Rated the No. 20 athlete prospect in the nation by 247Sports and the No. 11 overall prospect in Virginia ... Listed as the No. 53 athlete prospect in the nation by Rivals and the No. 16 overall prospect in Virginia ... Ranked the No. 22 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times.

**Why he chose Tech:** "It was close to home, and it felt like home when I visited there. It felt right when I met with and visited with Coach (Shane) Beamer. They have a good business school, and they're adding a new wing to it. Education was important to me."

**On his position:** "I'm probably going to end up at running back. Coach (Shane) Beamer talked with my dad and mom about it, and he also told me that I'll probably be a running back, slot receiver and kick

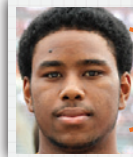
returner."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I think I get better as the game goes along. I think my legs get stronger as the game goes on. I need to work on everything, though. Everyone's on scholarship and everyone is good in college, so I need to work on everything."

**On his favorite player:** "I like Arian Foster (Houston Texans tailback) and Adrian Peterson (Minnesota Vikings tailback). I just like how smooth Arian Foster is when he runs, and Adrian Peterson runs with power."

**Most memorable moment as a player:** "I have several. I'd say my first start as a running back on varsity, my first touchdown as a freshman, the first time I ran a 4.3 in the 40 (-yard sprint), which was in front of the Tech coaches, and my first offer. Also, the day I committed was a memorable moment."

**Personal:** Born Oct. 12, 1994, in Virginia Beach, Va. ... Son of Daniel and Wilma Reid ... Has two older sisters and two older brothers ... Contemplated majors are business or accounting.



**ANTHONY SHEGOG**

6-2, 200, FS  
Stafford, Va.  
North Stafford High School  
**Also considered:** UVa

**Stats:** Played tailback and receiver as a senior and scored 16 touchdowns, including two on defense and two on punt returns ... Had 1,111 total yards on offense his senior season ... Rushed for 447 yards and five touchdowns on only 31 carries in North Stafford's three playoff games ... Finished with 63 tackles, five forced fumbles, five fumble recoveries and two interceptions his senior season.

**Top honors:** A 3-star recruit by both Rivals and 247Sports ... Ranked the No. 64 safety prospect in the nation and the No. 31 overall prospect in Virginia by 247Sports ... Rated the No. 16 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times ... A first-team All-Group AAA selection as a defensive back by Virginia Preps ... The Free Lance-Star's (Fredericksburg) player of the year ... A two-time first-team All-Commonwealth District and All-Northwest Region selection.

**Why he chose Tech:** "It was down to Virginia Tech and Virginia for me, and after visiting both, I just like Tech's campus more. The coaches were more friendly, and I just felt

more at home there."

**On his position:** "I'll be a defensive back, probably a rover type. That's really all I know so far. That's fine with me. I don't mind any position. Wherever they put me, I'm fine with it."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I'd say my strengths are coming down hill and making tackles, and I'm usually in the right place at the right time. I probably need to work on my coverage skills. They're not too bad, but you can always get better."

**Most memorable moment as a player:** "I'd say winning back-to-back regional championships. I had a part in helping to do that, probably more this year than last year. I scored four touchdowns against Mountain View this year to help us win it."

**Personal:** Born July 24, 1995, in San Diego, Calif. ... Son of Darnell and Theresa Shegog ... Father serves in the Navy, and the family lived in San Diego and Hawaii before moving to northern Virginia to be closer to the Pentagon ... Has an older sister and an older brother ... Major is undecided.



**WYATT TELLER**

6-5, 250, DE  
Bealeton, Va.  
Liberty High School  
**Also considered:** UVa, Clemson, Michigan, Oregon

**Stats:** Finished with 120 tackles, 11 sacks and four forced fumbles as a senior ... Recorded 85 tackles, including 27 for a loss, 9.5 sacks and four forced fumbles his junior year ... Also had three interceptions and five blocked kicks his junior year.

**Top honors:** A 4-star recruit by both Rivals and 247Sports ... Rated the No. 6 strongside defensive end prospect in the nation by Rivals and the No. 8 overall prospect in Virginia ... Listed as the No. 10 strongside defensive end prospect in the nation and the No. 10 overall prospect in Virginia by 247Sports ... Ranked the No. 11 prospect in Virginia by The Roanoke Times ... Named the Group AA defensive player of the year by the Virginia High School Coaches Association.

**Why he chose Tech:** "You can't get better coaches. Coach (Bud) Foster and Coach (Frank) Beamer are great, and Coach (Charley) Wiles can make me better as a player. It just felt like family there. I've got a lot of family and friends who go there, and it's going to feel like I haven't left

Fauquier County."

**On his position:** "They've (the coaches) recruited me as a defensive end. But with my frame, if I put on weight, I'll move down (to defensive tackle). If I get faster, I'll stay at end. But if I get moved down, I won't get mad about it."

**On his strengths and weaknesses:** "I think my motor, and I love the weight room. My strength is something I pride myself on. I also try to work harder than everyone else. Those are my strong points. I need to work on my speed and getting used to the speed of the game. I also need to work on all the little things so that I can become the best player I can."

**Most memorable moment as a player:** "Last year, we lost to Kettle Run, but this year, I ran a fake field goal and got in for a touchdown, and we won 15-14. That was awesome."

**Personal:** Born Nov. 21, 1994 in Manassas, Va. ... Son of Richard and Cheryl Teller ... Has an older brother and three older sisters ... Contemplated majors are political science or criminal justice.



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# Lack of depth taking its toll on Hokies as season moves toward final weeks

by Jimmy Robertson

Fresh off an extremely disappointing overtime loss to the North Carolina Tar Heels in Chapel Hill, Tech coach James Johnson sat in the postgame news conference afterward and fielded question after question about the loss and the team going forward.

When asked if there was anything he could have done to change things and kept his team from wearing down, he gave a good-natured response.

"What I could do is tell him (UNC coach Roy Williams) not to play all those guys he's playing," Johnson said with a smile. "Tell him, 'Let's play 6 for 6. You can't do any more.' But that's not how the game works."

The Hokies, who fell to 11-10 overall following the 72-60 setback to the Tar Heels, led for the entire first half after jumping out to a 12-0 lead. Tech held that lead for the first 10 minutes of the second half as well.

But in the final 10 minutes, the Hokies made just two field goals. That said, they somehow had the ball with a chance to win the game in the waning moments. Erick Green, who struggled for most of the game, missed a shot with less than 4 seconds remaining, and the game ultimately went into overtime. The Tar Heels outscored the Hokies 17-5 in the extra frame to pull out the victory.

Tech's lack of depth is starting to show. The roster features nine scholarship players, but only eight of them play, and one of those, freshman Marshall Wood, just returned from a fractured foot. Johnson tries to buy minutes of rest here and there for his regulars, but the object is to win the game and the Hokies can't afford to be without guys like Green and Jarell Eddie on the court.

Against UNC, Green played 43 minutes. In the previous seven games before the UNC game, he played at least 35 minutes in all seven. Eddie played 38 minutes after playing 36 and 34 minutes, respectively, in the Hokies' previous two games. Cadarian Raines played a career-high 40 minutes against the Tar Heels, while Robert Brown tied a season high with 38 minutes.

"I've got to play with what I've got, and they've (the Tar Heels) got to play with what they've got," Johnson said. "It is what it is. We've got to find a way to finish games, regardless of fatigue and regardless of foul trouble. We've got to find a way to finish the game."

Unfortunately, Tech hasn't been able to finish games. The Hokies trailed by five points against BC with 4:29 left. Against Clemson, the game was tied at 60 with 3:21 remaining. Against Miami, Tech trailed 60-56 with 2:14 left. And of course, against the Tar Heels, the Hokies possessed the ball with a chance to win in regulation.

All four games, though, ended in defeat.

