

INSIDE

HOKIE SPORTS

Official Publication of Virginia Tech Athletics



ON POINT

Tech point guard Nikki Davis wants to lead the Hokies to a postseason tournament in her senior season before pursuing other basketball interests



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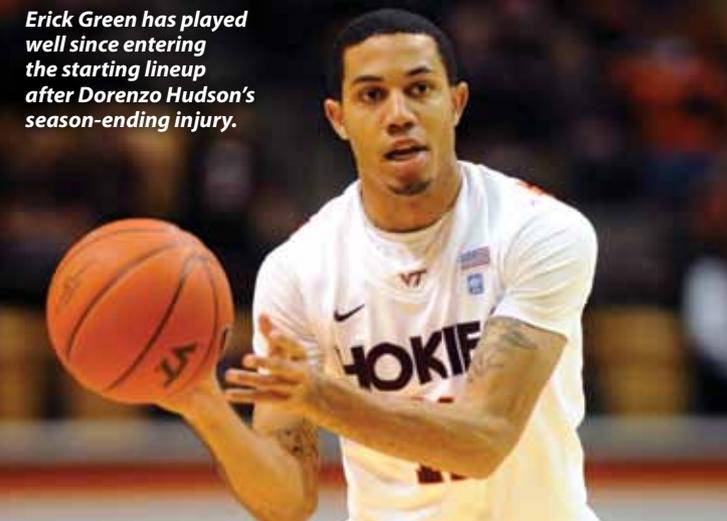
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Erick Green has played well since entering the starting lineup after Dorenzo Hudson's season-ending injury.



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On the Web...

The Notebook provides our readers with more behind-the-scenes news that otherwise may not make the front page of hokiesports.com.

hokiesports.com/notebook/



UPCOMING EVENT PROMOTIONS

JANUARY
16 Women's Basketball vs. Duke 2:00 p.m.
VT/Coke Drawstring Bag Giveaway
AcroDunk Halftime Show -Maroon Effect!

27 Women's Basketball vs. Georgia Tech 7:00 p.m.
VT Tote Bag Giveaway - Orange Effect!
Military Appreciation Night T-shirts

5 Wrestling vs. Virginia 7:00 p.m.
VT/Coke Drawstring Bag Giveaway
Enter to Win Raffle for Youth Bicycle

Women's Tennis vs. Tennessee Noon
VT Tote Bag Giveaway

13 Men's Basketball vs. Georgia Tech 1:00 p.m.
Coach Moir Day - Blackout!
Creative Sports BMX Halftime Show

FEBRUARY
26 Men's Basketball vs. Duke 9:00 p.m.
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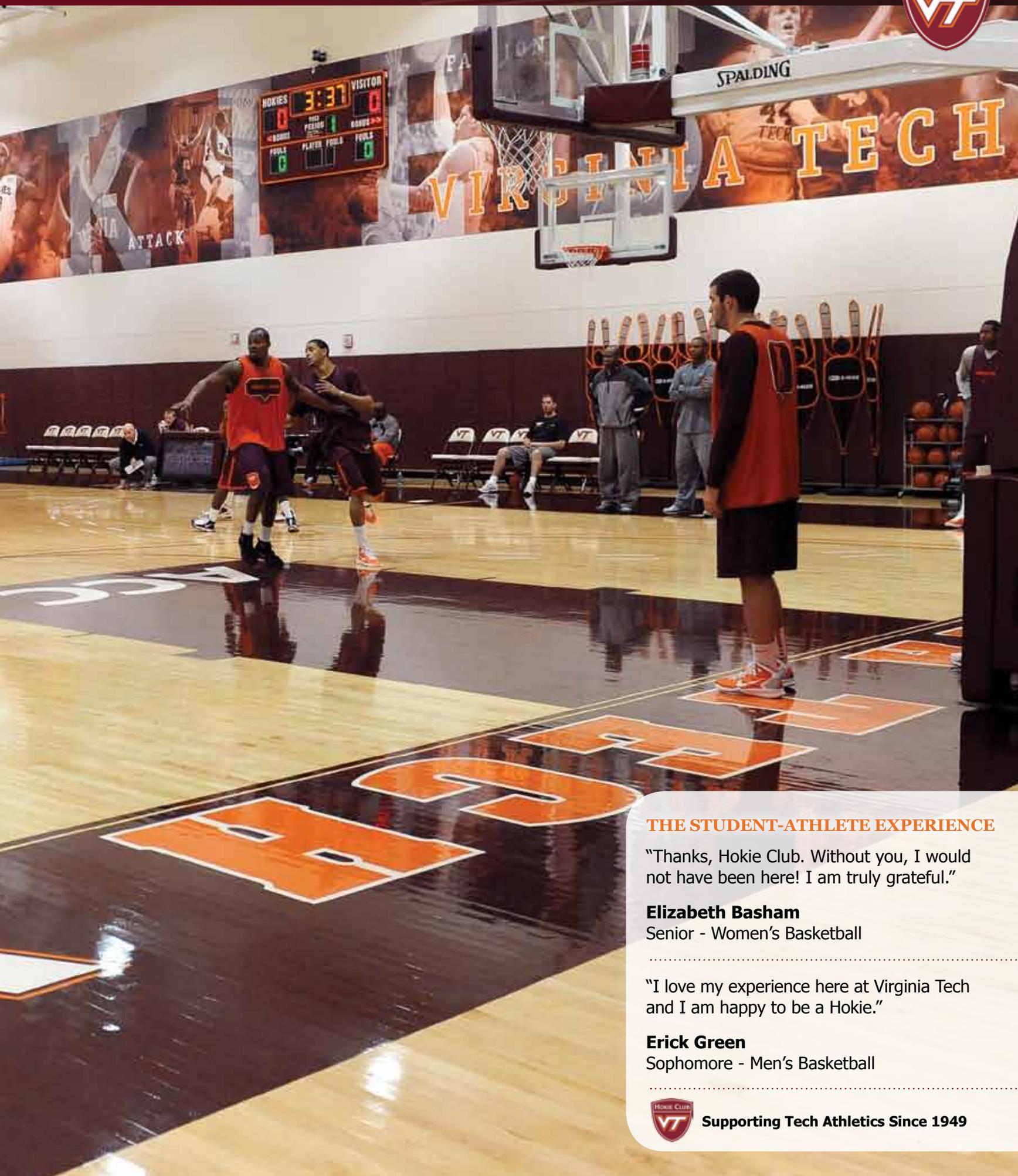
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"Thanks, Hokie Club. Without you, I would not have been here! I am truly grateful."

Elizabeth Basham
Senior - Women's Basketball

"I love my experience here at Virginia Tech and I am happy to be a Hokie."

Erick Green
Sophomore - Men's Basketball



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Mike Schnell

Current Hokie Club level:

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Hokie Club member since:

1997

Currently resides:

Palm Harbor, Fla.

Family:

Wife-Rita, Son-Austin, Son-Trevor



Q: What year did you graduate?

A: 1986

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

A: We live and breathe Virginia Tech. Rita and I met at the university in 1984 and Virginia Tech has been a big part of our lives ever since. Our positive experiences at Tech really drive us to support athletics, as well as academics.

Q: Living in Florida, how often are you able to travel to see the Hokies play?

A: I attend five or six games per year and even visit Tech during other times of the year as well.

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

A: Probably too many to list, up to and including wearing my Hokie shoes!

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

A: We always go to Macado's and visit the Bookstore.

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

A: The west-side stadium expansion because it combined so many aspects that truly improved the football experience at Virginia Tech.

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

A: The Virginia Tech vs. Duke basketball game.

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

A: Bruce Smith (football) - I still visualize the sacks he made, most particularly against Jeff Hostetler of WVU.

Dell Curry (basketball) - My favorite memory is actually meeting him and his family many years after we were at Virginia Tech together.

Interesting Hokie fact:

I co-own a house in Blacksburg adjacent to the university and have a Hokie "wing" at my house in Florida, which includes "imported" Hokie stone.

Anniversary Month vs. Benefits Deadline What's the difference?

When we talk to Hokie Club members, a few common threads seem to arise. Beyond their undying support for the Hokies and the passion that each of us shares, a few questions always work themselves up in conversation. We thought this would be a good opportunity to answer the most common question that we hear: what's the difference between my anniversary month and the benefits deadline?

Anniversary Month

When a person joins the Hokie Club by making an annual donation at one of the seven annual giving levels, he or she becomes an active member of the Hokie Club for a 12-month period. The month in which a person first joins the Hokie Club becomes their anniversary month. The anniversary month is used to track the member's giving and will be used as a reminder for membership renewal at the end of his/her 12-month period.



Pictured is the Hokie Club reception held at the Westin Diplomat in Hollywood Beach, Fla., before the Orange Bowl game.

With approximately 90 percent of all Hokie Club members making a donation at one of the seven annual giving levels (Hokie Club, Orange & Maroon Hokie, Bronze Hokie, Silver Hokie, Golden Hokie, Platinum Hokie, and Diamond Hokie), the anniversary month is important to everyone. With approximately 11,000 members, it is also important to our office that we receive donations each month so that we can efficiently operate the Hokie Club office and effectively support the Virginia Tech Athletics Department throughout the year.

