

inside

Vol. 6 No. 2, September 2013 • \$4

HOKIE SPORTS

The Official Publication of Virginia Tech Athletics

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Living through some rough times hasn't changed Brent Benedict's good-natured personality



STEPPING FORWARD

Jazmine Reeves has a career waiting for her once she graduates and now the high-scoring forward is focusing on getting the Tech women's soccer team back to the NCAAs

nTelos® wireless

PASS FOR CASH

PRESENTED BY **SAMSUNG**
mob!le

Imagine throwing a pass at the Maryland game with a chance to win a cross-country trip, plus spending money!

Enter to **Win \$5000** in Cash and **Free Airfare.**



► register online at
ntelos.com/p4c/vt



Tweet #Hokies

For Chances to Win Exclusive VIP Access and Prizes All Season.
And Share Your **#Hokies** Pride on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and Vine!  

nTelos® Wireless, official wireless provider of Virginia Tech football

For fast, **FREE** delivery, call 1-888-427-8858 or visit ntelos.com

Jimmy Robertson
Editor

Marc Mullen
Editorial Assistant

Bill Roth
Columnist

Tim East
Executive Editor

Dave Knachel
Photographer

Stacey Wells
Designer

Contributors

Brian Thornburg - Hokie Club
Kyle Winchester - IMG

* To advertise with Virginia Tech athletics or Inside Hokie Sports, contact Kyle Winchester at IMG Sports 540-961-7604

Cover photo by Lauren Rakes

Published by the Virginia Tech Athletics Department

Inside Hokie Sports (ISSN 8750-9148, periodical postage paid at Blacksburg Va. 24060 and additional mailing offices) covers Virginia Tech athletics and is published 11 times annually - monthly from August through June. The publisher is the Virginia Tech Athletics Department, 165 Spring Rd., Blacksburg, VA 24061.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICES: \$37.95 for one year (11 issues) and \$69.95 for two years. You can get an online subscription for \$25 and both the online and the print version for \$50. Mail all subscription inquiries, renewals, address changes, written inquiries and complaints to Inside Hokie Sports, Jamerson Athletic Center, Virginia Tech, 165 Spring Rd., Blacksburg, VA 24061 or call (540) 231-3908.

Inside Hokie Sports assumes no responsibility for companies and persons who advertise in this publication. Reproduction of contents in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. Publisher does not guarantee accuracy of information contained in any advertisement.

ATTN POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Inside Hokie Sports, P.O. Box 11101, Blacksburg, Va. 24061-1101.

Printed by Southern Printing Co., Inc., of Blacksburg, Virginia

contents

Hokie Club News | 4

News & Notes | 8
Former Tech Hall of Fame player passes away

From the Editor's Desk | 11
Despite loss, Hokies off to good start

Kroger Roth Report | 12
New offense a fit for Tech's personnel

Student Life | 14
Tech athletes help in the community

IHS Extra - Jim Weaver Q&A | 16
Tech's AD has been busy this past year dealing with an array of issues

IHS Extra - New video scoreboards installed | 18
High definition displays add to fan experience

Football Spotlight | 22
Good-natured Benedict a different breed

IHS Extra - Gittings named team chaplain | 28
Dave Gittings replaced Johnny Shelton

Hokies in the Pros | 30
Tapp joins boyhood favorite NFL team in offseason

Where are they now? - Myron Richardson | 36
Former Tech receiver works as a firefighter these days

IHS Extra - Tincher returns to Blacksburg | 38
Former Tech great named new softball pitching coach

Women's Soccer Spotlight - Jazmine Reeves | 40
Senior Hokie leader has priorities in order

Men's Soccer Spotlight - Kyle Renfro | 44
Goalie hopes to save Tech's 2013 ACC and NCAA chances



**Don't have a
subscription?**

Subscribe today!

Subscribe online at <http://inside.hokiesports.com> or cut out this section and mail with a check for the appropriate amount. Makes a great gift for every Hokie!

① Print options

1-year: \$37.95 2-year: \$69.95

Please make checks payable to: Treasurer, Virginia Tech

② Online option

1-year: \$25.00

Please designate a username and password (online version only):

Username: _____

Password: _____

Email: _____

You will receive an email confirmation once your account is activated.

Access the on-line version by entering your username and password at <http://inside.hokiesports.com>, once you receive your e-mail confirmation.

To order online: visit <http://inside.hokiesports.com> and click on the "subscribe" button at the bottom of the page.

Inside Hokie Sports
Jamerson Athletic Center, Virginia Tech
165 Spring Rd.
Blacksburg, VA 24061

2013 VIRGINIA TECH FOOTBALL

SINGLE GAME TICKETS

ON SALE NOW!

LIMITED NUMBER AVAILABLE • PURCHASE AT hokietickets.com

OR CALL THE VIRGINIA TECH ATHLETICS TICKET OFFICE AT (540) 231-6731
OR TOLL FREE AT 1-800-828-3244

**TRADITION
NEVER
STOPS.**



HOKIES DIG TOURNAMENT WIN

Playing in front of the new video scoreboards at Cassell Coliseum, the Virginia Tech volleyball team opened the 2013 season by winning three of four matches and claiming the championship of the Hokie Invitational played Aug. 30-31.





TECH
BALL



— VIRGINIA TECH —
VOLLEYBALL
WYOMING TEAM STATS

SETS	0
BLOCKS	0.0
ASS	0

“Thank you, Hokie Club members! Your support and encouragement has made my experience at Virginia Tech one of a kind! I am so very blessed to be a Hokie!”

Megan Beckwith
r-Junior | Volleyball

“Special thanks to the Hokie Club for all of their support! I have had an amazing experience at Virginia Tech!”

Jordan Fish
Junior | Volleyball





The Donor File

Shane Caudill

HOKIE CLUB LEVEL: Golden Hokie

HOKIE CLUB MEMBER SINCE: 2000

CURRENTLY RESIDES: Richmond, Va.

WHAT YEAR DID YOU GRADUATE? 1997

FAMILY: Sara Caudill (wife)



Q&A

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

A: We enjoy giving back. We enjoy knowing that our support, no matter how large or small, makes a difference. Athletics is very often a major factor on people's perception of your school. I don't think there is any doubt that our athletics success has greatly enhanced, in a positive manner, the overall perception of Virginia Tech. What has been built at Virginia Tech is very special. I'm proud to say we have played a part in that success.

Q: My all-time favorite Virginia Tech football player is (player's name) and my favorite memory of him is ...

A: There have been so many over the years ... Tyrod Taylor, Bryan Randall, Corey Moore, Maurice DeShazo, Lee Suggs, the entire secondary from the 1995 team, Danny Coale [etc.]. But my favorite is probably Jim Druckenmiller. He was the quarterback while I was a student at Virginia Tech, and the 1995

comeback win against UVa and the Sugar Bowl win over Texas are games that I will never forget. Honorable mention goes to Jermaine Holmes for "the catch" against UVa in 1995. I will never forget that play as long as I live.

Q: When you drive into Blacksburg for a game, are there any "must-do" things for you and your family?

A: The first thing I always want to do is race to our tailgate spot and get set up! So our biggest "must-do" item is getting to Blacksburg as early as we can to start tailgating. We haven't won all the games we've been to over the years, but we've never lost a tailgate.

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

A: I think our best tradition is a more recent event that we started for our football tailgates. One game per year is designated as the chili cook-off tailgate. My dad and my wife, Sara, each cook up a pot of chili, and everyone at our tailgate and neighboring tailgates get

to vote for the best chili. We have a trophy that goes home with the winner. Last year, Sara and my dad even had additional competition, as we had one of our tailgating buddies enter a third pot into the contest. So far, the trophy has gone home with Sara each year. There is a lot of good-natured ribbing between the competitors, and everyone has a blast trying out and tasting some great chili recipes.

Q: My all-time favorite Virginia Tech student-athlete from another sport is (player's name) and my favorite memory of (player's name) is ...

A: Again, I have so many favorites that it is hard to choose. I'm going to pick a coach instead. I'm a huge fan of wrestling coach Kevin Dresser. I've been lucky to hear him speak on several occasions, both in Blacksburg and in Richmond, and I just like what this guy is all about. He rebuilt the wrestling program from the ground up and has made them a force. He's passionate about his sport and Virginia Tech, and I'm glad that we have him on our side.



The following represents **Annual Fund donors (gifts from \$100 to \$10,000 annually)** who have either joined as new Hokie Club members or have upgraded their Hokie Club memberships from January through mid-August of 2013. We want to celebrate these commitments of helping improve Virginia Tech athletics by recognizing them and by saying "Thank You!"

NEW MEMBERS

Todd	Anthony	Wake Forest, NC
Sanjeev	Banja	Glen Allen, VA
Michele	Bannon	Mechanicsville, VA
Robert	Bennett	Raleigh, NC
Donna	Boone	Ashburn, VA
Christopher	Bradford	Arlington, VA
Robert	Brooks	Virginia Beach, VA
Brett	Buckland	Boones Mill, VA
William	Butz	Glen Allen, VA
Scott	Campbell	Lynchburg, VA
Sarah	Carlson	Louisville, KY
Judy	Cavanaugh	Herndon, VA
Guy	Chapman	Richmond, VA
Lisa	Cohe	Augusta, GA
Gary	Creasy	Roanoke, VA
Long	David	Roanoke, VA
William	Dixon	Radford, VA
Jeananne	Dixon	Blacksburg, VA
Matt	Donlon	Midlothian, VA
Jeffrey	Doughty	Arlington, VA
Nancy	Dye	Roanoke, VA
Angelique	Edwards	Princeton, WV
Drew	Forte	Winchester, VA
William	Glidden, Jr.	Yorktown, VA
William	Goodson, Jr.	Great Falls, VA
Crystal	Guffee	Winchester, VA
R. J.	Hall	Fairfax, VA
William	Hill, III	Lindenhurst, IL
Stacie	Hogan	Portsmouth, VA
Alex	Horton	Woodlawn, VA
Jeff	Hubbard	Virginia Beach, VA
An-Ming	Hwang	Centreville, VA
John	Jones	Manassas, VA
Heather	Jones	North Chesterfield, VA
Maegan	Keane	Arlington, VA
Ricardo	Manrique	Smithfield, VA
Dale	McCoy	Marietta, GA
John	McNulty	Williamsburg, VA
Kevin	Moomaw	Orkney Springs, VA
Bonnie	Murphy	Norfolk, VA
New River Soccer Association		Christiansburg, VA
Caitlin	O'Connell	Casanova, VA
Nicholas	Overholt	Rocky Mount, VA
Bill	Pafford	Damascus, VA
Warren	Palmer	Blacksburg, VA
Howard	Pardue	Fontana, CA
Suzanne	Parker	Florence, SC
Sharon	Parrish	Newport News, VA
Ricky	Payne	Roanoke, VA
Joey	Phillips	Blacksburg, VA
Cathy	Price	Blacksburg, VA
Todd	Rauchenberger	Smithfield, VA
Andrew	Rivenbark	Portsmouth, VA
Karl	Roulston	Woodstock, VA
James	Rountree, Sr.	Martinsville, VA
John	Seabrook, Jr.	Centreville, VA
Travis	Sheets	Vass, NC
Barry	Shiflett	Raleigh, NC

Jon & Beth	Smith	Culpeper, VA
William	Stephens	Fredericksburg, VA
Lynn	Surum	Atlanta, GA
Howard	Sykes, Jr.	Virginia Beach, VA
Kate	Thompson	Richmond, VA
Gerald	Trainor	McLean, VA
William	Tuttle	Chesapeake, VA
Kristy	Wade	Mechanicsville, VA
Elton	Wade, III	Mechanicsville, VA
William	Webb	Richmond, VA
Connor	White	La Grange, IL
Christopher	Wilcox	Hampton, VA
Garland	Williams	Lynchburg, VA
Stephanie	Williams	Reston, VA
Jamie	Williams	Radford, VA
Gary	Williams, Jr.	Reston, VA
John	Willingham	Winchester, VA
Mark	Woods	Wilmington, NC
Mallory	Wyatt	Mechanicsville, VA
Kareem	Zaki	Galax, VA
Samatha	Zanotti	Chantilly, VA

UPGRADING MEMBERS

J. C.	Barnold	Olney, MD
Adam	Bartlett	Richmond, VA
Robert	Bishop, Jr.	Alpharetta, GA
August & Kim	Briele	Salem, VA
Steven	Brodie	Thomason, GA
Karen	Brown	Chesapeake, VA
Regina	Buck	Aldie, VA
Ray & Jenny	Clarke	Huntersville, NC
Claude	Eley, Jr.	Smithfield, VA
A. J.	Engelberg, Jr.	Springfield, MO
Judy & James	Evans	Concord, VA
Michael	Everett	Christiansburg, VA
Leroy	Gravatte, III	Springfield, VA
Walter	Ickes, Jr.	Georgetown, KY
Thomas	Johnston, Jr.	Richmond, VA
Ahsanul	Khan	Corvallis, OR
Katherine	Lee	Tustin, CA
Robert	Litton	Fort Worth, TX
Vickie & Todd	Lonker	Cary, NC
Glynn	LoPresti	Ashburn, VA
Philip	Louer	Riner, VA
Myrtle Beach Hokie Club		Myrtle Beach, SC
E. A.	Overstreet, III	Bedford, VA
Bill	Pafford	Damascus, VA
Jim & Gail	Patterson	Christiansburg, VA
Barry	Pearson	Virginia Beach, VA
Frank	Pleva	Mathews, VA
Bryan & Dina	Purcell	Washington, DC
Charles	Renner, Jr.	Bowie, MD
Lisa	Stewart	Danville, VA
Paul	Torgersen	Blacksburg, VA
Glenn	VanLandingham	Ashburn, VA
Mark	Wales	Bay City, TX
Justin	Yalung	Christiansburg, VA

We are pleased to welcome these new members into the Hokie Club. We are also excited that so many of our existing Hokie Club members have upgraded their memberships. Annual Fund donations are key to our success and we would like to thank these members for their support of Virginia Tech athletics!

LU MERRITT | Senior Director of Development for Intercollegiate athletics

Nine true freshmen play in opener

Nine true freshmen played in the football season opener against Alabama in the Georgia Dome, marking the most true freshman to play under coach Frank Beamer since 2002. The 2002 group included guys like Darryl Tapp, Jimmy Williams and Jonathan Lewis.

This year's group included cornerback Kendall Fuller, cornerback Brandon Facyson, defensive tackle Woody Baron, safety Chuck Clark, left tackle Jonathan McLaughlin, fullback Sam Rogers, tailback Jerome Wright, receiver Carlis Parker and kicker Mitchell Ludwig. Facyson, Baron, Wright, McLaughlin and Parker all enrolled this past January and participated in spring practice.

Fuller, Facyson and McLaughlin played the most against the Crimson Tide. Tech's coaching staff credited Fuller with five tackles and an assist, while crediting Facyson with a solo tackle. McLaughlin played in 60 plays from his left tackle spot.

A year ago, Tech played eight true freshmen. Here's a look at who has played as a true freshman back to 2001:

2012 – J.C. Coleman, Josh Stanford, A.J. Hughes, Donovan Riley, Desmond Frye, Donaldven Manning, Deon Clark, Brooks Abbott

2011 – Ryan Malleck, Luther Maddy, Corey Marshall, Caleb Farris, Boye Aromire, Kyshoen Jarrett, Michael Branthover

2010 – Derrick Hopkins, Kyle Fuller

2009 – David Wilson, Jayron Hosley, D.J. Coles

2008 – Jarrett Boykin, Dyrell Roberts, Justin Myer, Eddie Whitley, Jake Johnson, Xavier Boyce

2007 – Davon Morgan, Tyrod Taylor, Chris Drager

2006 – Nekos Brown, Kam Chancellor, Jason Worlds, Sergio Render, Stephan Virgil

2005 – Macho Harris

2004 – Brandon Flowers, Eddie Royal, Justin Harper, Josh Morgan, Sean Glennon, Brett Warren, D.J. Parker, Jared Develli

2003 – David Clowney, Ryan Hash, Thomas McClelland

2002 – Darryl Tapp, Mike Imoh, Jonathan Lewis, Jimmy Williams, Cary Wade, Jimmy Martin, Danny McGrath, Reggie Butler, John Candelas

2001 – Bryan Randall, DeAngelo Hall, Kevin Jones, Jim Miller, Jeff Werner

(NOTE: some of these players redshirted later on in their careers. Also, Stanford, Drager, Worlds and Flowers all played as true freshmen, but received medical hardship waivers after getting injured that year.)

Tech Hall of Famer passes away

Jack Prater, a former Tech football player, assistant coach and director of the Hokie Club, passed away on Aug. 27 in Christiansburg at the age of 82 after a long bout with dementia and Alzheimer's.

Prater played on the 1950 and 1951 football teams before leaving school for two years to serve in the U.S. Army. He came back to Tech in 1954 and played on the team that went undefeated – 8-0-1- under head coach Frank Moseley. That team marked the school's last undefeated squad.

He was a co-captain on the 1955 team and earned All-Southern Conference honors as a center. Following the season, he was chosen to play in the Blue-Gray All-Star Classic, a game of former college all-stars that is played in Mobile, Ala., around Christmas.

Prater spent 10 years as an assistant coach at Virginia Tech, William & Mary and Miami. He came

back to Blacksburg in 1968 to work as the field secretary in the Student Aid Association (which later became the Virginia Tech Athletic Fund, or Hokie Club) before getting back into football as an administrative assistant under coach Charlie Coffey.

In 1978, after leaving Tech for several years to work in the private sector, he returned to work as an assistant AD under then-AD and football coach Bill Dooley. In 1979, Prater became the executive director of the Student Aid Association.

In 1988, the university tabbed Mike Carroll to be in charge of the Hokie Club, but Prater remained on the staff as the assistant director of development for athletic programs. He stayed in that role until he retired in 1994.

For all his contributions to Tech athletics over the years, Prater was inducted into the Virginia Tech Sports Hall of Fame in 1993.

Malleck the latest out for the season

Tech tight end Ryan Malleck became the third Virginia Tech football player to suffer a season-ending injury after suffering a labral tear in his left shoulder in an Aug. 20 practice that required surgery. Malleck, who did not redshirt his first two seasons at Tech, will use this upcoming season as a redshirt year to recover from the injury.

Malleck, a native of Point Pleasant, N.J., joined tailback Tony Gregory (knee) and whip linebacker Ronny Vandyke (shoulder) on the list of players lost for the season with injuries. Gregory, a redshirt senior from Virginia Beach, Va., saw his career end with his third ACL tear, while Vandyke, a redshirt sophomore from Lorton, Va., will return next season for his redshirt junior year. 



Container First Services
Service 1st . . . Just Behind Safety

Locally owned and operated, CFS leads the industry in providing a one-stop solution for all of your solid waste needs.