"Extremely frustrating," said Eddie, who scored 15 points against the Tar Heels. "It's really frustrating to be so close. We're just a couple of plays away from getting that win. It's just really frustrating."

"We've just got to keep working, keep clawing away and keep fighting. You can't get down. You've just got to keep playing."

Johnson likes the attitude of his team despite the struggles. He continues to applaud their work ethic, and he says they possess too much pride to give in to any team.

He also sees a lot of positives with their play. For example, they struggled with defense and rebounding earlier in the season, but they held North Carolina to 37.5 percent shooting from the floor, and they only got out-rebounded by four to Miami and nine to Clemson.

"I'm encouraged with the way these guys are still fighting," Johnson said. "Our 2-3 zone is getting better. Our rebounding is getting better. We're limiting guys' second shots. Our offensive execution is getting better. We're starting to get more guys coming around and contributing."

"So I'm pleased with the overall maturation of this team. I'd just like to see it show up in the win-loss column. That's the tough thing right now."

## RAINES MAKING PROGRESS

For the most part this season, Raines, Tech's center, has been splitting time with redshirt freshman Joey van Zegeren, and thus, his



Cadarian Raines scored in double figures in back-to-back games for the first time this season when he had 10 points against Miami and 12 against UNC.

numbers haven't been what many expected.

But Raines showed signs of reverting back to the way he played at the end of last season when he averaged 10.1 points and 4.6 rebounds in the final eight games. He scored 10 points on 5 of 6 shooting from the floor and grabbed eight rebounds against Miami's huge front line – the Hurricanes are the best team in the league.

Then, Raines followed that performance with a 12-point, six-rebound performance against North Carolina. He made 6 of 11 from the floor in that one.

The two games marked the first time this season that Raines has scored in double figures in back-to-back games. For the season, leading into a home game against Maryland, he had scored in double figures in six games.

"I think it's just a matter of being confident and being focused," Raines said. "I was finishing. The plays were going down for me, and I was making shots."

## GREEN TORCHES ACC BEST

The Hokies played Virginia, Clemson and Miami in back-to-back-to-back games, and all three teams resided at the top of the ACC in scoring defense.

But Green, who was the nation's leading scorer going into those games, got the best of all three, even though the Hokies came out on the losing end of each game. He scored a career-high 35 points against Virginia on 11 of 18 shooting (3 of 6 from beyond the arc). Then he scored 25 points in the road loss at Clemson, and he closed the three-game outburst with a 30-point performance against the Hurricanes. He hit 11 of 20 from the floor against Miami, including a career-high five 3-pointers.

"I thought going to Virginia Tech, you know, he would have a very nice career, but he's

developed into the leading scorer in the country. That's a whole 'nother level," said Miami coach Jim Larranaga, who recruited Green when he was the head coach at George Mason. "When everybody's attention is on you, you're going to get every defender's best effort. You're getting every team's best defender on the perimeter. It is very, very hard to continue to produce the way he has. It's a remarkable accomplishment by him."

For much of the season, Green has led the nation in scoring. Even after being held to 16 points against North Carolina on 7 of 21 shooting, he still was averaging 25 points per game.

"This is the most fun I've had in my four years," Green said. "And I know we're losing and it's probably crazy for me to say that, but I'm having a great time with these guys in my last year. These guys are getting me open, and I'm just making shots and I'm having a great time. I wouldn't trade this for the world."

## BROWN UNLIKELY HERO AGAINST WAKE FOREST

Mired in a terrible shooting slump, Brown found himself with the basketball and the shot clock running down in the waning moments of the Hokies' game against Wake Forest on Jan. 19.


Undaunted, he drove into the lane and hit a short jumper with 12.3 seconds remaining. That shot was the difference in a 66-65 Tech win over the Demon Deacons, who missed two shots in the final few seconds before Eddie got the rebound as time expired.

"Coach (James Johnson) always tells me to be aggressive regardless of whether I'm hitting or not," Brown said. "It was an open shot that he let me take, and I took the first good shot we had. They trapped Erick (Green), so the lane was open. I just made a play."

Brown, a sophomore from Clermont, Fla., had missed nine of his previous 10 shot attempts in the game. He finished 2 of 11 from the floor, with four points.

Brown came into the game having made just seven of his past 36 attempts before the game winner.

"It felt good to step and make a play for my teammates," Brown said. "Getting this win was a big win for us in the ACC and for our confidence. We've got two in a row (ACC wins), and we're going to try to keep building on that."

Brown picked up his play following the Wake Forest win. He went scoreless against Virginia, but scored nine points against Clemson, eight against Miami and 10 against the Tar Heels. 


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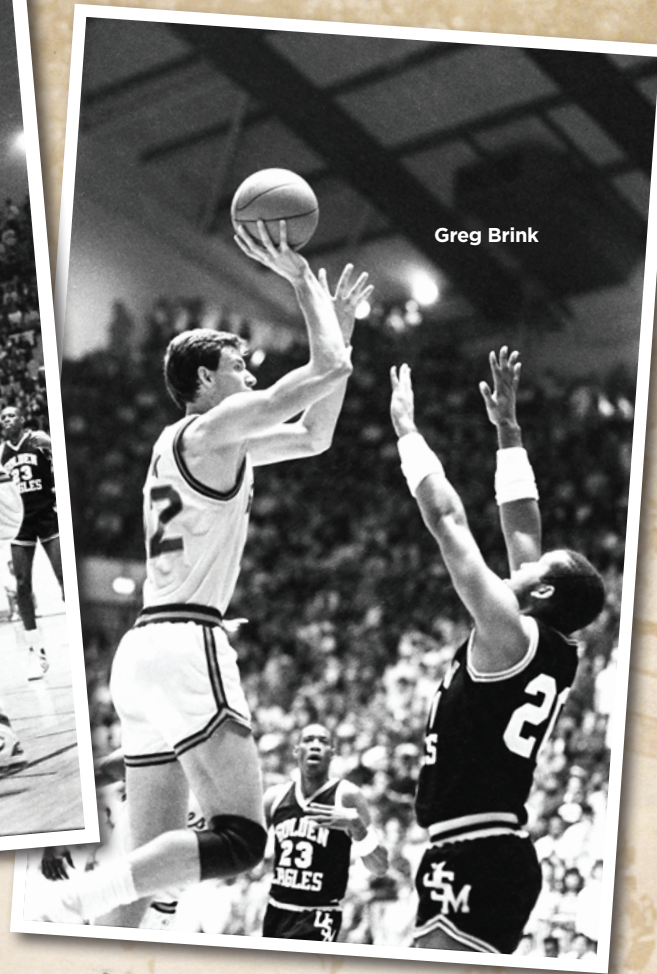
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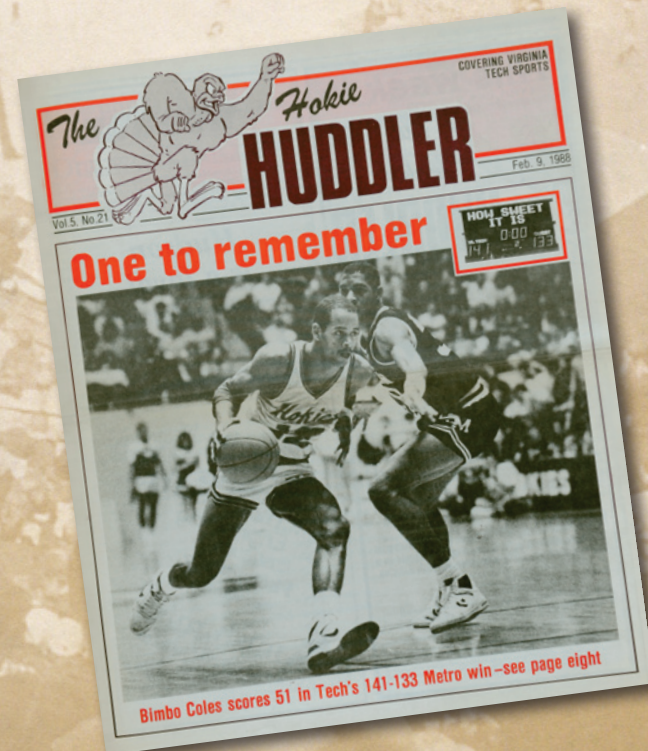
Bimbo Coles



Greg Brink

Twenty-five years ago, Virginia Tech and Southern Miss combined for 274 points in a breathless, frenetic, up-and-down-the-court classic that set a Cassell Coliseum scoring mark and today remains the ...