Benefits Deadline

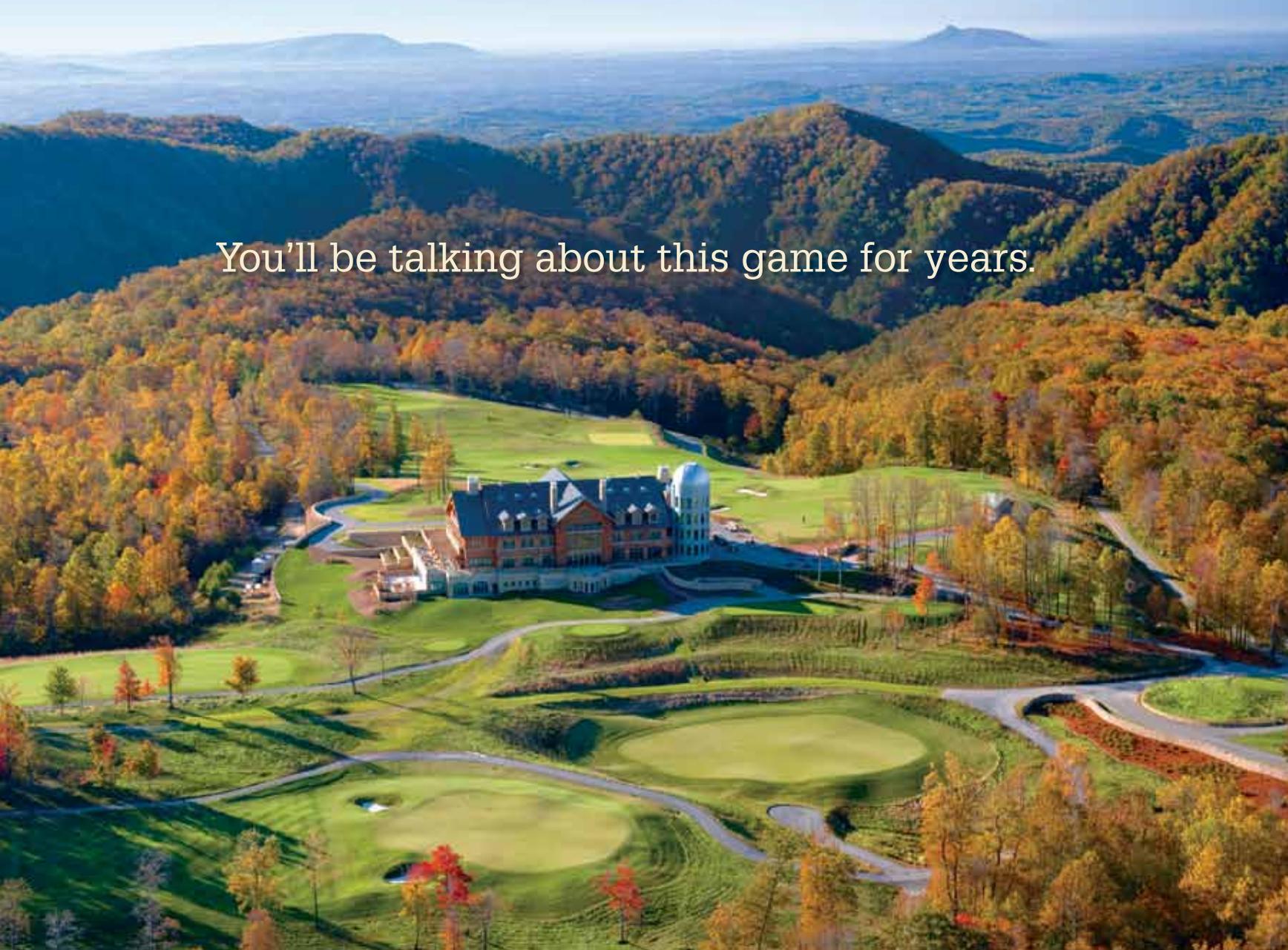
To effectively utilize the Hokie Club point priority system, the Hokie Club has designated December 31 of each year as the benefits deadline. Using the Hokie Club point priority system, the Hokie Club ranks all donors and uses their rank as of this date for all benefits for the upcoming year, including benefits for football season tickets and parking, basketball season tickets and parking, bowl game tickets, etc. (For example, the benefits deadline of December 31, 2010 will be used for all benefits for 2011.)

What happens if a Hokie Club member does not renew his/her membership by their Anniversary Month and instead waits until the Benefits Deadline?

If a Hokie Club member does not renew his/her membership as of his/her anniversary month, then he/she will become INACTIVE and lose all benefits of membership. In recent years, all Hokie Club members receive *Inside Hokie Sports* magazine as part of a membership and this, along with all other Hokie Club benefits, will stop. Additionally, if the membership is not renewed, the donor may lose years of continuous membership points.

We appreciate all that our Hokie Club members do in terms of support for our student-athletes here at Virginia Tech, so we hope that you will help us by renewing your membership on time and will encourage your friends, family and fellow Hokies to join the Hokie Club!

Note: This does not relate to those enrolled in quarterly, Hokie Matic and employee payroll deduction payment plans. These memberships operate on a calendar year basis.



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NEWS & NOTES

HOSPITAL VISIT A HUGE SUCCESS

Orange Bowl officials raved about the six-person Tech contingent that visited the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital to meet with ailing children as part of an official Orange Bowl function. The Hokies' group consisted of injured players who weren't playing in the Orange Bowl – Dyrell Roberts, Lyndell Gibson, Lorenzo Williams, Tony Gregory, Jacob Barron and Kwamaine Battle – and they handed out Tech shirts, hats, footballs and bags, brightening the kids' day.

"This is a blessing to me," Gibson said. "It's a way of giving back. I know when I was a kid, I wanted to see big-time people. It was fun. Being able to be that person who is special to them and to see them, it's a great thing."

Gregory, a redshirt freshman who tore his ACL in the North Carolina game, knows what it's like to be in a hospital. He's actually torn the ACLs in both of his knees and spent plenty of time in recovery.

"Their situation is much more serious than mine, but I know what it's like to be laid up," Gregory said. "You can't do the things you want to do or see the things you want to see. For someone or an organization to come and shed light or bring joy, it's a sight to see."

**PLAYERS DEBATE BOWLS VS. PLAYOFFS**

At the official bowl press conferences in Fort Lauderdale, an Orange Bowl official asked players whether they preferred bowl games or whether they wanted to see a playoff system.

The majority of Tech players interviewed, roughly 12 or so, preferred a playoff system. That contingent included tailback Ryan Williams, defensive tackle John Graves and tight end Andre Smith.

"I know the perks and everything with a bowl game is fun," Williams said. "You get a lot of gifts and you get to stay in a nice hotel. That's cool, but I really want to know who is the best team in the nation and I don't think these bowl games solidify that."

"Just like us. We got beat by JMU and then won 11 straight. Later on in the season, that's when teams gel and that's when you find out who's the best team. That's why I really wish there was a playoff system."

Those who supported the bowl setup included tailback Darren Evans and rover Davon Morgan. Both felt a playoff would mean too many games for such a physically demanding sport.

"The bowl experience is great," Morgan said. "There are already enough games, and I think it's good to get away. I've been down here [to the Orange Bowl] three times and I've enjoyed it every time."

Typically, Stanford coach Jim Harbaugh and Tech coach Frank Beamer held opposite views. Beamer has long been an advocate of the bowl system, while Harbaugh prefers a playoff.

CHANGING POSITIONS – AGAIN?

After a terrific spring practice as a tight end in 2009, Chris Drager willingly moved to defensive end after Tech's coaching staff saw a need to develop some depth along the defensive front.

Now, he may be on the move back to his original position.

"It's hard to say. I guess Coach Beamer and I are going to meet sometime after the bowl," Drager said three days before Tech's Orange Bowl appearance. "I know we've got a lot of talent at defensive end. Guys like Jimmy Gayle and J.R. Collins have more potential than I do, and they [the coaches] probably want to work more with them."

The issue is Tech's lack of depth at tight end. Andre Smith, who caught 20 passes for 195 yards and five touchdowns, departs, and the only returner with any significant experience is Eric Martin. Guys like Randall Dunn and walk-on George George played sparingly.

Drager started 12 games as a defensive end and finished with 34 tackles, including six for a loss, and two sacks. As a tight end in 2008, he caught three passes for 37 yards.

"I love defensive end," he said. "But I feel like I'm probably better as a tight end. To be a 4-3 defensive end, you've got to be freakishly athletic and that's just not me. I'm a good athlete, but I don't think I'm a freakish athlete."

"If he [Beamer] decides to move me, then I don't think it'll be a big transition. I'm glad I've gotten to play both positions. I think that's given me a better understanding of both positions. I enjoy both, so we'll see. It's a win-win situation for me." 

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TECH DEFENSE LOOKING FOR IMPROVEMENT AFTER UP-AND-DOWN 2010 SEASON

Days before the Hokies took to the field for the Orange Bowl, defensive coordinator Bud Foster revealed to the media at a press conference that Stanford's running game worried him.

It turned out to be more than simple coach-speak. It turned out to be prophetic.

Tech's 2010 defense will be remembered for playing impressively in phases this season. The Hokies intercepted 23 passes, ranking tied for second nationally in that category. They shut out BC, held the Tar Heels at bay, squelched Miami in the second half and gave up just a lone touchdown against rival Virginia.

But the flip side of 2010 is this – the Hokies gave up too many big plays, too many yards, especially on the ground, and too many points. The Orange Bowl was somewhat a microcosm of the Hokies' season, as Stanford racked up 534 yards of offense (247 on the ground), which stands as the most ever allowed by Tech in a bowl game.

"It was right there and then we had a couple of long plays against our defense and it got away from us a little bit," Tech coach Frank Beamer lamented. "We had them backed up, and if you feel like you could hold them, then you could get right back in it. But then they got two scores and it got away from us a little bit."

The two scores came within a three-minute span in the third quarter. Stanford would go on to score on its first four possessions of the second half to run away with things in a 40-12 victory.

Once the final stats were tabulated for the 2010 campaign, the Hokies allowed 361.5 yards per game. Nine opponents scored more than 20 points against Tech, the most since 2000. The Hokies gave up more than 200 yards rushing in four games this season.

It's not as if Foster and the rest of Tech's staff didn't foresee a rebuilding process. The Hokies entered 2010 with a young defense, especially after Jason Worilds surprisingly declared for the NFL Draft last year, robbing the Hokies of their top playmaker on the defensive front, and after Barquell Rivers tore his quadriceps tendon in a winter workout. Rivers, who started 13 games at mike linebacker a year ago, did not make his season debut until the Orange Bowl. Thus, Tech's defense featured seven new starters this season.

As a result, the unit struggled to mesh despite Foster's expertise. His linebackers were up and down, and the defensive line labored to get pressure. The Hokies faced several pass-happy, spread offenses early, which forced Foster to play a lot of nickel coverage – which meant freshman Kyle Fuller and redshirt freshman Antone Exum got a lot of time, but were forced to learn on the run.

"Throughout the season, when we really went sour, we weren't communicating," said Jack Tyler, who started the Orange Bowl at mike linebacker. "We weren't running the scheme and it was just a lot of execution letdowns. It's really just buying

into the system. Coach Foster has been doing this a long time and he's the best at what he does. So you need to listen to him and trust your teammates that they're going to be in the right spots."

"We need to work on the communication and get everyone on the same page," cornerback Jayron Hosley agreed.

