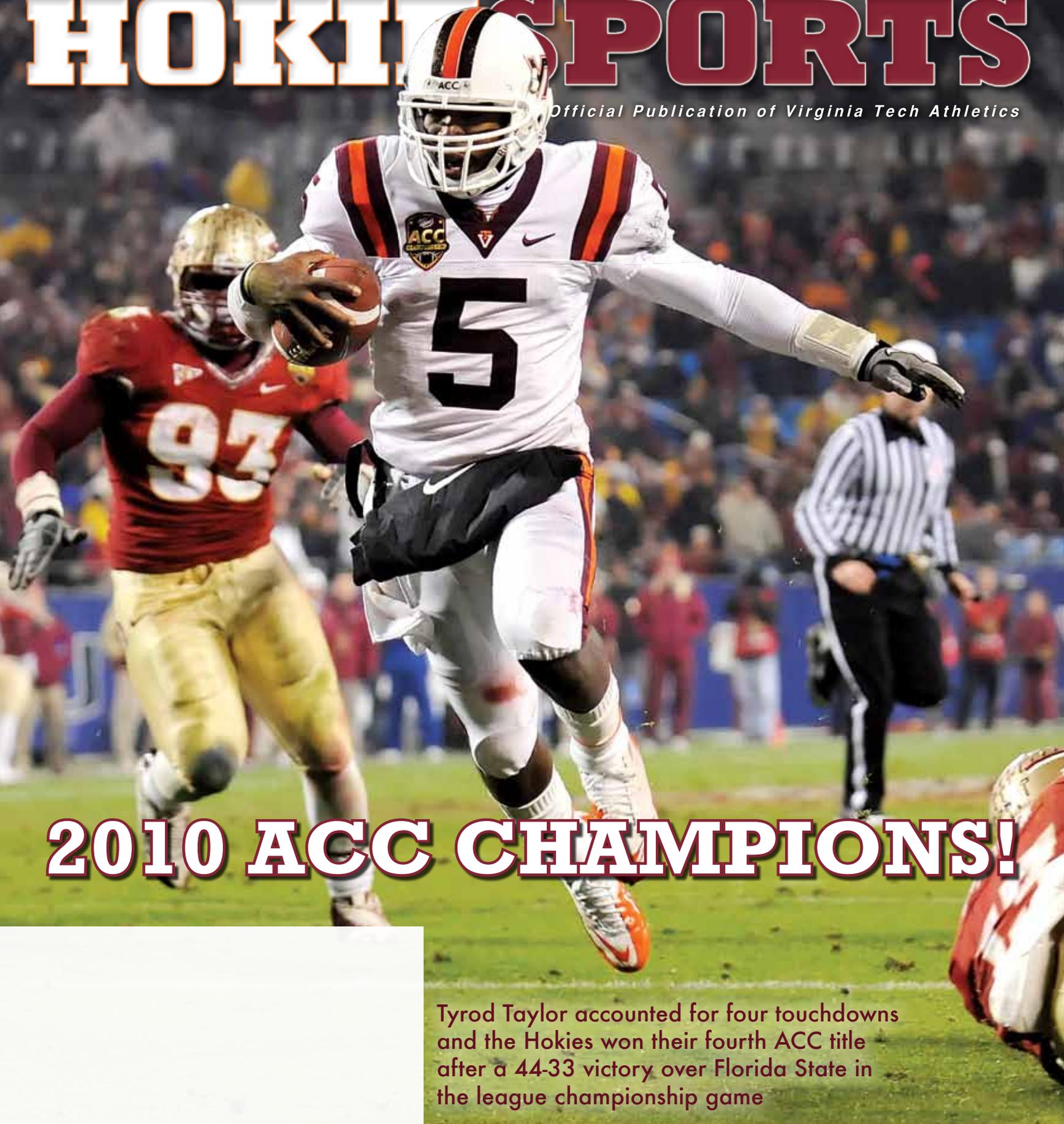


INSIDE

HOKIES SPORTS

Official Publication of Virginia Tech Athletics



2010 ACC CHAMPIONS!

Tyrod Taylor accounted for four touchdowns and the Hokies won their fourth ACC title after a 44-33 victory over Florida State in the league championship game

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UPCOMING EVENT PROMOTIONS

DECEMBER

21 Women's Basketball vs. Radford 7:00 p.m.

29 Women's Basketball vs. Alcorn State
Hilton Garden Classic 7:00 p.m.

30 Men's Basketball vs. USC Upstate 2:00 p.m.
Women's Basketball vs. Delaware/Vandy 7:00 p.m.
Hilton Garden Classic

JANUARY

8 Men's Basketball vs. Florida State 3:00 p.m.
VT Tote Bag Giveaway
Red Panda Acrobat Halftime Show

9 Women's Basketball vs. Miami 2:00 p.m.
VT/Coke Headbands Giveaway
Red Panda Acrobat Halftime Show - Family Four Pack

15 Men's Basketball vs. Wake Forest 8:00 p.m.
Ace Custis Day - AcroDunk Halftime Show

Swimming and Diving vs. William and Mary Noon
VT Tote Bag and VT/Coke Drawstring Bag Giveaways

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Dec. 29	Wed.	WBB	vs. Alcorn State	7:00 pm
Dec. 30	Thu.	MBB	vs. USC Upstate	2:00 pm
Dec. 30	Thu.	WBB	vs. Delaware/Vanderbilt	7:00 pm
Jan. 22	Sat.	MBB	vs. Longwood	7:00 pm
Feb. 10	Thu.	WBB	vs. Longwood	7:00 pm

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TAKING ON A NEW SEASON WITH A BRAND NEW FACILITY

The Virginia Tech wrestling squad is reaping the benefits of the new practice facility above the football locker room and lounge. The Hokies have reeled in another top-notch recruiting class and the new workout area and training area have helped them skyrocket into the top 10 in the national polls.



THE STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPERIENCE

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David Marone

Fr-Junior - Wrestling

"Being a Hokie is an honor. As a wrestler, I am very thankful for everything the Hokie Club has provided and it has made my experience here at Virginia Tech incredible!"

Jesse Dong

Junior - Wrestling



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Donor Files

Kelly Woolwine

Current Hokie Club level:

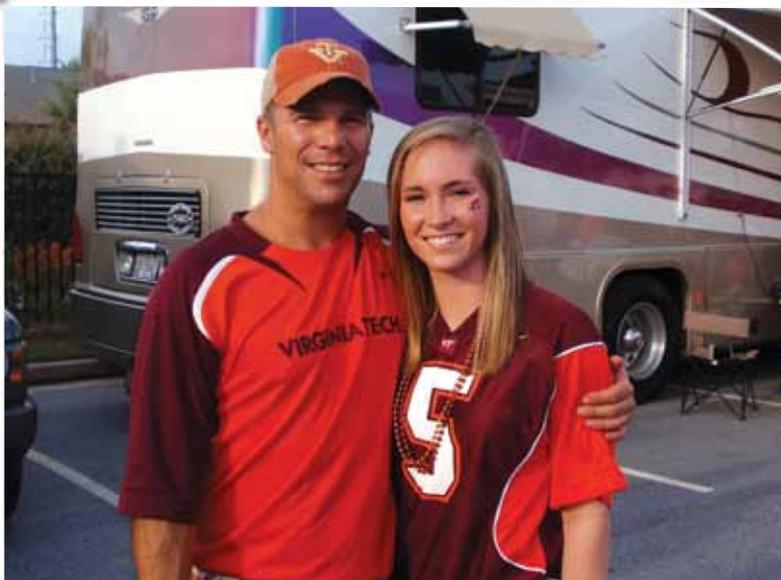
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Hokie Club member since:

1997

Currently resides:

Roanoke, Va.



Kelly Woolwine (donor) is pictured with his niece, Tiffany Woolwine, a current High Tech.

Q: What year did you graduate?

A: 1990

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

A: I have been going to Virginia Tech football games since I was too young to remember. During most of those early years Virginia Tech was not a name that was ever part of the discussions concerning the national landscape of college football and the powers that be. It has been very exciting to see Virginia Tech earn its way into that fraternity, and I am honored to be a part of it. More importantly, though, I have seen the way growth and success in the football program has contributed to the overall growth and success of the university. Admissions are up every year, and the campus is changing in positive ways all the time and I want to continue to support that growth.

Q: What makes Roanoke, Va., such a great community for the Hokies?

A: Because we're so close to the football stadium, of course! But also, the bigger schools overlook many of the athletes who come to Virginia Tech. But then, many of the athletes have never thought of going anywhere else but Virginia Tech. Roanoke is much the same. We are not known of nationally, but once you are here, you never want to leave. Those of us raised here would never dream of going anywhere else.

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: As a born and raised football fan, I always appreciated having such a great college football venue so close to home and have been going to games there since I was 2 or 3. I don't think I really appreciated what Virginia Tech was all about and understood just what it means to be a Hokie until I became a student. Even more so, after I graduated, having lived in other parts of the country, I realize how great it is to be part of the Hokie Nation. We are everywhere and always support each other. At no point, however, have I been more proud to be a Hokie than I was in days, weeks and months following the April, 2007 shootings. When faced with the worst possible adversity, Virginia Tech, its fans, followers and families bonded together and showed strength, dignity, pride and optimism. I was so proud.

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

A: I am not a very superstitious person, but I suspect it would be very bad luck not to tailgate before a game. Tailgating is a time for me, my friends and family to gather and have fun. My parents showed me from the very start that football, family and friends go hand in hand, and I plan to carry on the tradition of attending Virginia Tech football games with my friends and family till the day I die.

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

A: Every home basketball game and football game are exciting for me because my niece is a High Tech and I get to see her dance.

Hokie Club Year End Items of Importance

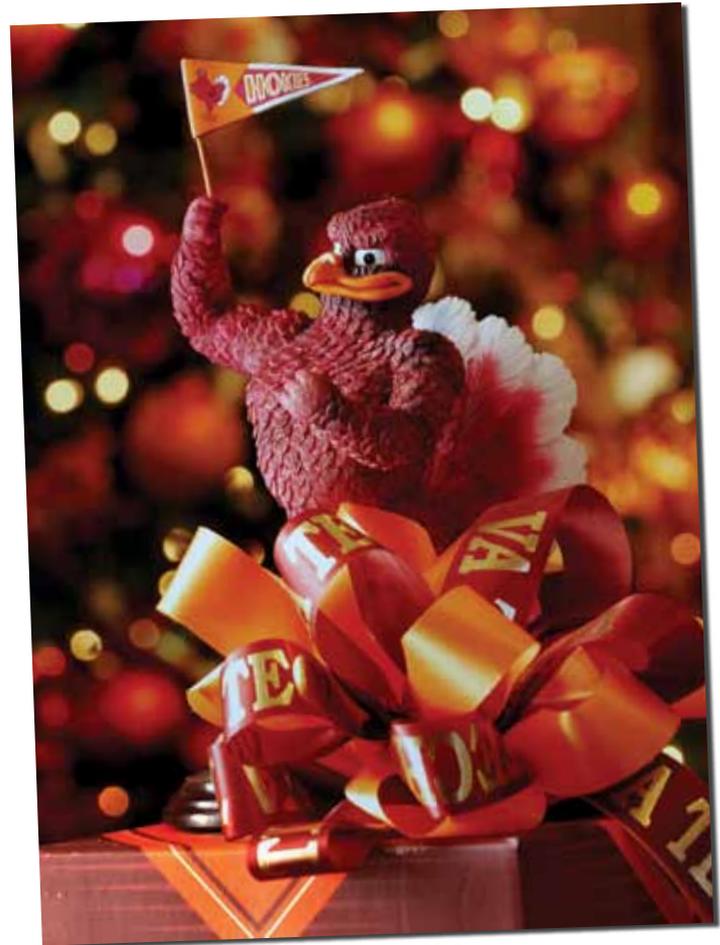
Benefits Deadline: December 31, 2010

Because of the university's holiday schedule and the bowl game schedule, please make every effort to speak with the Hokie Club staff or visit with our office now. Checks must be postmarked by December 31, 2010 and online contributions must be made at hokieclub.com by midnight, December 31, 2010. Please contact the Hokie Club Office at (540) 231-6618 if you have any questions.

In order to retain your current season tickets for football, men's basketball, and women's basketball' you must be a Hokie Club member, your membership must be ACTIVE on the Benefits Deadline (December 31), and you must maintain the giving level at which your season tickets were assigned. If your membership is INACTIVE or DOWNGRADED on the Benefits Deadline, your current season ticket location will be moved. This policy was implemented during the re-seating of Cassell Coliseum (2004) and Lane Stadium (2005).

Hokie Matic and Employee Payroll Deduction

November 30, 2010 was the last day to set up or upgrade your membership using either Hokie Matic or Employee Payroll Deduction to qualify for privileges to be awarded before the Benefits Deadline of December 31, 2010. At this point, any new Hokie Matic and employee payroll deduction forms will take effect in 2011. To make any changes to an existing Hokie Matic, please submit a new form indicating the updated information. Forms can be found on the forms page at hokieclub.com



Year End Gift Accounting

As we approach year end and enter 2011, the amount of gifts received by the Hokie Club typically increase. Because of the added volume of gifts, the amount of time it takes to mail out a gift acknowledgement may increase as well. Our gift accounting staff is working diligently to process and acknowledge all gifts in a timely manner and we thank you for your patience.

Virginia Tech Athletic Fund Gift Acknowledgements

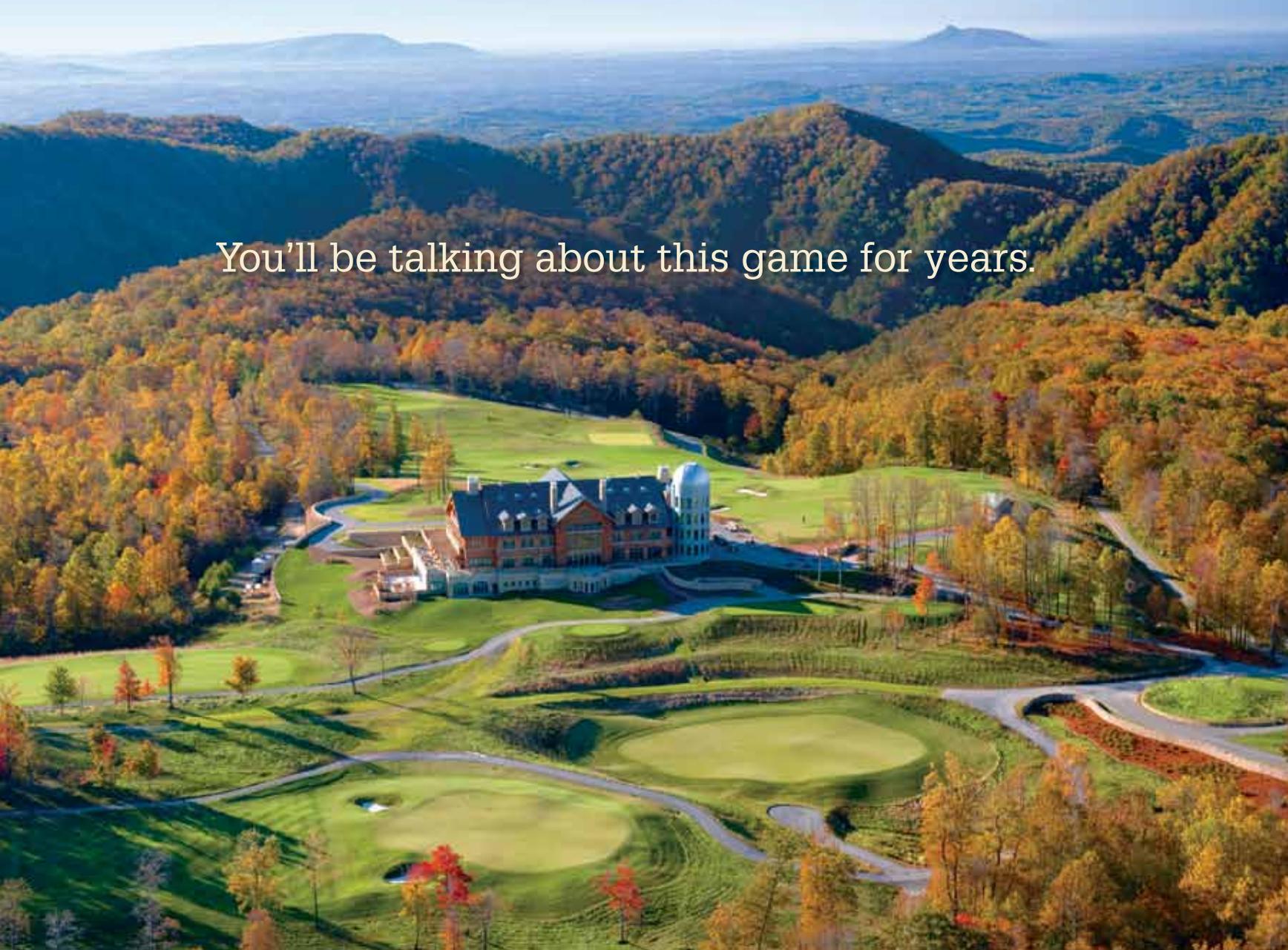
Once a gift is received by the Hokie Club, donors receive a gift acknowledgement letter or receipt. This letter is usually mailed within one to two weeks after the donation is made and serves as your VTAF tax receipt. If you have questions about this gift acknowledgement letter, please contact the Hokie Club at (540) 231-6618.