With roll-off containers and commercial dumpsters, LEED-certified recycling and a full line of new and refurbished equipment for sale, CFS provides the most professional and convenient solid waste services in the area. Our experienced team is here to identify and resolve your unique waste disposal needs.

CFS sets the bar for what an integrated solid waste services company should be!



**CFS Provides a
One-Stop
Solution for
All of Your Solid Waste Needs.**





Container First Services

333-B Industrial Drive, Petersburg, VA 23803 www.containerfirst.com
Phone: 804.748.8324 Fax: 804.706.1121 Toll Free: 1.866.587.HAUL(4285)

Distinctively Dye

Distinctively **VT**



VT  **One Great Weekend!**

FOOTBALL + GOLF =

Call today for tee times!
1-800-PeteDye
www.PeteDyeRiverCourse.com

THE BROWNSTONE

LIVE WORK SHOP



The Brownstone Condominium is located at 301 South Main Street in the heart of downtown Blacksburg. Whether you are a retiree or alumni looking for a home in Blacksburg; a graduate student or a professional; The Brownstone is the premiere Hokie location. Sports, plays, concerts or classes – all of these and more are available to you just minutes from your doorstep.

LIVE

The Brownstone's residential condominiums range from 1238sf – 3122sf and include 10' ceilings, custom lighting, granite countertops, fireplaces and hardwood floors throughout. Spacious covered balconies provide extended living space perfect for grilling and enjoying the views. All pre-construction buyers are able to customize their homes to their individual styles.

WORK

Our second floor units are the ideal location for your business needs; range in size from 685sf to 7000sf; can be customized to your specific needs; and, are available for lease or sale.

Our first floor units are the prime location for your retail business with sizes ranging from 780sf to 3435sf; can be customized to your specific needs; and, are available for lease or sale.

Our status on August 6, 2013:

	Space Committed	Space Available
Floor 1 (retail)	4,500 Sq ft	9,402 Sq ft
Floor 2 (office)	7,489 Sq ft	7,657 Sq ft
Floor 3 & 4 (residential)	16,832 Sq ft	15,346 Sq ft

www.thebrownstoneblacksburg.com
Steve Hill
Office: 540-808-2213 Cell: 540-520-9730





editor's desk | by Jimmy Robertson

Despite loss, Hokies get off to a solid start to 2013 season

When Demitri Knowles caught the opening kickoff from Alabama kicker Cade Foster, the green flagged dropped on the 13-week race that is the 2013 football season. Unfortunately, 60 minutes worth of game time later, the Hokies stumbled across the finish line of the first segment on the wrong end of a 35-10 defeat to No. 1 and two-time defending champion Alabama.

Yet, to be completely counterintuitive, the Hokies actually got off to a solid start to this season.

The statistics certainly bear this out as Tech out-gained the top-ranked team in the country 212-206, out-rushed them 153-96, recorded 12 tackles for a loss, had four sacks and picked off a pass. The Hokies lost by nearly four touchdowns because special teams count, as we know, and the Crimson Tide got a touchdown on a punt return and a kick return and also got one on an interception return.

They also got the win. Those were the differences.

The telling analysis of this game came from Alabama coach Nick Saban.

"They [the Hokies] out-played us up front, if you want to know the truth," Saban said.

Therein lies where Tech comes out feeling great about its performance.

Defensively, most Tech fans expected that type of performance from a front seven that returned six starters – six really good ones, too. Tackles Luther Maddy and Derrick Hopkins owned the interior of Alabama's front line, and as a result, Tariq Edwards and Jack Tyler were everywhere making tackles. In addition to sacking Alabama quarterback A.J. McCarron four times, the Hokies harassed him on eight other occasions.

The pressure helped Tech's young corners, who held up well against Alabama receiver Amari Cooper, a consensus freshman All-American last season. Cooper caught just four passes. McCarron completed only 10.

"Defensively, we played one of the best defensive games we've ever played around here," head coach Frank Beamer said. "We were flying around. I thought we were physical. We were tackling some good backs and explosive wide receivers, and we did a good job of that. I felt good about that."

The surprise performance came from the Hokies' much-maligned offensive line, which held up well against Alabama's front. Logan Thomas was sacked once, and Trey Edmunds made history, rushing for more yards than any Tech running back in a debut game at the school. He ran for 132 yards on 20 carries.

Only three of Edmunds' carries lost yards (1 yard on each carry). Skeptics might say his numbers were skewed by a 77-yard touchdown run in which he out-ran Alabama's defense after getting great blocking at the point of attack. But really? That run doesn't count?

Tech broke in two new tackles, including freshman Jon McLaughlin, who became the first freshman to start at left tackle under Beamer. That Alabama got one sack – which offensive coordinator Scot Loeffler actually pinned on Thomas – speaks volumes.

"I think we proved a lot with some young guys on the offensive line," said Andrew Miller, Tech's lynchpin on the offensive line. "I can't speak from the other positions, but I think we're going to learn from this game and improve greatly from it."

Beamer got a lot of what he expected out of this game. He knows the Hokies are going to play great defense, and that they have two good kickers. He knows Thomas, though he suffered a subpar passing performance, is a tremendous leader and a good quarterback.

But Beamer got so much more out of this. The offensive line showed potential, and the Hokies found a tailback in Edmunds. Plus, the 20 Tech players who saw their first collegiate action, including nine true freshmen, held up well for the most part.

"You kind of get a reading for where you are," Beamer said. "You see if people can handle the biggest of big situations, how they handle it and how they react to it. In college football, the first time you play for real, you're playing a regular opponent. It's regular season, not preseason games or scrimmages.

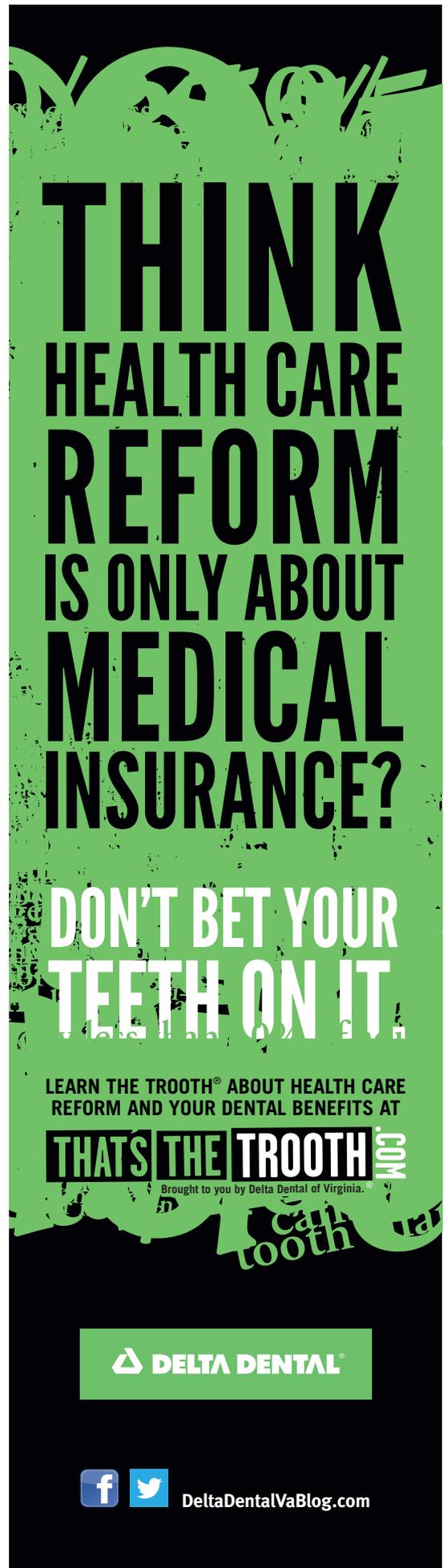
"That first game, I think you get a great evaluation. You can see how kids respond to those types of situations."

Beamer said that in a news conference before the game. During the game, he found out how his team responded to that type of situation. Needless to say, he was pleased.

"I think we have a chance to be a really good football team," he admitted. "We've got some work to do. We've got some execution to do. But I think the essential parts are there to be a really good football team."

In the end, the Hokies didn't land on the throat of college football's premier program and take a giant leap forward. But they did take small steps.

They should be optimistic that bigger ones are yet to come. 



THINK HEALTH CARE REFORM IS ONLY ABOUT MEDICAL INSURANCE?

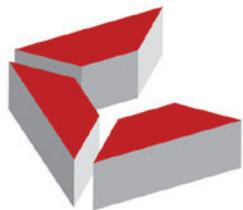
DON'T BET YOUR TEETH ON IT.

LEARN THE TRUTH[®] ABOUT HEALTH CARE REFORM AND YOUR DENTAL BENEFITS AT **THATSTHE TROUTH.COM**

Brought to you by Delta Dental of Virginia.

DELTA DENTAL

  DeltaDentalVaBlog.com



CAPITAL

Interior Contractors, Inc

An Employee Owned Company

3201 A Rosedale Avenue
Richmond Virginia 23230
Phone (804) 353-1447

Fax (804) 353-2530

WWW.CAPITALINT-CONTRACTORS.COM

**Light Gauge Metal
Framing & Trusses**

Drywall

Plaster / Stucco / EIFS

Insulation

Metal & Acoustical Ceilings

Rough & Finish Carpentry

**SWaM Certified Thru The Department
of Minority Business Enterprise
("DMBE")**

**Serving the Entire
Commonwealth of Virginia**



**Proud Partner of
Virginia Tech Athletics**



kroger roth report | by **Bill Roth**



Misdirection, options key to Tech's offensive philosophy



Hopefully, the ability of Tech's offense to do multiple things will lead to more big plays, like this 77-yard touchdown run by Trey Edmunds against Alabama.

Back in January, Virginia Tech introduced Scot Loeffler as the team's new offensive coordinator.

On Aug. 31 against No. 1 Alabama, Loeffler introduced a new offense to Hokie fans everywhere.

"What we're going to be is basically a pro-style team with the ability to run the spread offense," Loeffler said after a preseason where Tech's key scrimmages and practices were closed. "What we're going to do is actually similar to the Washington Redskins except they're a wide zone team with the ability to run some play action and spread option. We're doing basically the same thing except using the triple-option."

That's a new look for Virginia Tech. For fans who have asked for "an identity" for the Hokies' offense over the years, well, now you've got one.

"We want to give that option look, the misdirection and counter action," head coach Frank Beamer said. "It makes it harder on defenses to shift and stunt. It makes it harder to blitz."

That was Loeffler's game plan in the opening series against Alabama at the Georgia Dome.

"We were going to run the triple option the first series regardless of the down and the distance," Loeffler said. "The reasons were, No. 1, Alabama hadn't prepared for it, of course, because that's something Virginia Tech has never done. But secondly, Nick's [Saban] blitz packages are so effective and so complex that we wanted to back them off a bit."

Thus, even when the Hokies' faced third-and-9 on their opening possession, they ran an option play with D.J. Coles carrying the ball.

"What that does is give the defensive coordinators something else to plan for," Beamer said.

If you think Beamer and Loeffler are sounding a bit like Redskins' offensive coordinator Kyle Shanahan, you're right.

"The zone read is something I feel in the long run helps a quarterback," Shanahan told blogger Dave Elfin of Washington, D.C., radio affiliate 106.7 The Fan. "Everyone's accounted for, and there aren't many free hitters. The whole key to the zone read is just the threat of the zone read. If you're not honoring it [as a defense], you're [an offense] usually going to get 15 yards before contact. It [2012] was the least pass rush I've ever seen as a coordinator. They [defenses] were just sitting there just scared to death, just watching and not moving."

In Tech's system, it's the threat of the triple option that will keep defenses on their heels. Tech may line up in the wishbone, even with Thomas in the shotgun and then shift to four wide receivers, or vice-versa. That's something new and exciting.

"About halfway through [last] year, I realized we're not getting any of these blitzes that I used to see. The threat of a quarterback running makes [defenses] play 11 on 11 as opposed to 11 on 10, like they've been doing my whole career," Shanahan said.

Thomas, who sees guys like Colin Kaepernick [San Francisco 49ers quarterback], Russell Wilson [Seattle Seahawks quarterback], and Robert Griffin III [Washington Redskins quarterback] running something similar in the NFL, is excited about Tech's new scheme.



“It’s a little bit of everything,” Thomas said when asked to describe the offense. “Defenses have to pick up on everything and prepare for it. We’ve got a lot of shifts and motions that are going to make it tough for people. If we get lined up and run the right blocking schemes, it’s going to be tough for people to stop us.”

Loeffler and offensive line coach Jeff Grimes are in agreement that it’s the best offense to run for the Hokies’ current personnel.

“Absolutely,” Loeffler said. “If you look at the makeup of our offensive line, the skill position people we have, and the abilities and experience of Logan, this offense fits exactly what we want to do.”

How does the scheme work in practicality? Trey Edmunds’ 77-yard touchdown run in the Alabama game offers a perfect example.

“We were giving the illusion that we were running triple option, but it wasn’t,” Loeffler told me. “We ended up kicking out the mike linebacker (with a tight end block), and Trey was able to split it.”

Indeed, Thomas and Willie Byrn did a great job selling the option fake on this play, and then tight end Darius Redman made a nice block on Alabama’s All-America linebacker, C.J. Mosley. Andrew Miller got a nice block, too, on Alabama linebacker Trey DePriest.

The blocking and execution were perfect, and Edmunds out-ran the Alabama defenders 77 yards for a touchdown.

But the beauty is this: From the original formation, the play could have just as easily been a pass to Redman, or a quick screen to a receiver, or an option give to Byrn, or a play-action deep ball.

“We can do a lot of things from the same formation, and the shifting and misdirection keeps a defense from just teeing off on Logan,” Beamer

said.

It’s a pro style offense, with the ability to run the spread and the triple option. And it will be fun to watch how this new offense grows and improves as the season progresses.

THE VOICE’S MAILBAG

Dear Bill- Another blowout loss to an SEC team. What good does it do our team and our players to get beat like that? With a young team, it would have been much smarter to open with a home game against an easy opponent, win 56-3 and let them get some playing time. Instead, we got embarrassed by Alabama, again. Todd, Arlington, Va.

Todd- I thought it was a good game to play for Tech. Opening against Alabama gives our coaches a great yardstick of where the team is and where improvement must be made. I’m not sure Tech was “embarrassed” in this game or the 2009 game against Alabama, so I’m not sure where you’re coming from whatsoever. The game drew a 3.1 national television rating, which is tremendous exposure. The Hokies earned \$2.5 million, and the team learned a lot about itself – certainly more than it would have learned in a 56-3 win over an easy opponent.

Dear Bill- I really enjoyed listening to you and Mike in Atlanta. The reception in the Georgia Dome was perfect. A couple of thoughts:

1. We should play Alabama every year, or at least a powerful SEC team. It’s good for our players and a lot of fun for fans.

2. While Alabama was good, I don’t think that was the best team Tech has ever played, like Coach Beamer said. Time will tell, but that 1999 Florida State team or some early 90’s Miami teams were

better, IMO.

3. Trey Edmunds is the man.

Thanks for all you do. Chris, Charlotte, N.C.

Chris- Thanks for listening. We’re glad you enjoyed the trip despite the outcome of the game. We’ll see how good this Alabama team ends up, but as David Teel wrote in this story, the 2001 Miami team that Tech played had eight future NFL Pro Bowl players in its starting lineup: <http://www.dailypress.com/sports/teel-blog/dp-teel-time-miami-2001-beamer,0,921170.post>. That Miami team, and the 1987 Miami team, which featured Michael Irvin, Melvin Bratton and Steve Walsh certainly merit discussion. Also, as you said, the ‘99 Seminoles, and some of the 90’s ‘Canes teams (think Warren Sapp and Ray Lewis) come to mind.

Bill- You guys need to talk more about Kyle and Kendall Fuller. What a GREAT job they did against Alabama. Justin, Richmond, Va.

Justin- You’re right. Kyle was fantastic against Alabama, especially in one-on-one situations with Amari Cooper. Kendall has a really bright future, too. The Fullers have been outstanding players and even better people for Tech’s program over the years, and I’m eager to see Kendall develop in the coming years.

Dear Bill- I haven’t felt this good about a Tech offensive line since the mid-90’s. What do you think about these guys? JT, Marion, Va.

JT- You have to be impressed with what coach Jeff Grimes and those guys are doing. We must avoid injuries and could use a few more bodies, but that’s a really nice group that’s working hard. They should improve as the season progresses.

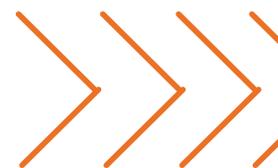


customcateringcenter.com 540-951-8295

For all of your catering needs use the oldest and most experinced catering company in Blacksburg

Proudly serving HOKIES since 1976!

Tech student-athletes make a difference with summertime service



by Reyna Gilbert-Lowry

While many students were enjoying the final days of summer before the start of classes, several Virginia Tech student-athletes made time to take part in local volunteer opportunities in the Christiansburg and Roanoke communities.

In July, football student-athletes T.J. Shaw, Devin Vandyke, Ronny Vandyke, Antone Exum, Luther Maddy and Kyshoen Jarrett visited the New River Valley Juvenile Detention Home in Christiansburg. This summer, the deputy superintendent implemented the “Character Counts” character education program, which is centered on basic values called the Six Pillars of Character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. The Virginia Tech student-athletes were asked to discuss the topic of fairness and also share how their experiences on the field have shaped their lives.

The group immediately connected with the youth by sharing their own experiences growing up and how, collectively, they came to the realization that something had to change for them to reach their goals of becoming a student-athlete at Virginia Tech. Shaw has recently been asked to share his story and speak to local youth groups about the importance of making positive choices. Ronny and Devin Vandyke shared how their strong faith has kept them on the path to reaching their goals.

“When I met the kids, I was really impressed with how they gave us their attention and were glued into what I had to say,” Ronny Vandyke said. “It’s unfortunate that they made decisions in their lives

which led them to juvenile detention. At the end of our visit, I shared with them that whatever they did in their past doesn’t define who they are and that God has a plan no matter the circumstances.”

The Tech athletes were grateful for the opportunity to interact with the kids and provide them with a positive message for the day.

Members of the football team weren’t the only ones volunteering within the community. Each preseason, the Tech women’s soccer team explores innovative ways to increase team cohesion in preparation for the upcoming season. On the morning of Aug. 14, the team took team-building literally and volunteered through Habitat for Humanity in the Roanoke Valley. The project sites, located in the west end area of Roanoke, were part of Roanoke’s Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative, which is designed to partner with residents to address their building needs and also improve the quality of life in the neighborhoods.

The student-athletes were joined by the entire coaching staff as well as the team’s athletic trainer, Katie Baer, department sports psychologist Dr. Gary Bennett, and Reyna Gilbert-Lowry, assistant athletics director for student life.