Experience figures to help that, and the good thing for the Hokies is that seven starters return heading into spring practice – eight, if one counts Rivers. Plus, Foster and his staff played a lot of people. Guys like Fuller, Exum, Tyler, Jeron Gouveia-Winslow, James Gayle, J.R. Collins and Derrick Hopkins figure to be much improved heading into spring practice.

"A lot of guys got a lot of reps and a lot of minutes this year," safety Eddie Whitley said. "I'm expecting us to go into spring ball rolling, playing at a fast pace and getting it done."

Preparations for the 2011 season start with winter workouts once the students return to Blacksburg for spring classes. Tech's defenders need to get stronger and more physical, both at the point of attack and in coverage. Then, an interesting spring practice begins in late March or early April.

Foster knows his stuff. His units have finished in the top 10 in total defense on nine occasions, including first twice. He'll be ready.

Will the players be ready? They should be. If nothing else, Stanford has provided the motivation. 

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HOKIES ENJOY A TERRIFIC SEASON, BUT THERE'S WORK TO BE DONE TO TAKE NEXT STEP

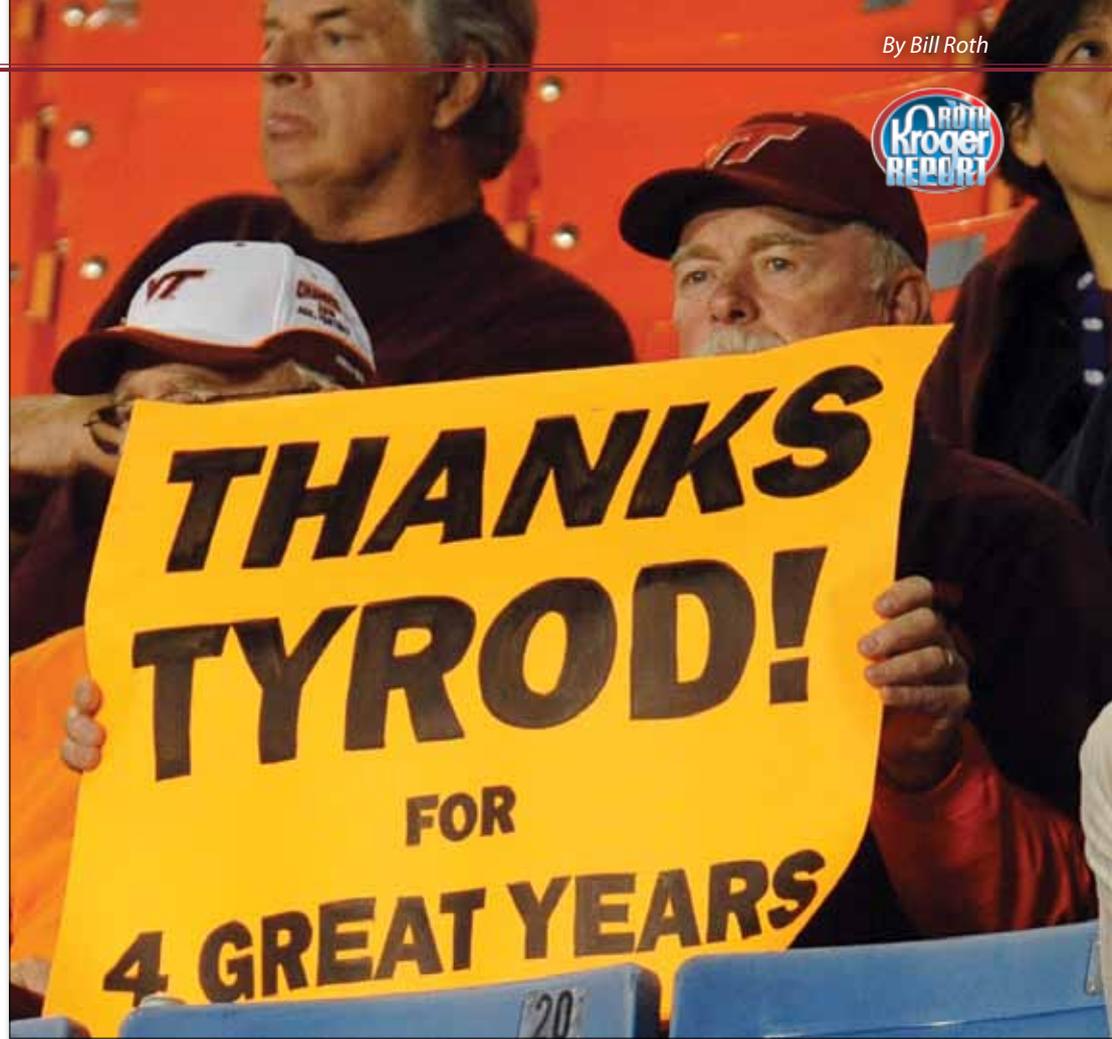
How should we, or will we, remember the 2010 Virginia Tech football season?

The record book will show a team that finished 11-3, was unbeaten in the ACC, knocked off a longtime nemesis in the league's championship game and played in a BCS bowl. It won 11 straight games, led by Tyrod Taylor, a quarterback who shattered many school records and was named the ACC's best player.

But it's also a team that sandwiched all of those wins between bookend losses to the only top-10 teams it faced. And, in what most observers (including the participating coaches) felt was an even matchup, the Hokies were beaten soundly 40-12 in their bowl game by Stanford.

The biggest danger here is to form an opinion from a single snapshot. If you judged the season by the result of the Orange Bowl, not only would you be disappointed, but you'd also be unfair to the players who won a bunch of games just to get to Miami.

Even considering the bowl loss, becoming the first ACC team to run the table in a decade makes this a remarkable group. The fact that it turned an 0-2 start



into 11-2 makes it even more memorable. Personally, this was one of my favorite Tech teams ever both on and off the field.

It just ended with a thud. The last time the Hokies were beaten that badly in a bowl game was following the 1997 season when No. 7 North Carolina trounced unranked Tech 42-3 in the Gator Bowl.

But this was not 1997. In fact, this was one of the best seasons in Tech history, and the Hokies were fielding one of their

most talented teams.

At the end of the day, what happened in Miami counts, and it counts a lot. The result was curious for folks all over the country because, under the brightest lights of the season and in what head coach Frank Beamer called "one of the biggest games in school history," Tech was humbled in a big way.

How did it happen? How did the Hokies have their worst performance in



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their biggest game? Was it a bad day at the office or something more systemic?

Well, first, here are some observations:

• **Was Stanford that much better than Tech?** At some positions, yes. Stanford was much more physical up front on both sides of the ball and had a once-in-a-generation quarterback in Andrew Luck, and he had a great night. Stanford would've been hard to beat even had Virginia Tech played a near-perfect game. So yes, they were that good.

• **How can an ACC championship team, one with a record number of all-conference players in its lineup, lose so badly to the Pac-10 runner-up?**

Two part answer here. A) This was certainly a bad night at the office for the Hokies. Remember the night Dan Reeves, John Elway and the Denver Broncos lost Super Bowl XXIV to San Francisco 55-10. It happens. But ... B) Defending the ACC's record in BCS games is an exercise in futility at this point, so there's no use in trying. As a league, the Pac-10 only had four teams with winning records, but its top two teams – Oregon and Stanford – were great this year and would've won a lot of conferences, including the ACC. Tech's recent "big game" losses (USC, Alabama, LSU, Stanford) came against some elite teams and three of those won national titles. Stanford, thanks to its senior-dominated lines and a future NFL quarterback, is in that ilk. The reality: Those teams did indeed have better players than Tech. Hokies dominated the ACC, but those teams from other leagues were mega-talented.

Certainly, Virginia Tech has won its share of "big games" in recent years. To have won four ACC titles, a team has to win some big games, right?

But even Beamer brought up Tech's poor record against top-five teams in the weeks and days leading up to this game. No use hiding behind the numbers, he felt. It was time to win one of these, and this seemed to be the team that would do it.

Didn't happen.

So, what's better? Decades-long consistency or short-term greatness?

Over the past four seasons, Virginia Tech compiled a record of 42-13. During the same period, Stanford was 29-21. But on this one night in Miami, Stanford's best was better than Tech's best and it's not debatable. Over the long haul, Virginia Tech has been the much better program, but did that matter on January 3, 2011? Nope.

This brings to mind my old college astronomy professor Dr. Gunter Wessel. Dr. Wessel (that's German, so it's pronounced "Vessel") often spoke of the star Sirius, the brightest star in the sky. Did you know that Sirius is twice as bright as any other star? You can gaze skyward and see for yourself. It's been blazing out there for millions of years, century-after-century, lighting up its area of the night sky.

Yet, when there's a shooting star (which, as you know, is really just a rock burning up in the atmosphere), millions flock to their backyards and decks to watch it light up the sky. After three seconds, it flames out, but what a memorable three seconds it was, eh?

Nobody (other than Dr. Wessel) ever

raves about Sirius, but Virginia Tech football is Sirius. It burns brighter than any other star in the ACC, but at times, a shooting star burns brighter. That, my friends, is what happened in Miami this year. Kansas had a wonderful team when it beat Tech in the 2008 Orange Bowl, but since then, Kansas has flamed out.

As we know, Frank Beamer and his staff did not build a program that will flame out, and that's what makes Tech's program the envy of so many around the country. Its consistency is astonishing.

But when facing truly elite teams, it seems to run into a Heisman winner (USC's Matt Leinart, Alabama's Mark Ingram, USC's Reggie Bush), or guys who finish a close second or third (BC's Matt Ryan, Stanford's Luck, etc.). Or a team that is having a magical season, and Tech falls short.

What Beamer, his staff and the Hokie Nation want is both. They want the consistency of Sirius, but to be able to burn even brighter in the biggest of games.

Thanks to some sensational recruiting within the region, Tech has better players than many of its ACC brothers. A record 13 players were named All-ACC, remember? But to beat truly elite teams, Tech needs even better players. It needs more *elite* players.

How will this season be remembered? Personally, this will go down as one of the best teams Tech's ever had. Ever.

But it will also be a good learning experience. The Hokies are close. They're right on the edge of taking that next step.

How Coach Beamer gets us there will be interesting to watch. 