Updated Point Priority Sheets to be mailed in late January 2011

Once all 2010 gifts are received, processed and acknowledged, the Hokie Club will send out updated point priority sheets to each member. We anticipate that these updated point priority sheets will be mailed to the entire Hokie Club membership in late January, 2011.

Matching Gift Information

Matching gifts from your employer are encouraged. Please carefully review your company's literature to determine if athletics gifts can be matched. If you submit a matching gift form, it is your responsibility to follow up with your company to make sure the gift has been matched – it could affect your club level. The matching amount will not be included in your point total until it is received.



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NEWS & NOTES

**TAYLOR NAMED
ACC PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

Tech quarterback Tyrod Taylor was named the ACC player of the year, according to the Atlantic Coast Sports Media Association (ACSMA), a group of media members who cover ACC schools.

Taylor received 27 of 57 votes cast. He became the second Hokie to win the award (Bryan Randall, 2004).

"First off, I have to thank the Lord for blessing me with the ability to play football," Taylor said in a statement. "I also have to thank my parents, my family, the coaches, my teammates and all of the Virginia Tech fans. It's an honor to be recognized as the ACC's Player of the Year and to see all of my hard work pay off.

"I'm more proud, though, of how this team responded from an 0-2 start."

Taylor, a senior from Hampton, Va., threw for 2,258 yards during the regular season, with 20 touchdowns and just four interceptions. He also rushed for 613 yards and four touchdowns.

Taylor, kicker Chris Hazley and cornerback Jayron Hosley were three of 11 Tech players to earn All-ACC recognition – the highest amount by any school since the league expanded to 12 teams.

Taylor, Hazley and Hosley earned first-team honors. Hazley, a senior from West Chester, Pa., made 19 of 20 field-goal attempts during the regular season. He missed his first and then made 19 straight, setting a Tech single-season record. Hosley, a sophomore from Delray Beach, Fla., had eight interceptions in the regular season. He also broke up seven passes.

The Tech contingent on the second team

included linebacker Bruce Taylor (team-leading 84 tackles, 15.5 tackles for a loss), defensive end Steven Friday (14 TFL, 7.5 sacks), defensive tackle John Graves (34 tackles, 4 TFL), rover Davon Morgan (72 tackles, 4 interceptions), punter Brian Saunders (ACC-leading 44.4 yards per punt), and offensive linemen Jaymes Brooks and Blake DeChristopher. David Wilson also made the team as a return specialist (two returns for touchdowns).

For the complete list, please check the ACC's Web site (www.theacc.com/sports/m-footbl/spec-rel/112910aac.html).

**TECH VOLLEYBALL PROGRAM
MAKES APPEARANCE AT NCAAS**

After a 19-11 regular season, the Virginia Tech volleyball team earned its first bid ever to the NCAA Tournament. The Hokies traveled to University Park, Pa., on Dec. 3 for a regional, taking on Delaware.

The Hokies knocked off the Blue Hens 3-0 (25-17, 25-23, and 25-18) and advanced to the next round against three-time defending national champion Penn State. Tech fell in three straight to the Nittany Lions, losing 25-22, 25-22 and 25-13.

The Penn State match marked the end of the careers of seniors Felicia Willoughby and Amy Wengrenovich. Willoughby, who played the 124th and final match of her career, will graduate from Tech holding eight all-time records – three career, three single-season and two freshman.

"This program has grown so much over the four years I've been here," Willoughby said, "and just to have this opportunity to make it this year, to make the tournament for the first time ever at Virginia Tech, words can't describe it."

**WAGNER TO HEADLINE 'BASEBALL
NIGHT IN BLACKSBURG'**

Five-time Major League All-Star Billy Wagner will be the featured speaker for the Virginia Tech baseball program's fourth annual "Baseball Night in Blacksburg."

The event will be held Feb. 12 from 6-9 p.m. in the west side club at Lane Stadium. Tickets cost \$75 per person (\$35 for kids 13 and under) and can be purchased by calling the Virginia Tech baseball office at (540) 231-3671. Space is limited.

In addition to the address by Wagner, "Baseball Night in Blacksburg" also will include a dinner, silent and live auctions for various professional sports and Virginia Tech items, and a chance to meet the entire 2011 Virginia Tech baseball team.

For those interested in a more intimate experience, a private, open-bar reception with Wagner and other notable figures will be held from 5-6 p.m. prior to the public portion of the evening. Access to the private reception can be gained by purchasing a ticket for \$200. A Home Run Package of eight tickets can be purchased for \$1,500.

Wagner, a Tannersville, Va., native who played college ball at Ferrum, was a relief pitcher who had a 17-year career with the Houston Astros (1995-2003), Philadelphia Phillies (2004-05), New York Mets (2006-09), Boston Red Sox (2009) and Atlanta Braves (2010). He was a five-time National League all-star (1999, 2001, 2003, 2007, 2008).

All proceeds of the banquet will go to the Virginia Tech baseball program and the Hokies' efforts to improve various aspects of the program. 

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HOKIES WITH ONE MORE STEP TO MAKE HISTORY

Tech head coach Frank Beamer teased his team.

They wanted him to dance following the Hokies' victory over North Carolina. They implored him to get down after the win at Miami. They beseeched him to boogie after the dismantling of Virginia in the regular-season finale.

Each time, he told them no, not yet. Work remained.

But following Tech's 44-33 victory over Florida State in the ACC championship game, Beamer gave the guys what they wanted.

With the help of Bruce Taylor and Davon Morgan, the 64-year-old coach stood on a chair and broke out into his own rendition of "The Dougie," a recent dance craze patterned off moves from longtime rapper Doug E Fresh. Video of Beamer's dance practically went viral on the Internet, and his version left an already boisterous locker room howling in delight.

"It's awesome," tight end Andre Smith said. "That shows the type of person he is. He can fit right in with us in good times. For him to stand in front of us like that and start dancing – and that's not the first time he's done it – it's a good feeling. Everyone has a great time when he does it."

It's hard to fault Tech's head coach or any member of his staff or any player for busting a move on a chilly night in Charlotte. After all, the victory capped an improbable 11-game marathon to the program's fourth ACC crown.

It has been an unbelievable season for the Hokies, who lost to a WAC team

(Boise State) and a Football Championship Subdivision foe (JMU) in their first two games. In those two, they looked like they had two left feet.

Despite injuries (Kwamaine Battle, Ryan Williams, Dyrrell Roberts, etc.) and early-game struggles (deficits in eight of 13 games), Tech won its remaining games. The Hokies clinched the Coastal Division down in Miami and then beat nemesis FSU for the title.

"We couldn't have done it without each other, and that's what makes me so happy," cornerback Rashad Carmichael said. "If we learned one thing, it's that you need each other. No matter how good you play or what you do, somebody on the other side of the field would get the pressure that helped [Jayron] Hosley get that interception, or something like that. Everybody understands that. This team, it won't be like this again."

For sure, the Hokies have made history. They became the first FBS (Football Bowl Subdivision) team to win 11 straight in a season after starting 0-2. They became the first ACC team to win nine games against conference opponents in a season.

But there is more work to be done – and more history possibly to be made.

With a victory over Stanford – 11-1 and ranked fourth in the BCS standings – in the Orange Bowl, the Hokies' senior class will be the winningest class in Tech history with 43 wins. The Hokies could be the first team in school history to win three straight bowl games. Also, they could become the first team in school history to win 12

games in a season.

Can you imagine that – 12 wins after losing their first two games, including one to an FCS opponent?

"To be able to be the winningest class ever and to be the first to get 12 wins, people would remember this season forever," Carmichael said.

"This is a special team," Beamer said. "You know, one more win in the Orange Bowl and I'm going to be talking about this team for a long time. Every Hokie Club meeting I go to, they're going to hear about this football team. But ... we need to get that done.

"We've had a team that played for a national championship and we had one that started 0-2 and went to the Sugar Bowl and beat Texas. But this team may top all that."

This task will be the toughest the Hokies face this season. Stanford's fans may tailgate with chardonnay and Brie, but head coach Jim Harbaugh's bunch is all beer and bratwurst.

The Cardinal, behind one of the nation's best quarterbacks in Andrew Luck, play power football. They boast one of the nation's most physical offensive lines and a rugged defense. Plus, Harbaugh ranks as one of the nation's top coaches.

The Hokies will not go to south Florida and simply moonwalk over the Cardinals.

But a win would be historical, and Beamer would be on that chair again, dancing away.

Maybe he's saving his best moves for that. 

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Frank Beamer poses with the 2010 senior class.

TECH'S SENIORS THE MAIN REASON FOR HUGE 2010 TURNAROUND

From the very time they first walked into Virginia Tech's football facility, there was a lot expected of the members of the Hokies' 2007 football recruiting class.

There was the five-star, all-everything quarterback from Hampton, a national player

of the year tailback from Indianapolis, the marvelously athletic safety from Varina and a mountainous tackle from Midlothian.

Tyrod Taylor, Darren Evans, Davon Morgan, and Blake DeChristopher were just four of the high school seniors who signed with Tech in February of 2007. And what a class that turned out to be, eh?

The 16 seniors, including Taylor and Morgan (Evans and DeChristopher are redshirt juniors), on Tech's team created a lasting legacy that will be hard to match for any future group of

seniors – and that legacy goes far beyond wins.

Sure, these seniors have won three ACC titles and will have played in three Orange Bowl games. They'll have the rings to show their kids and grandkids. Also, they've got a chance to be the winningest overall class in school history.

Individually, Taylor rewrote the record books at Tech, shattering marks for total offense, passing yards and touchdowns among others. His name, and other guys from this class and the 2006 class (redshirt seniors), sit atop the various lists – at least for now.



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But what set this group apart, more than the yards and records and the win total, was its unity and its character.

"You've heard me say this before, and I know it might sound repetitive, but the character of this team, and of those seniors, was the key to what happened around here this year," head coach Frank Beamer said.

"What happened," of course, is that Beamer's 24th Tech team pulled off one of the great turnarounds we've ever seen.

The 2010 Virginia Tech Hokies were the first team in NCAA history to lose their first two ball games and then win 11 straight. It had never happened before.

Of course, they'll hope to make it 12 in a row, with the 12th coming against Stanford. That would be an all-time school record for wins in a single season.

"This is a great group of seniors. They are like brothers to me," Morgan said. "We knew we were better than that (0-2), and we knew what it would take to come back and win. We all believed."

They believed because they had guys like Taylor and tight end Andre Smith, who spoke to the team. Neither is a shouter by any stretch, "but when they talk, their teammates listened," Beamer said of the team meeting following the loss to James Madison, which dropped Tech's record to 0-2.

When one looks at recruiting lists and rankings, one judges kids by height, weight, 40 times and sometimes their other scholarship offers. We knew Taylor was good, and so did Florida, Florida State, Penn State and others who offered. We knew Morgan received offers from Tennessee and Michigan, and DeChristopher could have gone to Ohio State. Tech had to out-recruit some pretty good programs to sign that class in 2007.

But none of those lists and rankings take into account the character of the kids – and

that, at least for this year's Virginia Tech squad, turned out to be its greatest strength.

After all, there's more than winning. In 2005, the Hokies finished 11-2 and ranked No. 12 in the final polls. But, as Tech fans recall, it didn't taste quite right.

Tech had 17 penalties for 143 yards and lost the ACC Championship Game to Florida State. The Hokies' first-team All-American safety bumped into an official and got tossed from the Gator Bowl in the first half. Its first-team All-ACC quarterback stomped on the leg of a Louisville player and eventually was dismissed from the team.

Tech had some outstanding young men on that 2005 team, people of very high moral character. But a few knuckleheads left a sour taste at the end of the season.

Beamer and his staff have really put a premium on recruiting the right kind of guys, looking for qualities and intangibles that don't show up in recruiting rankings, and it really paid off in a big way this year.

Virginia Tech's players invested so much into this 2010 season – years of work, offseason training and preparation. They poured every ounce of effort into preparing for this season and their goal was simple: they wanted to play for the BCS national championship.

Then, in one week, they lost it all.

Virginia Tech went from No. 6 in the rankings to completely out of the polls in one disastrous week.

0-2 and hopeless? Hardly.

Resilient is the word. The Hokies didn't lose again.

"I don't know that there was a turning point," Beamer said. "We were down 17-0 at N.C. State and it didn't look very good. But we battled and played hard. We didn't always play well, but one thing about this team, it always played hard."

And it all comes back to the seniors, so many

who were key this year.

Smith's huge day at N.C. State helped Tech come back and beat the Wolfpack. Danny Coale, also a part of that 2007 recruiting class, had a brilliant season, including a sensational night at the ACC Championship Game. Money-in-the-bank punter Brian Saunders and kicker Chris Hazley were as good as we've seen all year. The consistently solid John Graves was a key up front, and the emergence of end Steven Friday helped the defense come along as the year progressed.

Rock Carmichael was a superstar again in 2010 at corner. He refused to miss the ACC Championship Game. Can't wait to see No. 21 play one more game.

There's solid-as-a-rock Beau Warren up front and Kenny Younger, one of the classiest kids ever, leading the way at fullback. I think of the plays Zack Lockett made on special teams this year. His tale is a comeback story in itself.

It was so neat to see Jeff Wardach, Prince Parker and Ron Cooper make big contributions this year, too.

Then there were Morgan and Taylor, who will really be missed around here.

The list goes on and on, of course, but there are 16 really classy seniors on this team who helped turn 2010 into one of the most incredibly memorable seasons ever.

They have one more game to play and it will be one emotional locker room at Sun Life Stadium after the game. It's always tough to play that final game – a teary scene when the jersey comes off for the last time. The finality of it all is always so ... well ... cold.

But this group has already accomplished something no other team in the history of college football could do by turning 0-2 into 11-2. We've enjoyed watching them do it. Privileged, in fact, to witness this season.

And thrilled to get to see them play one more time on January 3. 



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KEEPING UP WITH COMPLIANCE

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

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

Q: *I saw where Bruce Pearl [men's basketball coach at the University of Tennessee] admitted to lying to NCAA investigators. Dez Bryant [Oklahoma State] lied to the NCAA last year, was caught and was suspended for the season. Will the same thing happen to Pearl?*

- Allen in Blacksburg, Va.

TP: "Good question and a tough one to answer. For those who don't know, Pearl provided false information about excessive phone calls he made to recruits and inviting recruits to his house for a barbecue. My understanding is the NCAA will weigh in on this matter in December.

"Lying is actually a specific NCAA violation. NCAA Bylaw 10.1 states, 'Knowingly furnishing the NCAA or the individual's institution false or misleading information concerning the individual's involvement in or knowledge of matters relevant to a possible violation of an NCAA regulation.' It will be interesting to see how the NCAA responds in this situation."

Q: *Just wanted to hear your take on the Cam Newton situation at Auburn. Rumors are flying that his father asked for money from Mississippi State in return for his son going there. Since no money ever exchanged hands and Cam Newton signed*

with Auburn, was there any NCAA violation actually committed?

- Tommy in Blacksburg, Va.

TP: "According to NCAA rules, even trying to solicit money in exchange for a recruiting commitment constitutes a violation. Of course, it would be much worse if money did change hands, but if Cam was unaware of the solicitation (I know, a stretch), then the NCAA would take that into consideration before levying any punishment. The NCAA is not punitive just to be punitive.

"The NCAA ruled that a violation of amateurism rules occurred in this case and Auburn declared Newton ineligible, which it must do. Then Auburn can apply for reinstatement on Newton's behalf, which it did. Evidently, the NCAA felt Newton didn't know anything because it reinstated Newton the day after it found a rules violation had occurred.

"If some of the allegations later prove to be true, the big loser in this could be Auburn, even if that school had no knowledge of what was happening. The school could be forced to vacate wins, one of the school's best ever quarterbacks could lose his eligibility (he has a year left), or worse. If Auburn wins the national title ... wow, that could make for quite a mess."

Q: *I read recently where a Texas player gave up football because of concussions, but that he would stay on scholarship until he finished up course work on his degree. How does that work? Would he count toward the 85-scholarship limit?*

- Kevin in Blacksburg, Va.