“The Habitat for Humanity build was a fun, worthwhile experience for our players to look beyond soccer, academics and their daily life,” head coach Charles “Chugger” Adair said. “The players were able to get down to business and help families in need while trying to figure out how to do things normally outside their comfort zone. We thoroughly enjoyed this experience.”

When they arrived at each site, they were greeted by the project manager and the homeowner. Habitat homeowners invest hundreds of hours of their own labor into building their Habitat house and the houses of others. The team immediately saw how committed the homeowners were to being involved in the successful completion of their homes. This experience was not only humbling to see, but also showed what the power of teamwork can accomplish, according to redshirt junior Shannon Mayrose.

The team split up into two groups to work at different construction sites located about two blocks away from one another. The first group got to work hoisting wooden frames from the ground onto the second floor of the home and building one of the second floor exterior walls. The construction at the second home was further along, and that group worked alongside the homeowner to install windows on the first and second floors.

By lunchtime, there was visible progress at both homes, and the groups were proud of what they had accomplished.

“Habitat for Humanity was great!” senior Jazmine Reeves said. “It was an experience for an awesome cause. Along with helping others in the community, we did a lot that we could easily relate to our team and situations we may encounter.”

Virginia Tech student-athletes are doing more than competing in their sports and going to classes. As these examples can attest, they are living out the school’s “Ut Prosim” motto (“That I may serve”) in their daily lives as well. 



Since 1969, G&H Appliance has been serving the New River Valley & beyond. At G&H we have experienced professionals you can trust, an extensive selection and competitive prices. Nobody does it better.



1290 Roanoke Street
Christiansburg, VA 24073
540-382-7500

www.gandhappliances.com

Find us on  at G&H Appliance





Members of the Virginia Tech women's soccer team lived up to the university's "Ut Prosim" motto ("That I May Serve") by taking a day during their preseason to help build homes for Habitat for Humanity in Roanoke.

Photos courtesy of Reyna Gilbert-Lowry

Weaver touches on array of topics as 2013-14 seasons begin

by Jimmy Robertson

Virginia Tech is coming off arguably its best year of competition in the ACC, as the football program won a bowl game, three teams won ACC championships and five others finished second in league tournaments. College athletics remains in a state of flux, but the Tech athletics department appears to be in good shape going forward. Tech AD Jim Weaver sat down and answered several questions covering an array of topics concerning the athletics department. Here are his answers:

Q: Looking back at last year and the success of many sports, was it one of the more rewarding years of your tenure, or did the struggles of the football and basketball programs take some of the shine off the success?

JW: I don't think there's any question with the successes, especially with regard to ACC championships, that it was one of our best years ever. Wrestling won its first one, men's track won three in a row [2012 outdoors, 2012 cross country and 2013 indoor], baseball finished second in the ACC Tournament, men's and women's swimming were second, men's tennis went to its seventh straight NCAA tournament, women's soccer had an outstanding year ... it was just an outstanding year, and for people who say that Virginia Tech is just a football school, that concept is not correct. It's inaccurate.

One of the things we've tried to do to help our Olympic sports get better is that, every time we build a new facility, we try to engage the "trickle-down effect." As an example, we moved wrestling into an outstanding new facility on the third floor of the football building. That helped wrestling, and it helped all the other sports because we took the west auxiliary gym and put in a very nice, new Olympic sports weight room that is twice as big as what we had before. This allowed more teams to work out at the same time and get better in that aspect of their program. We've done that with the football locker room. The old football locker room has been converted into three new locker rooms and all the hot and cold tubs and sauna have been renovated in that space.

Things like that are helping all of our Olympic sports. We have tried diligently to make more than one operation get better with all the various facilities we've dealt with.

Q: You've been busy here lately with the football schedule, adding home-and-home series with Michigan, West Virginia and Penn State. What has prompted all the additions of these top-flight programs?

JW: We're just filling out future schedules, and now that the Notre Dame situation has worked itself out (the Irish will play five ACC games a year), this is the time to do it. If you look at the history of our schedule, we've played some quality nonconference opponents. Just this past decade, we've played Clemson, LSU, Texas A&M, West Virginia, Nebraska, Alabama and Boise State. That's a pretty good group of programs.

So really, we're just duplicating what we've done before in the past decade. We're playing Alabama this year and then we play Ohio State twice. We're going to play Wisconsin, though that has been pushed back at the request of ESPN (to 2019 and 2020). We're going to play Michigan (2020 and 2021), West Virginia (2021 and 2022) and Penn State (2022 and 2023). So I don't think it's much of a change from our philosophy of the past.

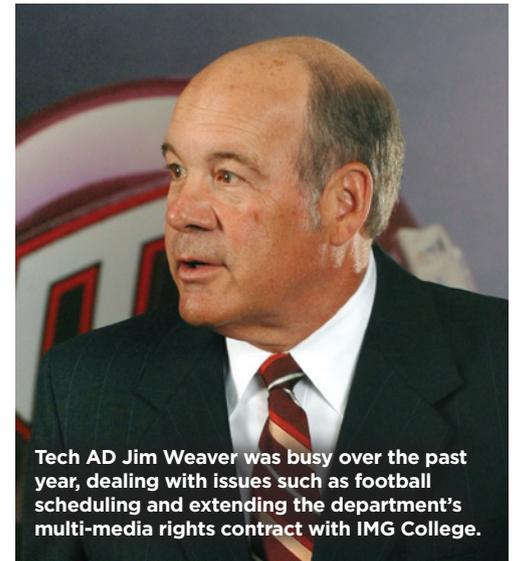
Q: How much has the new college football playoff format, which begins in 2014, entered into your thinking as far future scheduling?

JW: A lot. We all know that strength of schedule is going to be a much stronger criteria now than it has ever been. You want to put your program in the best possible position to earn a playoff spot, so it only makes sense to prepare for that going forward in terms of scheduling tougher teams.

Q: There are vacancies for the 2016, 2017 and 2018 schedules. Is there anything you can tell us about possible additions there?

JW: We're working on it, and to be honest, we'll probably have everything worked out before people receive your issue. But I don't want to get into the details until everything is finalized. As you can imagine, we've been in this situation before, and things have changed. Scheduling tends to be fluid, as you well know.

Q: There has been a lot of offseason discussion about the selling of season tickets throughout college football, and a number of big-name programs are



Tech AD Jim Weaver was busy over the past year, dealing with issues such as football scheduling and extending the department's multi-media rights contract with IMG College.

struggling to sell tickets, including Virginia Tech. What do you think is the contributing factor to why season ticket sales are down nationally?

JW: I think there are a number of factors. I think one factor is the television industry and how high-definition televisions keep a segment of the population at home to watch games. I think another factor is the economy. The tougher it gets economically, the more issues you're going to see in the ticket industry. When people can stay at home and have the opportunity to have big tailgates and watch games on big-screen TV's ... it's just coming into its own, having those kind of social get-togethers around the games.

I think another factor is scheduling. People need to schedule better, and that's what we're trying to do. I think that's one factor that will help. I don't think there's any question about that.

Q: As an AD, how do you combat slowing ticket sales?

JW: You try to get your external affairs people working sooner on the issues. You've got to try to market more aggressively. You've got to try to get more membership in your fundraising arm, which, in our case, is the Hokie Club. You've got to make sure that you keep the engine that's driving the train [the football program] moving down the tracks, albeit at some times, it's slower than others. But it's got to keep moving down the track because it's the revenue producer.

Q: Virginia Tech installed new state-of-the-art video scoreboards in both Cassell Coliseum and Lane Stadium recently. Why was this project so important?

JW: It's a part of enhancing the fan experience. We want our fans to have the best experience they can at our home events, and having the opportunity to have new scoreboards is one of the ways we can enhance it.

I think it will also help us in a couple of other ways. I think it can help in terms of the advertising revenue that can be generated, and I also think that it helps us at least a little in recruiting. If a recruit takes an unofficial visit to campus and attends a home game and feels the Hokie Nation, then I think that helps enhance their experience. I don't think it's the only thing a recruit will consider, but I think it enhances that experience.

Q: The athletics department agreed to a long-term contract extension with IMG, the department's multi-media rights holder, as a way to fund the construction of the scoreboards. How important was that and the overall relationship between IMG and Virginia Tech?

JW: They are the No. 1 operation of its kind in the country, and we were their second institution (Wake Forest was the first) going all the way back to 1995. We've had a very solid working relationship with them over the years, and we felt that, if we could extend our relationship, then it [the video scoreboards] would assist us in helping the game-day fan experience. I think it will be viewed that way when our fans have an opportunity to see it.

Q: What is the latest on the potential building of the new field house? The university looked at a number of potential sites, but none of those sites were exactly where the athletics department was looking to build.

JW: I think we're very close to making an announcement, so I don't want to give out any details because this has been a project that has attracted a lot of attention. I can tell you that Lu Merritt [senior associate director of development for intercollegiate athletics] and his staff continue to work hard in raising money for the project, which we know is going to benefit so many different people. Right now, we've got about \$11 million raised, half of which is cash and half of which is pledged. We don't have to have the entire amount raised before we start construction, but we do have to have a plan – and we will. We'll have a plan in place.

Q: Are there any other facilities projects on the horizon, maybe for the long term?

JW: In conjunction with the new field house project, we'll convert the old field house into a permanent indoor track, which will then allow baseball, softball and lacrosse to work out indoors in January and February in the new field house. In the current arrangement, the track is up from Christmas to St. Patrick's Day, so those teams don't get a chance to work indoors. This will give them a chance to do that.

Also, we have plans to build more restrooms east by the softball stadium, but we're also going to put in there a hitting building for softball. We hope to build two rooms all on the north side of Rector, so that we can have those to use at halftime during games for both soccer teams and lacrosse. It would also be able to be used for track when we host indoor events.

So the [new] field house project is going to have a big effect on a lot of different teams for us. We're waiting to get this moving before we draw up the final plans.

Q: You added women's golf as a sport this past summer, giving the department 22 varsity sports. You had talked about doing this for a long time. Why was the timing right now, and do you foresee the addition of any other sports in the future?

JW: The timing was right because we've got our other Olympic sport head coaches salaries, operating budgets and recruiting budgets more in line with the goals we had for them, and we didn't want to start another program until we had those various financial aspects in place.

I'm optimistic about our women's golf program. I think Carol [Green Robertson, the Tech women's golf coach] has good energy, and she knows the game. She was a collegiate player, and she's been on the pro tour. She's been a coach. I think she'll do a terrific job. I think the search committee did an excellent job of bringing her to Tech.

As for adding other sports, I don't foresee us doing that at this point, at least not during my tenure.

Q: The NCAA is still looking at possibly paying student-athletes a \$2,000 stipend in addition to their scholarship aid. I know you've addressed this in the past, but have your thoughts changed on this issue?

JW: Not at all. A lot of schools can't afford it. It's going to make the gap larger between the schools that can do it and the schools that can't. I hope this doesn't pass. That will be between another \$800,000 to \$1 million expense, and we'd have to take money from somewhere else just to meet the costs of that stipend.

Q: Texas A&M quarterback Johnny Manziel has received a lot of attention for

all the wrong reasons this past offseason. Recently, he allegedly received money for signing autographs. Would you be in favor of an NCAA rule change that allows for players to be paid for autographs and/or their likeness?

JW: No. That's going to affect just a few and not the majority, and I don't think that's a good idea.

Q: Do you foresee a day when the five major conferences split from the NCAA and form their own organization with a different rule structure and different postseason formats?

JW: I do. I think it would be the best thing we could do. We would have like interests, and we could operate in the best interests of our organizations and not deal with a governance body that is thinking about other divisions. That's been one of the problems with the NCAA over time, in my opinion. They've had to deal with so many philosophical approaches to the respective issues, and everything gets jumbled. They have too many schools to govern, and it's almost impossible to do it.

Now, I don't have a timetable in mind. I don't have an idea of who or what would be the force behind it. I know television networks will play an integral role because of the money, but I don't know how it will get off the ground. The dialogue has started, though, with respect to some comments that respective commissioners have made at various football media days.

Q: Finally, Virginia Tech president Dr. Charles Steger announced several months ago that he would be retiring. How much will his retirement and the pending hiring of a new president impact Tech athletics?

JW: First of all, Dr. Steger has been very supportive of me and our staff and athletics as a whole throughout his tenure, and I'm very appreciative of that. I've enjoyed working with him and his staff and certainly wish him all the best in his upcoming retirement.

I think the hiring of a new president will obviously have a great impact on athletics. We've had great continuity here with our staff for a long time, and we've had a lot of successes, but any time there is a change at the presidential level, there is inevitably going to be change in other areas within the university and that includes athletics. Our job, as a staff, is to put our athletics programs in the best possible position now and going forward. We owe that to this university, our student-athletes, our coaches and our fans, and that has always been our focus and will continue to be our focus. We want to do our part to make the transition for the new president as smooth as possible. 

The new high-definition video scoreboard at Lane Stadium is larger than video scoreboards at Ohio State and Oklahoma and was installed primarily to enhance the game-day experience for fans.



BIGGER – AND BETTER

Large, new high-definition video scoreboards in both Lane Stadium and Cassell Coliseum should enhance fans' experiences while also generating more revenue from advertising

by Jimmy Robertson

Virginia Tech played Western Carolina on Sept. 7 at Lane Stadium, and the picture was much clearer than before.

The latter part of that statement doesn't serve as a prediction of any on-field success for the Hokies this season. Rather it takes on a more literal meaning.

Virginia Tech unveiled its massive new video scoreboard against the Catamounts, one that ranks not only as one of the largest in the nation, but also one that features the most up to date in high definition video technology.

Tech's new video scoreboard, built and installed by Panasonic, stands more than 45

feet high and nearly 96 feet wide. It dwarfs the previous video scoreboard, which was built and installed in 2005. That one stood 22 feet high and 38 feet wide.

According to Wikipedia, the new video scoreboard ranks as the 11th-largest in college football at 5,215 square feet and the second-largest in the ACC behind Miami's (6,717 square feet). Miami plays its games at Sun Life Stadium, home of the NFL's Miami Dolphins, and thus gets the benefit of using the Dolphins' resources.

But to put things in perspective, Tech's new video scoreboard is larger than the ones at Ohio Stadium, home of Ohio State, and at Memorial

Stadium, home of the Oklahoma Sooners, and it only adds to the enclosed environment at Lane Stadium.

“I’ve always been a fan of stadiums that are completely closed in, and now with the end zone addition down here [pointing toward the south end zone] and the scoreboard up there, it’s [Lane Stadium] almost completely closed in,” Tech head coach Frank Beamer said. “I really like that. We’ve got a vertical stadium, where the noise stays in there. So I think it’s a great addition to our stadium.”

More importantly than the sheer size of the video scoreboard, though, is the quality of the video and graphics. The scoreboard features high-definition LED displays, so in essence, the picture resembles that of flatscreen televisions in living rooms throughout the country.

communication. “We wanted to get to a sharper image that was larger, and the only way to do that was to replace the video scoreboard we had. The quality should be as good, if not better, than what you see in your living room. You should get the same type of quality that you have at home.

“You look around and half, if not more, of ACC schools are going to high definition and putting up these giant video scoreboards, and it was important for us not to get behind. Jim Weaver [Virginia Tech’s athletics director] was on board with doing this. He was very instrumental.”

The new video scoreboard was part of a multi-phase project this summer that also included the building and installation of a sound system at Lane Stadium, two new video scoreboards in Cassell Coliseum and the construction of a new control room in the Merryman Center to

to all the ads on the radio network and the coaches’ television show and much, much more.

The athletics department and IMG College agreed on a contract extension that runs through 2024. As part of that extension, IMG College pays the majority of the price tag for the video scoreboards project. In return, IMG College gets to continue using the video scoreboards to sell advertising during football and basketball games. With new high-definition scoreboards in those venues, IMG College can sell more spots and sell them at a premium, which in turn, benefits both IMG College and Virginia Tech.

“We improved our existing inventory, which means you can increase rates, and we’ve added inventory, which provides the opportunity to get incremental dollars,” said Brandon Forbis, the general manager of IMG College’s Virginia



Two new high-definition video scoreboards have been installed at either end of Cassell Coliseum and are twice as big as the previous video scoreboards.

More and more schools and pro sports teams continue to go down this path, doing everything possible to enhance fans’ experiences, while also creating a potential revenue stream from additional advertising. Wisconsin, Illinois, Colorado and Colorado State are just a few examples of schools that will feature new video scoreboards this season.

“The main reason behind this for us was we wanted high definition,” said Kevin Hicks, Tech’s director of visual broadcasting and

operate the new scoreboards. The department purchased five new high-definition cameras and upgraded all software. All together, the project cost \$6.75 million.

The Tech athletics department worked with IMG College, the department’s multi-media rights holder since 1995, to get this project accomplished. IMG College sells advertising for the athletics department – everything from game program ads to schedule cards to signage within both Lane Stadium and Cassell Coliseum

Tech account. “But all in all, the most important thing is we have a better product to sell on those boards. Our main product that we sell is Virginia Tech athletics, but the actual inventory, the quality of it and the flexibility of it because everything is digital, is dramatically improved.”

The new video scoreboards allow sponsors to get creative with their messaging. Graphics can be customized and more appealing, and the message can be more centrally targeted. This appeals to many advertisers, who see more value

in this than doing, for example, a stand-alone panel in a certain location with just their name.

“Sponsors want more flexibility in their messaging because they want to integrate things like their Twitter handles and other social media interactive opportunities,” Forbis said. “It all boils down that sports marketing has developed, and as the economy has been suspect, marketers are trying more and more ways to measure return on investment and it’s more than just the eyeballs that are on the signs. It’s about engaging fans and tracking how they can turn them into customers.

“Every advertiser is trying to find a way to engage people besides the traditional TV commercial or billboard or radio spot. I think it will evolve as those secondary interactions with consumers evolve. People [advertisers] want less branding and all social media, and at some point, you have to get your name out there, so that’s the balance we try to find with people.”

Obviously, football brings in most of the revenue for the athletics department, but Tech AD Jim Weaver and Forbis like the potential of Cassell Coliseum – both for the enhanced game-day experience and the revenue possibilities.

The two new basketball scoreboards at Cassell Coliseum are 18 feet high and 29 feet wide. They also include two auxiliary boards that will be

used for player data – things like points, fouls, etc. for each player. The previous scoreboards were 9 feet high and 12 feet wide.

For Hicks and his staff, the new control room was a must to be able to do everything the athletics department and IMG College want to do. The new control room features four pieces of equipment used strictly for the game and then five editing stations. In the past, the staff only had three editing stations. They use editing stations nearly every day, whether it be for editing highlight videos or packages for the website or short pieces for kiosks in the Merryman Center and Lane Stadium.

The new control room also enables Hicks and his staff to run two productions at once. Events often overlap, particularly in the spring when, for example, baseball and softball games are being played at the same time. Now, the video staff can live stream both games on hokiesports.com or ESPN3 – in high definition.