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SAAC: WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Twice a month, 40 student-athletes meet to discuss team updates, community outreach initiatives and ways to increase attendance at home athletics events. Is this a team meeting? Not quite.

This is a description of a typical Student-Athlete Advisory Committee meeting, more commonly known around the Department of Athletics as SAAC. Through this committee's efforts, Virginia Tech student-athletes have collected cans for local food banks, donated toys to the Montgomery County Christmas Store and raised money for Relay for Life and victims of the earthquake in Haiti.

It's most important to note the first part ... student-athlete. The Virginia Tech SAAC is a student-run organization advised by the Office of Student Life staff and recognized by the Division of Student Affairs. It was started in 1997 as a mandate from the NCAA that all member institutions have SAACs on their respective campuses. Essentially, student-athletes assemble to provide insight on the student-athlete experience and input on the rules, regulations and policies that affect student-athletes' lives.

Each year, two members from each team, as well as athletic training students, serve as SAAC representatives. They are nominated by coaches and previous representatives and act as the "voice" for their teams. Kelly Phillips, a senior on the women's track & field team, was selected co-president of SAAC for the 2010-2011 academic year. Not only is student-athletes' participation integral to the growth of the department, but they also play a key role in disseminating information to their teammates and coaches.

So what does it mean to be a member of Virginia Tech's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee? For one, it means having a forum for student-athletes to voice ideas and make suggestions for implementing change or improving upon the student-athlete experience. It also means knowing that their opinions count and their administration takes their concerns to heart.

NCAA legislation also requires that all member conferences have SAACs, and this year, Phillips was selected as the Chair of the ACC SAAC. The purpose of the committee is to provide general feedback and institutional positions to the ACC on proposed NCAA legislation, conference policies and procedures and any other issues that affect student-athlete welfare. While Phillips serves as chair, the remainder of the SAAC leadership team also serves on the ACC SAAC. Co-president and wrestler David Marone, vice president and men's tennis student-athlete Pedro Graber and secretary and cross country senior Eddie Judge have all been afforded leadership opportunities through their campus and conference SAAC.

One of the purposes of SAAC is to participate in annual community outreach efforts. Each November, brother/sister teams are established as a way to promote friendly competition and collect toys for the Montgomery County Christmas Store (MCCS). They also help the MCCS staff collect toys at a men's and women's basketball game. Last year, the group introduced a new tradition by putting on a tailgate before the Thursday night home football

game in November. Food, drinks and games were provided for all of the student-athletes and coaches as a way to enhance unity between the teams, encourage support for Hokie athletics and promote SAAC and its efforts. Following Haiti's devastating earthquake last January, SAAC sprung into action along with members of the Hokies United campaign to collect monetary donations at the men's basketball game against North Carolina. It's these and other outreach efforts that allow Virginia Tech student-athletes to show appreciation to a community that supports them unconditionally.

The Virginia Tech Student-Athlete Advisory Committee strives to enhance the overall image of student-athletes by serving as positive role models for the department and university. It is evident by its dedication to community outreach and personal development that SAAC is making permanent, positive changes that will leave behind a lasting impression. 



The Student-Athlete Advisory Committee participates in many outreach projects, including collecting toys for the Montgomery County Christmas Store.

Bud Foster's Lunch Pail Defense Foundation



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



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ORANGE BOWL

STANFORD'S SECOND HALF TOO MUCH FOR TECH IN ORANGE BOWL



ORANGE BOWL NOTEBOOK

- Tyrod Taylor departs Tech as the Hokies' all-time leader in career rushing yards by a quarterback (2,196 yards), career rushing touchdowns by a quarterback (23), career total offense (9,213 yards) and career passing yards (7,017 yards), and is tied for first in career 100-yard rushing games by a quarterback (six). He also set the single-season record for touchdown passes with 24 this season.
- Jayron Hosley picked off his ninth pass of the season in the Orange Bowl, thus tying the school record for interceptions (Ron Davidson, 1967). He led the nation this season in interceptions.
- Andre Smith's blocked extra point in the second quarter marked his second career blocked kick (blocked PAT vs. Boise State). It also marked the fourth blocked kick in a bowl under Frank Beamer. Overall, the block was the 127th under Beamer.
- Barquell Rivers, who started every game at mike linebacker in 2009, played in the Orange Bowl as a member of the kickoff team. He had missed every game this season while recovering from a torn quadriceps tendon suffered last winter while lifting weights.
- Tech recorded a safety in the Orange Bowl, thanks mainly to quarterback pressure from John Graves. The safety was Tech's first since 2008 when the Hokies blocked a Nebraska punt out of the end zone and the first by a Tech team in a bowl game.
- Chris Hazley booted his 21st consecutive field goal when he connected before halftime. He finished with 116 points, a Tech single-season record for a kicker.
- The captains for the Orange Bowl game are considered the permanent captains for the 2010 season and were voted on by the members of the team – Graves, Smith, Taylor and Davon Morgan.

Virginia Tech and Stanford spent a week staying in hotels right on the beach in South Florida while conducting preparations for the Orange Bowl.

But after the game, the Hokies were the ones feeling beach bummed.

Stanford opened the second half by scoring touchdowns on its first four possessions and ran away from the Hokies 40-12, handing Tech its second-worst bowl loss ever and snapping the Hokies' modest two-game bowl winning streak.

The defeat also ended Tech's 11-game winning streak after an 0-2 start. Still, the ACC champs finished with an 11-3 mark – their seventh straight season of winning at least 10 games.

"I'm still proud of my boys for the way they fought the whole season," Tech quarterback Tyrod Taylor said. "Unfortunately, we didn't win the last game like we wanted to, but we had a heckuva season. We have nothing to hold our heads down about."

Taylor, playing in his final game, provided Tech fans with one last memorable moment. On a stunning play in the second quarter, he scrambled to his left, avoided Stanford linebacker Owen Marecic, spun around and threw a pass off his back foot while trying to stay inbounds. The pass was intended for Jarrett Boykin in the corner of the end zone, but tailback David Wilson made a diving grab in front of Boykin for an 11-yard touchdown reception.

That play gave the Hokies their only lead of the game at 9-7. Following a Stanford touchdown pass by quarter-

back Andrew Luck, Tech answered late in the first half. A Chris Hazley 37-yard field goal with three seconds left in the half cut Stanford's lead to 13-12, and the Hokies appeared to be in good shape heading into the second half.

But Luck and the Cardinal heated up in the second half. Tech got the ball first, but went three-and-out. Stanford then marched 59 yards and scored on a 1-yard run by Marecic, who doubles as a fullback, for a 19-12 lead.

The Hokies put together a nice drive on the ensuing possession, but Taylor threw his fifth interception of the season when Stanford's Delano Howell picked him at the Stanford 3. After a 56-yard run by Stepfan Taylor, Luck fired a 41-yard touchdown pass to Coby Fleener to make the score 26-12 with 5:49 left in the third quarter.

Luck hit Fleener for a 58-yard touchdown pass on the Cardinal's third possession of the second half and then found Fleener again on the Cardinal's fourth possession for a 38-yard touchdown. At that point, the Hokies were finished.

"It was right there and then we had a couple of long plays against our defense and it got away from us a little bit," Tech coach Frank Beamer said. "We had them backed up [after the interception], and if

you feel like you could hold them, then you could get right back in it. But then they got two scores and it got away from us a little bit."

Luck completed 18-of-23 for 287 yards and four touchdowns, with an interception. Fleener caught six passes for 173 yards and three touchdowns. As a team, Stanford finished with 534 yards of offense – the most allowed by Tech in a bowl game.

"We had three weeks to prepare for them," Tech linebacker Bruce Taylor said. "We just didn't execute. Luck is a great quarterback, but he didn't do anything special. We just didn't show up."

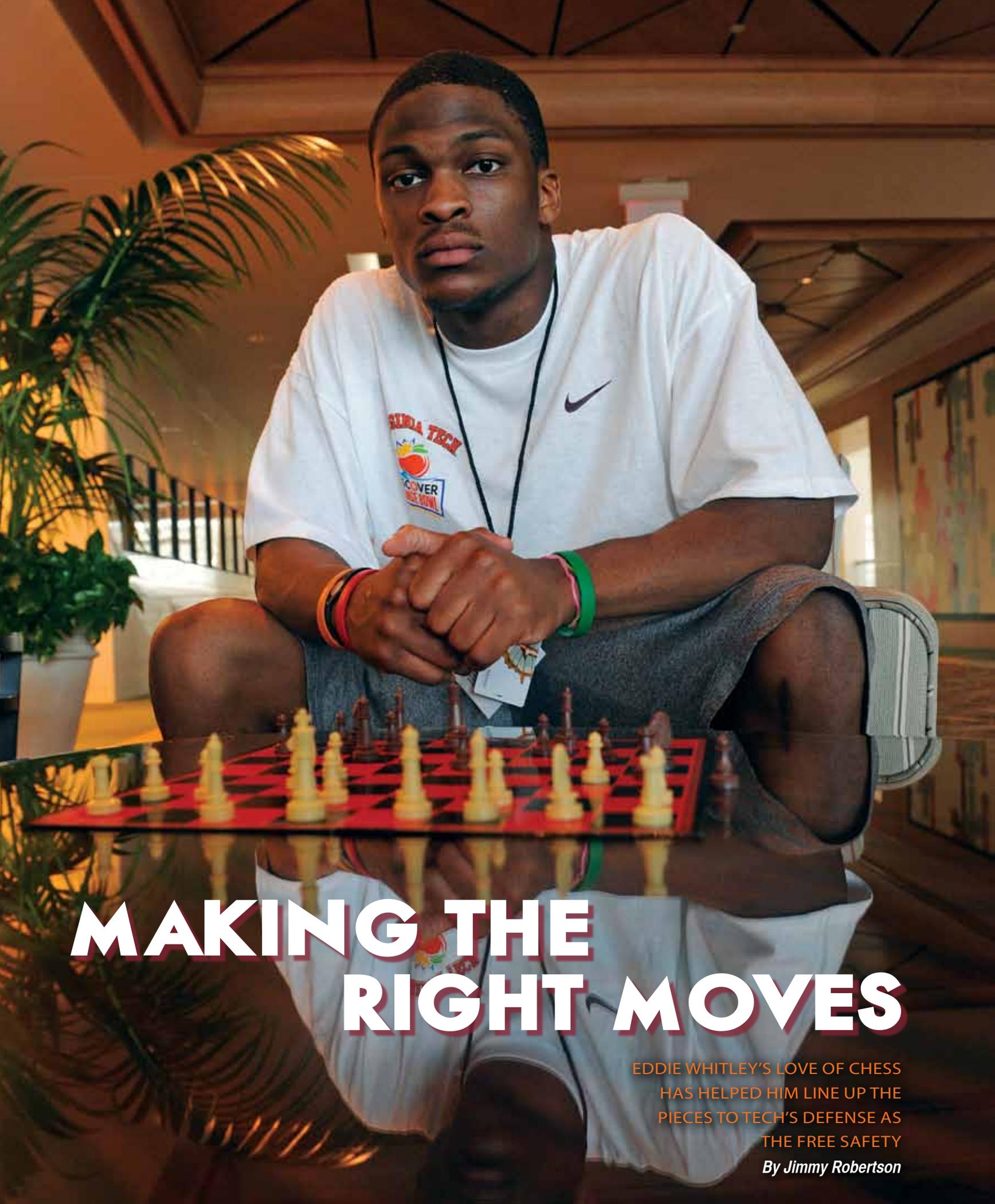
Tech's offense finished with just 288 yards, including 66 on the ground. Taylor completed 16-of-31 for 222 yards, with the touchdown and interception, and ran for 22 yards to account for most of Tech's output.