## HIGHEST-SCORING GAME IN TECH HISTORY



by Jimmy Robertson

It was the winter of 1988, and both Louisville and Memphis State dominated Metro Conference basketball attention. It was the era of great players like Louisville's Pervis Ellison and Memphis State's Elliot Perry, with their high-profile, well-known coaches Denny Crum and Larry Finch.

So many expected just another ordinary conference game when Tech and Southern Miss got together on a February afternoon at Cassell Coliseum. But the two programs were out to make points:

Literally and figuratively.

On a chilly Saturday afternoon, the game between the Hokies and the Golden Eagles turned into a near four-hour sprint that bordered on insanity. Points were scored at a dizzying pace, and the wild action left players, coaches and fans exhausted at its conclusion.

It also left those in attendance near speechless. Words used to describe the game were "terrific," "awesome," "unbelievable," and "great." Yet those adjectives fail miserably to capture a performance that saw at least 13 records fall and one that has never been duplicated. In fact, no Tech team has come close.

On Feb. 6, 1988, the Hokies outlasted Southern Miss 141-133 in double overtime. The game turned out to be the highest-scoring game in Tech history.

Twenty-five years later, it still is – and the records set that day, quite honestly, may never be broken.

### MODEST EXPECTATIONS

Heading into the season, expectations for the 1987-88 Tech basketball team were tempered for numerous reasons. For starters, the 1986-87 season ranked as the worst in 32 years, as the Hokies finished with a 10-18 mark – their worst record since the 1954-55 season.

Making matters worse at that time, an NCAA investigation into the Tech basketball program dug up nine violations, and that led to a two-year postseason ban. Charlie Moir, Tech's head coach, resigned on Oct. 2, 1987, even though he had been cleared of any wrongdoing. Tech's interim AD, Raymond Smoot, named Frankie Allen the interim coach. Allen became the first African-American head coach of a major Division I sport in the state's history.

So entering the 1987-88 season, Tech had a young team with no hopes of making it to postseason play, playing under a first-time head coach.

"We were picked last," said Allen, now in his fourth season as the head coach at Maryland Eastern Shore. "I was an interim kid, and I was just trying to get kids to go out and play at a high

level and play with some enthusiasm."

Allen refused to use the turmoil within the department as an excuse. He promised an up-tempo attack. His squad was young, but they were also athletic, and they possessed the pieces to be an effective, pressing team.

Steady junior Quinton Nottingham stabilized the group, but sophomore guard Bimbo Coles and redshirt junior Wally Lancaster provided the scoring punch. Redshirt sophomore Greg Brink spearheaded the press, and 6-foot-11 senior Roy Brow manned the back end, with his shot-blocking prowess. Tim Anderson, a 6-6 junior, flourished as a defensive stopper.

In short, Allen's group was going to get up and down the court at a rapid pace. They were going to be fun to watch, regardless of a game's outcome.

"The players that we had fit into that style of play," Allen said. "We really played to our strengths."

Despite the low expectations, Allen's team bought into his philosophy, and the Hokies started winning. They downed Southern California early that season, and a few weeks later, shocked then-No. 14 Georgetown 87-82 in Hampton, Va. They also beat West Virginia, Memphis State, Virginia and Florida State.

All told, they entered the Feb. 6 game against Southern Miss with a 14-6 overall record and a 3-3 mark in Metro Conference play.

"What people don't understand is players don't listen to expectations," said Nottingham, who now works as an associate professor of business information technology at Tech. "You've still got to play the games, and there's not a single player in America who says you've got to mail it in. Everyone else says you can. We had a new coach and a new style of offense, and the players bought into it."

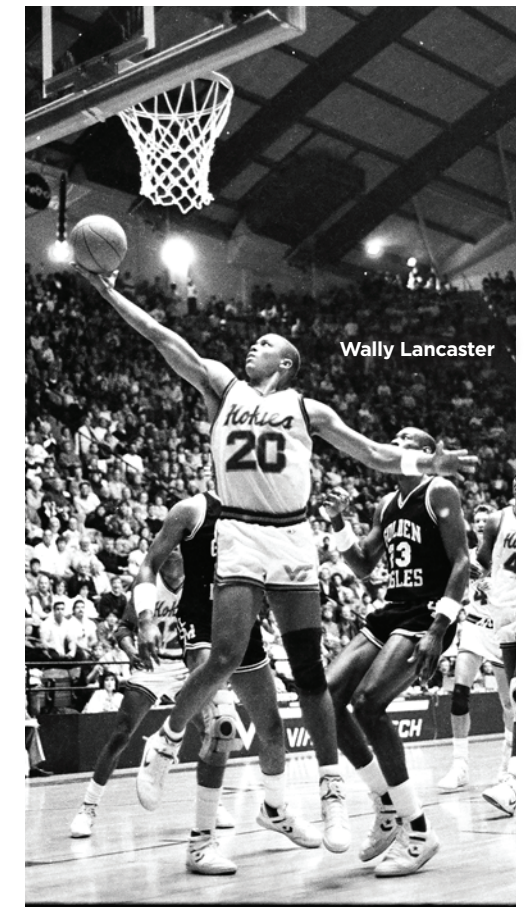
### MAKING POINTS - LITERALLY

The funny thing about the Tech-Southern Miss score-fest was that arguably the biggest play of the game came on the defensive end in the first overtime.

That seems hard to believe considering the volume of points scored. Of course, it seems hard to believe that the game got to that point considering the Hokies nearly got blown out in the first half.

The Golden Eagles quieted the sellout crowd of 10,000 Tech fans by jumping out to an 18-point, first-half lead. Lancaster kept the Hokies in it, scoring 25 points in the first 20 minutes. But Tech trailed by 14 at the break – 62-48.

"The biggest memory is us being down so much at halftime and going in thinking, 'We're down so many points. What are we going to do?'"



Wally Lancaster

said Coles, who runs a Crossfit Box and two fitness centers in Lewisburg, W.Va. "We just had a heart-to-heart at halftime and said, 'All right, let's go.' We came out and were all over the place the rest of the night."

The Hokies looked to be in trouble, though. Just a few weeks earlier, the Golden Eagles blew out Tech in Hattiesburg, Miss., by a 127-102 count. At the time, the 127 points tied for the most ever allowed by a Tech team.

This time around, with 19 minutes left in the game, the Hokies trailed by 18, but they rallied down the stretch and had a 110-108 lead in the waning moments. With 14 seconds left, Lancaster picked up his fourth foul with a push of John White, who buried both free throws – two of his 41 points – to tie the game at 110. The game then went into overtime.

Lancaster fouled out at the 3:33 mark of the first overtime, with the Hokies trailing by two. The redshirt junior scored a career-high 39 points, hitting 13 of 29 from the floor, including five 3-pointers.

Without Lancaster, Tech still managed to retake the lead. In fact, the Hokies led 122-117 with 52 seconds left following two free throws by Coles. But the Golden Eagles rallied, as White buried a long 3-pointer with 45 seconds remaining, and after Coles missed a free throw, Casey Fisher hit a

jumper with 20 seconds left to tie it at 122.

Fisher then nearly won it for Southern Miss in the final seconds. He picked Coles clean at the free-throw line and drove toward the basket. But Nottingham prevented Fisher from getting to the goal, and Coles ran back and dove at Fisher, knocking the ball away from him along the sideline.