TP: "The NCAA rules are built to accommodate situations where a student-athlete suffers an injury or illness that prevents him/her from ever competing in the sport again. Once a physician has declared that a student-athlete has sustained a permanently incapacitating injury or illness – and the diagnosis is backed up with substantial medical documentation – that student-athlete may receive athletically related financial aid in future years without counting against that team's maximum. So no, if the concussions forced an early end to his playing career, he would not count toward the 85-scholarship limit." 

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Bud Foster's Lunch Pail Defense Foundation



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



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ACC CHAMPIONSHIP

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CROWNING GLORY

BEHIND TYROD TAYLOR,
VIRGINIA TECH CLAIMS ITS
FOURTH ACC TITLE IN THE
PAST SEVEN YEARS

Sitting on a stage in an interview room in the bowels of Bank of America Stadium, Tech head coach Frank Beamer, with marvelous quarterback Tyrod Taylor and sturdy defensive tackle John Graves, displayed a jovial spirit and rightly so following his team's 44-33 dismantling of Florida State's Seminoles in the ACC title game.

"You're 2-3 against them, right?" Beamer queried his signal caller, meaning, of course, to say that he had won two of three against the Seminoles

Taylor, though, understood. He nodded.

"That's better than anyone else at Virginia Tech against them," Beamer smiled. "He's got the best record against Florida State. All the rest of us have too many losses."

Beamer was referencing his own 1-8 record to Florida State coming into the game, though in fairness, he succumbed to legendary Bobby Bowden and coached against the likes of Deion Sanders, Charlie Ward and many others. While FSU coach Jimbo Fisher's bunch is good, they certainly pale to those star-studded groups.

It showed on Bank of America's frosty surface, as the Seminoles struggled all evening

to contain the elusive Taylor, the ACC's player of the year who truly puts the "dual" in dual-threat quarterback. The senior from Hampton, Va., completed 18-of-28 for 263 yards and three touchdowns in what many termed his finest performance. He also rushed for a touchdown, thus accounting for four of the Hokies' six scores.

It wasn't so much that he accomplished it. It was how.

He dodged blitzes. He broke tackles. His 12-yard scramble in the third quarter ranks as one of his best. He should have been sacked, but slithered past five FSU defenders and slammed teammate Danny Coale in the back before running out of bounds.

"My feet just took over. Sometimes, I don't even know where I'm going," Taylor smiled. "I know Danny's probably mad I ran into him at the end of the play, but that wasn't on purpose. I was stumbling and didn't have anywhere to go."

Taylor also made the right checks and calls at the line of scrimmage. One time in the first half, Taylor had the option of throwing the bubble screen to Coale or hand it off to Darren Evans, depending on what FSU's

outside linebacker did. Taylor astutely handed off to Evans, who barreled 51 yards to the FSU 9. Evans then scored on the next play.

Taylor threw with precision and touch, undeniably answering those who questioned his passing skills.

There was the 19-yard touchdown pass to Jarrett Boykin in the first half in which Taylor spun away from an FSU safety. Then he rolled to his left, squared his shoulders and delivered a bullet to Boykin.

Then there was the 21-yard scoring strike to David Wilson in the third quarter that gave Tech a 28-17 lead. Taylor took two steps back to buy some precious time, and then he lofted a beautiful lob to Wilson, who took it to the end zone.

Then there was the "easy." He made an easy, backyard toss to a wide-open Coale coming across the middle. Coale went 45 yards to the end zone on Tech's first possession of the second half, starting a scoring onslaught that saw the Hokies put points on the board their first four second-half possessions.

Tech went to that same play later in the second half. Taylor again found Coale across the middle, and Coale took it inside the FSU

10. Taylor took care of the rest himself.

Again, scrambling, he made two FSU defenders grasp at air, cut inside of them and walked – literally – into a championship. That 5-yard score put the Hokies up 41-26 with under 10 minutes left and started the celebration.

“I’ve played with him four years and it doesn’t surprise me,” said Coale, the beneficiary of most of Taylor’s throws with a career-high 143 yards receiving. “I’ve seen his talents and everybody else has gotten to see what he can do.”

“We’ve been fortunate to have some great quarterbacks at Virginia Tech, and Tyrod is right there,” Beamer said. “You knew he was going to do the right thing with the ball, and you knew he was going to make good decisions. You think this next play may be a big one, and that’s a great feeling to have over there on the sideline.”

Tech’s defense tried to earn some pub. The Hokies intercepted two EJ Manuel passes, one each by Davon Morgan and Jeron Gouveia-Winslow, who returned his 24 yards for Tech’s first touchdown of the game. They held FSU to just 136 yards in the second half – 75 coming on the final drive of the game with the outcome decided.

But Taylor was the story on this night and the game’s MVP, his second such honor. His three touchdown passes gave

him 23 on the season and helped him set the Tech single-season record (Maurice DeShazo, 22, 1994). He tied the championship game record for touchdown passes, a mark held by former Tech quarterback Sean Glennon, (BC in 2007), and Taylor’s passing efficiency rating of 178.54 also was a championship game record, again snapping a Glennon mark (150.1).

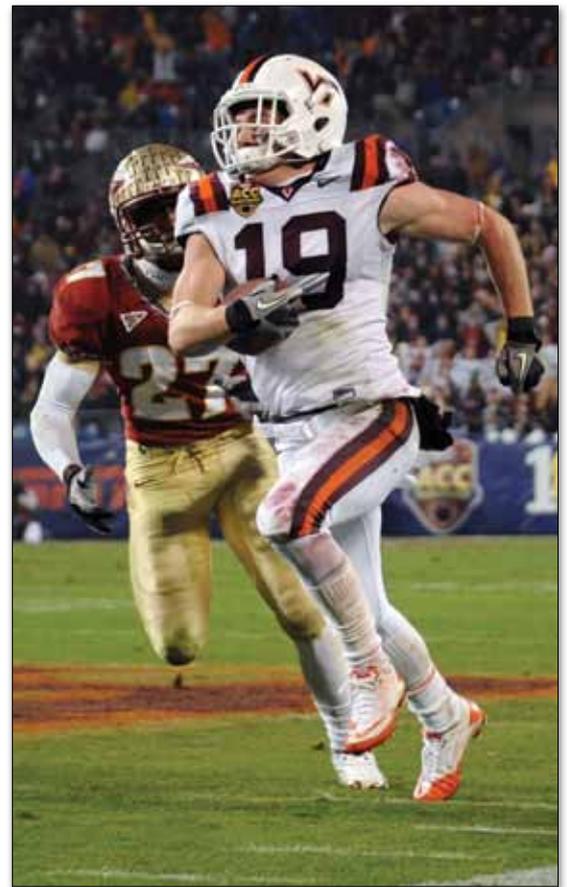
“It’s a great way to finish a senior season,” Taylor said. “I’m really proud of the way we turned things around. To come back from an 0-2 start, as a senior, it feels good to go out with a win like this.”

The win marked Tech’s 11th straight since the Hokies opened the season 0-2 following losses to Boise State and James Madison in a six-day span. The title marked Tech’s fourth ACC championship overall and its third in the title game. The Hokies won the crown in their inaugural season in the league (2004) and then have won it in title games in 2007, 2008 and this season.

“I still feel like it would be a letdown to do all this and lose the last game,” Taylor said.

Tech will be taking on Stanford in the Orange Bowl on Jan. 3 and a win there would make Taylor 3-1 in bowl games as a starting quarterback.

No need to tell Beamer of that particular mark. Rest assured, he knows that, too. 



Danny Coale had his best game yet as a Hokie, catching six passes for 143 yards in Tech’s win over FSU.

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LUNCH PAIL LEADER

JOHN GRAVES' IMPACT AT TECH GOES
WELL BEYOND THE NUMBERS

By Jimmy Robertson



Jim Cavanaugh always pays laser-like attention to detail, especially when those details concern recruiting, and in particular, the prospects within his recruiting area. He never forgets faces, always remembers names and takes care to store every piece of information about a prospect within that prospect's file or within his mind, whichever happens to be most convenient at the time.

In 2003, the Hokies played West Virginia on a Wednesday night in Morgantown and turned in a dreadful performance. Tech committed 13 penalties, including five personal fouls. The Hokies gave up 264 yards rushing, including 178 to Quincy Wilson, and they turned the ball over four times in a 28-7 defeat.

It was the type of performance that a whips and rovers coach would like to forget.

The following Thursday, Tech's coaches graded the film of that performance, and then Friday, Cavanaugh, and a few others, hopped in their cars to go recruiting. Exhausted at the time, Cavanaugh drove four hours to Petersburg, Va., to watch a defensive end for the Petersburg High Crimson Wave whom he was recruiting.

It was at that game that Cavanaugh first saw John Walter Graves in action.

Playing for Meadowbrook High out of Richmond – a program that hadn't been a

reasoning for recruiting him, but because he just enjoyed watching Graves.

An official visit was set up. So, too, was an in-home visit, as both Cavanaugh and head coach Frank Beamer wanted to meet John Sr. and Joyce Graves.

The visit went well, though Graves didn't commit – at least not initially.

"We were leaving the house and we had felt pretty good about things going in, but John didn't commit," Cavanaugh said. "So that is always a bit of a concern.

"But as we get ready to get into the car, John comes to the door and asked us to come back in for a minute. It seemed a little odd, but we went back in and John let us know that he was going to commit to Virginia Tech. And I can tell you, he made two coaches very happy."

Looking back over his past four years at Virginia Tech, he's made more than just two people happy – many more.

John Graves' life story wouldn't force a publisher to chop down many trees. To put it simply, Graves lived about as normal a life as one can live.

His blue-collar parents toil hard at their crafts, with his dad working as a welder and his mom as a janitor. They raised their three children in a modest home in Richmond.

The youngest of the three children, John

was quiet. He never got into trouble, he made solid grades and he played football – only football.

"I was a pure football guy," Graves chuckled. "My offseason sport was weightlifting to prepare for football."

Coerced into playing football at a young age by a lifelong friend, Graves went out for the Peeewe team, and that started a path toward stardom. He and his buddies won three Peeewe Super Bowls in a six-year span before heading off to middle school. Most of them joined Meadowbrook's varsity squad as freshmen and began the process of turning a mediocre program into a successful one.

"We went to high school together and we had a ton of chemistry already," Graves said. "We knew how to win. We took that work ethic that had been instilled upon us by those [Peeewe] coaches and took it to the high school level, and we were able to be successful."

In Graves' junior year, Meadowbrook rolled to an unbeaten regular season and then breezed through the first three games of the playoffs, thus making it to the Group AAA championship game against North Stafford, a team that would feature a couple of future Hokies in Tony North and Cordarrow Thompson. North Stafford

“It showed me that I needed to pick my game up another notch. I needed to work that much harder.

He [Bud Foster] was giving me the highest honor on the defense.

With great honor comes great responsibility.”

– John Graves

prominent football power up until this point – Graves dominated. He caught the keen eye of Cavanaugh, who made sure to file Graves' name into his sharp memory bank.

"When the game was over, I told the [Meadowbrook] head coach and the assistant coach that we were going to end up offering that guy," Cavanaugh said. "He was a helluva player. He played defensive end and offensive guard and he didn't come off the field."

Cavanaugh failed to land the defensive end from Petersburg, but he immediately began the recruiting process on the young man from Meadowbrook. He performed due diligence on Graves' transcripts, he talked to teachers and coaches about Graves' character, and he watched every frame of film possible, not because it reaffirmed his



John Graves' work ethic has been unmatched since he arrived at Tech and that has rubbed off on his teammates.

jumped out to a 14-0 lead.

But Graves and his Meadowbrook mates roared back, scoring 35 unanswered. They claimed the state title, winning 35-27.

"We scrimmaged them in the preseason, and before we scrimmaged them, we had heard that this team was going to win the state and all that stuff," Graves said. "They ended up beating us 14-7 in the scrimmage. They had the biggest offensive line in the state of Virginia.

"It was a real underdog story [in the state championship game]. No one gave us a chance. Our o-line and d-line were averaging over 200 pounds, so no one gave us a shot. But we ended up winning it all."

Several months later, Graves committed to Virginia Tech. Unfortunately, his last season ended on a down note, as Meadowbrook lost in the regional championship game.

But Cavanaugh knew he was getting a special player – and a special person. Hours before one of Meadowbrook's playoff games, he called Graves to wish him good luck, and he actually woke Graves up from a nap.

"It was 'Black Friday,'" Cavanaugh said, referring to the day after Thanksgiving. "He had gotten a job at a department store and had gotten up to work an eight-hour shift from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. He was taking a nap before his playoff game that night.

"Now, how many high school seniors would show up for a job at 6 a.m. the same day that they have a playoff game? That just shows you what a special guy John is. I'll never forget that."

John Graves' career at Tech is a little hard to quantify. He's played in 54 games over the past four years and started in 35 of those (heading into the bowl game), but the 6-foot-3, 278-pound defensive tackle has just 1.5 sacks in his career.

But people know his value to the Hokies. This season, following career highs in tackles, tackles for a loss and hurries, he earned second-team All-ACC honors.

His true value, though, lies in things that are impossible to measure, things such as work ethic, leadership, character, dependability and unselfishness. He'd be off the charts if such attributes could be tabulated.

Tech's staff values these traits more than most. So it came as no surprise when defensive coordinator Bud Foster placed Tech's lunch pail, the prized symbol of the defense, into Graves' hands for the 2010 season.

"It showed me that I needed to pick my game up another notch," Graves said. "I needed to work that much harder. He was giving me the highest honor on the defense. With great honor comes great responsibility."

Want to know how successful Graves has been this season? Well, check out Bruce Taylor's stats. Taylor leads the team in tackles and tackles for a loss, which directly reflects on Graves and his ability to keep defenders away from Taylor.

"I can't remember a single time in his career when John has gone out there and laid an egg," defensive line coach Charley Wiles said. "He's just a solid guy. He gives you his best every time.

"Go and turn on the video. He's not a guy who's going to have a bunch of sacks and tackles for a loss, but he's going to cause a lot of plays. I don't know what else I'd ask him to do."

One reason few mention Graves in a general discussion about Tech football is because he never brings attention on himself. When he makes big plays, he simply goes back to the huddle. He never chest bumps or fist pumps. He refuses to gyrate like so many others.

The mild-mannered Graves rarely celebrates even after victories. After the Chick-fil-A Bowl – a game in which he dominated – he didn't party it up. And if anyone deserved to celebrate, it was Graves. After missing five games with an ankle injury and being hampered even after he came back, he recorded a sack, two tackles for a loss, a forced fumble

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John Graves has helped Tech win three ACC titles and is looking to lead the Hokies to a third bowl win during his time at Tech. He also graduated with two degrees - psychology and sociology.

and a fumble recovery against Tennessee in Tech's 37-14 victory.

Afterward, Graves only smiled, preferring to watch the celebration at the Georgia Dome instead of participating in it.

"I've always been that way," Graves said. "I've had some great coaches, and they've always taught me never to be satisfied. You've got to keep pushing, no matter what, because there is always someone out there working. So it's one of those things. I always looked at it like, once that game is over, let's get ready for the next one. And when the last game is over, let's get ready for next season.

"It's hard for me to sit down and take it in. That's probably something I need to get better at. I need to work on taking it in and enjoying it. But that's how I am. I'm satisfied when we win, but I feel I need to critique and get better from it."

Andre Smith knows John Graves better than just about any player on Tech's team. The two of them roomed together their freshmen year, and they hang out together frequently. Smith, the best fisherman on the team, occasionally brings Graves with him on local fishing outings, and he's found exactly what stirs up fear in this chiseled human block of granite.

"He'll lift 500 pounds like it's nothing or he'll slap around an offensive tackle like it's nothing," Smith said. "But he won't touch a fish. The first time I took him fishing, I didn't know what to expect. Then he calls me, 'Hey Dre, can you come take this three-inch fish off the line for me?' I'm like, 'John, are you crazy? Are you serious?'"

"It's gotten to the point now where he enjoys fishing, but he has to bring a rag to touch the fish to take it off the line, or ask his

girlfriend to do it. Or he has to get me or one of my friends to take it off."

"It's pretty embarrassing," Graves admitted. Yet Graves has been anything but an embarrassment. He graduated in four years with two degrees - psychology and sociology - and he currently works on another.

He leads when he needs to, even though he rarely raises his voice. After Tech opened the season with two losses, he and the other seniors called a players-only meeting, and Graves delivered a poignant message about staying the course.

Graves' collegiate career will end with another bowl game. Whether his football career ends remains to be seen. NFL teams, for sure, will be interested.

"He'll have a shot," Wiles said. "He goes to work every day. He's a dependable, reliable guy with ability. They [NFL coaches] love those types of guys. He'll fit in with somebody. I'll be shocked if he's not on someone's roster this time next year."