“We have two full control rooms in the Merryman Center now, and they’re connected to all our venues,” Hicks said. “They’re mirror images of each other, and we can run a full show with replays, graphics, packages, commercials, live video – we can do those in either room.

“We set that up so that, for example, we can live stream baseball and softball if they’re going

on at the same time, and we’ll do it in high definition. We can do the video board feed, with IMG sponsors at a women’s basketball game while we’re doing an ESPN3 broadcast of the same game. We’ll have the ESPN3 graphics in one room and the sponsor graphics in the other.

“So we can do several things at the same time now. We needed two separate rooms to do all this stuff, and now we have that. The new room gives us a lot more flexibility.”

So a lot of people benefitted from the investment. The football and basketball coaching staffs like to be able to sell big, flashy video scoreboards to recruits. IMG College gets the advertising possibilities - and advertisers can still purchase spots for this season. Hicks gets a much-needed control room and equipment and software upgrades.

But most importantly, the fans benefit, or at least that’s what the Tech athletics department hopes. Officials within the department made this investment mostly with the fans in mind.

“We wanted to enhance the fan experience,” Hicks admitted. “Everyone talks about it, but it gets more and more difficult when they can go home and see something as good or better. So you have to give them something different.”

At Tech, those differences are video scoreboards that are much bigger – and certainly better. 



HOKIE FOOTBALL IS MORE THAN JUST A GAME. IT'S MORE THAN ENTER SANDMAN, LUNCH PAILS, AND TOUCHDOWNS. IT'S ABOUT FANS SHOWING CLASS, HONOR, AND RESPECT. RESPECT FOR THE OFFICIALS, THE COACHES, THE PLAYERS, AND OUR OPPONENTS. HOKIES RESPECT...

THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT!

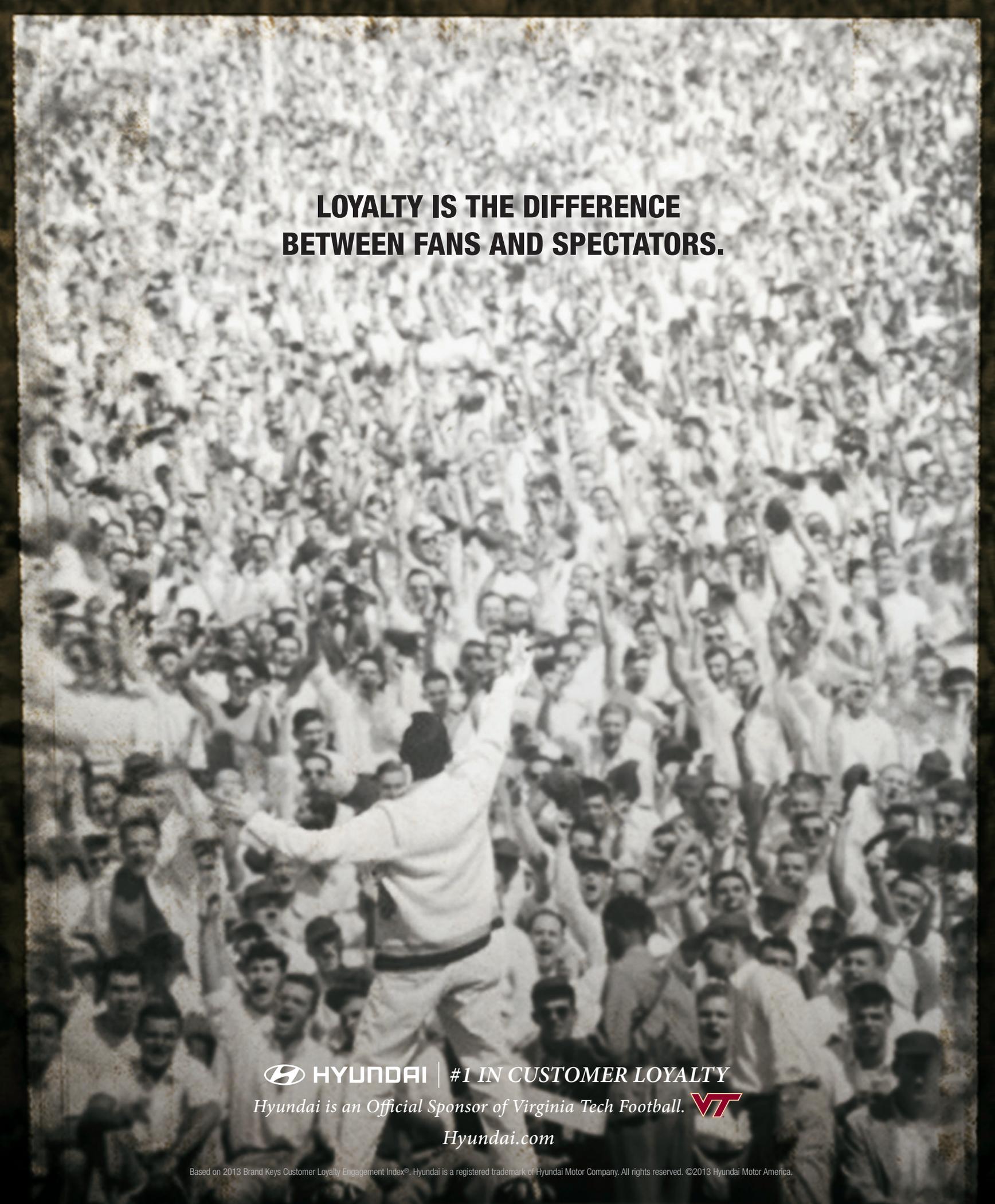
HOKIES RESPECT

THE MOMENT • THE OPPONENT • THE GAME
THEMSELVES • THE COMPETITION

HOKIES RESPECT HOTLINE

While it's not commonplace at Lane Stadium, for instances when issues with unruly fans or disruptive behavior occur, you can access the 'HOKIES RESPECT HOTLINE'. It provides fans a method to report such issues so that stadium authorities can quickly act to resolve the problem and allow everyone in that area to continue enjoying the game.

If needed, text "RESPECT" followed by your issues and location to "71855" and have the situation resolved as soon as possible.



**LOYALTY IS THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN FANS AND SPECTATORS.**

 **HYUNDAI** | #1 IN CUSTOMER LOYALTY

Hyundai is an Official Sponsor of Virginia Tech Football. 

Hyundai.com

Based on 2013 Brand Keys Customer Loyalty Engagement Index®. Hyundai is a registered trademark of Hyundai Motor Company. All rights reserved. ©2013 Hyundai Motor America.



After sitting out a season to meet the NCAA's residency requirements, Brent Benedict started six games and played more than 600 snaps at guard in his first season as a Hokie.

BENEDICT A RARE BREED

Tech offensive lineman Brent Benedict has dealt with some serious issues in his life, including the death of his brother, but the young man knows how to keep things light off the field

by Jimmy Robertson

Andrew Miller doesn't do a lot of talking, not even around friends and especially not around newspaper writers, television reporters and other media hounds. But his first witnessing of the man known as Brent Benedict left him totally speechless.

"He's got a great coyote-skin hat that comes most of the way down his back, and the first time I met him, he was wearing that coyote-skin hat," said Miller, a three-year standout on Tech's offensive line. "He didn't have a shirt on. He got out of the truck without a shirt on, wearing jeans and boots and that coyote-skin hat.

"I liked him right away. I think that's why he and I are such good friends. We're both different breeds."

The funny thing is that Benedict actually isn't all that odd. He just fits the profile of the typical Southern, country boy, a laid-back, slow talker whose big heart, outside the football field, only beats about eight times per minute. His blood pressure elevates only when a rod, reel and fish are involved, or when pulling the occasional prank on unsuspecting teammates.

The South Carolina native - he grew up in Greenville, not too far from Clemson's campus - likes to tell the occasional yarn. He has half the team believing that a scar from a knee surgery actually came from a shark attack. He also said his dad, Ed, the type who can fix just about anything and has owned several businesses over the years, wanted to name him "Oak." Brent's mom, Holly, refused.

"You know how moms can be. They cut out all the fun in life," Benedict deadpanned.

But life hasn't been all barrels of laughs and fishing for this 300-pound offensive lineman on Virginia Tech's football team. Instead, it has produced its share of heartaches and forced him down unfamiliar paths, ones in which he never dreamed of traveling.

He's now entering his third year in Southwest



Brent Benedict missed nearly two seasons while recovering from a devastating knee injury, but has bounced back and is now one of the few experienced pieces on Tech's offensive line.

Virginia and as a player at Tech. He has hopes and dreams and aspirations for his future.

Unlike any other player on the Hokies' roster, he knows firsthand those plans can change - in an instant.

Though hard to believe given his current 6-foot-5, 300-pound frame and ability to bench press small houses, Benedict actually grew up playing soccer as a young boy. But that ended by the time he turned 8. After all, his older brother,

Heath, played football, and Ed Benedict once played semi-pro ball in Texas. Football was in the family's blood, and once the soccer transfusion ran its course, Benedict tried football and became hooked, too.

"I knew that was where it was going to be," he said. "I knew that's what I was going to do."

Rather than send him to high school in South Carolina, his parents decided to send him to the Bolles School, a private boarding school in Jacksonville, Fla. It turned out to be a good move.

The Bolles School annually sends good football

players to colleges around the country. In fact, more than 100 players from Bolles have played collegiately since 2000, according to the school's website. Charles "Corky" Rogers ranks as one of the best high school coaches in the nation, having won more than 400 games and 10 state titles in 41 years of coaching, 23 at Bolles.

"It's a great place and a great school," Benedict said. "It's very good academically and has a football tradition there. We won three state championships, and I played for Corky Rogers, the winningest high school football coach in state history. That was an experience. It's something I'm proud to have been a part of."

Things went well for Benedict. He developed into a top offensive line prospect and received interest from colleges everywhere. Quite honestly, he may have been the best prospect in the Jacksonville area, which says something considering the level of talent in Florida.

But his world came crashing down in the spring of his sophomore year.

Heath Benedict died of an enlarged heart at the family's home in Jacksonville. Technically, the coroner ruled the cause of death as cardiac dysrhythmia, or an irregular heartbeat, related to the enlarged heart.

Heath had reaped a scholarship offer from

Tennessee, but transferred after one year and landed at tiny Newberry College in South Carolina. He had been preparing for the NFL Draft, and the 6-5, 320-pound offensive tackle was set to become one of the rare Division II players to get drafted.

"It was over spring break," Brent said. "We were back visiting relatives in South Carolina. It was the third or fourth day over spring break. We were trying to get ahold of him. He was back in Jacksonville training, and we were calling and calling and couldn't get ahold of him."

"We started calling around to local hospitals and everything else. One of our next-door neighbors was ex-CIA or Secret Service. A police officer lived across the street, too, and we just had them break in the front door, and they found him on the couch."

Heath's death pancaked Brent. Heath was more than an older brother. In a way, he was a father figure because of the eight-year age gap between the two. He offered insight on an array of topics, and he toughened Brent up when the two played football in the back yard.

The family buried Heath right next to his grandmother in Youngsville, Pa., the hometown of Ed Benedict. The family goes to Youngsville every Fourth of July for a family reunion, and

they stop by the site to visit Heath's grave and change out the flowers.

"That was tough," Brent said of his brother's death. "That was a hard thing to handle, especially as a kid. It was something I had to get through. You just have to deal and go on."

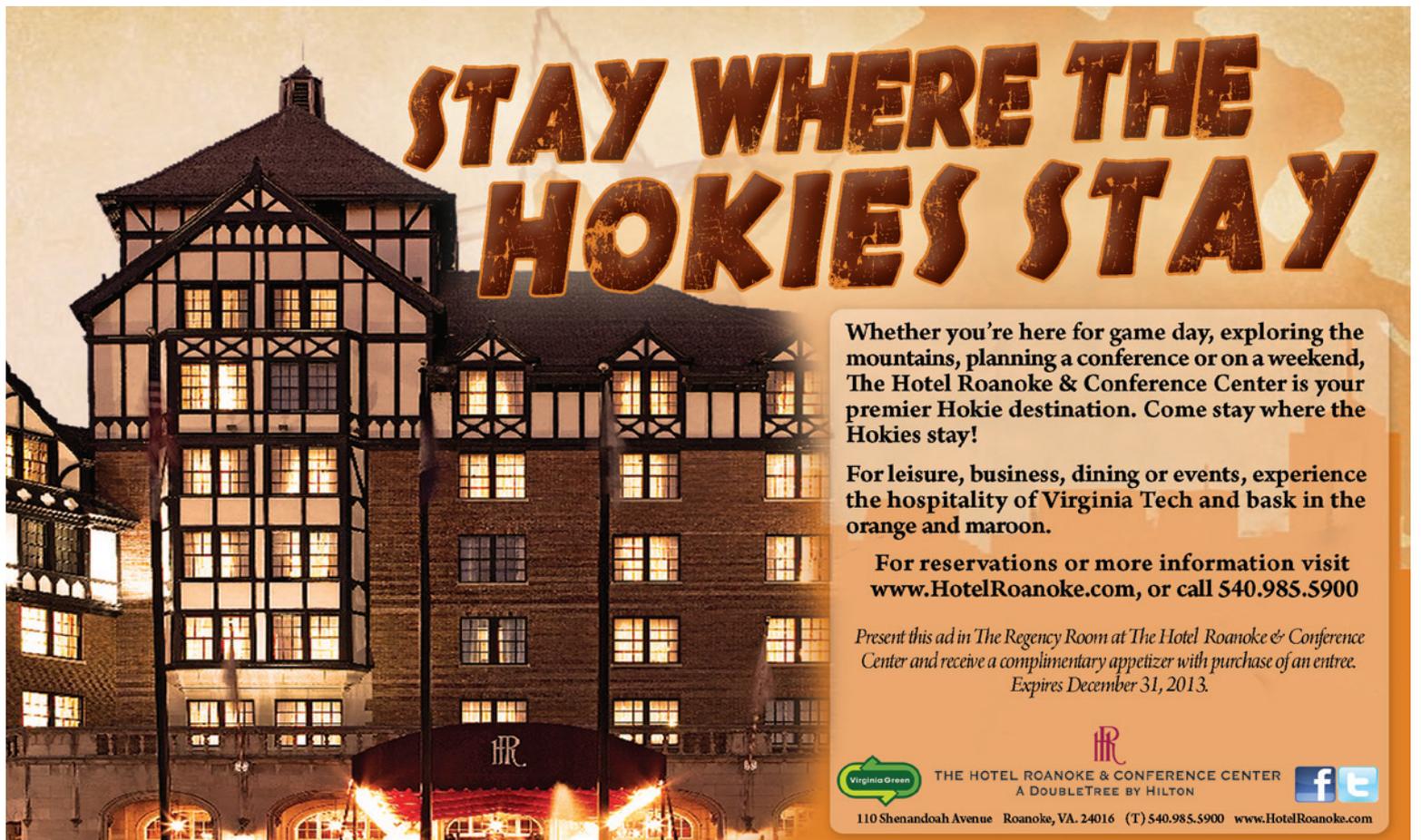
Benedict spent the days and months after Heath's death just trying to cope, just searching for a way to move forward. He slowly got back into the flow of everyday life, football guiding him, as usual.

Things were going positively in that aspect of his life. His size and play helped him earn scholarship offers from numerous schools, and he committed to Georgia before his senior season started.

Unfortunately, he finished his senior season in a crumpled heap – literally.

In the sixth game of the season, Bolles was in the process of destroying Yulee High School 68-0, and during the game, Benedict started jogging down the field to celebrate a touchdown with his teammates. Before he got to the end zone, he collapsed to the ground in agony.

He tore the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) in his right knee. He also tore the posterior



STAY WHERE THE HOKIES STAY

Whether you're here for game day, exploring the mountains, planning a conference or on a weekend, **The Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center is your premier Hokie destination. Come stay where the Hokies stay!**

For leisure, business, dining or events, experience the hospitality of Virginia Tech and bask in the orange and maroon.

For reservations or more information visit www.HotelRoanoke.com, or call 540.985.5900

Present this ad in The Regency Room at The Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center and receive a complimentary appetizer with purchase of an entree. Expires December 31, 2013.

Virginia Green THE HOTEL ROANOKE & CONFERENCE CENTER A DoubleTree by Hilton

110 Shenandoah Avenue Roanoke, VA. 24016 (T) 540.985.5900 www.HotelRoanoke.com

cruciate ligament (PCL) and the lateral collateral ligament (LCL).

“I got it good,” Benedict said. “We were up by 46 points and just running it down the field. It just went out, and I’ve got a big scar on my knee now.”

Benedict spent three days in the cardiac unit at the local hospital. Doctors feared an injury to an artery that carries blood to the lower leg. They also feared nerve damage.

“We’ll put you back together, but you’re done playing football,” they told him.

Benedict and his family found a doctor with a little more optimism – Dr. James Andrews, the noted orthopaedic surgeon in Birmingham, Ala. Andrews does more than put limbs back together. He practically gives athletes their lives back, so Benedict and his family wanted him to do the surgery.

On Oct. 18, 2009, Benedict underwent a total knee reconstruction. Andrews repaired everything, which turned out to be the easy part. The hard part belonged to Benedict, who embarked on what turned out to be a two-year odyssey to get his knee fully healthy again.

“When they told me I was done playing football, I was thinking, ‘Life goes on,’” Benedict said. “You handle it, deal with it and move on.

That’s how I thought of it.

“But Dr. Andrews told me I had an opportunity, and that he expected me to be back. That was what motivated me to get through those two years of rehab. That wasn’t a lot of fun.”

Fortunately, Georgia coach Mark Richt honored Benedict’s scholarship, and Benedict went to Athens, Ga., in the fall of 2010. He redshirted while getting his knee stronger.

Benedict got back on the field in the spring of 2011, a step in the right direction. The Bulldogs staff later moved him to guard, a hint that maybe his knee wasn’t quite 100 percent and that he lacked the athleticism to play at tackle.

In the end, it didn’t matter. In June of that year, he decided to leave the Georgia program. Benedict only said that things “didn’t work out,” and after leaving Georgia, he decided to look for another home.

He found one in Blacksburg.

Benedict nearly committed to Tech out of high school. Defensive line coach Charley Wiles recruited him the first time, but when Shane Beamer got wind that Benedict was leaving Georgia, he aggressively moved in to lure Benedict to Blacksburg.

Beamer had met the Benedict family on previous occasions. He served as a graduate assistant at Tennessee the year that Heath spent in Knoxville before transferring to Newberry College, so Beamer possessed a familiarity with the Benedict family. In the end, though, the total package sold Benedict on coming to Tech.

“Coach [Frank] Beamer having been here so long was a big draw,” he said. “His reputation and the tradition here, along with Coach [Mike] Gentry and the strength coaches. He’s well known and has a great reputation as well. Shane, having that connection and going that far back, that was part of it, absolutely.

“I really enjoy Blacksburg and the program. It’s been good. It’s a unique place. The culture here is different than anywhere I’ve been.”