"I feel bad for our football team and for our fans and for the ACC that we didn't play better, that we didn't function better," Beamer said. "But the same kids that I loved before this game, I love them after. They've given a lot. Getting that ACC championship, I mean, there was a lot of effort and hard work going into that. I'm not going to forget all that." 



Tyrod Taylor set several records during his four-year career at Tech, but his most impressive one is career wins as a starting quarterback. He departs with 34 victories.





MAKING THE RIGHT MOVES

EDDIE WHITLEY'S LOVE OF CHESS
HAS HELPED HIM LINE UP THE
PIECES TO TECH'S DEFENSE AS
THE FREE SAFETY

By Jimmy Robertson

Eddie Whitley has never played in the Sugar Bowl, but he certainly remembers his first trip to the French Quarter.

He wasn't there downing hurricanes or tossing beads. By his guess, he was only 11 or 12 at the time and playing in an AAU basketball tournament, and he went with his mom to take in the sights and sounds of New Orleans' famed tourist spot.

While there, he saw an elderly gentleman sitting on a seat with a chessboard in front of him. To play the man cost \$5, so Whitley asked his mom for permission, she granted it, and Whitley paid the man the money.

"I gave the guy \$5, and I thought we were gambling," he said. "I thought I'd get the money back if I won."

Whitley learned the game from his mother, almost on a whim. As a kid, he and his family sat around one night watching *Searching for Bobby Fischer*, a movie about the legendary chess player, and Whitley's mom asked him if he wanted to learn how to play. Ever inquisitive, Whitley intensely watched every move his mom taught him and memorized them all. She decided to test Whitley's skills, and after one game, he beat her.

Years of playing made him somewhat of an expert, so he easily disposed of the man in the French Quarter. After winning, he held out his hand, expecting the payoff. His mother quickly grabbed him and ushered him away.

"I beat him, and I was like, 'Where's my money?' and my mom told me, 'Nah, you were just paying to play him,'" Whitley said. "I wanted my money and she kept telling me not to worry about it. But I remember the guy telling people that I was going to be something special."

Indeed, he is. Though good, he hasn't quite become the next Bobby Fischer. Instead, he's become special as a student at Virginia Tech and as a player for the Hokies' football program.

He mans the critical free safety spot in Tech's defense, quarterbacking the defense and moving the pieces into the proper positions. The defense is his personal chessboard, and he loves it.

Tech's coaches love it, too. With Whitley out there, they feel pretty confident in one thing – most opponents will have a hard time putting Tech's defense into 'Checkmate.'

While chess provided the challenge for his brain as a kid, Whitley challenged his aggressive side by enrolling in a football league at a rather young age. He begged his parents to let him try out for one of the Little League teams in their hometown of Matthews, N.C., just outside of Charlotte, when he was 6. But his late autumn birthday rendered him too young for the league

and forced him to wait an excruciating year.

In the meantime, his mother and father suggested flag football, a precursor to Little League. But Whitley incredulously refused that offer. Football involved tackling to the ground, not some soft two-hand touch version.

"They had flag football for 5- and 6-year-olds, but I was like, 'No, that's for little kids – like I was so much older than everybody else,'" Whitley said. "But I wanted to play tackle football outside."

"So I did karate that year and I hated it. I told mom, after it was over, 'I'm done with karate. Put me in football.'"

As he became a young adult, he started to become consumed by other things – not all of them good. Two incidents shaped his path, and both let him know that he wasn't in charge of his future.

He realized he was God's pawn in this game of life.

While in middle school, the uncle of one of his friends approached him and a couple of others one day about his nephew, William Bulls. The uncle expressed profound worry over Bulls' choices and begged Whitley and the others to steer their friend in the right direction.

"He told us, 'Get Bulls straight' – Bulls was his nickname," Whitley said. "He told us that Bulls was doing a lot of things his mom didn't like, so he wanted us to get him back on the right path."

"Little did they know, Bulls was influencing us to do the same thing, but I lived on the other side of town, so I wasn't getting into it as much as he was. I was like, 'He's good, he's good.' Then the next week, we get a call saying that he was dead. He had been shot in the head in a drive-by [shooting]."

The incident floored Whitley and rattled his parents. They moved him out of that middle school at the end of the year and into another one a little closer to their home to get him away from some bad influences.

Whitley, though, knew better than to get involved in the things that young adults can get involved with these days. He was smarter and raised better than many of his friends. His mother was a schoolteacher, always stressing education, and his dad – whom he idolizes – had served in the U.S. Army and was working his way into a management role at a local trucking company, so he was always stressing discipline and hard work.



In his first season as a starter, Eddie Whitley finished third on the team with 80 tackles and intercepted two passes.

"After that moment, I realized there was no need to do anything stupid," Whitley said. "That [his friend's death] set my life straight. That was the hardest time of my life, though, to lose a friend like that."

The second incident that helped shape his life path was tamer by comparison, though certainly painful. A member of the Butler High School football team at this point, Whitley was developing into a college prospect and receiving attention from several ACC schools.

But a workout one early summer afternoon changed that. As a defensive back, he leapt over a receiver near the sideline and his cleat stuck in the artificial surface. His knee hyper-extended the wrong way.

"I couldn't even get up to walk," Whitley said. "I tried to lift a couple of days later, and I was trying to do conditioning drills. Then I went to the doctor and he did an MRI and told me that I didn't have an ACL. I had probably torn it several years ago, so I had to have surgery."

That cost him his final high school season.

N.C. State coach Tom O'Brien, widely respected in the coaching profession, rarely makes mistakes when it comes to recruiting local talent. But his hesitancy to commit to Whitley and his family when they were

ready to commit to him ended up working in Tech's favor.

Whitley vividly remembers the conversation between his mom and O'Brien before his senior season and shortly after his injury. She was on speakerphone with O'Brien, and to sum up the conversation, he turned her off.

"Coach O'Brien told her that if I couldn't come back and run and perform like I wanted, then they weren't going to hold my scholarship," Whitley said. "My mom was like, 'Okay, that's cool,' and she told me to tell him we'd call back and to hang up the phone.

"Then she told me to call Coach [Kevin] Sherman [Tech's receivers coach] to set up a visit for that Thursday."

Whitley went to one of Tech's summer camps while in high school, but his parents had never visited Blacksburg. So Whitley called Sherman, and a few days after that conversation with O'Brien, the Whitley family headed up Interstate 77 toward Virginia.

His parents quickly fell in love with the campus and even purchased some Virginia Tech gear. But what really won their hearts were the words from head coach Frank Beamer.

"Coach Beamer told us on our visit that if we got in a car wreck and got hurt going down the mountain [at Fancy Gap], then he

was still going to honor his [scholarship] offer," Whitley said. "He told me I could still have my full scholarship here, and my mom and dad were like, 'Yeah, this is it right here.' That was when we realized it was meant to be."

Whitley waited a week before committing to Tech on a national broadcast by ESPNU. After he put on his Virginia Tech hat, he looked over at his mom, who stood tucked away behind one of the cameras.

She was crying.

"She thought I had made the right choice," he said.

Whitley came to Blacksburg in the fall of 2008 and played right away. Tech's staff placed him at one of the cornerback spots and he spent most of his freshman season learning behind guys like Macho Harris and Brandon Flowers. Then the staff moved him to free safety his sophomore season, where he learned behind Kam Chancellor.

Finally, heading into this past season, he was moved into the starting role. The young child who grew up moving chess pieces all over a chessboard was going to be in charge of moving the pieces to Tech's defense into the proper position.

He found himself in the perfect place.

The 2010 season turned out to be a break-

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“ Coach Beamer told us on our visit that if we got in a car wreck and got hurt going down the mountain [at Fancy Gap], then he was still going to honor his [scholarship] offer. He told me I could still have my full scholarship here, and my mom and dad were like, ‘Yeah, this is it right here.’ That was when we realized it was meant to be. ”

– Eddie Whitley

out campaign for Whitley, who flourished in his first season as a starter right from the opening kickoff. Against Boise State in the season opener, Whitley finished with seven tackles and forced a fumble in Tech’s loss to the Broncos.

He continued making plays despite some nagging injuries. He missed one game midway through the season, but returned down the stretch and made arguably the play of the year with his end zone interception in the North Carolina game that prevented a touchdown.

“I was surprised at how quickly he started out so well,” defensive backs coach Torrian Gray said. “He got banged up and he wasn’t the same Eddie who started out that Boise State game, and he’s just now gotten healthy here toward the end of the season.

“But he’s just like D.J. Parker and Kam Chancellor. We can’t do the things we want to do defensively without a guy who is into it, and Eddie’s been a guy who has been so consistent. He hasn’t always been healthy, but he’s been consistent and he’s made some huge plays when we needed them. I’m proud of how he’s played.”

Whitley finished the season with 80 tackles (third on the team) and two in-

terceptions. More importantly, he provided leadership to Tech’s young defense, helping the unit rank tied for second nationally in interceptions with 23.