"I let those things take care of themselves," Graves said. "The more you think about it, the more you're being selfish. You're being selfish to your team and the guys. You're losing focus on what you're here for."

That's the type of response you'd expect from Graves. In more than four years in Blacksburg, he's put his priorities in the proper order and then crossed off every single one.

"He's, by far, one of the best guys I know, and I don't say that just to say that," Smith said. "You can ask anyone else on this team. They know he's a guy of character. He's always smiling, no matter what the situation or what situation he's in. He always checks on you as a friend.

"He's just a great guy."

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FOOTBALL

EXTRA



UNDER CONSTRUCTION

FOOTBALL TEAM CHAPLAIN JOHNNY SHELTON IS HELPING TECH'S STUDENT-ATHLETES BUILD SOLID FOUNDATIONS FOR THEIR FUTURES

When Andre Smith got to Virginia Tech, he expected to go to his classes, attend football practices and participate in games.

A quiet young man, the tight end from Maryland never expected to be taking a portion of his sparse free time and speaking publicly about anything, certainly not his Christian faith.

But when Smith saw Tech's football team chaplain, Johnny Shelton, organizing groups of players to visit places like area churches and homeless shelters as part of an outreach ministry, he felt moved to go and speak. He put himself out there – to a place where his football uniform and helmet couldn't hide him.

Like a lot of players these days, Smith is finding it hard to say 'no' to two people – the Lord and Shelton.

"We have guys of complete character and good people on this team," Smith said. "But sometimes it takes that extra

push. For me, it took a little bit to get out of that comfort zone."

Defensive tackle John Graves echoed Smith's thoughts.

"We do have some great guys on this team, but having Johnny around makes it a lot easier for the guys to say 'yes,'" he said. "He's been such an impact on so many players."

It's been nearly three years since Shelton moved from Greensboro, N.C., to Blacksburg to continue his work for Fellowship of Christian Athletes and to serve as the football team's chaplain. Tech head coach Frank Beamer saw a need to bring someone in whom the players could discuss their Christian beliefs and someone who would be a tremendous off-field role model for the players. He convinced Shelton to leave Greensboro and his position as the area director for the FCA, and the impact on Tech's program has been stunning.

The weekly "share" times – one night a week in which the players pick a topic to discuss and Shelton selects a Biblical verse related to the topic – have been packed. The chapel services before each football game also are jammed. More and more players are participating in outreach visits as well. In fact, more than 20 players went to the Roanoke Rescue Mission in August to eat and meet with the homeless and others struggling in their lives.

"Initially, when I first got here, what surprised me was how quickly guys responded," Shelton said. "They trusted me, and that surprised me. But since then, nothing really has surprised me. It just confirms why I'm here.

"I'm just being transparent. I'm authentic. I'm real. I tell them the truth. I don't tell them what they want to hear. I tell them what they need to hear and a lot of guys have responded to that because they don't get that. As football players, people

talk to them according to what they think they want to hear and not necessarily what they need to hear. But they're craving it. They want the truth. That's why I think they've responded to me."

Shelton instituted a theme for the football team late this summer entitled "Men under Construction" and based it on Matthew 7, verses 24 and 25 in which Jesus said that "whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who builds his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock."

He wants players to focus on their foundations, their core beliefs. As with any building, the foundation is the most important part.

"We talked about our foundation being our hearts and our roots and our core values," Shelton said. "What makes us do what we do and say what we say is our foundation. Whether it's good or bad, that's where our foundation comes from."

"Now, we may have some cracks or we may have to dig out the whole thing and put down a new foundation. So that's the premise of what we're doing."

Shelton's message has resonated with several of Tech's prominent players, such as Smith, Graves and Tyrod Taylor. All are actively involved, and as the leaders of Tech's team, their words, but more importantly, their actions carry a lot of weight within the team, particularly Taylor, who is probably the overall leader of the squad.

"He had the foundation coming out of high school," Shelton said of Taylor. "He chose to keep that, but he also learned along the way. He knew that this was something that he wanted and needed to help him stay grounded."

"Now, when he leaves here, he's still going to be under construction. He's still going to have to do the right things. He's going to have to read his Bible and pray and do outreach. Whether he does those things is up to him."

Some players think Shelton's impact has affected the Hokies positively on the field – "When you have someone like that on your team, it's no coincidence that you're winning," Graves said – and there certainly may be a correlation, but Shelton's goals aren't really centered on wins. He wants God to work through him to get the players to hold each other accountable, and once they leave Virginia Tech, to get

them to become spiritual leaders publicly. He wants people to be able to be around these young men and never be able to doubt their faith.

That appears to be happening, and not just with football players. Shelton, who hopes one day to see a team chaplain with every sport, has been meeting with student-athletes in other sports, and also coaches and athletics department staff members.

"It's been fun," he said. "We're branching out to anyone in the athletics department, and I don't mind that at all. It's a privilege to be available to so many people."

"A lot of people can say that they don't know where their life would be without the impact he's made on their lives," Smith said. "I wholeheartedly can tell you that I'm a prime example."

"Johnny is a guy who is very spiritual and has such wise words and has taught us life lessons in the short amount of time that he's been here. He's a guy of utmost character and he's been an amazing blessing to this team."

"He's made a crazy impact behind the scenes that most people don't even realize." 



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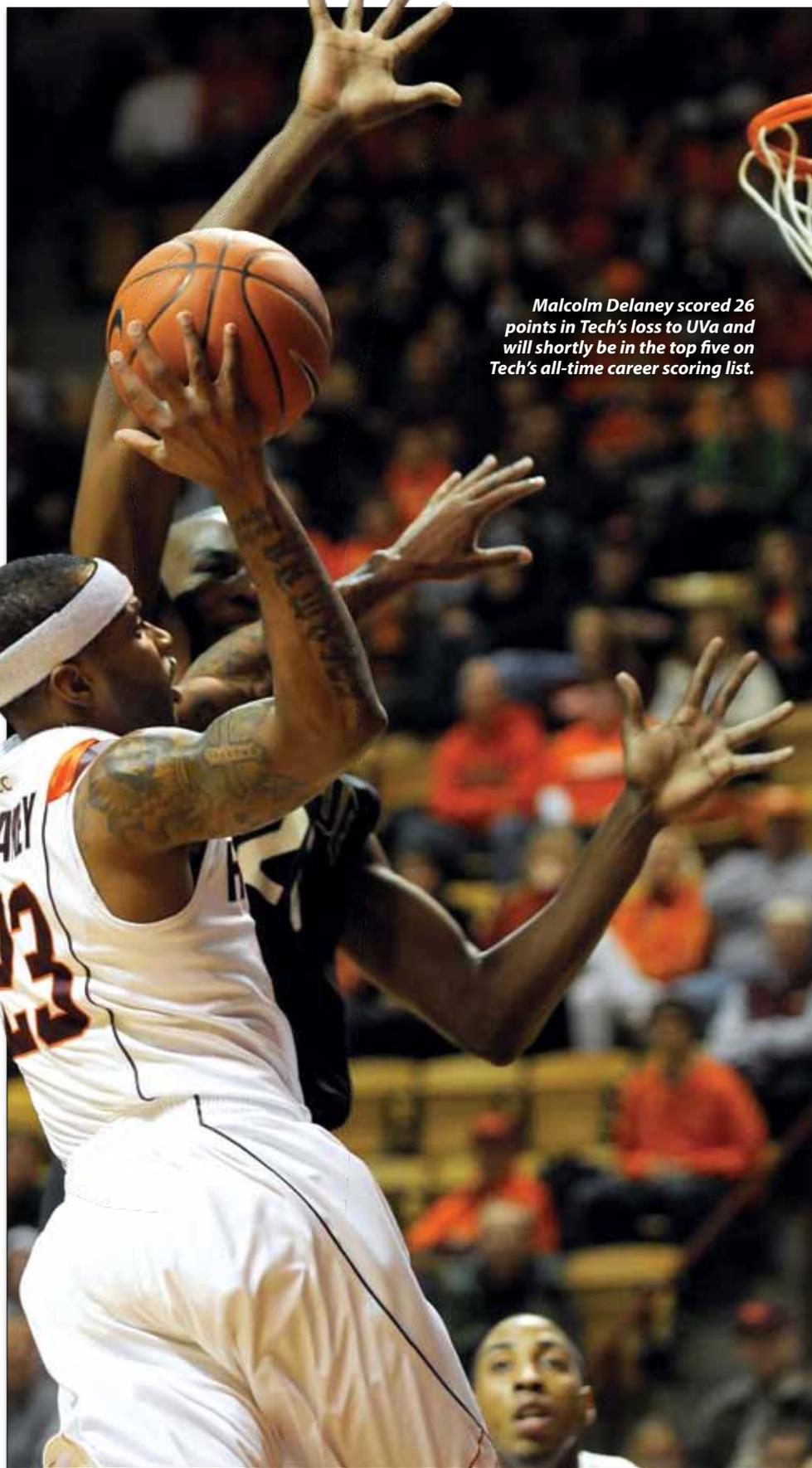
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HOKIES OPTIMISTIC DESPITE EARLY-SEASON STRUGGLES



Malcolm Delaney scored 26 points in Tech's loss to UVa and will shortly be in the top five on Tech's all-time career scoring list.

Virginia Tech basketball coach Seth Greenberg was feeling poorly before the Hokies took to the court against Virginia in the conference opener for both squads at Cassell Coliseum on Dec. 5, and what he saw transpire certainly didn't alleviate his symptoms.

But Tech's 57-54 loss to the Cavaliers hasn't dampened his enthusiasm for a team that came into this season with such high expectations.

"I'm not worried," Greenberg said. "The second half, I thought we did some good things. We've got to get more people contributing. That's the biggest thing.

"I know it doesn't make for good copy, but the last time I checked, we've got 23 games left. We can win 18 of them, and all of the sudden, life would be great. But we're not going to win any of them if we don't block out on the free-throw line. We're not going to win any of them if we don't come up with a 50-50 ball. And we're not going to win any of them unless we play with a sense of urgency all the time. We have a small margin of error. We didn't have a sense of urgency in the first 20 minutes."

The loss to UVa left the Hokies at 4-4 on the season and marked their third consecutive defeat. Two of those losses came to teams ranked in The Associated Press poll as of Dec. 6 (Purdue and UNLV). Actually, three of Tech's four losses came to teams ranked in The AP poll as of Dec. 6 (Kansas State, Purdue and UNLV).

Tech didn't shoot the ball particularly well in that three-game slide, making just 41.5 percent from the floor, and didn't score more than 60 points in any of those games. But Greenberg pointed more toward the Hokies' defense, especially against UVa. Tech allowed UVa to shoot 55 percent from the floor in the first half, score 36 first-half points and enabled the Cavaliers to build a 16-point bulge at one point.

"Giving up 36 points in the first half to that team is where the game was lost," Greenberg said.

"There is no way we should have started the game off like that," said Malcolm Delaney, who scored a game-high 26 points. "That was horrible. We didn't play good defensively, and offensively, we didn't do anything."

To its credit, Tech came back in the second half, cutting that deficit to a basket on two occasions. But a defensive breakdown led to UVa's Mike Scott running free down the

court and resulted in Jeff Allen's intentional foul. Scott hit two free throws and then the Cavaliers hit two more, resulting in four points and giving UVa a six-point lead. Also, the Hokies failed to block out on the free-throw line, and while that occasion didn't cost them points, it cost them precious time off the clock.

Those are little things, as Greenberg stated. Similar things happened in the Purdue loss, and 12 missed free throws cost the Hokies in the UNLV game. Tech easily could be 7-1 after eight games, but its margin for error is slim.

"We're an experienced, talented, but thin team right now," Greenberg said. "We don't have the depth we'd like to have. We haven't created that Energizer bunny coming off the bench that a JT Thompson would give us. We've got to find that guy. When we get in a lull like we got in the first half, we don't have a guy right now that's coming off [the bench] that's helping us to that extent. That's the biggest thing we've got to develop and we've got to get some other guys playing to the level we expect them to play at.

"I think it's all little things. I don't think it's a big thing. We had good possessions [against UVa]. We've got to get out more in transition. We made two or three just bad decision in transition. But it's little things. What's beaten us is not coming up with a loose ball or coming up with a free-throw block-out."

OPPORTUNITY LOST VERSUS PURDUE

Tech missed a golden opportunity to record a win over a ranked opponent, falling 58-55 in overtime to Purdue in an ACC/Big Ten Challenge game played at Cassell Coliseum on Dec. 1. The Hokies turned the

ball over on their final two possessions and it proved costly.

Allen paced Tech with 14 points and had nine rebounds, as the Hokies out-rebounded Purdue 42-34. Victor Davila played his best game of the season, scoring 12 points, grabbing six rebounds and blocking three shots.

Delaney struggled in this one, hitting just 2-of-18 from the floor and 1-of-6 from beyond the 3-point arc. He finished with nine points.

"A lot," Delaney said when asked how much this loss hurt. "I played horrible. We missed free throws [Tech went 15-of-21 from the line]. We missed block outs. When we needed second-chance points, we didn't get them. We played hard, but it wasn't good enough."

Jajuan Johnson, a 6-foot-10 senior, finished the game with 29 points for Purdue – one short of his career high.

HOKIES FINISH SECOND IN 76 CLASSIC

The Hokies won two of three games at the 76 Classic held over the Thanksgiving holiday in Anaheim, Calif., beating Cal State Northridge 72-56 and Oklahoma State 56-51 before falling to UNLV 71-59 in the championship game.

The Hokies had a chance to claim the title, but turnovers and terrible free-throw shooting against the Running Rebels spelled doom for Tech. The Hokies turned the ball over 18 times and made just 9-of-21 from the free-throw line. Davila missed five free throws and Allen and Delaney – the Hokies' best free-throw shooter – missed three each.

It also hurt that the Hokies got just three points from their bench.

"We need more guys contributing," Greenberg said on his postgame radio show after the game. "It's plain and simple. But we were 9-of-21 from the free-throw line and we committed 18 turnovers and we were still in position to win the basketball game.

"We improved offensively and we did some positive things. We've got to get better, but we got better this trip. This game [UNLV] was there to be won. We didn't do enough things to win the game."

DELANEY MOVES UP THE CHARTS

Delaney earned all-tournament honors for his efforts in the 76 Classic, scoring at least 16 points in all three games, including a 30-point outburst against UNLV in the championship game. He hit a career-high seven 3-pointers in that game, surpassing his previous career high of six against both Charleston Southern (Dec. 19, 2009) and Clemson (Jan. 29, 2009).

Delaney broke into the top 10 on Tech's all-time scoring list earlier this season, passing the likes of Chris Smith (1,635 points), Bill Matthews (1,652), Bryant Matthews (1,656) and Wally Lancaster (1,696).

After eight games, Delaney had 1,781 points and needed just 41 to break into the top five on Tech's all-time scoring list.

ALLEN ADDS TO DOUBLE-DOUBLE TOTALS

Allen scored 10 points and grabbed 10 rebounds in the Hokies' win over Cal State Northridge in Anaheim, marking his second double-double of the season. It also marked the 30th double-double of his career – the most by any active ACC player. UVa's Mike Scott is the next player on that list with 22 career double-doubles. 



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TECH COACHING STAFF STILL GOING THROUGH LEARNING PROCESS WITH YOUNG SQUAD

Tech women's basketball head coach Beth Dunkenberger knew the early part of this season would be a learning process for a young squad that features 10 freshmen and sophomores.

But did she know there would be a learning process for her and her staff?

"Absolutely," she said.

In the Hokies' first seven games this season, Dunkenberger used five different starting lineups. An injury to Shanel Harrison necessitated one change, but for the most part, Dunkenberger is trying to find some consistency within her youthful bunch.

In particular, Dunkenberger is searching for someone to emerge in the post. The Hokies feature a lot of height, with five players taller than 6-foot-2. So far, freshman Nia Evans, sophomore Porschia Hadley and senior Brittany Gordon all started at some point in those first seven games with varying degrees of success.

"It's obvious we're struggling to find a consistent post presence," Dunkenberger said. "We've had different people step up in different games, but it's hard when you go through six, seven, eight post players to figure out who's ready to play. Who's ready to defend? Who's ready to rebound?"

"The thing I keep telling these guys is that if they are ready to play defense and rebound, then the offense will come. You can't let the fact that you miss a lay-up or drop a pass dictate how you play on the defensive end."

Dunkenberger got a great game out of Evans in the victory over Winthrop. Though slightly undersized at 6-0, Evans – who started seven of the Hokies' first eight games – scored 11 points and grabbed seven rebounds in 23 minutes. She made 5-of-9 from the floor and was one of two players to shoot better than 50 percent against Winthrop. Tech shot a chilly 35 percent in the 53-48 win.

"That was much better from Nia," Dunkenberger said. "We kept her out of foul trouble. I thought she did a good job on both ends of the court. She played hard."