Benedict sat out the 2011 season while meeting the NCAA’s residency requirements for transfers. Last season, he played in all 13 games and started six of them, playing more than 600 plays at guard in Tech’s offense.

He goes into this season as the Hokies’ top backup – and the most experienced. He figures to see plenty of action as the season rolls along. After all, the offensive line experienced numerous injuries a year ago, so his role will be invaluable.

“Brent had a great summer and has really

MORE THAN 30,000 JOINT REPLACEMENTS / THAT’S EXPERIENCE YOU CAN TRUST.

MEET OUR ORTHOPEDIC SURGEONS

LewisGale Medical Center

- Alfred Durham, M.D.
- James Farmer, M.D.
- Mark Hagy, M.D.
- William Hooper, M.D.
- Gregory Riebel, M.D.
- Mark Rowley, M.D.
- Brian Torre, M.D.
- Preston Waldrop, M.D.

LewisGale Hospital Alleghany

- James McCoig, M.D.
- Joe Pack, D.O.
- Clare Weidman, M.D.

LewisGale Hospital Montgomery

- Stuart Gardner, M.D.
- Shelby Jarrell, M.D.
- Marc Siegel, M.D.

LewisGale Hospital Pulaski

- James Lovelace, M.D.

After doing more than 30,000 joint replacement surgeries, you’d think they would be no big deal. But to us, every surgery is as important as the very first one.

If you’re considering joint replacement surgery, ask your physician for a referral to one of our orthopedic surgeons. Each of our hospitals offers highly specialized care, so you can find the treatment you need where it’s most convenient.

TO LEARN MORE OR TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT, CALL CONSULT-A-NURSE® AT 877-2HCA-DOCS (877-242-2362.)
LEWISGALE.COM



worked hard,” offensive line coach Jeff Grimes said. “He’s been in the mix along the way, and I think he’ll fit in and help us in a significant role this year. I don’t know what it will be or how much it will be, but he’s a great kid and a big part of our depth and where we’re headed.”

Benedict thinks he knows where he is headed. He’ll be a senior next season, probably a starter, and if his NFL dreams fail to come to fruition, he’ll possess a degree in residential property

management. But he also knows that things tend to change. He knows it better than anyone else.

In the meantime, he plans to enjoy life. He and Miller share similar interests and like to have a good time. During a team meeting to start the second summer session, the two of them surprised everyone by sporting an early-80s look, with short shorts and tank tops and aviator sunglasses. New coordinator Scot Loeffler liked the ensemble and promised to dress similarly at

some point over the summer.

“We try to have a good time,” Benedict said. “Off the field, you have to have a little fun.”

So if one sees Benedict on the street wearing his coyote-skin hat or his beloved cowboy hat, another of his cherished items, just understand that this is Brent being Brent, enjoying himself and having a good time.

Considering what he’s gone through over the years, he’s definitely earned it. 

GETTING TO KNOW BRENT BENEDICT

Q: It is Friday night in the offseason, what are you doing?

BB: I’ll probably be hanging out with Andrew and some of the offensive line guys. We’ll probably go fishing or go “snape” hunting in the woods. We’ll take some of the freshmen and tell them we’re going “snape” hunting. There is no such thing as a “snape,” but we’ll get them out in the woods and try to run behind them and scare them. Sometimes, they fall for it.

I might tell them my big shark attack story, too, with this big scar on my leg [from his knee surgery]. I’ll tell them it happened on senior day in high school. We were out fishing on the beach and went out in the water and had a shark come up and attack me. That’s a good one. That works 50 percent of the time.

Q: Are you into social media?

BB: A little bit. I wasn’t much of a Twitter guy at first, and I’m still not much into it.

I’m on Facebook and Instagram mostly. I just haven’t gotten into Twitter. I’ll tweet the offensive line guys and a couple of friends back home, and that’s about it.

Q: How much of a reader are you, and if so, are you reading anything these days besides your textbooks?

BB: I read quite a bit. I’ve read a few devotions. I’m a big Huckleberry Finn guy. I wasn’t much of a reader for enjoyment until the last couple of years. TV gets old sometimes.

Q: Who is your favorite NFL player?

BB: I’ve watched quite a few guys who have stood out to me. I think maybe because it was the year my brother died, but I’ve always watched Jake Long [tackle for the St. Louis Rams] and Joe Thomas [tackle for the Cleveland Browns]. I think Joe Thomas was the year before. They’ve always seemed to be top-level guys.

Q: In 10 years, what will you be doing?

BB: I don’t know. That’s part of the future. You never know what’s going to be going on. Hopefully you’re just happy and healthy and doing something you love to be doing.

Q: If you could trade places with anyone for one day, who would it be?

BB: I’d have to go with one of my role models – maybe Hulk Hogan or Chuck Norris, one of those guys. They seem to have pretty good lives. They seem to have a lot going on. I’ve seen some WrestleMania stuff. That’s what we usually watch before “max-out day” [in the weight room] to get pumped up, just some Hulk Hogan or some of the “World’s Strongest Man” videos. Those will get you pumped up and get you going for max-out day. Those guys seem to have a pretty good time and enjoy what they’re doing.



“The Preowned SuperCenter Promise”

Here’s what you get....

- Treated like a new car buyer
- A Carfax history report
- Lifetime state inspections
- Over 100 vehicles to choose from, each with a quality warranty
- Loaner cars available
- ASE certified technicians and a fully stocked parts department
- An oil and filter change at your first service visit
- A Multi-point Inspection with each service
- Convenient service hours, including Saturdays
- Vehicle Locator Service - If we don't have it, we'll get it for you!

**BUY WITH CONFIDENCE FROM
THE NAME YOU TRUST!** 

The Preowned SuperCenter
1022 East Main Street • Salem
A Hart Motor Company

www.hartusedcars.com

HOTLINE (540) 389-1214



Follow the Hokies On the Air ... Online ... and On the Go

Free mobile app with:

- News releases
- Rosters
- Schedules
- Bios
- Photo galleries
- Live in-game stats
- Press conferences & exclusive videos
- Push alerts for breaking news and final scores.

HokiesXtra Subscription Includes:

Live play-by-play audio of all Hokies football, men's & women's basketball, and baseball games.

Tech Talk LIVE! radio shows featuring Jim Weaver, Frank Beamer and James Johnson.

Exclusive live video coverage of Hokies Olympic Sports.

Subscribe at hokiesports.com/xtra



NEW CHAPLAIN JOINS TECH TEAM

Dave Gittings was tabbed as the Hokies' team chaplain after Johnny Shelton left for a position with the Baltimore Ravens this summer

by Jimmy Robertson

The Virginia Tech football team lost 18 players to graduation. It lost a couple of players to suspensions, one player to medical issues (Michael Cole) three players for this season with injuries (Ronny Vandyke, Tony Gregory and Ryan Malleck) and possibly another depending on how Antone Exum's ACL responds in the coming weeks. The squad even saw team chaplain Johnny Shelton depart after he took a job as the chaplain for the Baltimore Ravens this summer.

Head coach Frank Beamer took care of replacing the players. A higher power took care of replacing Shelton.

Everyone involved in the process of hiring Dave Gittings felt that God had led to Gittings coming to Blacksburg, as Gittings took over Shelton's previous role as the Hokies' team chaplain. He arrived at Tech a week after August practices started and immediately started attending practices and meeting players.

"When you're introduced as a chaplain, everyone knows why you're there," Gittings said. "They know that you bring the spiritual and moral perspective to the team. But how to get to the point where you can verbally communicate those things to the players and coaches takes some time.

"So my start here was just being around, being a friendly face that those guys could see and being able to communicate with them in ways that were just relational. Taking interest in them individually and learning their names is very important. That's the start I encourage every chaplain to do. I've got to prove to them that I care about them, and once they know that, I think we'll have some great fruit. God is doing some wonderful things right now."

Gittings comes to Tech from St. Simon's Island, Ga., where he worked as a multi-area director with the South Central Georgia chapter of Fellowship of Christian Athletes, an organization that challenges athletes and coaches at all levels to use athletics to impact the world for Jesus Christ. He developed a staff of 10 that oversaw a 30-county area in Southeastern Georgia, ministering to athletes at the local high schools and colleges in that area.

It was actually Shelton who convinced Gittings to pursue the position at Tech. The two have known each other since going through a "Leaders of Excellence in FCA" program as part of their



Dave Gittings came to Tech from Georgia, where he worked as a multi-area director with the South Central Georgia chapter of Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

training at Ashland Theological Seminary in Ohio several years ago. Shelton took football players Derrick Hopkins and T.J. Shaw to the College Athlete Conference in St. Simon's Island, Ga., this past summer and planned to inform Gittings of the open Virginia Tech position and then convince him to take it. But after hearing Gittings passionately tell about all the great things that God was doing in that area and hearing him talk about his upcoming mission trips, Shelton decided not to bring up the Tech chaplain position, feeling that Gittings was perfectly happy ministering in South Georgia.

Shelton discussed the situation with the Virginia Tech FCA board and also with Jimmy Page, who serves as the vice president of field ministry in the mid-Atlantic region for FCA. They all felt God was leading them at least to present the opportunity to Gittings, so when Gittings returned from a mission trip to the Bahamas this summer, he received a call from Shelton telling him that Virginia Tech needed a chaplain and that they wanted him to consider the position.

"My wife, Kim, and I took some time to pray about it," Gittings said. "I was coming off a hurtful situation that I had experienced. The Lord took me through a process with the chaplaincy to the Pittsburgh Steelers, which is my favorite team in the NFL. Long story short, I went through a great process with them and felt good about it. They

ended up choosing another guy, a great guy. I was sure that was the call God had for my life. When that didn't work out and this came about, I was a little nervous because it felt good.

"But I think God knew best. I probably would have ended up being more of a fan than a chaplain if I had ended up with the Steelers. I continued to pray about this position. My wife and I soon realized that God was opening this door for us, so we pursued going through the process. We came up on an initial visit and met a few of the coaches. We got a chance to go through the area. We felt a peace about being here. We prayed a little more and felt this was a great opportunity for our lives."

A Pittsburgh native, Gittings never imagined getting involved in the ministry. He ran his own business, operating an automobile detailing salon company, and some of his customers were actually Steelers football players.

One of his first customers moved to Sea Island, Ga., and would fly Gittings down to take care of his cars. The two of them later merged businesses, and Gittings moved his family to St. Simon's Island (adjacent to Sea Island) in May of 1996. He and his family started attending a small Baptist church there, and in October of 1996, he met Jesus.

"I fell in love with Jesus right away and began pursuing him with everything I had through the church there," he said. "It was a small church

there where I have to give credit to a pastor named Michael Atkinson, who was the pastor at that time. I began serving there and became a deacon there. Later on, I received the call to preach the gospel and became their pastor. I was really raised in that church. I became their senior pastor, but along the way, I knew God was doing more with me.”

In 2002, an FCA board member named Nick Doster asked Gittings to consider a possible career move to the FCA. Gittings told him that he already had a job, and Doster came up with a classic reply.

“He said, ‘I didn’t ask if you had a job. I asked you to pray about a ministerial opportunity,’” Gittings said. “That set in motion a whole new course for my life.”

Gittings officially joined the FCA staff in 2003 after completing a two-year program through Ashland Theological Seminary. He originally ministered in nine counties before later becoming the multi-area director and developing a staff that covered 30 counties in Southeastern Georgia.

Along the way, he has served on various committees within the FCA and worked on mission trips to both the Bahamas and Nicaragua. He and Shelton both still serve on a national chaplain advisory team, and he completed the FCA Coaches Ministry Academy back in May.

Gittings plans on taking a simple approach with

Tech’s football team at first. That approach entails just being around, introducing himself and getting to know all the players. Then he hopes to develop some junior chaplains within the team – guys who will lead small group discussions and facilitate Bible studies.

“I’m very relationship driven,” he said. “I don’t expect anything out of the players or the coaches. I’m here to make friends and be a part of this organization. I think it’s important for me to allow that natural relationship to grow. When players and coaches trust you, they’re willing to listen to the things you have to say. They’ll begin to listen as time goes on. But if I were not willing to make friends and just journey with them and live life with them, then my job would be much harder.

“But I think God has given me a gift. I just enjoy people. I’m passionate about people. I want to see the best in people. That makes my role as a chaplain a little easier. I love what I’m doing.”

Gittings’ transition, of course, involves getting his family to Blacksburg as soon as possible. He and wife Kim have four children – two boys and two girls. His oldest son, Aaron, works in Fernandina Beach, Fla., for the federal port system, and his youngest son, Everett, is married to wife Katie and is pursuing a doctorate degree in sports medicine and chiropractic medicine at Life

University in Marietta, Ga. His oldest daughter, Niesha, just graduated from Edinboro University in Edinboro, Pa., with a degree in child psychology and is working in Erie, Pa. His youngest daughter, Briana, is in high school and will be attending Blacksburg High, probably in December.

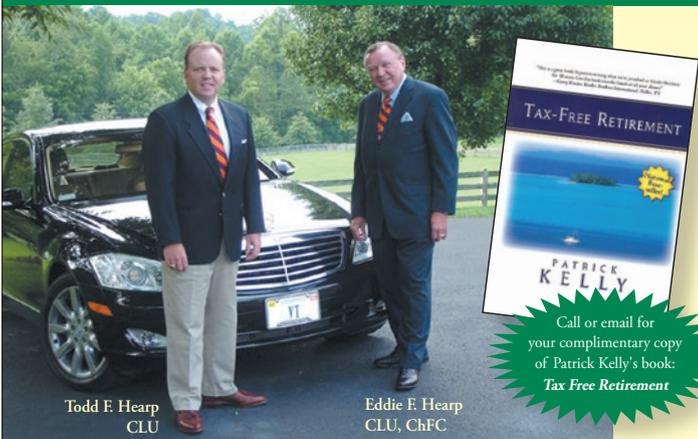
Though it figures to be difficult, Gittings is willing to be away from his family for a few months. After all, he felt God moved him in this particular direction with his life.

He also knows it won’t be easy to replace Shelton, who became a popular figure not just among the football team, but also among those working in the athletics department and those in the community. Yet in his short time at Tech, he has seen the type of people in the Tech football program and looks forward to helping carry out God’s will for his life and theirs.

“There are a lot of great guys on this team,” he said. “Some of them are young, but the reality is they are young men and they’re growing leaps and bounds every day. We’ve got guys who are doing it right.

“So I am here to make sure that level of spiritual and moral excellence is valued. But my job is not that hard because here at Virginia Tech we have a great group of guys who are moving in that direction.” 

National Financial Services, Inc.



Todd F. Hearp
CLU

Eddie F. Hearp
CLU, ChFC

Call or email for
your complimentary copy
of Patrick Kelly's book:
Tax Free Retirement

National Financial Services, Inc. is based in Roanoke, VA and our representatives have been helping families and businesses address their financial concerns for many years. We have advised thousands of clients on:

*Strategies for Those Seeking
a Safe Retirement*

When our clients engage us, they receive the benefit of working with an entire team. Each member of the team has a specific area of expertise, which allows our clients to access the talents and experience of each of our specialists.

Employment Opportunity: We are always looking for specialists to join our team. Looking for more? Contact Todd at Hearp_Todd@nlvmail.com

* Todd F. Hearp is a Registered Representative and Investment Advisor Representative of, and securities and investment advisory services offered solely by Equity Services, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC, 4401 Starkey Road, Roanoke, VA 24018, (540) 989-4600. National Financial Services, Inc. and Eddie Hearp are independent of Equity Services, Inc.

4401 Starkey Road • Roanoke, VA • 24018

Phone: 540-989-4600 • Fax: 540-989-0109 • Email: Hearp_Todd@nlvmail.com

website: www.nfservicesinc.com

TC67321 (0312)

Offseason change of address sees Tapp joining favorite childhood team

by Jimmy Robertson

Earlier this summer, Darryl Tapp and his family flew to Seattle to visit with some of his in-laws who lived in the Seattle area. He looked forward to the trip and to getting away after a difficult season with the Philadelphia Eagles, who lost 11 of their final 12 games and finished with a 4-12 mark.

Tapp wasn't even thinking about free agency. His contract with Philadelphia had run its course, leaving him free to sign with any team in the NFL. But on his trip, he just wanted to relax after a taxing season.

Then he got the call from his agent.

"He told me the Redskins were interested in me," Tapp said via a phone interview. "I was surprised. They were probably the last team I would have expected to have an interest in me."

Tapp quickly flew back to Washington, D.C., and met with Redskins brass. He saw the facilities and the plan that the coaches had in place for him. He kept reminding himself that this was his favorite team from his childhood days.

Tapp ended up agreeing to a one-year contract with the Redskins worth \$865,000. Washington's management team and coach Mike Shanahan sold him on what they wanted to do, and Tapp never visited another NFL organization.

"This was the first time I had been a free agent," he said. "I was in Seattle for four years, and then Pete Carroll [Seattle's head coach] traded me to Philadelphia. The Eagles then extended my contract for two years. So this was the first time I was going to get to see what was out there.

"But when the Redskins called and I saw what they had to offer – and given that they were my favorite team growing up – I knew I had to jump on it. The powers that be made it happen, and I'm glad to be here."

Tapp's three years in Philadelphia did not go particularly well once he arrived in 2010. He played in 39 games, but started just three of them after starting 32 games during his four years in Seattle. Last season, he played in 13 games, but did not start in a single game.

He finished with 17 tackles (13 solo) and a half of a sack as a result. That marked his fewest tackles and sacks since he joined the league as a second-round pick of the Seahawks in the 2006 NFL Draft. More importantly to Tapp, he only went to the playoffs one time (2010). He has only been to the playoffs twice in his NFL career, with the other time coming in 2007 with the Seahawks.

"Last year was tough," Tapp said. "I enjoyed

the opportunity I had with the Eagles, but that was a tough place to be. We were losing so many games. It just never turned out the way I thought it would."

The move to Washington comes with some risk. The Redskins want him to play the outside linebacker spot in their 3-4 scheme. Tapp played defensive end during his days at Tech and played the same role in both Seattle's and Philadelphia's 4-3 scheme during his days with those two organizations.

Being an outside linebacker in a 3-4 scheme means getting plenty of opportunities to rush the passer – something in which Tapp excels. But it also means playing in coverage at times, usually trying to check quick running backs or big and fast tight ends.

"It's been good," Tapp said of the transition to an outside linebacker. "I've been receiving tons of coaching, both from Coach Shanahan and Coach [Jim] Haslett [Washington's defensive coordinator]. They've had their hands on me the entire process.

"The big thing for me is learning the coverages and getting used to where my help is going to be. But it's been fun. I enjoy learning new things."

Tapp went into the season as the backup to Ryan Kerrigan, the former first-round pick who has started every game the past two seasons for the Redskins. Kerrigan quietly ranks as one of the best outside linebackers in the NFL, having recorded 16 sacks in two years.