"I prevented Casey Fisher from going to the basket, and Bimbo was behind him," Nottingham said. "He (Coles) dove on the sideline. That was big, but for us, diving on the floor was what we were doing that year. In the beginning of the season, we had more knee scrapes, and we started wearing kneepads. We just wanted to press and run, and wanted to get the ball out and go.

"That was a great effort on Bimbo's part, but from the players' perspective, we were all diving all over the place all the time."

Southern Miss inbounded the ball, but didn't get off a shot. So off things went to a second overtime.

In the second overtime, Coles took over, as the Hokies opened the overtime with a 12-4 run. Southern Miss got no closer than six, and Coles scored seven of Tech's 19 points in that second overtime.

Coles finished with a career-high 51 points –

just one short of Allan Bristow's single-game record of 52 points (vs. George Washington in 1973). Thirty-nine of those points came in the second half and the two overtimes and 10 came after Lancaster fouled out. Coles hit 16 of 30 from the floor for the game, including a 3-pointer. He made 18 of 27 from the free-throw line. For good measure, he dished out 11 assists, thus accounting for 73 of the Hokies' 141 points.

"Wally actually got the player of the game, and I ended up with 51," Coles said, laughing. "But he actually had a better game than I did. After he fouled out, my points just kept adding and adding. Someone who outplayed me doesn't get as much recognition because I had 51 and he had 39."

**UNBREAKABLE RECORD?**

By the time the sweat had dried and the nets had cooled, Tech and Southern Miss had combined to smash at least 13 Tech and Metro Conference records, according to the Feb. 9, 1988 issue of the Hokie Huddler. The Hokies' 141 points served as the most scored by Tech in a single game, and also the most by a Metro Conference team both in a game and in a Metro game. The 274 points combined were the most by two teams in a Metro game.

Coles' 51 points were the most by a player in a Metro game. He and Lancaster combined for 90 points – the most by two players in a Tech game.

"Wow," Nottingham said, laughing, when asked what he was thinking after the game. "But I didn't think much about the history of it.


"The style of play now, even though some teams are up-tempo, they still make a lot of passes. We probably didn't make 10 passes a possession. We had no issues with the shot clock. I remember playing Marquette that year – or maybe it was the next year – and we had almost 100 shots. That's unheard of, but that's how we played."

Twenty-five years later, many of the records from the Tech-Southern Miss game still stand, and given today's style of basketball, those records may stand another 25 years – or longer. In fact, Tech and Duquesne combined for 224 points in an NIT double overtime affair at Cassell in 2009, but still came 50 points shy of the mark set in the 1988 Tech-Southern Miss game.

"I don't see it broken any time soon with the way people play," Allen said. "Connecticut and Syracuse played six overtimes, and I don't know if they got to 274 (the two scored 244). It's going to take two teams playing well and playing at a high level, and playing an up-tempo style. I guess you should never say never."

clock and there aren't as many possessions."

Regardless, Tech fans in attendance that Saturday afternoon 25 years ago witnessed history. They should cherish the memories for obvious reasons.

The cliché states that, "records are made to be broken." Yet it's certainly hard to see any of those records set 25 years ago falling any time soon. 

HIGHEST-SCORING GAMES IN TECH HISTORY			
Game	Year	Outcome	Points Scored
Tech vs. Southern Miss	1988	W, 141-133 (2OT)	274
Tech at Southern Miss	1988	L, 127-102	229
Tech vs. Cincinnati	1988	W, 115-111	226
Tech vs. Duquesne	2009	W, 116-108 (2OT)	224
Tech vs. Virginia*	1989	L, 113-106 (OT)	219
Tech vs. William & Mary	1992	W, 127-92	219

(\* Game was played in Richmond.)

The Hokies finished the 1987-88 season with a 19-10 overall record (13-1 at Cassell) and a respectable 6-6 mark in the Metro. Allen received a four-year deal from new AD David Braine to stay as the Hokies' coach.

The 1987-88 team today remains the highest-scoring team in Tech history, as it averaged 91.2 points per game. Three of the highest-scoring games in the program's history occurred that season.

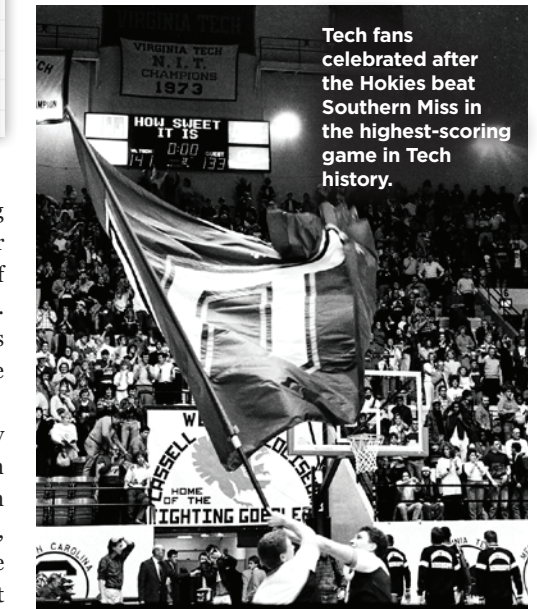
Unfortunately, those days are long gone. Today's college basketball resembles rock fights or taffy pulls. Teams rarely get to 80 points. In fact, at press time, half of ACC teams averaged less

than 70 points per game. None averaged 80.


Of course, a lot of the best players are going to the NBA earlier and never seeing their senior seasons, which attributes a lot to the lack of scoring. But Allen thinks there's a deeper problem.

"Maybe the advent of the 3-point shot has had an effect," he said. "No one really attacks the basket any more.

"And everyone plays it so close to the vest any more. Everyone wants to control the game from a coaching perspective. Back then, we were an up-tempo team. We just went out and played, and kids loved playing that way. There are more possessions, but now, teams are milking the shot



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Lauren Evans has gotten plenty of on-the-job training this season, as she leads all of Tech's freshmen with 20 starts as of Feb. 6.

# New year hasn't been kind to Tech women's team, as young Hokies struggle with confidence

by Marc Mullen

When the calendar turned to 2013, the Virginia Tech women's basketball team was coming off a three-game winning streak, which included a victory over Wake Forest in the team's ACC season opener.

And after three narrow losses – a pair on the road at Virginia (a four-point loss) and at No. 15 North Carolina (a three-point loss), and one at home to Boston College (by seven points) – the Hokies appeared to have made strides in improving as a program.

However, since then, they've dropped six more games – three to ranked teams – but all by double figures, and they head into the final four weeks of their season on a nine-game losing skid.

In the span, the defense had been streaky –

limiting No. 4 Duke to just 58 points, but allowing more than 65 on three occasions. Meanwhile, the Tech offense has fallen flat, scoring more than 50 just once and failing to hit the 40-point plateau three times.

"We're still a work in progress," Tech coach Dennis Wolff said after the Boston College game. "So every game is going to be an interesting entity. In this league, there isn't a ton of high-scoring games in league play, so everybody's playing hard defense.

"We didn't get 50 the other day. Neither did Carolina. Again, everybody is fighting on the defensive end. We have to – from our standpoint – play better on offense. We need to be more efficient offensively, and we need to execute better."

Wolff pointed to a pair of things that needed to be improved upon to help his team right the ship. One was getting a better start in games.

Only twice in the nine-game streak had the team scored its 10th point of the contest before the 10-minute mark of the first half. Six times during ACC play, the Hokies trailed by 10 by halftime.

"You can't come into a game and be running uphill the whole game. We aren't good enough to do that," Wolff said. "That's what it feels like to us on the bench.

"And whether it's stage fright, whether we're playing not to lose, whatever it is, it has to change. We're in the ACC, and when we come out and start so slowly and we make similar mistakes as we do in other games, then you can just almost look at the look of our team, and we become deflated and we have to somehow collectively try and end that."