In general, though, Dunkenberger hasn't been pleased with her team's play. Tech usually struggles from the tip and gets behind early, and then uses a second-half rally to get back in the game. That happened in the Winthrop game when the Hokies trailed with less than 10 minutes to play and needed an 11-0 run to put the game away.

The real question is why they struggle early in games.

"I've watched tapes until I'm blue in the face," Dunkenberger said. "We're trying to figure this out. It's very frustrating. Intensity is something



Aerial Wilson had back-to-back career scoring highs and is seeing more playing time as a result of her increased production.

they can bring and need to bring every single game.

"We wait until the last eight minutes before we play hard. We've got to find a way to play with that intensity for 40 minutes. When we do that, we'll be a much better team."

HARRISON MISSES TIME

Shanel Harrison, arguably the Hokies' most gifted player, missed the Minnesota game and most of the Iowa game with concussion-like symptoms.

The symptoms started in the VCU win when she got kneed in the head and kicked in the head on two separate occasions. Then, at the end of the Florida Gulf Coast game, she fell and hit her head hard on the floor. She tried to play in the Iowa game, but Tech's trainer and coaches pulled her after she complained of nausea.

It's probably not a coincidence that the Hokies lost the Florida Gulf Coast, Iowa and Minnesota games with her suffering from the symptoms. She returned against Winthrop and scored 11 points, but hit just 5-of-15 from the floor, including 1-of-5 from beyond the 3-point arc.

"They didn't want me to shoot while I was out," Harrison said. "I had to be free of the symptoms for 48 hours before they'd let me back.

"I need to get in the gym and shoot because a lot of my shots were short. We weren't in sync on offense and I don't know if that has anything to do with me being out or whatever, but we need to get back into it."

DEFENSE MUCH IMPROVED

Tech's staff went into this season hoping to see improvement on the defensive end and much of the Hokies' early-season success can be attributed to how well they've played defensively.

Tech forced at least 20 turnovers in each of its first four games and six of its first eight. In arguably its best win, Tech forced VCU to commit 22 turnovers and held the Rams to just 36.4 percent shooting from the floor.

Most of VCU's scoring came from the talented Courtney Hurt, who scored a game-high 26 points. But she made just 6-of-21 from the floor and committed a game-high eight turnovers.

"We talked about what would be the keys for this game and we felt we needed to be better defensively," Dunkenberger said. "To hold them to 61 points in an overtime game, that's a good defensive game. So when your shots aren't falling and you're missing free throws, you can still be in the game."

Only two of Tech's first eight opponents shot better than 41 percent from the floor.

Florida Gulf Coast, the preseason pick to win the Atlantic Sun Conference, hit 44.1 percent and made 13 3-pointers against the Hokies in Cancun. Not coincidentally, the Hokies lost 73-65.

"It's been solid," Dunkenberger said of her team's defense. "We have held teams, but we need to create more from our defense. Again, that comes with intensity."

WILSON WITH BACK-TO-BACK CAREER NIGHTS

Aerial Wilson, a sophomore from Cocoa, Fla., was one of the bright spots for the Hokies in their 72-43 loss to No. 20 Iowa in the Caribbean Challenge played in Cancun, Mexico, over the Thanksgiving holiday.

The backup guard scored a career-high 11 points despite hitting just 4-of-14 from the floor. At the time, the performance marked her second double-figure performance of the season, as she scored a then career-high 10 points in the Hokies' win over Elon on Nov. 14.

But Wilson played even better in the Hokies' game after that Iowa loss. She set another career high, scoring 14 points in Tech's 63-58 loss to Minnesota. She hit 6-of-13 from the floor, including 1-of-2 from the 3-point arc and played a career-high 29 minutes. She also dished out three assists. 

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RECRUITING

MEN'S HOOPS

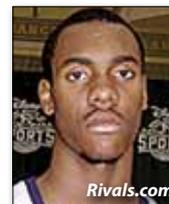
GREENBERG AND STAFF LAND TOP-15 RECRUITING CLASS



Dorian
Finney-Smith



C.J. Barksdale



Robert Brown



Marquis Rankin

Since arriving at Virginia Tech, men's basketball coach Seth Greenberg has led the Hokies to the NCAA Tournament and the NIT. He's been named an ACC coach of the year. He's helped to mold several unheralded players coming out of high school into professionals overseas.

And during the early-signing period, Greenberg added yet another accomplishment to the list.

Greenberg – and his staff – put together a nationally ranked recruiting class for the first time, inking four ESPNU top-100 recruits that comprise a class that came in at No. 12 nationally by that service. The class, which includes two Virginia natives and three who are spending their senior seasons at Hargrave Military Academy, checked in at No. 12 by Scout and No. 18 by Rivals.

"It [the national rankings] reflects Virginia Tech basketball and where we're going," Greenberg said. "It reflects

the ACC. The ACC is a vehicle to help us build our basketball program. We're a long way away from where we want to be, but we're getting closer every day."

Dorian Finney-Smith headlines this star-studded class. The 6-foot-7, 190-pound small forward from Portsmouth, Va., is ranked as the No. 26 prospect in the nation by ESPNU and No. 28 and No. 37 by Scout and Rivals, respectively.

Finney-Smith averaged 19.7 points, 13 rebounds, six assists, three steals and two blocks per game in leading I.C. Norcom to the Group AAA championship. In late September, the Group AAA player of the year committed to the Hokies over Old Dominion, where his brother plays, and Florida.

Finney-Smith has drawn comparisons to former Maryland star Joe Smith, though he probably possesses better perimeter skills than Smith. He rebounds the ball well, and he also handles the ball well enough to start the fast break. His biggest strength, though, lies

Dorian Finney-Smith is the top-rated recruit in Tech's class and a big reason why the Hokies' recruiting haul was ranked No. 12 nationally by ESPNU.

in his ability to score in a variety of ways.

"He's a complete basketball player," Greenberg said. "He can handle the ball like a point guard. He can shoot the ball like a 2-guard. He's a terrific offensive rebounder. He can rebound the ball and start the break. He's a tough match-up and that's really big.

"He's a wing player who can start the fastbreak, and he's a wing player that can move the ball against pressure. He's almost too unselfish. He wants to win. He's a winning player. He extremely skilled, but he doesn't have the ego of a great player, yet he's a magnificent player."

C.J. Barksdale, a 6-7, 220-pound power forward from Danville, Va., is the other Virginia native in the class. Barksdale is rated the No. 88 prospect nationally by ESPN and No. 65 and No. 95 by Scout and Rivals, respectively. Scout ranked him the No. 14 power forward prospect nationally, while Rivals ranked him at No. 17.

Barksdale averaged 17 points, 14 rebounds and seven blocked shots in his junior season at George Washington High School on his way to earning second-team All-Group AAA honors (he was also first-team All-Western Valley District and first-team All-Northwest Region). He decided to transfer to Hargrave Military Academy for his senior season.

Barksdale poses a match-up problem of opposing defenders, with his length and his ability to hit jumpers from out to 18 feet. He passes the ball well out of the post, too. Defensively, he blocks and alters a lot of shots, especially from the weak side.

"C.J. came to camp here at the end of his freshman year, I believe, and you could see he was a special player," Greenberg said. "He's got great, big shoulders and long

arms. He loved the game. He was excited to be in the gym. He's active and quick. He's competitive. He's a guy that you can see getting better and better because he's got great shoulders and terrific hands."

Barksdale's teammates at Hargrave include two other prospects in Robert Brown and Marquis Rankin.

Brown, a relative unknown from Clermont, Fla., 18 months ago, exploded onto the scene over last season and this summer, and ESPN rated him the No. 83 prospect nationally. The 6-6, 195-pound shooting guard is ranked No. 105 nationally by Rivals, which also rated him the No. 28 shooting guard prospect in the nation.

Brown averaged 16 points per game for East Ridge High School as a freshman and 19 points per game as a sophomore. Last season as a junior, he averaged 21 points, four rebounds and 2.1 assists per game, and he also scored his 1,000th point.

Brown shoots it well and also loves taking it to the basket. He brings size, length and speed to the shooting guard position.

"He's the prototypical athletic, rangy wing player that's been successful in my system," Greenberg said. "He's long, he's active and he's quick. He can make shots and he can defend the basketball. He plays fast. He's a terrific student and a great person. He's the type of guy we want in our program."

Rankin, a 6-0, 170-pound point guard from Charlotte, N.C., was rated the No. 95 prospect nationally by ESPN and Scout ranked him the No. 84 prospect nationally. He probably would have been rated higher if not for some nagging injuries that limited him over the summer.

Rankin averaged 13.6 points per game, seven assists and 4.4 rebounds per game

last season for Vance High. He excels in transition and covers a lot of ground in a hurry. He uses screens well and his quickness allows him to get into the lane for a shot or a dump off to a teammate. He's not a consistent shooter yet, but that should come with added strength.

"I call him the 'Mailman,' Greenberg said. "He's a general. He's got no ego. He just wants to make other players better. He distributes the basketball and he's unselfish. He's fast with the ball. He gives the ball up early.

"Kevin Keatts says he's the best on-the-ball defender they've had at Hargrave, which is a terrific compliment. He can pressure the basketball on both sides, whether he's bringing it or defending it."

Most of the prospects weren't on the national radar a year or so ago – Finney-Smith being the exception. But they improved drastically in that year's time, particularly Brown, who wasn't on anyone's top-100 list, and as signing day approached, they all continued to receive more and more interest from big-time programs.

Fortunately for the Hokies, they bought into the school and into Greenberg's philosophies.

"A big part of what we try to do is evaluate those guys 'up' and I think we did a good job of evaluating," Greenberg said. "I'm not saying Jamon Gordon wasn't a terrific player. He was. Zabian Dowdell was a terrific player. They were undervalued.

"These guys [the 2011 class], we evaluated them early and they moved up. To me, that's what recruiting is all about. It's not just about recognizing great talent when they're seniors. It's about recognizing a guy that has the potential to be a great talent." 

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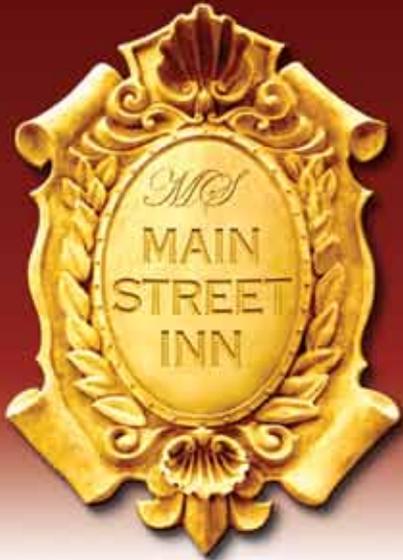
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RECRUITING

WOMEN'S HOOPS

DUNKENBERGER AND STAFF ADD ONE DURING THE EARLY SIGNING PERIOD

After signing five prospects each of the past two seasons, Tech women's basketball coach Beth Dunkenberger and her staff scaled back significantly with the 2011 class, signing just one prospect during the early-signing period.

Larryqua Hall, a 5-foot-10 guard from Powder Springs, Ga., put her name on the line, and interestingly, she will become the fourth Georgia native on Tech's roster.

"We are very excited to announce that Reka is joining the Hokie family," Dunkenberger said in a statement released by the athletics communications office. "On the offensive end, she's a slasher with an explosive first step that helps her get to the basket and finish. Reka is more than just an unbelievable athlete, and I think it's her heart and the spirit that she plays with on defense that makes her truly special."

Hall, who goes by the nickname "Reka," averaged 12.4 points and seven rebounds per game for Hillgrove High School as a junior, helping the team to a 22-8 record. Hillgrove finished second in its region and advanced to the state playoffs, finishing in the "Sweet 16."

Hall, who received interest from

Clemson, South Alabama, Tennessee Tech and Armstrong State, topped the 1,000-point plateau last season, becoming just the second player in school history to score more than 1,000 points. She earned first-team All-Region 7 AAAA honors and also was a second-team All-Cobb County selection by the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*.

As a sophomore, she averaged 16.3 points and 3.4 rebounds per game. She earned All-Cobb County honors by the *Marietta Daily Journal* following that season.

She played in the post the past three seasons, starting as a sophomore and junior. But this season, her head coach, Sheryl Fowler, plans on moving her to small forward.

"We played her in the post the past three years because we haven't had any height," Fowler said. "We'll play her at the 2 or 3 this season. She's very athletic and quick to the basket. She rebounds the ball well."

"I think the thing she needs to work on is slowing down and coming under control. She tends to go full speed and gets herself into trouble sometimes."

Hall's signing will give the Hokies 12 scholarship players heading into the 2011 season – three below the NCAA limit. Tech graduates three seniors after this season (Nikki Davis, Elizabeth Basham and Brittany Gordon) and will have one senior next season (Shanel Harrison). Thus, Dunkenberger and her staff have some flexibility to add a player or two during the spring signing period. 



Tech women's head coach Beth Dunkenberger was happy to sign high-scoring Larryqua Hall out of Powder Springs, Ga., during the early signing period.



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HOKIES IN THE PROS

FORMER TECH RECEIVER JOSH MORGAN FINDS SAN FRANCISCO TO HIS LIKING

When Josh Morgan was growing up as a young kid in Washington, D.C., he idolized Jerry Rice and the San Francisco 49ers, and though he loved basketball much more, Morgan decided to play football because of his respect for the Hall of Fame receiver.

His decision paid off quite well, as he not only gets paid as a wide receiver in the NFL, but he also plays for the same team as Rice and runs into his idol on a regular basis.

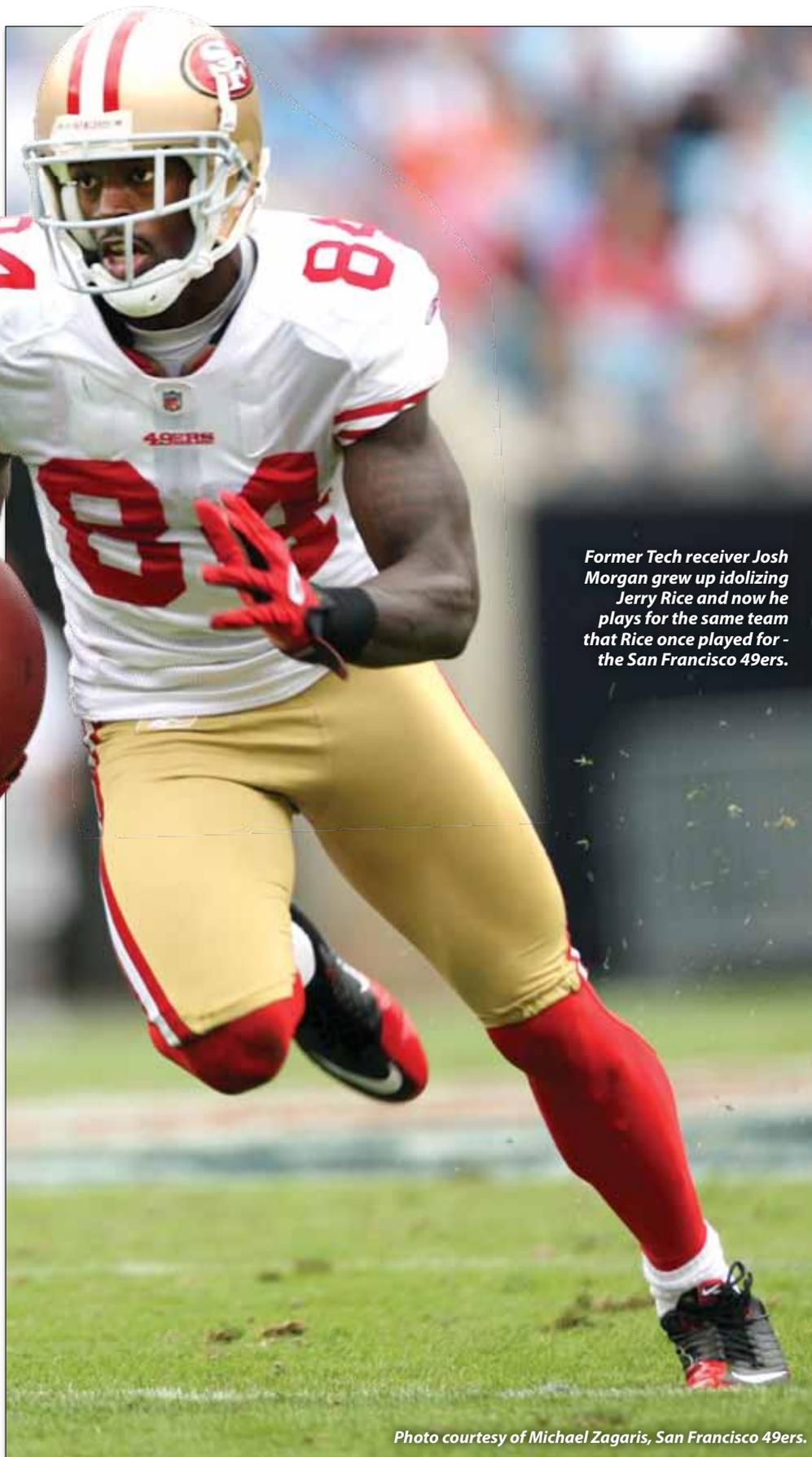
"We've formed a good relationship," Morgan said. "I run into all those guys, him and Dwight Clark and even T.O. [Terrell Owens, a former 49er receiver] – I haven't seen John Taylor yet. They show up at team functions and charity events that we do, and they're often on the sidelines during games.