At the other outside linebacker spot is another former first-round pick, Brian Orakpo. Orakpo missed most of last season with an injury, but in the three previous seasons, he recorded 29.5 sacks.

Tapp envisions having individual success in Washington, albeit on a smaller scale. With such good players in front of him, he may not put up astronomical numbers. But he cares more about the success of the organization anyway than any personal success for himself.

"I just want to win," he said. "I'm so tired of losing. My last two years in Philadelphia, we didn't win a lot, and that's miserable. Winning and going to the playoffs, that's why you play the game."

In addition to feeling the excitement of playing a new position, Tapp also enjoys playing with a bunch of former Tech players. DeAngelo Hall, Will Montgomery and Josh Morgan all reside on the Washington roster. Tapp played with all three



Darryl Tapp suffered some tough years in Philadelphia, but couldn't be happier to be with the Redskins. (Photo courtesy of the Washington Redskins)

of those guys at Tech. In fact, Tapp and Hall have known each other since elementary school.

"Special guys," Tapp said. "Just like old times."

While things last season didn't go as well as planned for Tapp, he enjoyed a big year off the field. He and his wife, Tiffany, had their first child, a daughter named Taylor Nicole.

Their daughter's birth happened last Nov. 5 – the same day the Eagles took on the New Orleans Saints in New Orleans. But Tapp stayed behind in Philadelphia to be with his wife and witness the birth of his daughter.

So he's got a new child and a new team. Now the former two-time first-team All-ACC player is hoping for new results.

"Things are awesome," Tapp said. "All the guys here are great. No one is letting the media control us or our expectations. Everyone is down to earth, and they're all hard workers.

"I'm just happy to have this opportunity. I'm all in." 

Hokies in the pros | former Hokies in the NFL

Here is a look at all former Tech players playing in the NFL as of opening day (Sept. 8):

ARIZONA CARDINALS

87 Jeff King – King is entering his seventh season in the NFL and his third with the Cardinals after being drafted by the Carolina Panthers in the fifth round of the 2006 NFL Draft. Unfortunately, he was placed on injured reserve on Aug. 30 after undergoing a second knee operation since last season ended, and he will miss this season.

This may be the end of King's tenure in Arizona, as this year is the final year of a three-year, \$5.55 million contract he signed with the Cardinals in 2011. The deal included a \$1 million signing bonus. He caught 44 passes for 400 yards and three touchdowns in two years in Arizona.

34 Ryan Williams – The former Tech tailback has incurred nothing but bad luck since being drafted by Arizona in the second round of the 2011 NFL Draft. As a rookie in 2011, he suffered a torn patella tendon in the preseason and then missed the entire season. Last year, he played in five games and ran the ball 58 times for 164 yards, but injured his shoulder against St. Louis and underwent surgery that cost him the season.

Williams hopes to stay healthy and show his potential this season, though the Cardinals are reportedly trying to trade him. He is entering the third year of a four-year, \$5 million contract that he signed as a rookie. That deal included a \$2,141,768 signing bonus.

BALTIMORE RAVENS

2 Tyrod Taylor – Taylor won a Super Bowl ring with the Ravens last season, his second in Baltimore after being drafted in the sixth round of the 2011 NFL Draft. For the season, he played in seven games and completed 17 of 29 for 179 yards, with an interception. He also rushed 14 times for 73 yards and a touchdown.

Taylor begins his third season as Joe Flacco's backup. He signed a four-year deal for \$2.145 million as a rookie, and the deal included a \$105,308 signing bonus.

CHICAGO BEARS

50 James Anderson – Anderson spent his first seven seasons in the NFL with the Carolina Panthers, who drafted him in the third round of the 2006 NFL Draft. He recorded 319 solo tackles, 135 assists and eight sacks in those seven years. A year ago, he started 12 games and finished with 39 solo tackles and 34 assists. He set a franchise record with 20 tackles in a game against the New York Giants last September.

But the Panthers released Anderson two seasons into a five-year, \$22 million contract extension because of salary cap reasons. So Anderson signed a one-year deal with the Bears, a deal worth \$1.25 million that included a \$200,000 signing bonus. He should be a starter at one of the outside linebacker spots.

DALLAS COWBOYS

87 Andre Smith – In a bit of a surprise, the

Dallas Cowboys kept five tight ends on their 53-man roster, and Smith, the former Tech tight end, was one of them. The Cowboys' coaching staff reportedly kept him because of his ability to block.

Smith did not get drafted in the 2011 NFL Draft after wrapping up his Tech career following the 2010 season. He signed with the Chicago Bears as a free agent and spent eight weeks on their practice squad before being elevated to the 53-man roster for the final eight games, though he wasn't active for any games. The Bears released him in May of last year, and he signed with the Indianapolis Colts, who waived him right before the 2012 season started.

Smith signed with Dallas last January, agreeing to a two-year, \$1.05 million contract.

81 Danny Coale – Coale suffered a terrible rookie season with the Cowboys after tearing the ACL in his knee. The former Tech receiver, who went in the fifth round of the 2012 NFL Draft, spent the season on the practice squad while recovering, and he'll spend the 2013 season on the practice squad as well. The Cowboys personnel staff cut him on Aug. 31, but signed him to the practice squad the following day. He could be signed off the practice squad at any point this season if the Cowboys need him.

Coale signed a four-year contract as a rookie.

DENVER BRONCOS

70 Vinston Painter – Painter, a former Tech offensive tackle who started all 13 games as a senior last season, went in the sixth round of last April's NFL Draft. He signed a four-year, \$2.27 million contract, which included a \$117,932 signing bonus.

The Broncos personnel staff cut Painter on Aug. 31 – the day that rosters needed to be finalized. But the following day, they signed Painter to the practice squad. Like with Coale, he could be signed off the practice squad at any point this season if the Broncos need him.

GREEN BAY PACKERS

11 Jarrett Boykin – Boykin beat the odds last August, making Green Bay's roster as a free agent. The former Tech receiver was not drafted and was cut by Jacksonville, which had signed him as a free agent, before latching on with the Packers. He ended up playing in 10 games and catching five passes for 27 yards, and he also added five tackles on special teams.

Last year, Boykin signed a three-year deal worth \$1.44 million. He projects as the fourth receiver for Green Bay this season.

DETROIT LIONS

10 Corey Fuller – After a terrific senior season at Tech in which he caught 43 passes for 815 yards and six touchdowns, Fuller was drafted in the sixth round by the Lions this past April. The Lions' brass cut Fuller on Aug. 31, but signed him to their practice squad the following day. Like with Painter and Coale, Fuller could be signed off the practice squad at any point this season.

Fuller signed a four-year deal with Detroit after

Less than 10 minute
drive to VT campus



Holiday Inn

99 Bradley Drive,

Christiansburg VA 24073

Make Your Reservations Today!

(540) 381-8100

www.holidayinn.com/cburgnorth



Indoor Salt Water Pool, Fitness Center,
Business Center, All Rooms with
Microwaves, Refrigerators and Safe

Kem's Restaurant and Lounge
Open for Breakfast & Dinner
Meeting and Banquet Space with
Full-Service Catering



Holiday Inn Christiansburg NRV MALL featuring Kem's Restaurant & Lounge

SWITCHING TO SUNTRUST HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER.

**Switch to the award-winning service of SunTrust.
From Direct Deposit to Online Bill Pay,
we'll move everything for you.**



HOW CAN WE HELP YOU SHINE TODAY?

Stop by or visit suntrust.com/switch

the draft worth \$2.283 million. The deal included a \$123,100 signing bonus.

HOUSTON TEXANS

76 Duane Brown – Brown, a former Tech left tackle, had arguably the best year of his career last season when he earned first-team All-Pro honors and made the Pro Bowl. He started all 16 games for the Texans and has started every game in which he has played during his five-year career.

Brown, a first-round pick by the Texans in the 2008 NFL Draft, signed a seven-year deal in August of last year worth \$56.2 million - \$22.08 million of that is guaranteed, including a \$12.5 million signing bonus.

22 Rashad Carmichael – Carmichael, who missed nearly all of his rookie season in 2011 with a shoulder injury, played in six games last season, his second in the NFL after being drafted in the fourth round of the 2011 NFL Draft. The former Tech defensive back finished with 9 tackles (8 solo) and an assist.

The Texans' personnel staff released him on Aug. 31, but signed him to the practice squad two days later. He could be signed off the practice squad at any point during the season.

Carmichael signed a four-year, \$2.437 million contract as a rookie in 2011. The deal included \$397,088 signing bonus.

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

24 Brandon Flowers – Flowers has become

one of the best defensive backs in football as he enters his sixth season in Kansas City, which drafted him in the second round of the 2008 NFL Draft. He started 15 games a year ago and finished with 48 tackles (40 solo) and three interceptions. He has started every game he has played in except for one.

Flowers signed a six-year, \$49.35 million contract with Kansas City in 2011, with \$22 million of that guaranteed. It also included a \$10 million signing bonus.

NEW YORK GIANTS

22 David Wilson – Wilson will be the starting tailback for the Giants. A first-round draft pick last year, he played in all 16 games last season and rushed 71 times for 358 yards and four touchdowns as a backup to both Ahmad Bradshaw and Andre Brown.

Wilson set a team record with 327 all-purpose yards in the Giants' 52-27 win over New Orleans on Dec. 9. That included a 97-yard kickoff return for a touchdown and 100 yards rushing and two touchdowns. He became the first player in NFL history with 200 kick return yards and 100 yards rushing in the same game.

Wilson's rookie contract was a four-year deal worth \$6.68 million, with a \$3.3 million signing bonus.

28 Jayron Hosley – Hosley enjoyed a solid rookie campaign after being drafted by the Giants in the third round of last year's draft. He started six games and played in 12, and he finished with

40 tackles, including 32 solo stops. He also had an interception and forced a fumble.

Hosley, who goes into the season as a backup at one of the cornerback spots and a potential punt returner, signed a four-year contract as a rookie. His deal was worth \$2.637 million and included a \$515,000 signing bonus.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

7 Michael Vick – The former Tech quarterback won the starting job under new head coach Chip Kelly, who took over for Andy Reid. A year ago, Vick played in 10 games, missing several with a concussion. He completed 204 passes out of 351 attempts (58.1 percent) on the season for 2,362 yards and 12 touchdowns, with 10 interceptions. He also rushed for 332 yards and a touchdown.

Vick, the No. 1 overall pick in the 2001 NFL Draft by the Atlanta Falcons, agreed in February to restructure the six-year, \$100 million deal he signed with Philadelphia in 2011. His new deal is a one-year contract worth \$10 million and included a \$3.5 million signing bonus.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

93 Jason Worilds – Worilds finished with a career high in sacks last season for the Steelers and goes into the 2013 season looking for more. As a backup outside linebacker last season, he started three games and played in 16, recording 27 tackles (23 solo), and he had five sacks. His five sacks equaled the number of sacks he had in his first two seasons with the Steelers, who drafted him in the

MARTIN TRAVEL

It's how Hokies travel!
Don't miss a moment!

HOKIE CRUISE
NOVEMBER 2-9, 2013

Virginia Tech vs. Miami
Saturday, November 9, 2013
Miami Gardens, FL



Email us at hokies@martintravel.com
or call 540-343-5400 for more info and pricing

www.martintravel.com/hokies

Cruise into the Miami game on The Oasis of the Seas by Royal Caribbean! Discover the most awe-inspiring ship the world has ever seen during our 7-night Eastern Caribbean cruise followed by a Hokie victory and a night at the team hotel, Shula's Hotel & Golf Club. All for a VT – "Value Travel" price!

Hokies in the pros | former Hokies in the NFL

second round of the 2010 NFL Draft.

Worlds, who starts now that James Harrison is no longer with the Steelers, is in the last year of a four-year deal he signed as a rookie. That contract was worth \$3.305 million, with \$1.9 million guaranteed.

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

11 Eddie Royal – Royal's first season in San Diego didn't go so well, as he played in just 10 games mostly because of a hamstring injury. He started two games and caught 23 passes for 234 yards and a touchdown.

Royal, who is projected to start at one of the receiver spots, spent his first four seasons in the NFL with the Denver Broncos, who drafted him in the second round of the 2008 NFL Draft. After his rookie contract ran out, he signed a three-year, \$13.5 million contract (\$6 million guaranteed) with San Diego to play for head coach Mike McCoy, who was the former offensive coordinator in Denver.

67 Nick Becton – The former Tech offensive tackle, who started every game for the Hokies last season, did not get drafted in April's NFL Draft. However, Becton signed with the Chargers as a free agent.

Becton survived in the Chargers' preseason camp until Aug. 31, when the Chargers' personnel staff released him. Yet the following day, the staff signed him to the team's practice squad, where, pending injuries, he'll spend this season. He could be signed off the practice squad at any point during

the season.

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

31 Kam Chancellor – Chancellor established himself as one of the NFL's best safeties last season, starting 16 games and recording 101 tackles (75 solo). He started 15 games in 2011 and finished with 97 tackles (75 solo) and four interceptions. The former Tech safety goes into this season as the starter at strong safety for the team.

Chancellor, a fifth-round pick by the Seahawks in the 2010 NFL Draft, got rewarded for his play in the offseason, signing a five-year, \$35 million extension that includes \$17 million guaranteed.

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

23 DeAngelo Hall – The Redskins released Hall in a salary cap move this spring, but re-signed him to a one-year deal worth approximately \$2 million. Hall is entering his 11th season in the NFL, his sixth with the Redskins.

Hall, a first-round pick of the Atlanta Falcons in the 2004 NFL Draft, started 16 games at cornerback a year ago, recording 95 tackles (68 solo) and four interceptions. He was hampered with an ankle injury all through preseason camp, but figures to move into the starting role when he gets healthy.

63 Will Montgomery – Montgomery, a former Tech walk-on who played both at center and guard for the Hokies, enters his third season as the starting center for the Redskins and his fifth season overall with the team. He started 16 games each of the past

two seasons.

Originally drafted by the Carolina Panthers in the seventh round of the 2006 NFL Draft, Montgomery is in the second year of a four-year, \$11.4 million contract (\$2.75 million signing bonus) that he signed with Washington in February of last year.

15 Josh Morgan – Morgan enters his second season with the Redskins after starting 15 games a year ago. The former Tech receiver caught a team-best 48 passes for 510 yards and two touchdowns, and he figures to be a starting receiver for the Redskins this season.

Morgan spent the first four years of his NFL career with the San Francisco 49ers, who drafted him in the sixth round of the 2008 NFL Draft, but he signed a two-year, \$11.5 million contract with Washington in March of last year. More than \$7 million of that is guaranteed, and the deal included a \$5.5 million signing bonus.

54 Darryl Tapp – In March, Tapp agreed to a one-year, \$865,000 contract with the Redskins, who plan on playing him as an outside linebacker. The former Tech defensive end became the fourth former Hokie to latch on with the Redskins.

Tapp spent three seasons in Philadelphia before signing as a free agent with Washington, and he played in 13 games last season. He finished with 17 tackles (13 solo). He spent the previous four seasons before his stint in Philadelphia with the Seattle Seahawks, who drafted him in the second round of the 2006 NFL Draft. 

WELCOME HOME! THE PERFECT **HOKIE FAN RETREAT**. ENTERTAIN IN STYLE IN THE HEART OF BLACKSBURG!



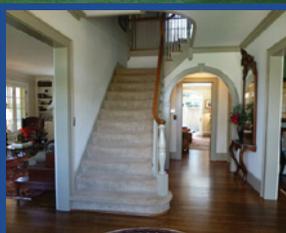
207 EAKIN STREET, SW
BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA 24060

OFFERED FOR \$765,000 • MLS #309995

BRICK COLONIAL BUILT IN 1924 WITH 3,572 SQUARE FEET

Tastefully renovated and restored three story colonial in Blacksburg's historic Miller Addition neighborhood. Once in a lifetime opportunity to purchase a home in this desired area that has recently been remodeled with gourmet kitchen, new baths, re-finished floors, and fresh paint inside and out. Two car attached garage plus detached carriage house. Just a few blocks to downtown, Lane Stadium, and Farmers Market.

CALL TO SET UP A PRIVATE SHOWING AND YOU WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.



Bill Linkenhoker
REALTOR®
540.320.4652
BillLinkenhoker@comcast.net



Rob Jones
REALTOR®
540.320.6688
Rob@nrvforsale.com



SCAN CODE FOR INFO



Far from just sibling rivalry...

Virginia529SM is the Official College Savings Plan of **THE RIVALRY**.



Virginia529 SM
College Savings Plan

Flexible. Affordable. Tax-advantaged. College Savings.

Use promo code **RIVALRY** to waive \$25 application fee.

Virginia529.com | facebook.com/va529 | @virginia529 #rivalry

Promo code expires 12/31/2014. Call 1-888-567-0540 or visit Virginia529.com for more information and program materials. Read them carefully before investing.

For non-Virginia residents: other states may sponsor a 529 plan that offers tax or other benefits not available through Virginia529.

© 2013 Virginia College Savings Plan. All Rights Reserved.

Former Tech receiver Myron Richardson is living up to the university's motto

by Jimmy Robertson

Just about all Americans can probably remember their whereabouts on the day of Sept. 11, 2001, when terrorists attacked both the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Most probably spent the day glued to the television, watching the video footage of what transpired on arguably the worst day in America's history.

Former Virginia Tech football player Myron Richardson was not one of those people. He didn't watch on the television as the events unfolded. Instead, he got a firsthand look at the destruction in real time.

Richardson has worked as a firefighter and paramedic with the Arlington County Fire Department near Washington, D.C., for the past 22 years. On that fateful day, he and other members of the fire department went to the Pentagon, put out the fires, helped take out the 189 who lost their lives and helped the injured. It's a day he'll never forget.