Ending that feeling, Wolff believed, would come with gaining confidence.

"We have to collectively try and find a way to restore some confidence in some of the kids," Wolff said after the Clemson loss. "There were some good shots in the first half that we missed, and then when those things happen, individually we lose confidence."

## UGOKA NOTCHES TWO MORE DOUBLE-DOUBLES

It took junior Uju Ugoka just two games to register her first double-double in a Tech uniform, and since, she's added two more to her totals – both in ACC games – as she continued to be a critical asset for the Hokies.

In her first 11 games at Tech, Ugoka scored in double figures eight times and grabbed at least nine rebounds seven times, including a pair of double-doubles against Boston College (21 and 13) and at Miami (12 and 13), while posting Tech's highest rebounding effort of the season with 14 against Clemson.

"Uju plays really hard. She's on the offensive glass hard, and she's very aggressive," Wolff said. "But she's struggling big time (from the floor).

"I think what is happening with her, too, is that she misses her first one, and then it seems to be a snowball rolling downhill. And we are taking her out and talking to her about catching it first and gathering herself. What she has to do is slow down and then try and finish"

She was shooting just over 37 percent from the floor for the season, but was certainly making her presence felt in the ACC. Ugoka was sixth in the league in both overall (8.5) and offensive rebounding (3.3) in league games only.


## FRESHMEN GAINING EXPERIENCE

There are five freshmen on the 2012-2013 Tech roster, and none of them are playing the waiting game. Each is cutting her teeth in her first season with the Hokies, as all five have been averaging at least 10 minutes per game and have combined for 45 starts as of Feb. 6.

Lauren Evans led the pack with 20 starts and 26 minutes per game, while Taijah Campbell had 15 starts and 24 minutes, and Hannah Young logged 20 minutes a game.

They were gaining valuable experience for the future, but Wolff was definitely expecting more from this group as the season wound down.

"We need more people to contribute," Wolff said after the Clemson game. "I think that these players have the ability to be better shooters than they are right now. I think that Alex (Kiss-Rusk) is a good shooter. I think that Lauren and Hannah have the potential to be good shooters. I think Alexis (Lloyd) is a good shooter.

"We have to remember that, in their cases, those kids are freshmen. I'm not giving them a pass because we are now in February, and they've got to start acting like college players. They've got to be confident going through (the rest of the season)." 



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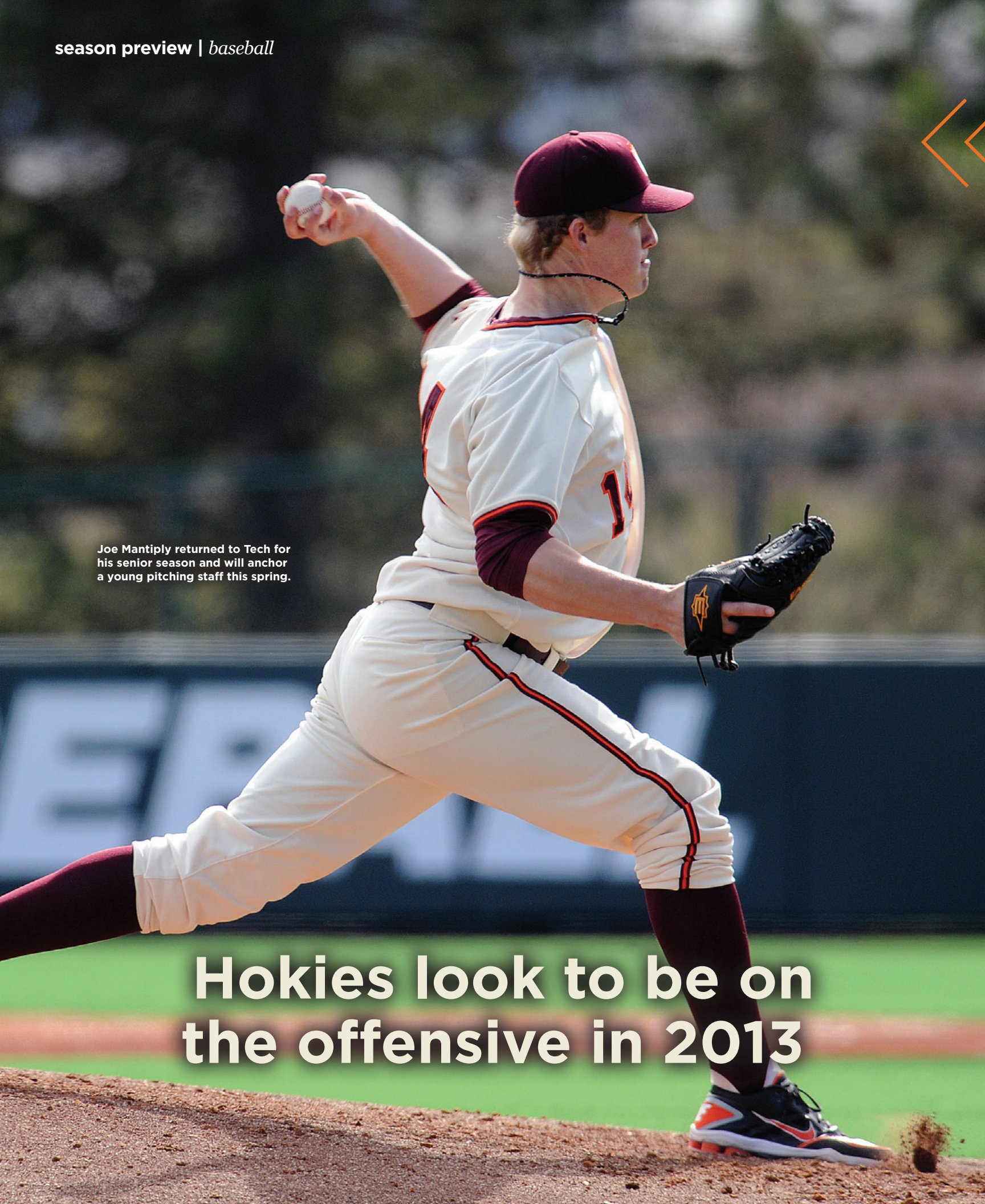
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Joe Mantiplay returned to Tech for his senior season and will anchor a young pitching staff this spring.

# Hokies look to be on the offensive in 2013



The Tech baseball team features a lot of young pitchers and thus will rely on an offense that returns nearly everyone from a season ago

by **MARC MULLEN**

It's the same story once again for head coach Pete Hughes as he enters the 2013 season with his Virginia Tech baseball program. The team returns a wealth of bodies on offense, almost 75 percent of the at-bats from a season ago, but pitching will be the key, particularly starting pitching.

Less than half of the starts return on the mound for the Hokies, but one bright spot is that, rather than opting to sign a professional contract with the Philadelphia Phillies, senior Joe Mantiplay returns with his 34 career starts. Hughes is looking for quality starts and will try to find them wherever he can.