"It's great to be able to talk to him [Rice] and have him give me some pointers, and I pick his brain every chance I get. Me, being a wide receiver, it's great for me to stay in touch with those guys."

After a good career at Virginia Tech in which he finished second in career receptions (122), fourth in receiving yards (1,817) and fourth in receiving touchdowns (16) – current Hokie Jarrett Boykin has jumped him in receptions and yards – Morgan found himself bound for San Francisco after the 49ers drafted him in the sixth round of the 2008 NFL Draft. He was one of three Tech receivers drafted that year, joining both Eddie Royal and Justin Harper.

Morgan stuck with the 49ers through training camp and made a nice contribution during his first season. He played in 12 games and even started a game. He caught 20 passes for 319 yards and three touchdowns.

He jumped into the starting lineup last season, starting 15 of the team's 16 games. He caught 52 passes for 527 yards and three touchdowns, and he also ran five times for 61 yards. This season, he's started all but three games (as of



Former Tech receiver Josh Morgan grew up idolizing Jerry Rice and now he plays for the same team that Rice once played for – the San Francisco 49ers.

Photo courtesy of Michael Zagaris, San Francisco 49ers.

Dec. 5), missing one game with a thigh injury, and has 29 catches for 412 yards and a touchdown.

"I know I can go out and be one of the best receivers in this league," Morgan said. "I felt like I had the talent, and all I had to do was come out here and work hard. That's what I did at Virginia Tech, and I was able to become one of the top four receivers in school history.

"I knew when I came out there that I could have some success. I knew no one was going to outwork me. So it [his success] has not surprised me at all."

Morgan not only gets to see Rice on a regular basis, he also gets to play for one of the NFL's all-time greatest players in Mike Singletary, the former Chicago linebacker who serves as San Francisco's head coach. Singletary took over the job midway through Morgan's rookie season.

"It's like playing for your father," Morgan said. "He wants the best for you and he pushes you to make sure you're doing everything right. He's a great motivator and he's consistent. He is who he is. He'll tell you what he thinks and demands the best of you – just like your father would."

Singletary helped Morgan with the

transition from college to the pros. But the guys who helped him the most were Isaac Bruce and Allen Rossum, neither of whom is currently with the team. Bruce, a receiver who ended his NFL career third on the all-time list for receiving yardage, retired over the summer.

"They both took me under their wing," Morgan said. "Isaac Bruce was like a mentor to me. He really helped me get adjusted and helped me get better as a receiver and as a man.

"The toughest thing for me was being so far away from family. I had no family out here in California. When I was at Tech, I had all my friends there. Even a lot of D.C. guys who didn't play football went there, and I was only four hours from home. I'm a big family guy, so that was the toughest thing for me, just being away from them."

With Bruce and Rossum gone, Morgan hangs out a lot these days with Vernon Davis – a D.C. guy – along with Michael Crabtree, Ted Ginn Jr., and Troy Smith. He still remains in touch with some of his former Tech teammates, including Royal, Harper, David Clowney and James Anderson, among others.

"The main thing I miss [about Virginia Tech] is the relationships," Morgan said.

"We grew up together. We all got better together. We went through the shootings [in 2007] and we've all stayed close.

"I love those guys like brothers. We all had the same focus and we were on the same page. We wanted to win games, get our degree and get to the NFL. Everyone was working toward the same thing. I do miss it. I miss it a lot."

For now, he's consumed with helping the 49ers win some more games. A team many pegged for the playoffs, the 49ers stumbled out of the gate, losing their first five games – with four of those losses by three points or less. They won three of their next four, but the playoffs now seem a remote possibility.

"We've got to finish games," Morgan said. "We've got to get that killer instinct."

He'll also continue to work on becoming a better receiver, or actually, a great one. That will require more hard work and attention to detail. But if he needs any help, he needs only to ask arguably the greatest receiver in NFL history.

"Jerry showed you can dominate a game as a receiver," Morgan said. "He's like the Michael Jordan of football, and everyone loves Michael Jordan. That's the effect he's had on me." 

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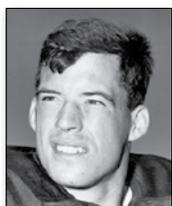
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A DEFINITION OF TOUGHNESS

FORMER TECH PLAYER GENE BREEN RANKS AS ONE OF THE TOUGHEST PLAYERS OF HIS ERA



Gene Breen

Former Virginia Tech football coach Frank Moseley, a fearsome taskmaster, loved tough guys and instructed his staff to bring those types of players to Blacksburg during his tenure in the 1950s.

So Dick Redding, one of Moseley's assistants, knew he was bringing in a Moseley type when he signed Gene Breen out of Mt. Lebanon High School outside of Pittsburgh. But Breen wasn't quite so sure.

"I didn't think I'd make the team," he said.

Breen did more than that, becoming one of the best Southern Conference linemen – both offensive and defensive – in the early 1960s and eventually securing a spot in

the Virginia Tech Sports Hall of Fame. He also wrestled at Tech for legendary coach Frank Teske and helped the Hokies win the Southern Conference title in 1962 in that sport.

In football, Breen made an immediate impact during his sophomore season in 1961 for new coach Jerry Claiborne; whom Moseley, also the AD, hired to replace himself. Breen earned All-Southern Conference honors and helped the Hokies lead the league in total defense. In 1962, a knee injury limited him, but typical of his western Pennsylvania background, he played in every game. In 1963, he returned to form and earned first-team All-Southern Conference honors again, helping Tech lead the league in rushing. The Hokies finished 8-2 that season, including 5-0 in the Southern.

Breen served as the team captain for

his entire career. In fact, Claiborne named Breen a captain not long after arriving in Blacksburg.

"I was very surprised," Breen said. "That was a turning point in my life. That's when I realized that I had potential."

Breen graduated from Tech in 1964 with a degree in distributive education. A member of the Corps of Cadets, he graduated as a distinguished military student and also earned a spot in the listing of "Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities."

Breen figured he'd embark on a career in teaching and coaching, but the NFL's Green Bay Packers, coached by legendary Vince Lombardi, drafted him in 1963. So he decided to try the professional football route.

"I got a \$1,200 signing bonus," Breen said. "I hitchhiked to Green Bay, and when I got

there, Lombardi gave me the \$1,200. Then when I made the team, he gave me \$9,000."

Breen spent just one year in Green Bay. After the season, Lombardi traded him to the Pittsburgh Steelers, which gave Breen an opportunity to return to his hometown.

But Breen hated every second of his two-year stint with the Steelers.

"When he [Lombardi] traded me to Pittsburgh, I cried like a baby," Breen said. "The Steelers were a bunch of bums. All they did was drink and gamble, and they didn't show up for practice half the time. They didn't have any weights and we had to practice in a mud pit.

"I didn't like Art Rooney [the founder of the Steelers] either. After two years there, he cut me and I was glad. I was happy to get out of there."

Breen went to Los Angeles and played for the Rams for a couple of years before getting out of football for good. He said he had 8-10 knee surgeries between college and the pros, and the pain became unbearable. Plus, football wasn't as much fun as it was while playing for Lombardi, who died in 1970 at the age of 57.

"The NFL went to hell when he left," Breen said. "In 1968, I was in Los Angeles playing for the Rams and we were playing the Packers. We were walking out the tunnel and Green Bay was walking back in on the other side. Coach Lombardi yelled at

me, 'Hey Breen, you gonna say hello?' He gave me a hug and I thanked him for the opportunity he gave me. Then he told me to go out and play a good game.

"Coach Lombardi never used a swear word. He never belittled a person. He treated everyone the same, and that's why they loved him. That's why we won. It was the same way with Coach Claiborne, too. Jerry was a winner, and that's why Virginia Tech was a winner."

Following his playing days, Breen briefly dabbled in coaching. He landed a job at Marshall with Rick Tolley, a former Tech teammate. After a year and a half, he left and came back to Tech in 1970 as the offensive line coach under Claiborne.

At this point, his first wife and their five kids – four boys and a daughter – still lived in western Pennsylvania. Breen couldn't afford to buy a house and bring his family to Blacksburg, so after a year, he decided to return to Pennsylvania.

"Coach Claiborne didn't speak to me for years after that," Breen said.

Breen started his own business, becoming a sporting goods representative. He knew plenty about sports equipment from his playing days, and he traveled all over the eastern part of the U.S, selling goods. It turned out to be a lucrative profession – one from which he ultimately would retire.

"One of my jobs as a rookie was to help

the equipment manager," Breen said. "Lombardi helped me learn that trade, too. I am what I am because of Claiborne and Lombardi."

As a sporting goods rep, he often sold shoes to players and teams, and one of his clients was none other than O.J. Simpson, the former Buffalo and San Francisco great.

"He's a bum now, but I liked him," Breen said. "And he liked me. I took care of him. We got along well."

Breen's second wife, Nancy, ran the human resources office for Westinghouse Electric before Siemens bought that company in 1997. She was transferred to Florida, and she and Breen left western Pennsylvania in 1998. Breen retired from his job that year, and they currently live in Heathrow, Fla.

Despite battling knee problems and concussion symptoms, Breen has lived a rather blessed life, having played college and pro football and been a successful businessman. Plus, while bouncing around in the NFL, he managed to avoid going to Vietnam because his paperwork got hung up, and he later received an honorable discharge. Then, the year after he left Marshall, the Thundering Herd team plane crashed, killing all 75 on board, including Tolley and former teammate Frank Loria.

"God was on my side," Breen said. "Twice." 

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RECRUITING

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SOFTBALL PROGRAM SIGNS SIX WHO COMPRISE A STELLAR CLASS

Head softball coach Scot Thomas and his staff signed six prospects to letters of intent during the early-signing period, and the group includes several who earned all-state awards and one who was named a Gatorade state player of the year as a junior.

"This is arguably the best overall class that we have ever signed in program history," Thomas said. "This class has it all – power, speed, solid pitching. Combine this class with the talent we already have coming back and you just have to be extremely excited. On top of that, these are just some tremendous young ladies with great families. It was an awesome job by the staff in getting the job done on the recruiting front."

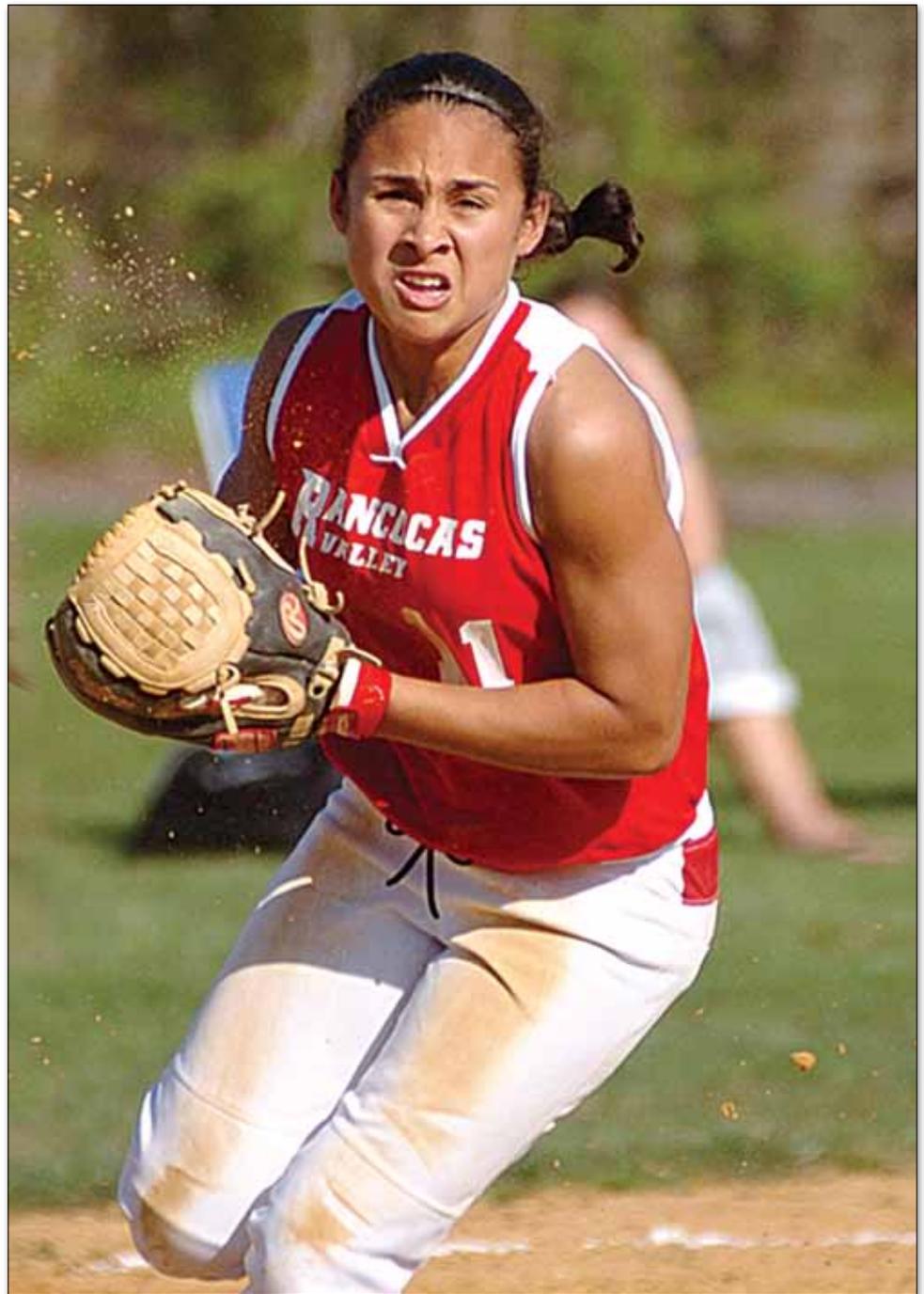
Lauren Gaskill, an outfielder from Rancocas Valley High in Mt. Holly, N.J., probably headlines the group. She was the Gatorade state Player of the Year in New Jersey after a junior season in which she hit .684, with 10 homers, 31 RBI, 42 runs and 21 stolen bases. She also earned South Jersey Player of the Year honors and first-team all-state honors.

Infielders include Kylie McGoldrick, Kelsey Mericka and Jessica Rappe. McGoldrick, also a native of New Jersey, earned first-team All-South Jersey honors after hitting .522 and slugging .728. Mericka, from Kennesaw, Ga., hit .577, with 10 homers and 43 RBI for Kell High School while being named the *Marietta Daily Journal's* Cobb County Player of the Year. Rappe, from Charlotte, N.C., played at Butler High and hit .444, with 40 runs and 21 stolen bases. She was an all-state selection.

Logan Spaw, an outfielder from Blue Springs, Mo., and Isabella Corrao, a pitcher from Farmingdale, N.Y., round out the group. Corrao had a 0.93 ERA, with 229 strikeouts for Farmingdale High as a junior and was a second-team all-state selection. Spaw missed most of her senior season because of a sprained knee (high school softball is played in the fall in Missouri), but she earned All-Suburban Big Seven Conference honors as a junior.

GOLF PROGRAM ADDS THREE

Virginia Tech golf coach Jay Hardwick signed three prospects during the early-signing period, adding Trevor Cone, Miles Curley and Scott Vincent to the fold starting next fall.



Lauren Gaskill was one of softball head coach Scot Thomas' top signees and she should make an immediate impact once she arrives at Tech next fall.

Cone, from Concord, N.C., attends Jay M. Robinson High School. Earlier this year, he won the North Carolina High School Invitational and finished runner-up in the Carolinas Junior Boys' Championship. He was named to the N.C. boys all-state first team by the Carolinas Golf Association in 2009 and was the South Piedmont Conference Player of the Year in 2010.

Curley, from Rock Hill, S.C., attends South Pointe High School. An all-region selection in 2010, he won the Metro Junior Championship and was named the *Rock Hill Herald* Golfer of the Year. He finished third in the 2009 South Carolina Junior Players Championship and fifth in the 2010 North & South Junior Championship.