Whitley returns for his final spring practice and final season in 2011 and will need to provide more of that same leadership considering that the Hokies lose secondary stalwarts Rashad Carmichael and Davon Morgan.

Next year, this defense again will be Whitley’s defense.

“Coach Bud isn’t on the field and Coach Gray is up in the press box,” Whitley said. “There is no one out there but us. You can’t hear, like you can in practice. You’ve only got three timeouts, and you’re not going to call one every time there’s a miscommunication.

“So I see this as my defense. Everyone has to know what’s going on and play as one. But they have to get the checks from me. I feel it is my defense.”

It’s his chessboard, and he’s used to winning in that game. Only teammate Greg Nosal has come close to defeating him, once playing him to a draw.

This past season, he was the Bobby Fischer of Tech’s defense. Tech’s staff, teammates and fans only hope next season produces similar results. 

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FOOTBALL

EXTRA

REDSHIRT YEAR OVER, TECH FRESHMEN EAGER TO BEGIN COMPETING FOR PLAYING TIME

Nick Acree was the rage this past August in Tech preseason practices largely because few in these parts had seen a freshman the size of Acree.

He came in at 6-foot-5 and weighed a hulking 315 pounds, and he shattered a freshman record when he threw up 450 pounds in the bench press. Unpolished technique and rust from not having played in more than a year – he tore his ACL and missed the 2009 season at Fork Union – resulted in him redshirting in his first season at Tech.

The result? A new man.

Acree, a defensive tackle from King William, Va., who signed with Tech this past February, used the redshirt year to shed more than 20 pounds and get his body fat down to 17 percent.

“Coach Mike Gentry has gotten me back to where I need to be,” Acree said. “I’ve dropped fat. My body fat is now down thanks to him. I’m ready to learn a lot this spring and summer. I need to keep learning.”

Acree is one of 14 freshmen to redshirt this past season out of the 20 who signed with the Hokies this past February. Two of those 20 did not enroll (DeAntre Rhodes and Tahrirk Peak), two deferred enrollment to January (Caleb Farris and Justin Taylor), and only two played. Both cornerback Kyle Fuller and defensive tackle Derrick Hopkins saw extensive time this season.

Recruiting class	No. of those who played as true freshmen
2010	2 (Kyle Fuller, Derrick Hopkins)
2009	3 (David Wilson, D.J. Coles, Jayron Hosley)
2008	6 (Jarrett Boykin, Jake Johnson, Quillie Odom, Dyrell Roberts, Eddie Whitley, Lorenzo Williams)
2007	3 (Tyrod Taylor, Chris Drager, Davon Morgan)

Tech’s coaching staff goes into 2011 spring practice expecting big things from the 2010 recruiting class, especially among its defensive players. The Hokies allowed nearly five yards per carry in 2010, so getting bigger and more physical up front stands as a priority.

That means a guy like Acree and fellow defensive lineman Zack McCray will have an opportunity. Acree has been mentioned as a possible offensive lineman, but rest assured, Tech’s staff wants to give him every shot at becoming a stalwart on the defensive front.

“I’m not sure,” Acree said of his future



Nick Acree used the redshirt year to get himself into great shape and the upcoming spring practice will be the next step in his development as a player.

position. "It's all debatable. But in talking to the coaches, I'm making good progress and that's all I can ask for. I just want to get better each time.

"I don't have a preference. Wherever they need me, that's where I'll play. I just want to be the best at whatever position they put me at."

As for McCray, the defensive end from Lynchburg, Va., came to Tech weighing about 235, but now weighs 253 and got a lot stronger while redshirting.

"Coming in, you always want to compete and get some early playing time," said McCray, arguably Tech's highest-rated recruit in the 2010 class. "But I definitely think it's [redshirting] been the best for me. I've put some weight on and gotten bigger, stronger and faster. I've learned the whole system and what I need to do to come in and compete next year. So it's been a big help."

Tech's staff also expects a few other freshmen to compete for playing time, including 6-1, 190-pound Nick Dew from Virginia Beach, Va., at the rover spot, where the Hokies lose All-ACC performer Davon Morgan, and Detrick Bonner, a 6-0, 180-pounder from McDonough, Ga., at the cornerback position, where the Hokies lose standout Rashad Carmichael. Also, the coaches like Dominique Patterson, a linebacker from Suffolk, Va. He weighed in recently at 227 pounds. Brian Laiti, a 6-3, 210-pounder from Fairfax Station, Va., also projects as a linebacker.

On offense, most of the freshmen who red-shirted will find it tough to get playing time in 2011. That's because the Hokies return the core of their offense – they lose just four starters (Tyrod Taylor, Andre Smith, Darren Evans and Beau Warren).

Smith may be the hardest to replace be-

cause only one other tight end saw extensive action at the spot this past season (Eric Martin). That means an opportunity is there for Jerome Lewis, a 6-3, 247-pounder from New York who redshirted.

He will be scrutinized closely this spring, along with the two quarterbacks in this class – Mark Leal, a 6-0, 200-pounder from Greenacres, Fla., and Ricardo Young, a 6-0, 160-pounder from Washington, D.C. Those two possess the talent to be a back-up behind projected starter Logan Thomas, but need to show they can grasp the offense to edge current projected No. 2 Ju-Ju Clayton.

Receiver E.L. Smiling, a 6-3, 200-pounder from Stafford, Va., and linemen Mark Shuman, a 6-7, 310-pounder from Fork Union, Va., Matt Arkema, a 6-3, 275-pounder from Midlothian, Va., and Laurence Gibson, a 6-5 293-pounder from Sierra Vista, Ariz., also find themselves in similar situations. The coaching staff loves their po-

tential, but their future may not begin next season because of the talent and experience in front of them at those positions.

After spending the fall on the scout team, the majority agreed that redshirting was in their best interests. Certainly, it allows players to get bigger and stronger and adjust to college life. But more importantly, they get used to the speed of the game, which is the biggest adjustment for incoming freshmen.

"You definitely need the year to sit out and prepare for it because the speed of the game is something that changes just like that," McCray said, snapping his fingers. "Everyone said the speed of the game was different. But you've got to be here to experience it in order to believe it."

They experienced it this past fall. They'll get to experience it again this spring.

And their performance on the field will show just how much they've adapted after redshirting this past fall. 



Zack McCray was a highly touted recruit, and Tech's coaching staff believes he has a bright future as a defensive end.



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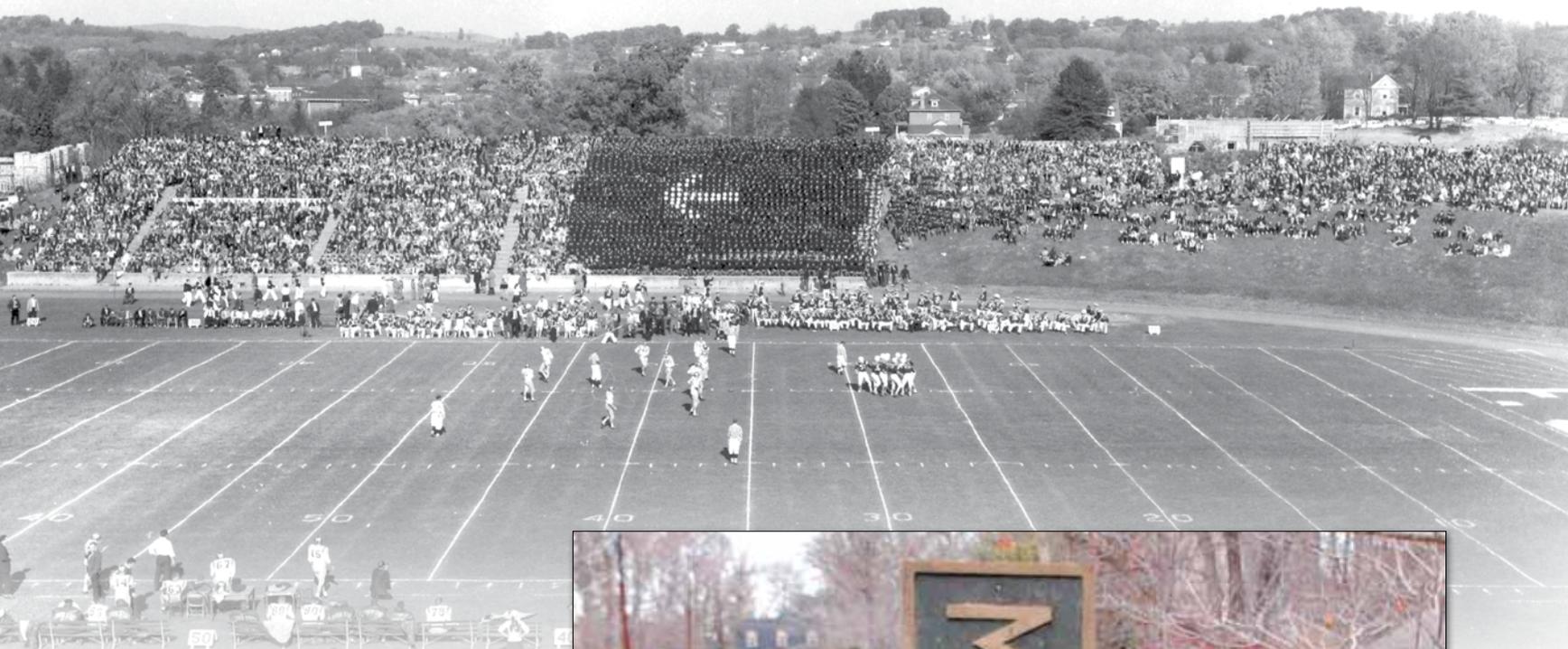
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RESTORING A LOST TREASURE



Written by Kevin & Olivia Lightle

It was the last night of the New Virginians' fall concert of 1976. I was not with the New Virginians as a chorus member, but had joined them out of jealousy for a girlfriend who was having a lot of fun with the technical crew. That evening, I was relegated to what was referred to as "the dungeon." My task was moving set equipment into a little-known area underneath Burruss Hall. Many people had walked through the Burruss tunnel and had passed by the fallout shelter sign, but I'm certain no one had given much thought to what was behind the door. I had the unpleasant opportunity that evening to move stage equipment into a part of that shelter.