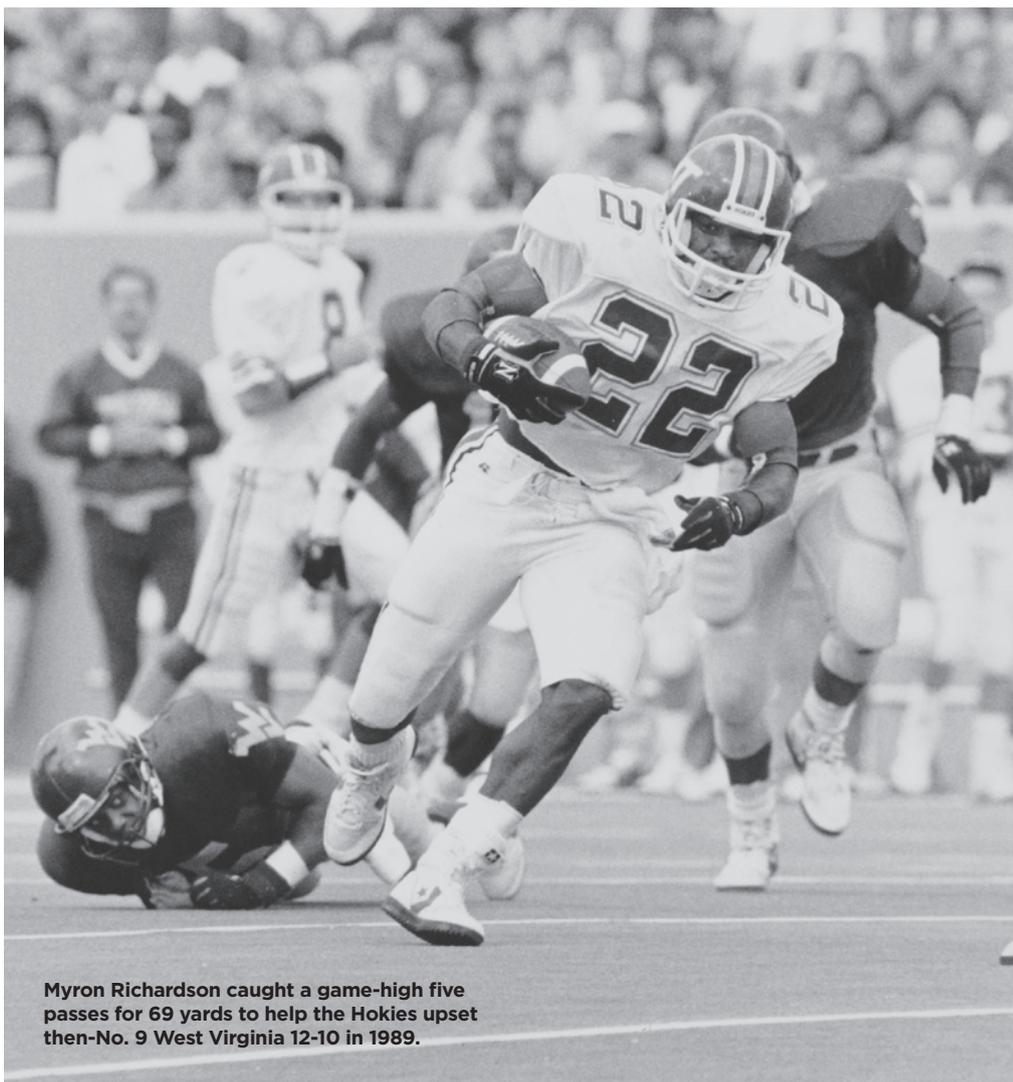
"It was the longest and scariest day of my life," he said. "They said there was another plane coming, and everyone was worried. Fortunately, everything worked out and that didn't happen, but that day was grueling and horrendous."

Richardson enjoyed much happier times during his playing days at Tech in the late 1980s. And he has enjoyed happier times since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

He came to Tech in 1986, a receiver out of Richmond, who was recruited by former assistant coach Steve Marshall. He received interest from some colleges, but picked Tech mostly because his mother wanted to be able to come to the games and see him play.

He played as a true freshman on Bill Dooley's Peach Bowl team that went 10-1-1 and punctuated the season with a 25-24 last-second victory over NC State in the Peach Bowl. In that game, Richardson caught one pass for 5 yards.

"I was a little surprised I played that season,"



Myron Richardson caught a game-high five passes for 69 yards to help the Hokies upset then-No. 9 West Virginia 12-10 in 1989.

he said. "Most people redshirt. Everything was new to me, just making the transition from high school to college. It was a little scary. I just didn't want to mess up. But I thought I was talented, and I had confidence. I was just a little nervous. Nervous energy, I guess you'd call it."

Richardson spent most of that season backing up a name familiar to Tech fans – David

Everett. Everett now works in The Virginia Tech Athletic Fund office (better known as the Hokie Club) and helps raise money for the athletics department.

"David helped me a lot," Richardson said. "He was a junior, and I was a freshman. He helped me learn the plays, and he helped me get lined up on certain plays."

Unfortunately, Richardson and his classmates would not make it to another bowl game after their freshman season. Dooley had resigned during that season amidst recruiting violations, and new coach Frank Beamer got stuck dealing with the ramifications for the next few years. The NCAA placed the Hokies on probation following that season.

The Hokies did go 6-4-1 in Richardson's senior year. But a late-season loss to rival Virginia in Charlottesville probably squelched any bowl hopes.

Still, he had plenty of great memories of his playing days. During his senior season, the Hokies stunned then-No. 9 West Virginia 12-10 in Morgantown, W.Va., and they beat Tulane 30-13 in Blacksburg that season in a game that Beamer missed while undergoing coronary angioplasty surgery. Assistant coach Billy Hite filled in for Beamer, and Richardson caught a touchdown pass in the game.

"I would say my freshman year," Richardson

said when asked of his most memorable moment at Tech. "After that year, our first year under Beamer, I think we went 2-9. Then, I think we went 3-8 and 5-6 [actually 6-4-1]. Under Dooley, we had been winning and went to the Peach Bowl, and I had expected us to just keep winning.

"But we struggled with the transition. Obviously Coach Beamer got it turned around, as you can tell."

Despite the lack of team success during his final three years, Richardson enjoyed his share of individual success. He caught 36 passes for 583 yards and a touchdown as a junior, and his senior season, he hauled in 28 passes for 455 yards and four touchdowns. He led the team in receiving both seasons.

For his career, Richardson caught exactly 100 passes for 1,541 yards and nine touchdowns. At the time, he was the third Tech receiver ever to haul in 100 career passes and the second to catch more than 1,500 career yards.

Interestingly, though, Richardson finished his career with just one 100-yard receiving game. That came in his junior year against Virginia when he caught five passes for 129 yards in Tech's 16-10 defeat to the Cavaliers.

In 1990, he graduated with a degree in sociology and returned to Richmond to work for a local business there. But it wasn't something he wanted to do for the rest of his life.

He decided to attend a job fair at Virginia Union, a historically African-American university in Richmond where his brother was attending college. He put in applications with numerous companies and small businesses, and one of those was for a position as a firefighter in Arlington County.

"I thought I would do something in public service when I graduated from Tech," Richardson said. "I knew a lot of firefighters, but I don't know that I ever thought I would be one. But I applied for that job, and the rest is history.

"I just like helping people. I also like the physical challenge of it. It's kept me in shape, and it's interesting, too. I don't have to sit behind a desk. That wasn't for me."

Richardson has risen to the rank of captain II and also serves as an emergency medical technician and is a registered paramedic. He oversees three ambulances.

Today, he lives in Upper Marlboro, Md., with his family and commutes to Arlington. His wife, Trina, is a dentist, and the couple has two sons, ages 14 and 12.

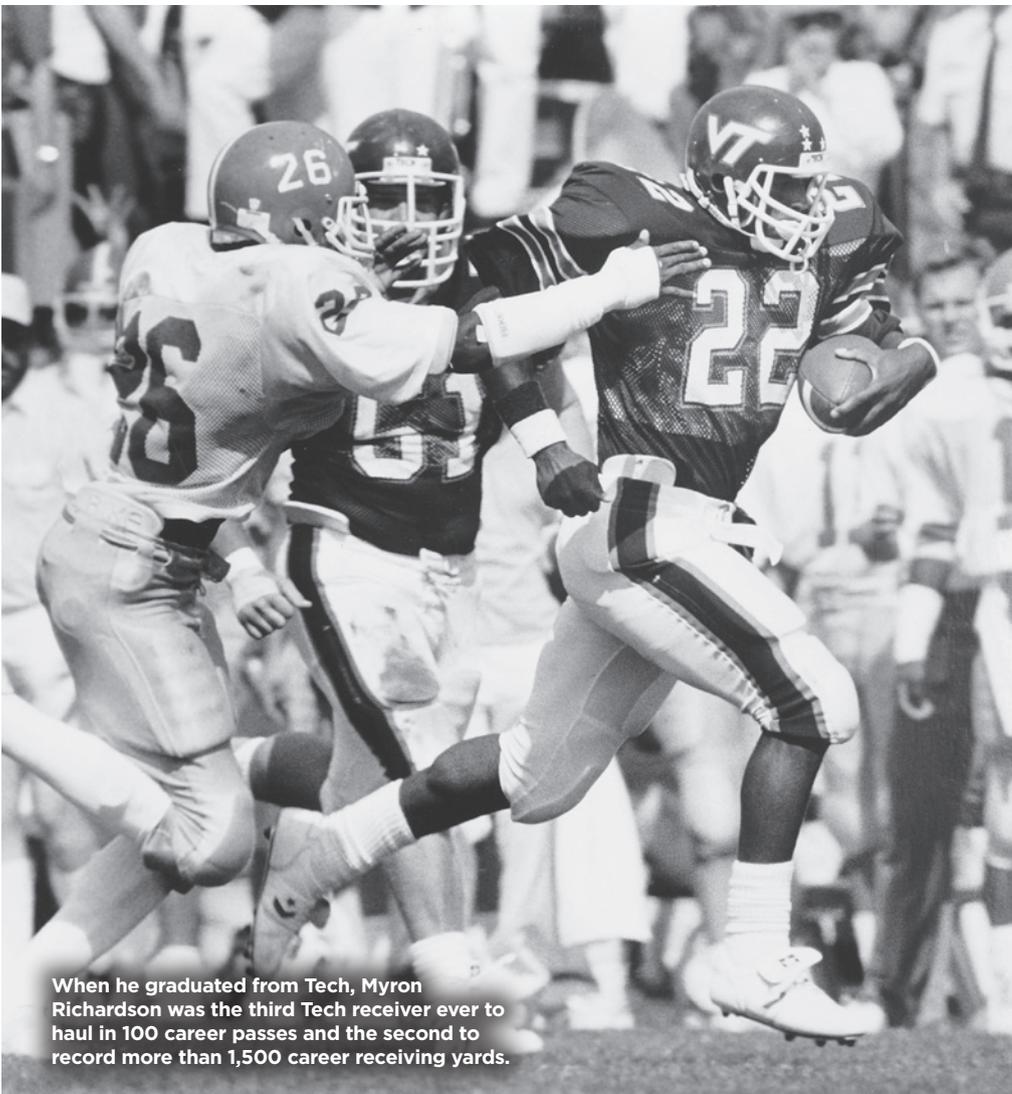
Despite his busy life – his sons are involved in swimming, basketball and golf – he manages to get back to Blacksburg at least once a year.

"I brought my sons down for the spring game," Richardson said. "They got to meet Coach Beamer, and I got to see all the new facilities. Obviously, things have changed a lot since I played there.

"I try to keep up with a few of my teammates, mostly through Facebook. I call a couple of them on a regular basis, guys like Phil Bryant and Greg Daniels and Malcolm Blacken. Malcolm is now working for the Redskins [as the director of player development]."

No matter how often he talks with them or sees them, they – and all Tech fans – can appreciate the importance of his job. Virginia Tech's motto of *Ut Prosim* means "That I may serve," and he's been a living example of that motto since he departed the school.

Given that he likes his job and helping others, it's probably safe to say that he's not going to visit any career fairs any time soon. 



When he graduated from Tech, Myron Richardson was the third Tech receiver ever to haul in 100 career passes and the second to record more than 1,500 career receiving yards.

Maybe the greatest softball player in Tech history, Angela Tincher O'Brien returned to campus as the Hokies' new pitching coach under head coach Scot Thomas.



FAMILIAR FACE RETURNS to BLACKSBURG

Former Virginia Tech softball pitcher Angela Tincher O'Brien has been hired as the program's new pitching coach, returning to the place where she became one of the NCAA's all-time greats

by Jimmy Robertson

Former Virginia Tech softball pitcher Angela Tincher O'Brien was a three-time academic All-American, and she graduated from Tech with a degree in finance and a 3.84 grade-point average. As one may expect, she makes a lot of smart decisions.

But the smartest move she has made recently was deciding to keep some of her cold-weather apparel after moving to Orlando, Fla., once she got married.

"I still have a lot," she laughed.

Tincher O'Brien may need some of those clothes this fall and winter when she starts conducting practices with Tech's pitching staff over at Tech Softball Park. That's because Tech coach Scot Thomas named Tincher O'Brien as his new pitching coach on Aug. 27. The native of Eagle Rock, Va., returned to her alma mater and began her new role on Sept. 2.

Tincher O'Brien replaces former pitching

coach Barb Sherwood, who departed after getting the head coaching job at Portland State.

"It was a pretty easy decision for me," Tincher O'Brien said. "Obviously, there were some things to work out logistically with us [she and her husband, Sean, a former Tech baseball player] being in Orlando and making that transition. But I knew I would be interested in getting back into coaching if it were the right program and the right fit, and Virginia Tech was obviously at the top of that list."

Tincher O'Brien brings impressive credentials to the position. As a player, there was simply no one better.

She earned the 2008 USA Softball Player of the Year honor as a senior after leading the Hokies to their first College World Series appearance. She also beat the USA Olympic Softball team that season in an exhibition, pitching a no-hitter and ending Team USA's 185-game pre-Olympic win streak.

The three-time All-American and three-time ACC Player of the Year went 123-35 over four years at Tech, with a 0.78 ERA and 2,149 strikeouts – the third-most strikeouts in NCAA history of softball at any level. She is one of only two players in NCAA history to record 600 or more strikeouts in two different seasons, and she led the nation in ERA her junior and senior years. Tincher O'Brien also led the nation in strikeouts her final year and tossed 14 solo no-hitters, including two perfect games, in NCAA competition. She compiled 120 double-digit strikeout games for her career, including 42 games of 16 strikeouts or more.

Following her graduation, she played for the Akron Racers, who drafted her in the first round of the National Pro Fastpitch League Draft. She spent two seasons playing for the Racers, and she played one season for a team in Japan.

But Tincher O'Brien decided to give up

playing relatively early in her career. At that point, she became more interested in coaching.

"I think I was just ready," she said of leaving softball. "A lot of people thought that I retired early, but for me and where I was, I knew I was ready to be done and do other things. I had always committed so much to softball and never felt like I was missing other things. When you're playing a sport year-round and devoting so much time to that, you do miss out on a lot of other things. Not that that didn't bother me, but softball was always my No. 1 priority.

"But when I was starting to get to where it bothered me to miss out on so many other things in life and not be able to give other things my full attention, I think I knew then that it was time for me to make a change."

In 2010, Tincher O'Brien served as an assistant coach at Syracuse, helping the school to the Big East title and automatic berth to the NCAA Tournament. The following year, she was the pitching coach at Maryland, helping that program to the NCAAs.

Once she got married, she resigned from her job at Maryland and moved with her husband to Orlando, where he held a position with The Golf Channel. While in Orlando, she continued coaching, albeit by giving private lessons, and she volunteered occasionally with the Daytona

State Community College softball team, helping out that program's pitchers when needed.

"When I was still playing the first couple of years, you need something that is flexible and still allows you to work out on your own and stay in shape," she said. "That [coaching] was an easy decision for me because I could coach during the year and still had the summer to play. From there, it opened up a lot of other opportunities that I wanted to make use of. I thought I'd always go back to my business degree or go back to finance, but it's hard to step away from softball.

"I do enjoy coaching. Even though I haven't been coaching full time in college the past couple of years, I've been giving private instruction and working with pitchers. I've always enjoyed keeping that a part of my life, even though it's changed from year to year."

She inherits an interesting situation here at Tech, as last season's winningest pitcher, Jasmin Harrell, graduated after a senior season in which she went 18-9 with a 2.72 ERA and pitched well in the NCAA regional. But sophomore Kelly Heinz returns after going 17-8 as a freshman with a 2.68 ERA. She struck out 169 in 156.2 innings. Also sophomore Maggie Tyler returns after pitching 60.2 innings a year ago as the team's third pitcher.

Tincher O'Brien will also be doing more than

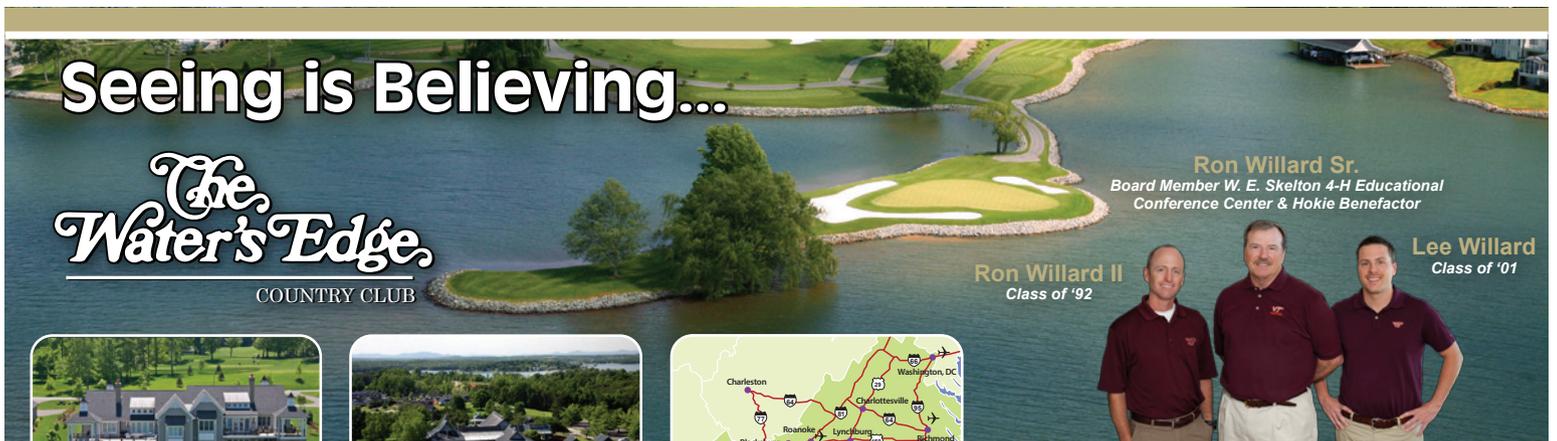
coaching. She will be recruiting, which arguably may be more important than coaching.

"I think I'm going to enjoy being out there at tournaments," she said. "It's something I did more in the last year, go out to tournaments where I had students playing just to see how they were doing. I enjoyed being out there at the games and seeing how players were developing. So I think that will be the exciting part of it."

She comes to Tech with high expectations, both of herself and of the Tech program, which, this spring, made the NCAA regionals for the sixth time in the program's history. But expecting her to mold her pitchers into players as good as she was may be a little extreme. After all, she ranks as one of the all-time greats in NCAA history.

But she's not worried about accomplishing that. Like the quintessential coach, she wants to focus more on short-term goals, like planning the fall workout schedule for her pitchers.

"The team has done well in making the postseason, and that's something we want to continue," she said. "Obviously, I want to be a part of that, but I think right now I'm just more excited to be back and be a part of it and looking forward to the fall and the work that we have to get done then. I look forward to taking it one day at a time as we get ready for the spring." 



Seeing is Believing...