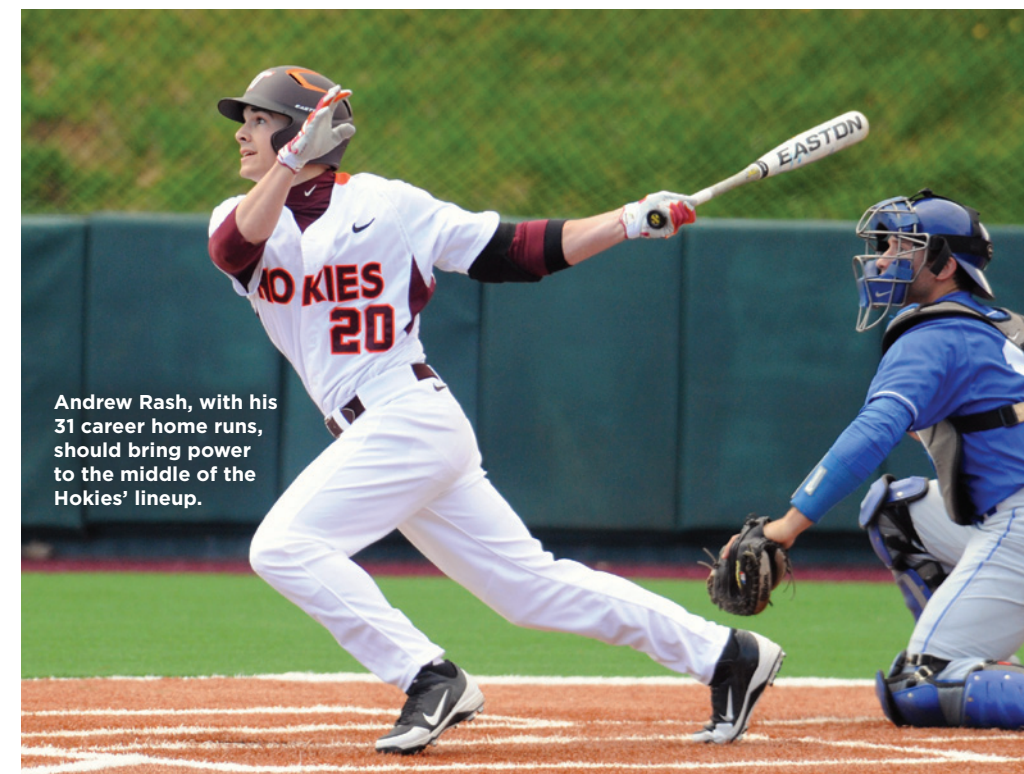
"The strength this year is the offense. It's about as productive a team as we have ever had coming back," Hughes said. "It's productive in its experience. There are a lot of quality at-bats coming back, and I guess that's a good thing when you have so many question marks with your pitching staff. We have guys who haven't had expanded roles, so to have a little extra on the offensive side to go through some growing pains is helpful.

"But we look for those growing pains to be short and few and far between. We need to have guys fall into expanded, impactful roles, and we need them to pitch to their abilities. So there are a lot of question marks, and we don't have a lot of time to answer them. Those question marks have been addressed to our staff, and those guys have been competing and working on that since the fall."

Mantiplay will no doubt be a weekend guy. Hughes pointed to six to eight guys who are in the mix and a couple of interesting names pop up.

"Joe Mantiplay is going to pitch on the weekends, and then we are going to throw guys who are competitive, guys who love to compete and can throw strikes," Hughes said. "Sean Keselica, Sean Kennedy, Tanner McIntyre, Jake Joyce, Devin Burke, Eddie Campbell, Brad Markey, Colin O'Keefe ... there are eight guys who are good enough, but they need to take advantage of a great opportunity for them. We need guys to emerge and take that opportunity, and those guys are good enough to do it."

Last season, the Hokies came back to win



Andrew Rash, with his 31 career home runs, should bring power to the middle of the Hokies' lineup.

19 games in which they trailed entering the fifth frame or later. That goes back to the Tech bullpen and its juniors Clark Labitan, Joyce and McIntyre, who combined to go 16-3, with five saves and a 3.08 ERA in 111 innings pitched (all in relief).

It should be noted that McIntyre was a junior-college transfer and Labitan was coming off an injury. All three needed to step up into roles that were lost during the season because of injuries suffered to then-seniors Ronnie Shaban, the scheduled closer, and Jake Atwell, a top set-up man in 2011.

Both Joyce and McIntyre are among the names that Hughes thinks might make that jump into an expanded role.

"Yeah, we are stretching those guys out to see if they can be one of our top three pitchers right now, just in case we want to go with that option. We are going to give them an opportunity and see what's best for our program," Hughes said. "Jake and Tanner are guys we trust and were lights out.

"There are two ways to look at it – the age-

old question. Do you put them out there to start instead of close because you may never get to your closer? We really just need quality starts. We have enough depth to match up from the sixth inning on. We are just looking for a guy to give us five quality innings."

Quality starts are usually defined as a starting pitcher tossing six or more innings and allowing less than three earned runs. As a whole, last season, the Hokies were 7-5 when a starter recorded a quality start, but the five losses included two at Virginia, and one game each at Florida State and North Carolina and versus NC State – all teams that made the NCAA Tournament.

Using Hughes' definition of quality start, just five frames, the numbers jump substantially. The Hokies were 9-1 – with the only loss coming at FSU. So combining the two definitions of a quality start, the team went 16-6, a winning percentage that equates to .727.

"There is a great opportunity for a lot of guys to work themselves into expanded roles for our season as we head into ACC play," Hughes said.

“But we do have a lot of guys who are battling for two rotation spots on the weekend, and it should make for a real competitive preseason and first three weekends of the season, I know that.”

Interestingly enough, those injuries to Shaban and Atwell also created an opportunity for a couple of freshmen to see action in the field and crack the starting lineup, particularly Brendon Hayden, Kyle Wernicki and Keselica. Combined with scheduled starters Mark Zagunis and Alex Perez, the freshman class made 136 starts last season and batted a respectable .290. They scored 108 runs and knocked in 103 – around one-third of the team’s totals for the season – while posting a .978 fielding percentage.

“I would have rather played in the national tournament and gone to Omaha last year than to have built depth with our freshmen, but in saying that, our freshmen did a really good job and gave us quality playing time,” Hughes said. “Those guys took advantage of injuries to Shaban and Atwell and played great. And their growth was expedited, and it’s made us a better team this year.

“We just need to take advantage of that and capitalize on that experience gained to make us a better team this year. And I think it has. I think it’s made us deeper and more productive one through nine coming back.”

Mantiply was the only one of the underclassmen to be selected in the 2012 MLB Draft, but there could have been more. Hughes enjoys this fact, welcoming back a very talented and experience group for 2013.

“Clark could have gotten drafted. Jake Joyce could have gotten drafted. Tyler Horan could have got signed after the summer that he had. Joe Mantiply chose not to sign,” Hughes said.

“Andrew Rash was devastated, but he’s coming back. So we’ve got Andrew, who is motivated and has a chip on his shoulder, and Joe, who is for the same reason.

“These guys are competitive enough kids that they want to come back and go out the right way. I love when you have motivated kids coming back into your program. Whenever you have a bunch of senior leadership guys who have played a lot for you, that’s usually a recipe for a really successful season.”

The phrase that Hughes is continuing to emphasize since the fall, though, is “Avoid the noise.” Several underclassmen are jockeying to have a breakout season to bolster their draft status, and Hughes wants to make sure his guys are focused on the Hokies first and foremost.

“That’s a big challenge, to be a draft guy and get some exposure and to be able to handle it the right way,” Hughes said. “That’s a key to having a successful season. Guys who can handle the draft and all the implications and all that comes with that.

“I love the fact that we have some seniors who have been at that dance before and could care less about it, and now, they are motivated to win and see how great they can get this one year. That gives them less distraction and less noise, and then they become more of a team.”

The Hokies need to be focused and become a team right out of the gate, as their schedule is competitive throughout. They face 18 teams – a total of 31 games – that made their respective conference tournament and 15 teams that are among those ranked or receiving votes in preseason polls.

That includes Tech’s opening weekend opponents Kent State and UNC Wilmington.

Both teams won conference championships last season and made the NCAA Tournament, with the Golden Flashes advancing to the College World Series.

“I love our schedule, and I’m excited for our guys to play Kent State,” Hughes said. “Those guys went to Omaha (last year). That’s where we want to go. They (his players) are going to see first hand that you can be a mid-major and go to Omaha, as long as you get the right group of guys. If you get enough guys who get drafted to come back, and you get enough young guys who flourish in expanded roles and if you stay healthy and get lucky, you can get to Omaha. And that’s what Kent State did.