After hours of taking wooden stage equipment into the shelter, I allowed my eyes to roam the confines, dimly lit, with low ceilings and earthen floor. I found some tins labeled "Survivor Crackers" and discarded pieces of hardware and equipment. While poking around, I stubbed my toe on something hard in the dirt. I scraped the dirt off and realized that this object was metal. I couldn't make anything out because it was quite encrusted



Kevin Lightle (left) and his older brother, Bruce, pose next to the Miles Stadium sign that Kevin Lightle found in a fallout shelter over at Burruss Hall in the mid-1970s.

Photo courtesy of Kevin & Olivia Lightle

with age and dirt. In the low-level lights, I continued to scrape off enough dirt until I saw an M, a U and an I. I had a flashback to visiting professors' offices and seeing pieces of wood from the bleachers of an old stadium that they proudly displayed on their desks. I briefly thought, "Could this be?" I quickly surmised it was approximately 7 foot by 1 foot by 1 inch and rectangular in shape. It was at that point that I realized I'd come across a treasured item of Virginia Tech sports history: the Miles Stadium sign.

At first, I was excited to have found such an historic monument and then appalled that something of such significance was relegated to the depths of an old fallout shelter. It was dumped amongst other debris and trash that, to this day, may still not have seen the light of day. Recognizing the value of such a treasure, I told another flunky working on set removal to pick up the other side of the sign and help me move it outside, threatening his life

spair that I gave up the hope of getting it to my room and restoring the dignity of the sign. At this point, we simply dropped the sign next to a few trees, face side down.

Two days later, I had a class across the Drill Field and took a route that led past the sign. A quick glance over at the trees surprised me that it was still there. I returned from classes, took another glance, and yes, it was still there!

The next day, I took the same route. This time, I could see that it had been moved about two feet possibly by someone who also recognized its historical value. I called my brother that evening to let him know my concern and that I didn't think I could muster up enough manpower to get the sign into my dorm room. Could he do something about getting it to his apartment at Sturbridge Square? Being a student of mechanical engineering, he could not give me much hope of what he could do as he finished off his 10th pot of coffee.

The next day, I did not have the op-

friends of family, and even those who'd heard about the sign from others stopped to see this piece of history.

I graduated from Virginia Tech in 1978 with my bachelor's in art education, and then with my few personal belongings and the sign, moved to Lynchburg, Va., to begin my work on a master's degree of special education. By this time, I had also acquired a dolly, which helped my roommates and me move the sign out of the third-floor apartment and into a truck to bring to Lynchburg.

In Lynchburg, I managed to roll the sign into my parent's basement where it was propped against a wall. It went unmoved until my graduation from Lynchburg College when it was transported to Roanoke, where I began my teaching career at The Achievement Center. The move from Lynchburg to Roanoke was accomplished with the help of my girlfriend. Moving this sign from a basement to the second-story apartment above a photo

“ I continued to scrape off enough dirt until I saw an ‘M’, a ‘U’ and an ‘I’ ... I briefly thought, “Could this be?” I quickly surmised it was approximately 7 foot by 1 foot by 1 inch and rectangular in shape. It was at that point that I realized I'd come across a treasured item of Virginia Tech sports history: the Miles Stadium sign. ”

– Kevin Lightle

if he told anyone what we had done. We were not, especially me, equipped for the weight and bulkiness of some 400-pound, 7-foot sign. We managed to get the sign out to the front bushes of Burruss Hall and then dumped it.

Later that night, after completing my duties with the New Virginians, I returned to my room in Pritchard Hall, where I excitedly told my roommate and a few other friends about my find. At this time of the evening, not much could excite this group. However, I managed to convince one unlucky soul to come across campus to help me bring the sign back to the dorm room.

We returned to the scene, and sure enough, the sign was still there. My friend did not really understand what it was all about, but seeing how excited I was, he agreed to help. I picked up the front, he picked up the rear, and both of us, weighing no more than 130 pounds each, realized the challenge ahead of us. We headed across the Drill Field. It was an effort that should have been applauded, as we awkwardly moved it across the campus in full moonlight with campus police circling the Drill Field. After a half hour of this effort, we had only reached the other side of the Drill Field. I recognized this was too big for us two small people. It was with de-

portunity to go by the sign, but later that afternoon, my brother called to say he had the sign. Apparently, one of his roommates had a hatchback, and my brother and his roommates went to check out my story. There, in broad daylight, they picked up the sign, loaded it into the hatchback and moved it to his third-story apartment.

Now, I give credit to my brother and his roommates. They, too, recognized the historical significance and proceeded to restore the sign. It was encrusted with dirt, age and neglect. They cleaned and polished it until it gleamed. Then, they elevated it on cinder blocks and set it in front of their couch. Many people came through that apartment and marveled at the significance of such an historical coffee table.

That year, my brother graduated and had a party at his apartment. We did not realize how many of the graduates had parents and friends who were alumni, and we thought for certain the jig was up. To our surprise and satisfaction, the alumni were gratified and overwhelmingly supported our find and restoration efforts.

I took over my brother's apartment lease, and with my roommates, maintained the condition and respect of the sign. Again, many people, students, friends, family,

shop on Williamson Rd. in Roanoke, Va., (August 1979) was the first of many relationship tests.

By this time, one of my engineering friends from Tech had dedicated himself to drawing the plans for creating a wood base for displaying the sign as a living room table. These were masterful and exact, but at this time, the sign was displayed as a table on three apple crates from my girlfriend's parents' apple orchard in Bedford, Va.

In 1980, my girlfriend once again proved her commitment by helping me move the sign from the second-story apartment and cart it across town to a three-story house on Willow Rd. It again found its place as a coffee table in front of a sofa and fireplace. Needless to say, having a large house and a large table meant only that large parties were held in its honor. The relationship tests of both my imperfections and attachment to a brass sign still afforded my girlfriend to now become my fiancé, as the sign could attest to this fact.

After our marriage in 1981, I began work on my doctorate in special education administration under Dr. Phil Jones at Virginia Tech. We moved to Blacksburg to (thankfully) a first-floor apartment on Meadowbrook Dr. My wife accompanied me with this move. My friend, Jeff, who



Cassell Coliseum was constructed diagonally across from Miles Stadium in the early 1960s (above). To get a better indication of where Tech's former football home used to stand, the photo below shows that the Miles Stadium south end zone was located where Lee Hall currently resides and stretched across to the back of War Memorial Gym.



was also in the graduate program, helped me get the sign off the truck. This, too, was the beginning of testing how far a friendship could go. Here, the stadium sign had made the full circle of leaving Blacksburg and returning so close to its original home. It had become a semi-annual tradition to sit down with a can of Brasso and polish and buff the sign to a glossy golden glow. The sign had now become a part of our family and was revered and respected as a family member by all who had come into contact with it.

Upon receiving a certificate of advanced graduate study in 1984, I had abandoned the thought of finishing the doctorate program, and it was time to move on in life. Olivia and I sublet the apartment, and for six weeks, toured the United States and Baja California while camping in our Dodge Caravan. Upon returning home, we had a job offer in Winfield, Kan., and promptly packed a moving van and trekked back to the Central Plains.

Here yet again is where I tested relationships. Not one for treasures, Jeff was nonetheless there to help us move into a one-story house. It didn't take long to see that Kansas was not going to be our career or retirement state of choice. In the summer of 1986, again with the help of Jeff, we loaded it onto a moving van and moved to a townhouse in Grove City, Ohio.

In 1988, Olivia was pregnant, and a month prior to our daughter's birth, we moved into a split-level home on Reaver Ave. in another section of Grove City. By this time, Olivia was in no shape for moving and was in no shape to help. With the aid of the dolly, I managed to move the sign to the lower-level den by myself. The Miles Stadium sign served as a favorite place for our daughter, Kelly, to cut her first teeth.

In the spring of 1989, Dr. Phil Jones called me to inquire about my finishing my doctorate, as I only had one year left before being dismissed from the program. I had a family and a career, and I could not fathom dropping all this to go back to Blacksburg. However, my respect for Dr. Jones and the school, plus the continued support of my wife, made me realize that it was important to complete what I'd started. We packed everything up and moved into a townhouse on Tee Street in Blacksburg in August of that year. Our daughter learned to walk by grasping the sign and hoisting herself up.

I defended my dissertation in the

spring of 1990. The party at Tee Street was a reunion of family and friends and was an opportunity for Jeff to reacquaint himself with the Miles Stadium sign.

Soon after, we moved to southwest Virginia to a rental farmhouse in Austinville, starting a journey in which the sign followed us in four more homes in three different states, including stops in Rural Retreat, Va., Frankfort, Ky., and Liberty, N.Y.

In December of 2004, the sign found itself in a Cape Cod house in Liberty, N.Y. It is noteworthy that, for the last two moves, we had a moving company make the moves. The moving men were used to oddities, but all had to stop, discuss and eventually curse the moving of the sign.

While in New York, I did not move the sign into the living room, as I was dedicated to creating the proper stand for the sign to be displayed. The sign was relegated to our garage. More than five years later, the stand had not been completed, our daughter was preparing to graduate from college, and Olivia and I had made a conscious decision to dedicate ourselves to a simpler life with less clutter and less ownership of belongings.

It must be noted that I had never in-

tended to "own" the Miles Stadium sign. My first intentions were to restore it, and this was my only intention throughout our travels. However, I was plagued with the very simple question of how one could get such a treasure back to the hallowed grounds of Virginia Tech without notice or blame. Over the years, hundreds of people had heard the story, touched the sign and polished it, and respected its place in history. At any point in time, any of these people could have reported and potentially received a reward for what some would have perceived as a theft. Even with the hundreds of people who had supported our efforts and stood in the defense of my actions, I knew it would not be enough to be protected from an accusation of theft. Of course, how can one steal something when no one ever knew it existed?