The Water's Edge
COUNTRY CLUB

Ron Willard Sr.
Board Member W. E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center & Hokie Benefactor

Ron Willard II
Class of '92

Lee Willard
Class of '01

With 13 miles of shoreline and more than 700 acres, there's a lot to love at The Water's Edge, a prestigious golf and lake community developed by The Willard Companies at Smith Mountain Lake, VA. Enjoy an 18 hole private, members-only, PGA Championship golf course ranked as one of the best in the nation. The Water's Edge also offers a 36,000 sq. ft. Clubhouse featuring dining and bar areas, men's lounge, and fitness center. Additional amenities include tennis courts, Jr. Olympic size pool, driving range, pro shop, and equestrian center all under the backdrop of Virginia's majestic Blue Ridge Mountains. To become part of this exclusive community, choose from a variety of single-family homes, home sites, condos, town homes, or golf villas.

The conditions are perfect. Seeing is Believing...

 **Prudential**
Waterfront Properties

For a **FREE DVD and Visitor Guide**,
Call (800) 858-4653
(540) 721-8569

www.TheWatersEdgeCC.com
www.SmithMtnLake.com

For additional information and pricing, contact Prudential Waterfront Properties today.

© 2013 BRER Affiliates Inc. Real Estate brokerage services are offered through the independently owned and operated network of broker member franchisees of BRER Affiliates Inc. Prudential, the Prudential logo and the Rock symbol are registered service marks of Prudential Financial, Inc. and its related entities, used under license with no other affiliation with Prudential. Equal Housing Opportunity.



Tech women's soccer standout Jazmine Reeves has more work to do on the soccer field for the Hokies before heading off to her new job in the professional world.

EXPECTING GREAT THINGS

Jazmine Reeves has a career in management at Kohl's lined up after graduation, but her immediate focus is helping the Tech women's soccer team back to the NAAs

by Marc Mullen

Most people have seen the NCAA ads and have heard the slogan, "There are over 400,000 NCAA student-athletes – and most of us will go pro in something other than sports."

For Virginia Tech women's soccer player Jazmine Reeves, the slogan is fitting. So this past summer, the current senior made sure to prepare herself for a career that did not include professional sports, even if it meant good-bye to her summer vacation.

"It was definitely a different summer than I've had in the past because usually I just go home and relax and work out," she said. "But this summer, I realized that, next year, I have to find a job. I thought maybe I should do something about it. So I went to the career fair [at Tech], and I got an internship with Kohl's for store management.

"I was working 40 hours a week, so it was like a real job, and it was tough. I was going to work from 8 to 4:30 and then going straight to the field to run and then straight to the gym to lift. So my days were really long, and I was basically exhausted all summer. It wasn't super enjoyable, but in the end, it was definitely worth it."

Reeves, who will earn a management degree in entrepreneurship, innovation and technology management when her time at Tech ends, made the most of her internship, as she made an impression on those at the company and was offered a position in its Manager-In-Training program following graduation.

According to the company's website, a little more than 250 graduates a year are provided the opportunity to experience key areas of store management. And upon completion of the program, a person will be placed as an assistant store manager and running a multi-million dollar business within an area of the store.

"I had a great experience, and I appreciate them

for giving me a chance and that opportunity," Reeves said. "But I'm so proud of myself in a way because I was able to do that and also come in prepared [athletically] for this year, which I was a little worried about when I took the internship.

"I was hoping that it [her internship] wasn't going to be too much for me because soccer is my priority. I have one more year of it, but I think I was able to manage both pretty well."

Reeves knows all too well how preparation for a fall season doesn't just start on the first day of training sessions.

In her first two seasons with the Hokies, she scored five goals in each campaign and added nine assists to her totals as a sophomore – which is the third-most assists ever in a single season at the school – and she

expected bigger things heading into her junior year. However, during the spring of last year, Reeves ended up tearing a quad muscle and kept playing on it, making matters

worse. For a player who relies on her quickness for success – one of the reasons why she stayed in the sport – she just wasn't as fit as she wanted to be last season.

"It probably wouldn't have gotten as bad as it did if I hadn't kept playing on it," she said. "I don't want to make any excuses for why I didn't have a great junior year, but I didn't have a great junior year.

"I was still not at 100 percent until a few weeks into the season of last year, and I just don't think

that I ever got back to being myself. I'd never had an injury that set me back like that, so that was definitely an experience that I struggled through. I think I've gotten past that now, thankfully."

She still scored four goals and added four assists last season. But that wasn't good enough for the two-time Delaware Player of the Year (2008 and 2009) and the two-time state Gatorade Player of the Year (2009 and 2010). She was used to doing so much more.

She wasn't always that successful in her sport. In fact, years ago when she first started out her career in soccer, maybe she would have taken a four-goal season.

"Actually, I got into soccer because of my brother, Cody," she said. "He played, like, kinder

kickers, and I was a little older than him, but I wanted to play, too. So when I started, I was on the U9 team [under 9 years of age], and they basically only took me because I was fast. That

“ I was working 40 hours a week, so it was like a real job, and it was tough. I was going to work from 8 to 4:30 and then going straight to the field to run and then straight to the gym to lift. So my days were really long, and I was basically exhausted all summer. It wasn't super enjoyable, but in the end, it was definitely worth it. ”

– Jazmine Reeves on her summer internship at Kohl's

was the only thing I had going for me. I was really, really bad at soccer, but obviously, I stuck with it and things came along for me."

Reeves progressed up the soccer ladder, moving from the recreation team to a club team, and she credits the coaches she had for just continuing to give her chances. They gave her opportunities because of her speed.

Naturally, she also ran track in middle school, but once she got into high school, the two sports ran into each other. Her athleticism enabled her to

women's soccer spotlight | jazmine reeves

play other sports, such as volleyball and basketball, at Caesar Rodney High School in Dover, Del.

But it wasn't until she made a switch to a Northern Virginia club team, the Vista Shockwave, that she started to believe that she shouldn't try to be a two-sport athlete at a Division II school. Instead, she thought she had a legitimate shot at playing soccer at the highest level possible.

"At one point, I thought maybe I would go play D-II and play two sports because I didn't think I was super good at one of them, and that was always in the back of my mind," she said. "But once I went to play for that club team in Virginia and I started getting looked at even more, I think that's when I realized soccer was going to get me to a school like Tech – a big-time school with football and basketball. That always appealed to me."

But the adventure of being recruited was new to Reeves, and she said her mom, Katherine, and her were clueless on what to do. Fortunately, another person stepped forward and guided her and her family down the path toward Division I recognition.

"We had never been through this, so we were really lost. We had no idea of what to expect or what to do," Reeves said. "But the manager of our club team, Nancy Santiago, she helped us tremendously. She gave us tips on what to do, on things we should be looking for, so that was great.

"We only visited four schools, and for the longest time, I really thought that I was going to Maryland. Then I visited here, and that was it. I didn't have to think any more. I didn't have to look any more. My decision was made. Luckily, we had the help of Miss Santiago. I committed early, in my junior year, and it was just stress free from there."

Reeves has led an interesting life, as she was born in California, moved to Dover, Del., when she was 2 and lived on the Air Force base until she was 5. She has traveled to many places thanks to soccer, including a trip to Costa Rica, where she got a weird allergic reaction.

"My lips were huge," she said. "We went in the jungle, and then all of a sudden, I started reacting really weird to something. To this day, I have no idea what it was. All I know is that my lips started feeling really chapped out of nowhere. So I kept putting a ton of ChapStick on, and the next morning, my lips were huge, which was so embarrassing."

However, she said that the scariest thing that she ever had done was probably choosing to play soccer at Tech. She wasn't nervous about the ACC, or her new teammates or coaches, but the impending freedom.

"I'd have to say that my mom spoiled me a little because she did everything for me, which I love her for," Reeves said. "But I was unsure if I could



In her first three years at Tech, Jazmine Reeves had 14 goals and 14 assists and hopes to do even more scoring during her senior season.



A delicious game-day tradition.

BEFORE THE GAME OR AFTER, Preston's Restaurant is a delicious place for a new game-day tradition.

Start with our breakfast or lunch buffet. Order lunch or dinner from our mouth-watering a la carte menu of fresh, seasonal cuisine. Our signature ice cream is a tasty way to savor victory – or smooth over defeat. And don't forget the Valley's best brunch, every Sunday at Preston's, inside the Inn at Virginia Tech.

Make Preston's Restaurant your game-day tradition.

540-231-0120

Open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner.
Reservations recommended.



Preston's

THE INN AT VIRGINIA TECH
AND SKELTON CONFERENCE CENTER

www.innatvirginiatech.com

be independent when I got here. This is the perfect location because my parents can still come here if they need to, but I am still away from home.

"I was never really away from home [growing up] and had to fend for myself, so choosing to come here was a big step. It was separating and taking that next step to becoming an adult and having responsibilities that are my own – paying bills, filling out doctor's forms –that was pretty scary for me. I never had to do that when I was at home. But I've managed."

Now, the only thing that scares her is Tech's 2013 ACC slate, as she and her teammates eye another NCAA Tournament appearance and, what she hopes, is a run never seen before by the women's program.

"My first thought of the new ACC, at least for this year, is that it's really scary," she said. "They are still only taking the top eight [teams] for the ACC Tournament, and typically, they [the NCAA selection committee members] only take the eight that make the ACC Tournament to the NCAA Tournament, so that's scary right off the bat."

"But we've made the Sweet 16 twice now, so one of our goals would be to make it to the Elite 8, and then at that point, anything can happen on any day. I think last year we kind of ended our season a little too soon. I think we had a team that should have gone further. This year, hopefully we can all come together, and the Elite Eight would be a great goal to achieve."

Fortunately, Reeves can focus solely on her role with the women's soccer team for the next two months. Then it's on to the next phase of her life, finishing her degree and going pro in something other than sports, starting her job at Kohl's.

The slogan at Kohl's is "expect great things." Well, Reeves expects great things from herself on the field and off. Hopefully, those things come both sooner and later. 



Jazmine Reeves and her teammates have made it to the Sweet 16 twice during their careers, but hope to advance to the Elite Eight and beyond this season.

PROUDLY SERVING THE HOKIE NATION SINCE 1891

Come see why we've been the area's hometown bank of choice for over a century. Our winning lineup of personalized service, no-nonsense accounts and 25 convenient locations is backed up by over 120 years of financial strength and safety. Join our team today!



www.nbbank.com | Member FDIC

DRUMKIRK GOAL



If the Hokies want to improve on their seven-win season from a year ago, then they need a big season from goalkeeper Kyle Renfro, who has been a starter since midway through his freshman year.

RENFRO A KEEPER FOR TECH

Goalkeeper Kyle Renfro wants to save the Hokies' fortunes this season and help the team to an ACC Tournament appearance – and perhaps beyond

by Marc Mullen

He's a Lynchburg, Va., native, started at Brookville High School and did not commit to Virginia Tech until his senior year. He enters his final playing season for Tech knowing that a lot of his team's 2013 success will hinge on how well he performs. He sorely wants to improve upon the Hokies' seven-win season from a year ago and will not worry about the draft or a professional future until after the season.

Yes, this could be the lead for a story on football's Logan Thomas. But it isn't.

It's about Kyle Renfro, the senior goalkeeper and co-captain for the Hokies' men's soccer team, a young man who also grew up in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains about 90 minutes northeast of Blacksburg. He, like Thomas, will be looking to close out the final chapter of his Hokie career in grand fashion.

"It's very interesting. That probably doesn't happen too often where you see something like that," Renfro said about two guys from the same high school being the focal points for two different teams at the same Division I school. "I've always been good friends with Logan. He's a very humble guy. So it's a pretty cool thing, but I've never really thought about it too much.

"Let's just say we're both doing what we love, and we've both been working hard on it our whole lives and we're just trying to do the best we can. And as you can see, it's paid off for us. It's an interesting concept, for sure, when you think about it."

Renfro has worked, for most of his life anyway, on perfecting his goalkeeper craft. He started out as a field player in a recreational league playing for his father, Martin, who actually coached many of his teams as a child. He also played baseball and basketball.

Around 11 years old, Renfro believes, he made the move to a travel squad, Lynchburg United

Soccer, where he stayed until his junior year of high school. It was with LUS when he first made an appearance between the pipes, mostly due to necessity.

"One year, during our travel season, both of our goalies moved out of town," Renfro said. "So our coach [Chuck Flournoy] asked us if anyone wanted to step up and play goalie. So I did it in practice and did well, and he just decided to stick me there for the rest of the season.

"I ended up performing well and enjoying it, so I just stayed there the rest of my time, which was a great move, as you can see, because it got me to where I'm at today."

It still wasn't an easy path for the relatively local kid to make his dream of playing for the Hokies come true. He grew up rooting for Virginia Tech, and he realized that his best way of getting noticed by the Tech coaching staff meant switching club teams.

Renfro moved on to the Roanoke Star, a bigger club coached by John Faircloth.

In his first season with the Star, Renfro helped the club to a No. 1 ranking in Virginia, a No. 10 ranking on the East Coast and a

No. 31 ranking nationally. Yet that didn't get the attention of those in Blacksburg. So Renfro, who was getting Division III offers and some attention from Division II schools, took it upon himself to make them notice.

"Going into my senior year, I came to the Virginia Tech soccer camp because I heard the best way to get recruited was to go to camps so the coaches could see you for, like, four days straight in training sessions," he said. "The goalie coach at the time was Kevin Doyle [a former Tech assistant], and he saw me play in the training sessions



and thought I was good.

"He asked me to play with some of the older guys, the guys that were currently at Tech, and he came out and watched that and I did really good. Then, on my third day of camp, he pulled me aside and was like, 'Hey, you are good enough to play here. I want you to come play here.'

"I was like, 'What!?' It was out of the blue, and I was like, 'Yeah, that's awesome, but I've got to think about it.' But right after he told me that, I was so ecstatic. I just ran up and called my parents and told them the news, and they couldn't believe it either. A month later, I verbally committed."

Entering his first season on campus, Renfro would face an interesting situation, as he was one of three keepers in camp, including two juniors. None of them had played a collegiate minute the previous year.

He was also battling an injury, as he had dislocated his left shoulder the day before preseason camp began. It did not deter him, though, as he played well. It took the staff just until the third game to insert the freshman into the starting lineup in a match at South Florida.

"My very first college game was on national TV down in Miami, which was a little wake-up call," Renfro said. "National TV, my first game, and getting used to the speed of play, I was like 'Oh my gosh, what did I get myself into?' But it was fine. I played well, and from there, I sort of solidified my spot as a starter."

However, it wasn't for long, and the reasoning wasn't due to a lack of quality play – Renfro went 3-1-1 in his next five starts, including a tie against Clemson and a win at NC State. He would miss the final 10 games of the season with a shoulder injury after making a start against Wake Forest.

"When we were down at Wake Forest, in the first half, I ended up dislocating my right shoulder," he said. "From there, we talked to the doctors and just

decided the best route for me was to go ahead and get surgery on both shoulders.

"So I was done for that season and got surgery on both about a month apart. I rehabbed all spring, and I got to a point where I could play a little bit at the end of spring. Coming into my sophomore year, I was 100 percent healthy, and I got to starting again."

And he hasn't stop starting. Renfro had reeled off 39 consecutive starts at Tech entering the 2013 season and played all but 13 minutes in that span. The streak included what he considered one of the best games of his career – shutting out then-No. 1 North Carolina and making a career-high nine saves in the Hokies' 1-0 upset of the Tar Heels back in 2011.

It will take many performances like that for Renfro to accomplish his on-field goals for this season, both personally and for the team.

"I want to be named the best goalkeeper in the ACC," he said. "Over the past couple of years, me and the coaching staff have agreed that I've kind of gotten gyped out on some accolades, which is fine. That just gives me more motivation to go after it this year."

"I want to get at least 10 shutouts, and that could go along as a team goal because it's not just me. I've got 10 other guys working in front of me. Also, as a team, definitely make the ACC Tournament because ... it's no longer every team makes the tournament. It's just the top eight."

"And if it we make the ACC Tournament, we should make the NCAA Tournament, and that's

something that's eluded us the past couple years. We need to get the program back to constantly getting there and playing at that level."

Over the summer, Renfro actually got to play at an even higher level, as he spent two months living in Washington, D.C., and playing for the DC United U23 team in the National Premier Soccer League. It gave him insight into what it takes for a soccer player to reach the professional ranks.

"It was a great experience, and it was an amazing opportunity for me to see the next level," he said. "To get exposure to the level of play and what it takes to be there and how I need to train and the professional environment, I saw what that's like."

"It was good to see that and to see what I need to improve upon. I also got to play with some of the best college players in the nation, so it was good to see where I stood against other college kids, too."

"But my task at hand is to focus on our team

right now. As long as we do well and succeed in our season, everything after will fall into place. If we succeed in winning games and doing well, that means I'm

“ I want to be named the best goalkeeper in the ACC. Over the past couple of years, me and the coaching staff have agreed that I've kind of gotten gyped out on some accolades, which is fine. That just gives me more motivation to go after it this year. ”

- Kyle Renfro on one of his goals for this season

probably doing well myself. So getting drafted, it's in the back of my mind, but I'm not really thinking about it."

History certainly solidifies his point. The last time a Hokie was selected in the MLS draft was in 2008, when two were actually taken. It followed the 2007 season that saw the Tech men's soccer team play its last NCAA Tournament game.

But one has to walk before he or she can run. And Renfro knows that getting Tech back to the ACC Tournament is the first step. 



Professional Catering Inc.
STEVE WILLIAMS, C.E.C.

Your large event specialists!

540-961-9800 ■ Blacksburg, VA ■ www.professionalcateringinc.com



AAA is a Proud Partner of Virginia Tech.

AAA HAS HOKIES FANS COVERED

TRAVEL PLANNING

HOTEL SPECIALS, AND DESTINATION PLANNING
TO HOME AND AWAY GAMES

DISCOUNTS AT

RESTAURANTS, MOVIES AND
SHOPPING

ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

ON YOUR WAY TO AND
FROM THE GAME



JOIN TODAY AT AAA.COM/JOIN

A brand new community opening Fall of 2014!



the **EDGE**

apartment homes

Proud Partner of VT Athletics



The Edge is designed by
Entasis Design
(704) 786-2328 • www.entasis.com

BRAND NEW 2, 3 & 4 bedroom apartments & townhomes

NOW LEASING!



- **Walk to campus**— The Edge is directly across from VT®!
- Fully furnished apartments & townhomes
- Individual leases available & utilities included
- Private bathroom in each bedroom

- Study & collaboration rooms with video conferencing tools
- Internet Café & WiFi available throughout the Clubhouse
- Resident Lounge with pool tables, game room & tanning beds
- Club inspired Fitness & Yoga Centers



All drawings & renderings are for representational purposes only & are subject to change.

Leasing office: (540) 552-EDGE (3343)
651 Toms Creek Road • Blacksburg, VA
theedge@cmgleasing.com • www.cmgleasing.com