Vincent, from Harare, Zimbabwe, at-



Kylie McGoldrick will play in the middle infield and is a left-handed power hitter who can hit for average.

tends St. John's College, a high school in Harare. He is currently the No. 1 ranked player in his country and won the 2010 Zimbabwe National Amateur. Vincent represented Zimbabwe in this year's World Amateur Team Championship in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he led his team and finished 57th individually. He finished 11th in the 2009 Junior Orange Bowl International Golf Championship in Coral Gables, Fla.

"Trevor, Miles and Scott will each have a major impact on our team's success in the years to come," Hardwick said in a statement released by the athletics communications office. "All three have an outstanding work ethic and, more importantly, they are all fine young men who will be outstanding additions to our team and our community."

WRESTLING TO BRING IN FIVE

Tech wrestling coach Kevin Dresser and his staff signed five prospects during the early signing period, including four in the top 100 according to InterMat, a Web site devoted to college wrestling.

"Once again, we feel we have done very well with these five early signings," Dresser said in a statement released by the athletics communications office. "Of course, time will tell. However, these guys have already done it on various national stages. They will be needed to continue to take this program to the highest level. I can't wait to watch them compete this year as seniors. I am their biggest fan right now!"

Nick Brascetta is the highest ranked of

the five, according to InterMat, as he is rated the No. 26 overall prospect in the country. He hails from St. Paris, Ohio, and attends St. Paris Graham High. He is projected to wrestle at 141, 149 or 157 pounds in college.

As a freshman, he went 40-8 and took third at 103 pounds at the state tournament before going 45-0 as a sophomore and winning the state at that same weight class. Last year, he took second place at 119 pounds and went 42-4. Brascetta enters his senior year with a career mark of 127-12 and placed third at the Walsh Ironman and FILA Cadet Nationals last year.

Austin Gabel is a two-time Colorado state champion and will be the second Coloradoan to take the mats for Tech, following in the footsteps of current heavyweight David Marone. Gabel hails from Parker and attends Ponderosa High, where he won a state title at 160 pounds as a sophomore and the title at 171 pounds last year by going 44-1. As a freshman, he took third in the state at 135 pounds. Gabel is projected as either a 184- or 197-pounder in college. He enters his final year of high school with a record of 111-14 and was named to the 2010 Colorado first-team all-state team for the 171-pound class.

Lex Ozias is ranked as the No. 48 overall prospect in the country by InterMat and is a two-time Maryland state champion. The Kitzmiller native attends Southern Garrett High, where he wrestles at 140 pounds. He took third place at the NHSCA Junior Nationals last year and is projected to wrestle at 149 pounds in college.

Bubba Scheffel is rated at No. 56 nationally by InterMat. He won the 160-pound class at the NHSCA Junior Nationals last year. The Oakland, Md., native also attends Southern Garrett High and is teammates with Ozias. Scheffel is a two-time state champion who has gone a combined 83-0 his past two seasons. He is projected to wrestle at 174 pounds in college.

Matt Stephens, the younger brother of current Hokie Brian Stephens, attends St. Paris Graham High in Piqua, Ohio. He is a three-time placewinner at the Ohio state championships, placing third at 145 pounds last year as a junior. He took second at 140 pounds as a sophomore and was fourth at 140 pounds as a freshman. He is ranked the No. 83 wrestler nationally by InterMat and enters his senior season with a career record of 121-22. He also took fourth at the Walsh Ironman and fourth at the Super32 Challenge as a junior. He is projected to wrestle at either 165 or 174 pounds in college. 

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THROUGH THE PAIN

SARAH MILTON HAS OVERCOME SERIOUS OBSTACLES ALONG THE WAY TO BECOMING ONE OF VIRGINIA TECH'S MOST SUCCESSFUL DIVERS

By Matt Kovatch

It was an early morning in May of 2009. Sarah Milton remembers it well, and rightly so, because it almost ended her promising diving career.

As she awoke to get ready for class early in the first summer session following her sophomore year at Virginia Tech, she prepared to swing her legs from the mattress to the floor and get up to start another busy day. But something was wrong. Her feet throbbed with unbearable pain, so much so, that she was afraid to get out of bed. She had just worked out the day before, but sustained no injuries or felt anything out of the ordinary. But this was a pain she had never experienced.

It was the latest in a couple of health scares for the young diver, and now a year and a half later, the senior captain has finally

recovered and is hoping to complete her final season by qualifying for the NCAA Championships in March. It would be a rewarding end to a career full of challenges.

Milton was born just outside of Toronto on the shores of Lake Ontario in Canada, and then spent most of her youth moving from city to city as her father kept getting transferred in the ever-growing computer business of the 1990s.

The Miltons moved to Massachusetts when Sarah was 7, spending a year there before moving to California for five years. Five more years were then spent in The Woodlands, Texas, outside of Houston, before the family settled in the Dallas area when Sarah was a junior in high school. It wasn't until the Miltons arrived in Texas that Sarah began diving,

and she took to it rather quickly.

"I had originally done gymnastics when I was younger, so it was easier for me to pick up diving," Milton said. "As the years went on and I was able to do the harder dives, I was scoring better at meets and beating people who had beaten me before. That's when I knew I wanted to dive in college."

Though Milton knew she wanted to dive in college, unfortunately for her, not many colleges were aware of whom she was. That's because of a technicality in the rulebooks of USA Diving, which states that "Under no circumstances shall a non-U.S. citizen compete or participate in [among other things] Age Group National Championships or Junior National Championships."

Despite living in more American cities that most Americans by her mid-teens,

Milton was not yet a United States citizen when she was of age to enter those competitions. She has since gained U.S. citizenship in the summer of 2008, but back when she was trying to get recruited, the rules prevented her from ever advancing past the regional round of competition.

"I guess you could technically say that I would always get last place," Milton joked. "It didn't matter what place I earned. I couldn't advance and I didn't even get a ribbon or a medal. I would still compete and do all the same dives that other people were doing. I would get the scores so I knew what place I should be in, but if I was third, then whoever was in fourth would be third. They would just have my name at the very end of the results. Even if my score was higher than others, it would still show up at the end."

As one might imagine, Milton's name got skipped over most of the time by recruiters. She tried to stay focused and always did her best, but she admitted that competitions were less stressful for her because she knew she couldn't advance no matter how well she did. Luckily for her, though, Virginia Tech diving coach Ron Piemonte had some contacts in Texas who could see what the results weren't showing.

"I knew some people who had coached her before and they just told me that she had a lot of potential," Piemonte remembered. "They highly recommended her and said that she had a great work ethic and a great attitude. I didn't get to see her dive very much, but she sent me a video of herself and we got to talking and the rest is history."

Once becoming a Hokie, Milton immediately found success while diving in smaller

competitions and dual meets, but larger meets like the ACC Championships proved to be more difficult because she had never been able to simulate the big-time pressure of those meets due to her Canadian citizenship.

"My freshman year, it was definitely a huge adjustment at the ACCs because it was really important," Milton admitted. "They stressed how we were scoring points for Virginia Tech, and when you're doing club diving, you don't really have team points. I was definitely very nervous because I hadn't been around that environment as much. I think it did hinder me a little bit in that perspective."

"She could be in a dual meet against some of the top divers and dive great," Piemonte added. "But once you put her in a meet that had 30 divers in it, she just couldn't settle down and dive like she was capable of. However, I think she's at the point now where she's figured out how to deal with that. I'm really confident that she's going to have a great finish to her career, and I think she has a very legitimate shot of making the NCAA Championships this year."

Getting over the big-meet jitters was certainly a challenge, but it was nothing compared to what she was about to endure. Near the end of March in her sophomore year, Milton came down with what doctors originally thought was pink eye. She was prescribed some medicine, but after a week, the condition was getting worse. A trip to the optometrist resulted in a failed dilation, so Milton next visited the hospital. After almost four hours of trying to get her eye to dilate, she was diagnosed with acute iritis, which is an inflammation of the iris of the eye.

"I ended up wearing my glasses for a month after that," Milton remembered. "I

couldn't really dive that whole time because I can't see well without my contacts in and I obviously couldn't dive with glasses on. There was a little scare there briefly that I could possibly go blind in that eye, but I was able to take all of my medicine and get rid of it."

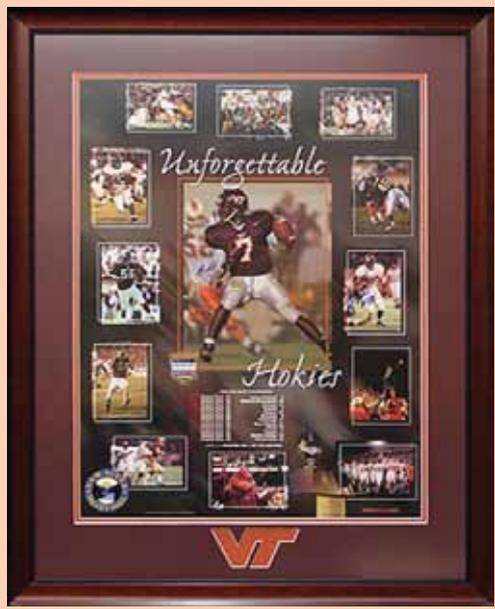
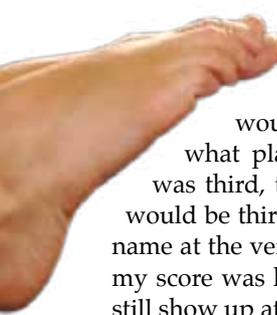
Though Milton could see clearly again, she was far from in the clear. About a month later was when she woke up that morning with the tremendous discomfort in her feet. Any pressure at all upon her feet would shoot pain throughout her body, and she was also having pain in her left wrist toward her thumb. Soon, it was back to various doctors again for more tedious, and ultimately inconclusive, tests.

"I kept asking myself 'What is wrong? Why am I having this horrible pain?'" Milton said. "We took a bunch of X-rays and an MRI, but absolutely nothing was showing up. They couldn't see any swelling or anything. I started to wonder if it was all mental."

One doctor suggested rheumatoid arthritis, but it didn't seem right because Milton's pain wasn't responding to the anti-inflammatories. Another doctor suggested reactive arthritis, because they figured that the acute iritis was her body's initial reaction to whatever was wreaking havoc. Finally, a bone scan revealed some flare-ups in her feet and left wrist. Though the cause of so many inflammatory reactions is still unknown, the bone scan at least proved to Milton that she "wasn't crazy."

The next challenge was to find a medication strong enough to help Milton deal with the continued pain that prevented her from doing anything but hobbling around.

"They put me on a weekly medication that, when used in a lot stronger doses than what I was given, is used for cancer,"



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Milton said. "My hair has thinned out a lot because of it. There was also a daily medication, Prednisone, which I had to be very careful with because it was very addicting. I was on that for almost a year because every time I tried to cut the dosage down, my pain would shoot right back up again."

Once Milton was able to harness the pain at the end of the summer, she decided to get back up on the diving board. She had been coming to practice all along just to stay around the environment and to do what she could, whether it was stretching or abdominal work. But she taped up her feet and ankles as tight as she could – a process which she was just able to stop a few months ago – inched to the edge of the board and basically let herself fall off because she could barely jump.

"It was brutal," Piemonte said. "It could have been career ending for a lot of other people who didn't have the determination that she had to work through it. She couldn't even push the diving board down at first. She was in tears, and for Sarah to be in tears, you know there is something really wrong. I was just thinking 'Uh oh, this is it. She's going to be done.'"

"I kept pushing through it because I wasn't going to let it stop me from anything," Milton added. "Coach would get

mad at me sometimes because I would try to push myself as far as I could."

Through stubborn grit and perseverance, Milton also decided it was time to stop depending on the powerful medication. Once taking as much as 40 milligrams of Prednisone a day, she slowly forced herself down by a little over two milligrams a week. Dropping the dosage too quickly can do serious damage to the body, so she was monitored weekly by doctors. Each taper downward would increase the pain for several days, but once it subsided even a hair, Milton would drop the dosage again. A little over a year after she began taking it, just this past summer, she was through with the medication.

Slowly but surely, Milton battled her debilitating condition throughout her junior year, all while battling her opponents. She has set and reset the school record in the three-meter dive many times over, and her journey back to health culminated in a third-place finish during the preliminary competition at the ACC Championships this past March. She's come a long way from her days as a high schooler who finished last (wink, wink) in every meet, and Piemonte couldn't be prouder.

"Diving is a pretty small sport – you pretty much know who everybody is," Piemonte

said. "But it's funny because over the past three years, I can't tell you how many high-level diving coaches have come to me and asked of Sarah: 'Who is that? Where did she come from?'"

"I don't think anybody knew about her because they never saw her at the level where everybody was doing all the recruiting at. To see how well she has developed into the diver she is today, it just speaks volumes about her. She's had to work for everything she's got." 



Despite battling health issues throughout her career, Sarah Milton has set the the school record in the three-meter diving event several times over.



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LATE BLOOMER

HARDLY RECRUITED OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL, CHRIS DIAZ HAS TURNED INTO ONE OF THE NATION'S ELITE WRESTLERS

By Matt Kovatch

When the announcement of Chris Diaz's commitment to Virginia Tech was posted on hokiesports.com on April 20, 2007, the headline read "Hokies sign blue chipper." While the term "blue chipper" has turned out to be accurate – last March, Diaz became Tech's first All-American wrestler since 2006 – a more proper headline might have been "Hokies sign late bloomer."

Now a senior who was ranked sixth in the nation in the 141-pound weight class at press time, Diaz is recognized as one of Virginia Tech's best grapplers ever. But at the time of his signing with Tech, the Camden, Del., native was very lightly recruited.

Though Diaz began wrestling at the early age of 6 and actually placed second in the first tournament he ever competed in, he dabbled in countless other sports while growing up and didn't narrow his focus to wrestling until he reached the ninth grade at Caesar Rodney High School in Camden, Del. Even then, he found himself stuck on the junior varsity team. It wasn't

second-smallest state in the nation – actually fueled his hunger.

"It [Caesar Rodney] is actually a pretty big wrestling school for Delaware, considering how small it is," Diaz explained of The First State, which, coincidentally, also produced Tech teammate Jarrod Garnett. "There are only a handful of high schools that take wrestling really seriously, and that's probably what actually gave me a little bit of an edge in pursuing wrestling and trying to get better.

"At the time, my team had won states multiple times in a row, and they were starting to get ranked nationally. Everybody else around me was doing it, so that gave me a little bit of a boost. Having people around me who were successful made me want to be more successful."

And more successful he steadily became. Diaz won the state title in his weight class as a junior, finally drawing the attention of some universities, including Virginia Tech and head coach Kevin Dresser.

in the running for his talents was Indiana University, and he actually made a trip there before coming to Blacksburg, unbeknownst to Dresser.

"Indiana kind of snuck in there, and at the time, they had a pretty persuasive coach," Dresser said. "They flew him out there, and we didn't even know about it. They made him an offer and told him he had 24 hours to take it or leave it. He and his dad thought it was too good to pass up, so he took it."

Back in those days, coaches were still permitted to send text messages to recruits. Dresser said Diaz is "kind of a quiet kid," and that he opened up a lot more via text than in person or on a phone call.

"I just told him that I had heard he verbalized to Indiana and that I was sorry to hear that," Dresser said. "I just felt like we deserved a chance.

"The next day, Chris texted me back and said 'Coach, I think I made a mistake.' Virginia Tech was something he really wanted to consider. I said 'Well, you can still come down here for a visit. You don't

“I was always telling Coach Dresser since I first got here that I was going to be his first All-American and his first national champion ... It made me happy that I was able to fulfill one of my goals and actually be the first All-American [under Dresser] ... I want to keep working hard this year to try to finish out my other goal. I have a few months to give it all I've got, so that's what I'm going to do.”

– Chris Diaz

a situation that most supposed blue chippers have to deal with.

"I wasn't very enthused about it," Diaz said of his time on the JV squad. "I was ready to quit. But one of my good friends and his dad convinced me to keep doing it."

Begrudgingly, Diaz continued on as a sophomore. His natural talent began to shine through, and he eventually wound up placing second in the state tournament. That's when the light came on for him.

"It took me a while to get pretty serious about wrestling," Diaz said. "Trying to compete on a higher scale with national level guys ... it took a while to adjust. But I was progressively getting better throughout high school. Once I placed second in states my sophomore year, I started to compete in a lot more tournaments. I was even wrestling in the summertime. I wanted to try to become nationally ranked so I could go to college."

The taste of success whetted Diaz's appetite for more, and strangely enough, his home state's size – Delaware is the

"There weren't a ton of people recruiting Chris at that time," Dresser remembered. "But I knew enough about him because I had a good relationship with some Delaware people."

When student-athletes start getting recruited obviously varies from case to case, but for the cream of the crop – which Diaz turned out to be – senior year is a bit late in the game.