“But we play against Omaha teams every year on the weekends. Three years ago, we beat three Omaha teams in ACC series. But I like our nonconference schedule. If we want to play better on the weekends, we need to be able to play a tough nonconference schedule that can get us ready for a tough ACC schedule.

“And that should ramp up our level of play and our intensity level nonconference, so we get to ACC pace and tempo and approach. It’s all about playing well in the ACC and part of doing that is having that switch on and playing at a high level all the time, so you walk into the ACC and play it naturally because that’s how you played it in the nonconference.”

Tech will follow its first weekend of baseball at the UNC Wilmington tournament – Feb. 15-17 – with its first home weekend against Temple and Holy Cross on Feb. 22-24. In all, the Hokies serve as the hosts to 28 games at English Field this year, a schedule that includes visits from top ACC teams Georgia Tech, Florida State, North Carolina and Virginia. 



## GETTING TO KNOW TYLER HORAN

**Q: My summer vacation was spent ...**

**TH:** “Back at home with my family in Middleboro, Mass., where I played baseball in the Cape Cod League. I played for the Wareham Gatemen and had a 25-minute commute. We won the Cape Cod League championship, which was great.”

**Q: My pregame routine consists of ...**

**TH:** “Usually just some light swings in batting practice, but not too much because I don’t want to overdue it and tire myself out. Over the summer, my mom and I got into this routine where she would make me a peanut butter and fluff sandwich before every game, so that’s a new thing.”

**Q: My favorite Tech moment, so far, was ...**

**TH:** “Just being around the team with some of the big victories we’ve had – extra-inning wins, walk-off wins. Probably the best moments so far were the comeback wins in the Miami series because they were in the top 10 at the time.”

**Q: I wear No. 27 because ...**

**TH:** “My freshman year coming in, it was really one of the only numbers available, and I like having an odd number rather than an even number. And one of my favorite numbers is 9, so 2 and 7 makes 9, so that works.”

**Q: My favorite uniform combination is ...**

**TH:** “I like the cream uniforms. I think that they look really good on the team, and I like the old-fashion ‘VT’ logo. I just think they look really nice.”

**Q: Tech fans will be excited for the 2013 season because ...**

**TH:** “We have a lot of people coming back, almost our entire lineup. It’s going to be stacked. (Andrew) Rash, Chi (Chad Pinder), Brendon Hayden, Mark Zagunis, all those guys are back. Joe (Mantiply) is back in the starting rotation, and we’ve got a great bullpen back. We just have a very powerful pitching staff and lineup to take out on the field this year.”



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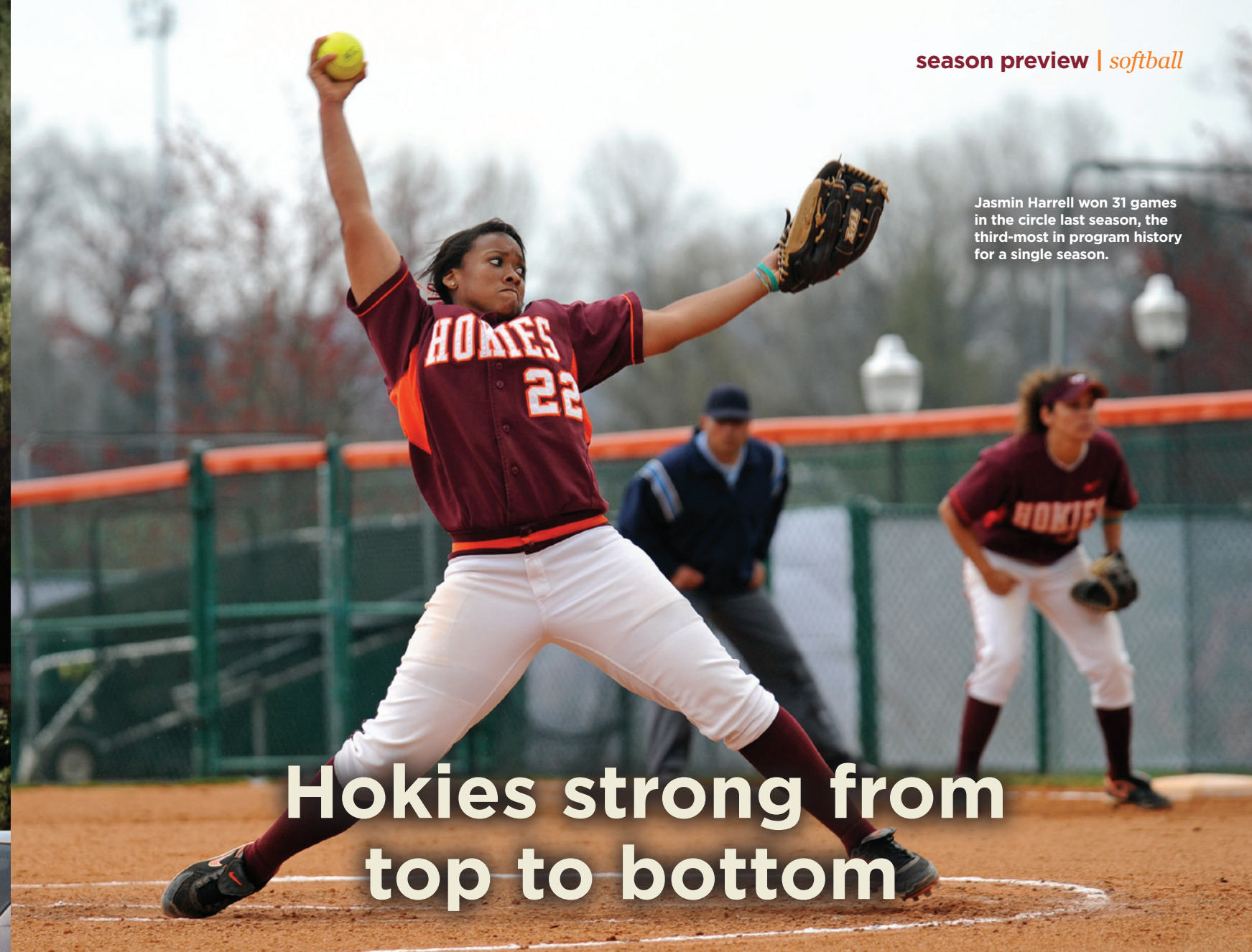

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Jasmin Harrell won 31 games in the circle last season, the third-most in program history for a single season.

## Hokies strong from top to bottom

With a powerful lineup and a top-notch pitcher, the Virginia Tech softball team has high expectations for the 2013 season

by **Marc Mullen**

There are high expectations for the 2013 Virginia Tech softball team.

With the loss of just two seniors to graduation – who combined to account for just 55 starts in a 63-game schedule – from a team that advanced to the ACC championship game and the NCAA Tournament, the Hokies have a goal of matching or possibly exceeding what the 2008 team accomplished and do not shy away from that.

“Our No. 1 goal, no matter what year it is, is to compete for an ACC title,” Tech softball coach Scot Thomas said. “But sometimes you’re in a situation, where we are this year, that the expectations kind

of change a little bit, and our focus is to win an ACC title, and we feel like that we’ll be disappointed if we don’t.

“That’s not to take away from teams that are right there with us because there is Florida State, North Carolina and Georgia Tech, in particular, who are going to be right there – top-25 caliber teams, as well as I think we are. But the expectations are very high for us to win an ACC title and then go on to NCAAs and go as deep as we can.”

For those who don’t remember, the 2008 Tech softball team was the defending ACC tournament champions, but had bowed out in the regionals of

the 2008 NCAA Tournament. The Hokies entered the season ranked 15th in the preseason poll and never dropped out of the top 25, as they won the ACC title again and made a postseason run that landed them in the Women's College World Series.