"The first time was in the beginning of my senior year," Diaz confirmed. "I wasn't very highly recruited because I wasn't one of the best in my weight class nationally. Coach Dresser showed a little bit of interest at first, but I wouldn't say he was really pursuing me."

That all changed after Diaz stormed through his senior season and completed his career that April by winning the National High School Coaches Association senior national championship – fittingly, in Virginia, out at Virginia Beach. Shortly thereafter, Dresser and Diaz set up a date for Diaz to visit Blacksburg.

However, the visit almost never happened. According to Diaz, the other school

have to sign anything."

Diaz's visit to Blacksburg ended fewer than 24 hours before the tragic campus massacre of April 16, but to his credit, he didn't let that affect his decision to de-commit from Indiana and become a Hokie.

"Chris called us pretty much right afterward and said he wanted to come to Virginia Tech," Dresser said. "As a staff, we were obviously concerned about what people were going to think [after the shootings], but anybody who has ever been here knows that was a pretty bizarre situation in this town."

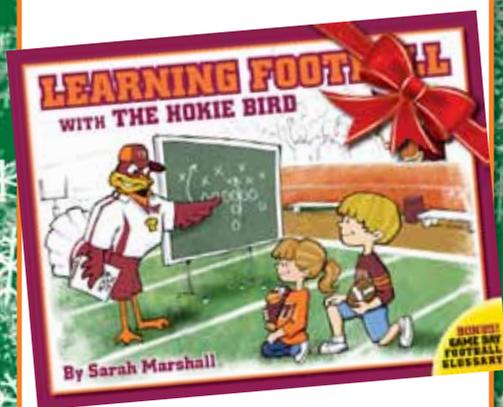
"It didn't scare me away at all," Diaz confirmed. "Stuff like that just doesn't happen every day. I knew it was still a good school. Some crazy event wasn't going to throw me off."

Several months later, Diaz arrived at Tech for good and, contradictory to his laid-back nature, made some bold statements.

"I was always telling Coach Dresser since I first got here that I was going to be his first All-American and his first na-

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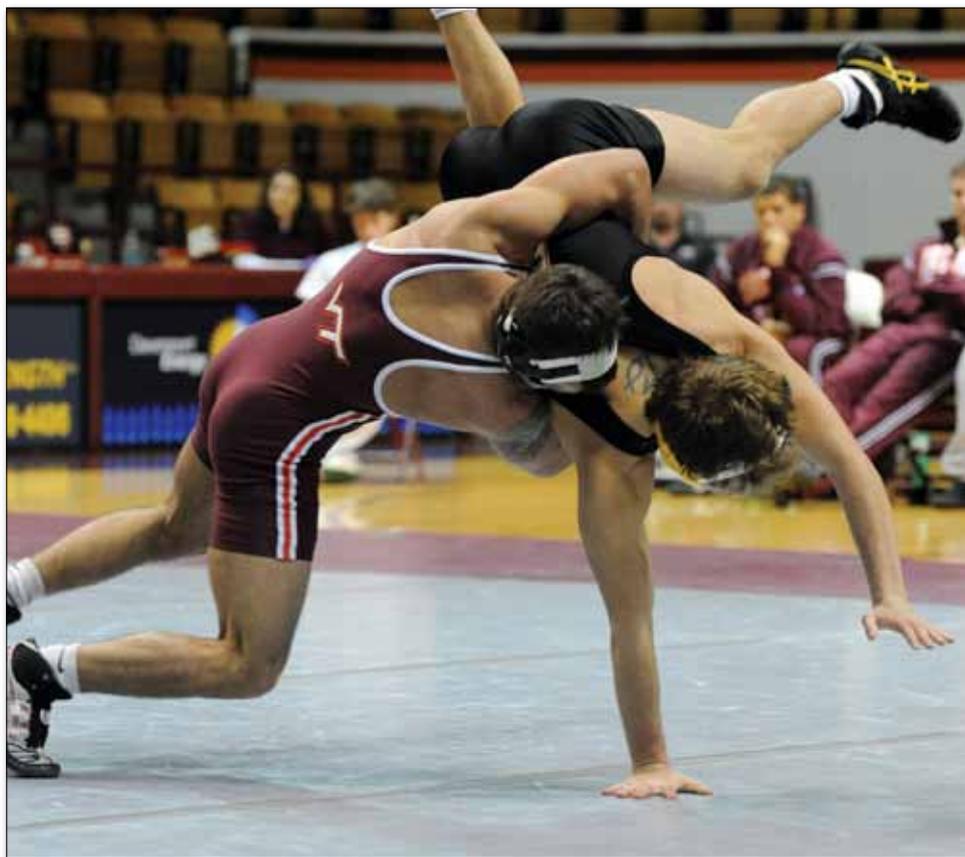


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No one expected Chris Diaz to turn the wrestling world upside down when he got to Tech, but he's transformed himself into one of the nation's best wrestlers.

tional champion," Diaz said.

Did Dresser think Diaz had it in him?

"I did – I knew he was skilled," Dresser said. "Our concern with Chris early on was his work ethic. He's certainly not a guy who misses practice or anything, but getting the very most out of him at every practice was a challenge for us as a staff. I always called him an '80 percent guy.' He'd get to 80 percent of what he needed to accomplish and then he'd kind of shut down and go on cruise control in terms of getting tired. In wrestling, you have to learn how to perform when you get really tired. He would never get really tired in practice, so when he got in competition and became really tired, he would shut down and he would lose matches at the end."

Slowly but surely, Diaz made it over that hump last year. As Virginia Tech wrestling fans know by now, Diaz went on to place eighth in his weight class at the 2010 NCAA Championships. Much like when he earned that second-place finish at the Delaware state tournament as a high school sophomore, his taste of glory as a junior in college has left him thirsting for more.

"It made me happy that I was able to fulfill one of my goals and actually be the

first All-American [under Dresser]," Diaz said. "It's hard to explain, but once you actually make it onto that medal stand, there's no feeling like it."

"It really gave me a realistic view of what it takes to take that extra step ahead of everybody else. Being able to stand up there next to all these great wrestlers, with the excitement of looking at the crowd and taking it all in, it really made me want it more and more. I want to keep working hard this year to try to finish out my other goal. I have a few months to give it all I've got, so that's what I'm going to do."

Everything about Diaz's wrestling career has proved him to be a late bloomer. In high school, he didn't make the varsity team right away, he didn't embrace the sport until the end of his sophomore year and he didn't get recruited until he was a senior. In college, Virginia Tech was actually his second choice, and it took him a couple of years to maximize his potential. Heck, even in his best performance, the aforementioned All-America run, he dropped his first match and had to fight his way back through the loser's bracket.

One can only imagine what the end of this season, his final one, will bloom into. If the past is any indication, it's bound to be impressive. 

UPSET OVER TIDE BIGGEST IN TWO YEARS

By Chris Colston

(Reprinted from Vol. 7, No. 15 edition of the Hokie Huddler)

You've heard it before: "Every successful college basketball team needs a good big man." But in Blacksburg, they might start saying everybody needs a good little man.

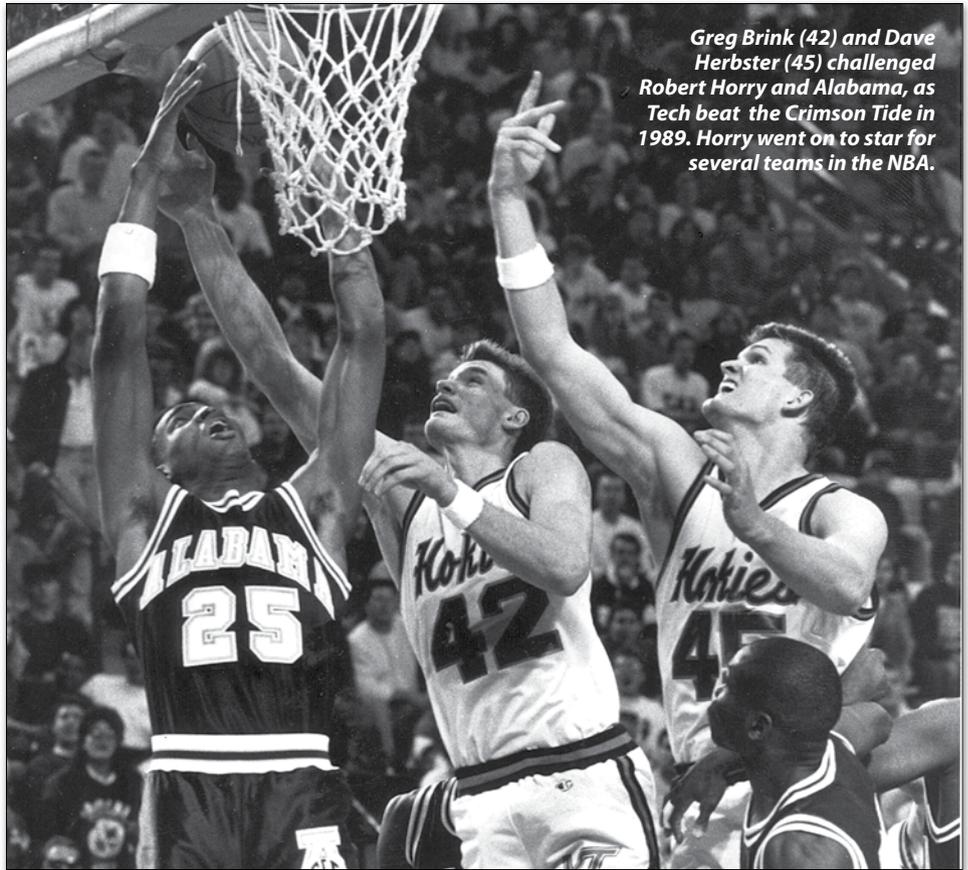
In the last few years, Virginia Tech fans have seen small guys such as Andre Turner, Elliot Perry, and Romell Shorter help send the Hokies home with losses. Spud Webb, Muggsy Bogues, Michael Adams and Dana Barros, among others, have made their mark elsewhere.

Now, Tech (2-1) has a big little man of its own.

Enter 5-foot-10 (that what they're saying) freshman Rod Wheeler, a key cog in the Hokies' 76-75 win over 21st-ranked Alabama last Monday in Cassell Coliseum.

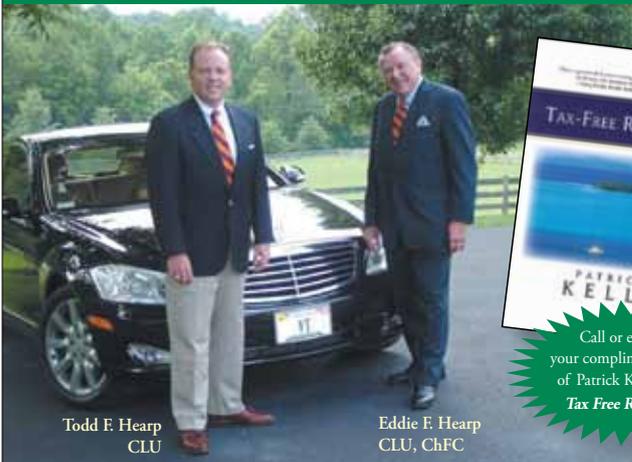
It was the biggest win for Tech since it upset No. 14 Georgetown on Dec. 9, 1987.

Wheeler came in for Bimbo Coles midway in the second half, but when Coles re-entered at the 7:58 mark, it was J.J. Burton,



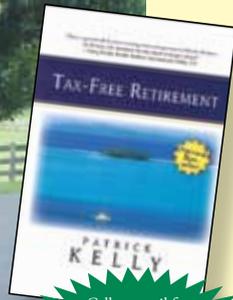
Greg Brink (42) and Dave Herbster (45) challenged Robert Horry and Alabama, as Tech beat the Crimson Tide in 1989. Horry went on to star for several teams in the NBA.

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not Wheeler, who came out.

"J.J. was struggling offensively and we needed a spark," head coach Frankie Allen said.

Down the stretch, Wheeler made two key steals, hit 2-of-2 3-point tries and made 3-of-4 free throws, finishing with nine points.

"Rod might have been the most poised player on the floor," Allen said. "He played like a senior. He was a catalyst, a spark, a Godsend. Our fans would have come out of the stands and lynched me if I had taken him out."

Alabama (4-1), No. 26 in *USA Today's* computer rankings (the Hokies were No. 113), was only a one-point favorite even though the Tide – with a roster full of big, athletic players – was coming off an upset of traditional power North Carolina.

Apparently, the Las Vegas odds makers were well aware of Tech's home court advantage, and the game was a struggle all the way.

A Melvin Cheatum lay-up gave the Tide a 62-59 lead with 3:40 left, but Coles answered. That's when Wheeler went into his act. First, he stole the inbounds pass and fed fellow freshman Dirk Williams for a lay-up. Then, after Alabama's Robert Horry scored, he hit a trey; then he made another

steal and was fouled. He sank both ends of the one-and-one to give Tech a 68-64 lead with 2:22 left.

After Alabama's Gary Waites and Coles traded buckets, Wheeler picked up a loose ball and drove to the basket. His lay-up went awry, but Williams was there to slam it home for a 72-66 lead and send Cassell Coliseum into delirium with 1:11 left.

"I could see a jam coming all the way from halfcourt," Williams said.

But it wasn't over yet. Keith Askins tipped in an errant shot, and then Tech's Williams was called for an illegal screen. Waites made one free throw, but Rivers rebounded and pitched out to Wheeler, who was fouled in the backcourt. His free throw with 32 seconds left made it 73-69 Tech, and John Rivers rebounded his miss, was fouled and made one for a 74-69 lead with 31 seconds left.

Horry missed a 3-point try, but stole Coles' cross-court pass. He lost the ball driving to the hoop, but the ball bounced off Tech center David Herbster and right back to Horry, who slammed it home and was fouled by Wheeler. Horry made the free throw, and Tech's lead was just two with 10 seconds left.

That was the call for Coles to earn his

reputation. He took the inbounds pass, was fouled and made both ends of the one-and-one to finally seal the victory. He finished with 34 points – no other Tech player scored in double figures.

After being out-rebounded 23-16 in the first half, Tech fought back to win the battle for the boards 43-42. Tech out-rebounded Alabama 14-5 on the offensive boards and 27-19 in the final 20 minutes.

"We had fresh legs at the end," Allen said.

Alabama coach Wimp Sanderson was terse with reporters after the game. "The difference in the game was their offensive rebounding," he said. "That's something we take great pride in ourselves, but we stood around and watched them. They out-worked us.

"The keys to the game were their offensive rebounding and the play of Coles. I don't know nothing about any of that other (stuff)."

Although Allen was pleased with the win, he pleaded Hokie fans to be cautious. "One game does not a season make," he said. "People wrote us off after the Marshall game, and that was wrong. This is a good win for us, but we still have a lot of work to do." 



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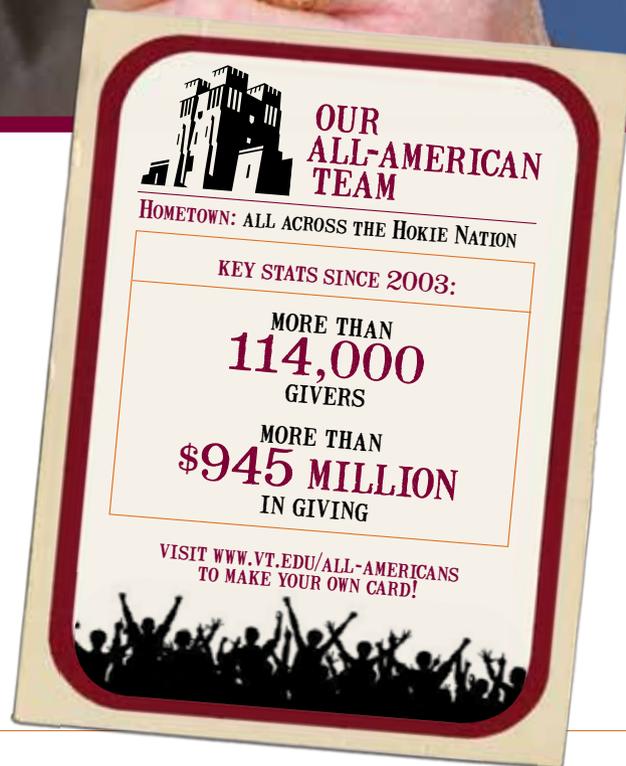


You're the team behind the team.

Stanley Cohen qualifies as a Golden Hokie because of his generous support of Virginia Tech Athletics and at this year's homecoming game he gave all of Lane Stadium a thrill by arranging the flyover of a World War II B-25 bomber.

Meanwhile, for many years Stan (architectural engineering '49, M.S. civil engineering '51) has given students in both the College of Engineering and the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets the opportunity to keep their college costs down, thanks to several scholarships he's created.

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