Similarities can be seen to this year's team in a way. In 2012, the Hokies used a six-inning grand slam home run by Kat Banks in an opening-round ACC Tournament game against Maryland to propel them to an unexpected ACC title shot. Tech knocked off No. 21 UNC in the semifinals before losing to Georgia Tech in the finals. The Maryland win, though, cemented an NCAA Tournament bid, where the Hokies went 2-2 and were eliminated by No. 5 and WCWS participant Tennessee.

With that thought in his mind – of another run to the WCWS – Thomas has set in front of his team a challenging schedule, one that mimics the 2008 slate in that it features balanced competition early and a tough road swing to the West Coast before getting into the ACC schedule.

“Scheduling is a science of sorts. You really have to look ahead and predict what your team is going to look like and what you are going to try and get out of them,” Thomas said. “This schedule is very similar to what we put in front of them in 2008, with the expectations of going to the World Series. I think this team, overall, is more talented. We've got a great pitching staff. It's deep. Now, we don't have an Angela Tincher [former pitcher], but we've got some kids that can really get it done. When you have that, and with everyone coming back, you say, 'Let's go play a tough schedule.'”

“It's a tough schedule that, when we get into postseason play, the team has seen everything and they shouldn't be fazed. The team has seen it and done that, and hopefully they are more relaxed and they can go out and be more successful.”

As Thomas stated, more than 90 percent of the team's pitching staff returns, in terms of innings pitched.

Senior Jasmin Harrell, a 2012 second-team NFCA Mid-Atlantic Team selection and an ACC All-Tournament team member, anchors the rotation. Her numbers last year included a 31-16 record in the circle in 40 starts and 51 games. She tossed 288.1 innings and struck out 227, while posting a 1.97 ERA. She had 33 complete games and 10 shutouts, which included a five-inning perfect game against Liberty.

Not bad for a pitcher who was throwing on a bum knee late in the season.

“I think Jasmin is doing pretty well. She actually started pitching even last fall,” Thomas said. “(The surgery) was basically a cleanup job on her knee. She had some things there that were kind of rolling around, and it was catching on her.



Kat Banks

So I think she's going to be good.

“It's one of those things that you wish, in hindsight, it would have been taken care of before last year because she ended up playing with some pain and discomfort. But what a trooper she was all the way down to the end for us, and we think she's going to be back 100 percent.”

Also returning is sophomore Bailey Liddle, who was 8-4 with a 3.38 ERA in 26 games. She was second on the team with 91 innings pitched and 56 strikeouts. She had three shutouts, combined on a fourth, and matched Harrell with a save to her record.

Joining the staff are two highly recruited in-state freshmen in Kelly Heinz, the 2011 Gatorade State Player of the Year, and Maggie Tyler, the 2012 Virginia Group AA State Pitcher of the Year. And each impressed during the fall season.

“From a pitching standpoint, as a whole, we have Bailey back as well, which is going to be huge, but I think the two freshmen did a heck of a job in the fall,” Thomas said. “Maggie didn't allow a run all fall, and Kelly only allowed one run.

“They both did a great job, but because of having both Jasmin and Bailey there with them, they are going to benefit from (the returners') maturity. We may do a lot of pitching by committee sometimes this season, just to give teams different looks, because we are so deep there, and that's a positive.”

Backing up that staff is a defensive unit that finished last year 12th in the nation in fielding percentage at .975 and was ninth in double plays turned per game (0.48). And everyone returns.



Bailey Liddle

Looking around the infield, there is senior Courtney Liddle at first base (62 starts in 2012), sophomore Kylie McGoldrick at second base (63), senior Bkaye Smith at shortstop (54) and sophomore Kelsey Mericka at third base (58).

In the outfield, there are juniors Dani Anderson (30 starts in left field) and Kat Banks (44 starts in left or right field) and sophomore Lauren Gaskill (63 in centerfield), while behind the plate senior Betty Rose and her 60 starts return as well.

“No doubt, we are as deep as we've ever been, ever,” Thomas said. “And just the quality of kids we've got playing behind them, they could be starting somewhere else, but here, they are going to be waiting.

“We were one of the best defensive teams in the nation last year, and I expect us to be the same this year. But the exciting thing after all of that, and knowing what we've got pitching wise, you sit back and look at Amanda Ake.

“She hit a couple of home runs in the fall, and she's going to find a spot in the lineup somewhere. She was a junior-college transfer and did a heck of a job for us in the fall. Then there's Katey Smith. We used her as a pinch hitter, and she did a good job, and Jess McNamara, who played a lot of AAU basketball and was a late bloomer in the world of softball, she's really looking good right now.”

The object of the game is to score runs. With great pitching and defense, the demand for a high-powered offense is not a necessity. For good measure, though, the Hokies return their top eight hitters in terms of batting average.

The top of the lineup certainly highlights the offense, starting with Gaskill, who was named an NFCA all-region first-team selection and a second-team All-ACC member. She led the offense with a .312 average, 47 runs scored, 59 hits, 14 doubles and 24 stolen bases and will return as the team's leadoff batter.

Liddle, who was an NFCA second teamer and a repeat first-team All-ACC selection, led the team with a .519 slugging percentage and a .484 on-base percentage. She enters her senior year second at the school in career home runs (25) and walks (101) and 10th in RBI (99).

Mericka, the cleanup hitter for Tech in 2012, knocked in a team-high 45 runs and slugged nine home runs. As a team, Tech hit 46 home runs, with Liddle connecting for eight and Gaskill six.

“From a pure hitting standpoint, we have an incredible speed/power combination with Gaskill in leadoff,” Thomas said. “Then we'll go with Kylie, Courtney, and Kelsey, our top home run hitter back from last year. To be honest with you, any of the three in front of her can hit home runs as well, if they get on track.

“After Kelsey, the picture becomes a little more cloudy, but in a positive way, because we've got Betty Rose, who has the potential to come back and hit home runs and has done that in the past,



Kylie McGoldrick

and Dani Anderson, who had a great freshman year. She had a little bit of a slump last year, but came back late in the season.

“Logan Spaw, who came up with a lot of big-game hits for us last year, is a potential DP (designated player). Kat Banks, who hit the grand slam against Maryland, hasn't started the last few seasons at 100 percent, so if she gets on track early, that could be really big time for us.”



Betty Rose

The Hokies opened the 2013 season with the Dot Richardson National Collegiate Softball Invitational in Clermont, Fla., and play their first 16 games away from Blacksburg. Tech's only home game in its first 27 contests is scheduled for March 5 at 6 p.m. against UNC Greensboro.

The expectations are high. But given their talent and experience, this team of Hokies wouldn't have it any other way.

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## GETTING TO KNOW JASMIN HARRELL

**Q: My summer vacation was spent ...**

**JH:** "First, in California with my family, but the majority of it was spent here in Blacksburg because, after I got knee surgery, I was doing things here mainly with rehab."

**Q: My pregame routine consists of ...**

**JH:** "Putting on my purple Beats, and I have to listen to my Nicki Minaj songs, especially her song, 'I'm the best' That's my favorite. Then just watching my team warm up and getting a feel of the game and getting pumped up."

**Q: My favorite Tech moment, so far, was ...**

**JH:** "Last year, the run we made of making the ACC Tournament championship game up to playing in the NCAA Tournament. The ACC Tournament was just exciting, starting with the walk-off win over Maryland and then beating UNC, which was a good win. Then making the NCAA Tournament because that was the first time we've made it there (since she's been at Tech)."

**Q: I wear No. 22 because ...**

**JH:** "My favorite, No. 12, was already taken when I got here. But also, one time, I wore No. 22 when I lost my jersey in travel ball and 22 was the only extra one, so that's why I picked it. But now, it's my favorite number. I love it."

**Q: My favorite uniform combination is ...**

**JH:** "Orange jersey, white pants and orange socks."

**Q: Tech fans will be excited for the 2013 season because ...**

**JH:** "It's going to be a lot different than any other team we've had in the past. We have a lot of flexibility. We have a great pitching staff – we actually have a staff now. We have a stacked lineup, and our defense is going to be solid."



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