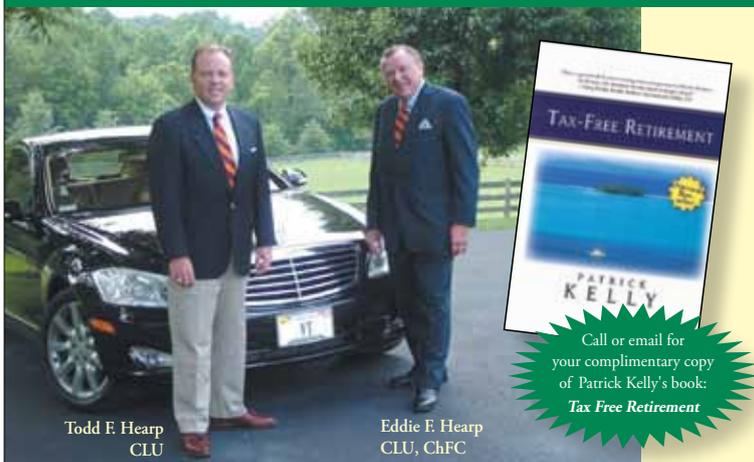
In 2010, during a visit with my parents in Lynchburg, Va., we were reminded of their good neighbors who were alumni of Virginia Tech and active in the sports program. That fall, I had an "aha moment" when I awoke in the middle of the night and realized I had an underground link with the ability and connections to return the sign to its place of honor. I contacted

my parents and got the phone number for Dodd Harvey. I called him and left him a message. When Dodd returned my call, I told the tale of someone I knew who had an object of interest. He was intrigued, excited and assured me he would make the contacts to display the sign and protect our well-intentioned efforts.

On Thanksgiving weekend of 2010, I loaded the treasure with the dolly again into the bed of our truck. We traveled south to Lynchburg, and for the last time, made the transfer from my truck to Dodd's vehicle. The whole family had gathered for our farewell as brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, daughters, and sons were a part of its history. From there, we are happy that everyone at Virginia Tech, past and future, can now share the same pride we had in our 33 years of stewardship.

Thanks to Mr. Lightle, the Virginia Tech athletics department currently is in possession of the Miles Stadium sign, which marked the entrance to Miles Stadium where the Hokies used to play football before the construction of Lane Stadium. The athletics department plans on displaying the sign somewhere inside Lane Stadium, either within its own exhibit or within the athletics memorabilia area. VT

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SEASON-ENDING

DEPTH CHART

Depth chart for the entire 2010 season. The number before the slash indicates plays from scrimmage, while the number after the slash indicates plays from special teams. The number of plays, the grades and the tackles came from the coaching staff. *Note: This does not include the number of plays from the Orange Bowl.*

OFFENSE

QUARTERBACKS

5 Tyrod Taylor (6-1, 210, Sr.) – 805/0. A first-team All-ACC selection and the ACC player of the year. Started all 14 games. Completed 188-of-315 (59.7 percent) for 2,743 yards, with a school-record 24 touchdowns and five interceptions. Also finished second on the team with 659 yards rushing on 146 carries and five touchdowns.

3 Logan Thomas (6-6, 242, r-Fr.) – 80/0. Played in seven games and completed 12-of-26 for 107 yards. Also caught a touchdown pass.

12 Ju-Ju Clayton (6-1, 220, r-Soph.) – 0/0.

TAILBACKS

32 Darren Evans (6-0, 220, r-Jr.) – 356/0. Started nine games and played in all 14. Rushed for a team-leading 854 yards and 11 touchdowns.

34 Ryan Williams (5-10, 202, r-Soph.) – 249/0. Started five games and played in 10, missing four games with a hamstring injury. Rushed for 477 yards on 110 carries and scored nine rushing touchdowns.

4 David Wilson (5-11, 200, Soph.) – 257/45. A second-team All-ACC selection as a return specialist. Started one game and played in 13, missing a game with mono. Rushed for 619 yards on 113 carries and five touchdowns. Caught 15 passes for 234 yards and four touchdowns. Returned 22 kicks for 584 yards and two touchdowns.

22 Tony Gregory (6-0, 182, r-Fr.) – 47/44. Played in 10 games before tearing his ACL in the North Carolina game. Rushed 23 times for 102 yards.

FULLBACKS

31 Kenny Younger (6-0, 228, r-Sr.) – 220/171. Started eight games and played in all 14. Caught four passes for 21 yards.

25 Josh Oglesby (5-11, 211, r-Jr.) – 70/27. Played in 13 games and rushed for 49 yards on six carries. Also caught a pass for seven yards.

45 Joey Phillips (5-11, 216, r-Soph.) – 24/26. Played in 10 games.

39 Martin Scales (5-11, 211, r-Soph.) – 5/183. Played in all 14 games, mostly on special teams. Had 10 solo tackles and four assists on special teams.

SPLIT ENDS

81 Jarrett Boykin (6-2, 215, Jr.) – 760/37. Started all 14 games and led the Hokies in both receptions (53) and yards receiving

(847). Had six touchdown catches.

35 Austin Fuller (6-2, 221, r-Soph.) – 84/59. Played in 11 games and caught one pass for 11 yards.

29 Xavier Boyce (6-4, 224, r-Fr.) – 28/26. Played in nine games.

18 D.J. Coles (6-3, 225, Soph.) – 46/30. Played in eight games.

FLANKERS

19 Danny Coale (6-0, 200, r-Jr.) – 735/88. Started all 14 games and caught 39 passes for 732 yards and three touchdowns.

7 Marcus Davis (6-4, 229, r-Soph.) – 309/39. Played in all 14 games, starting two. Caught 19 passes for 239 yards and two touchdowns.

LEFT TACKLES

72 Andrew Lanier (6-5, 275, r-Jr.) – 629/78. Graded out at 82 percent for the season heading into the Orange Bowl, with 48 knockdowns.

54 Nick Becton (6-6, 311, r-Soph.) – 236/51. Had nine knockdowns for the season heading into the Orange Bowl game.

LEFT GUARDS

75 Greg Nosal (6-6, 293, r-Jr.) – 808/77. Graded out at 85 percent for the season heading into the Orange Bowl, with 51 knockdowns.

76 David Wang (6-2, 300, r-Fr.) – 61/0. Played in five games.

CENTERS

60 Beau Warren (6-3, 286, r-Sr.) – 815/0. Graded out at 84 percent for the season heading into the Orange Bowl, with 54 knockdowns.

63 Bo Gentry (5-8, 237, r-Soph.) – 23/0. Played in three games.

RIGHT GUARDS

68 Jaymes Brooks (6-2, 296, r-Jr.) – 735/77. Graded out at 84 percent for the season heading into the Orange Bowl, with 545 knockdowns.

74 Andrew Miller (6-4, 283, r-Fr.) – 136/0. Graded out at 82 percent for the season heading into the Orange Bowl, with 48 knockdowns.

71 Winston Painter (6-6, 298, r-Soph.) – 34/0. Played in four games.

RIGHT TACKLES

62 Blake DeChristopher (6-5, 320, r-Jr.) – 815/69. Graded out at 83 percent for the

season heading into the Orange Bowl, with 59 knockdowns.

67 Michael Via (6-7, 300, r-Soph.) – 54/0. Played in five games.

TIGHT ENDS

88 Andre Smith (6-5, 272, r-Sr.) – 690/238. An honorable mention All-ACC selection. Started 12 games and played in 14. Caught 20 passes for 195 yards and five touchdowns.

86 Eric Martin (6-2, 268, r-Fr.) – 87/46. Played in 10 games.

85 Rob Stanton (6-5, 234, r-Sr.) – 8/20. Played in eight games.

13 Randall Dunn (6-2, 248, r-Soph.) – 46/18. Played in seven games.

95 George George (6-4, 266, r-Soph.) – 6/4. Played in three games.

87 Prince Parker (6-6, 262, r-Sr.) – 27/0. Played in four games.

DEFENSE

STUD ENDS

82 Steven Friday (6-4, 250, r-Sr.) – 682/45. A second-team All-ACC selection. Started all 14 games. Finished with 66 tackles (38 solo), including 15 for a loss. Led the team with 8.5 sacks.

42 J.R. Collins (6-2, 254, r-Fr.) – 270/21. Played in 13 games, starting one. Had 25 tackles (12 solo), including 6.5 for a loss, and five sacks.

66 Tyrel Wilson (6-2, 220, r-Fr.) – 3/91. Played in all 14 games.

64 Jeff Wardach (6-3, 245, Sr.) – 18/2. Played in four games.

ENDS

33 Chris Drager (6-4, 255, r-Jr.) – 482/147. Played in 12 games, starting 11. Tallied 34 tackles (20 solo), including six for a loss, and two sacks.

99 James Gayle (6-4, 248, r-Fr.) – 228/4. Played in 14 games, starting two. Had 13 tackles (10 solo), including 6.5 for a loss, and four sacks.

96 Josh Eadie (6-4, 231, r-Sr.) – 14/38. Played in 10 games.

NOSE TACKLES

91 John Graves (6-3, 278, r-Sr.) – 675/65. A second-team All-ACC selection. Started all 14 games. Registered 37 tackles (14 solo), including five for a loss, and 1.5 sacks.

98 Derrick Hopkins (6-0, 289, Fr.) – 169/0. Played in 13 games and had nine tackles (six solo), including 1.5 for a loss, and 1.5 sacks.

TACKLES

56 Antoine Hopkins (6-1, 302, r-Soph.) – 569/16. Started 12 games and played in 14. Recorded 45 tackles (18 solo), including 6.5 for a loss, and two sacks.

53 Dwight Tucker (6-1, 277, r-Soph.) – 117/0. Played in 11 games.

55 Isaiah Hamlette (6-4, 270, r-Soph.) – 14/1. Played in two games.

MIKE LINEBACKERS

51 Bruce Taylor (6-2, 246, r-Soph.) – 754/26. A second-team All-ACC selection. Started all 14 games. Led the Hokies with 91 tackles (41 solo), including a team-high 15.5 for a loss, and six sacks.

58 Jack Tyler (6-1, 228, r-Fr.) – 111/89. Played in all 14 games, starting one. Had 25 tackles (13 solo), including six for a loss.

52 Barquell Rivers (6-0, 236, r-Jr.) – 0/0. Played in the Orange Bowl.

BACKERS

44 Lyndell Gibson (5-11, 220, r-Soph.) – 753/42. Started 13 games, missing the bowl game with a shoulder injury. Had 66 tackles (34 solo), including six for a loss, and two sacks.

24 Tariq Edwards (6-3, 228, r-Fr.) – 111/145. Played in all 14 games. Had 21 tackles (11 solo) and an interception.

57 Telvion Clark (6-1, 217, r-Fr.) – 0/5. Played in two games.

WHIP LINEBACKERS

43 Jeron Gouveia-Winslow (6-2, 207, r-Soph.) – 373/161. Played in all 14 games and started seven. Finished with 41 tackles (23 solo), including one for a loss, and had two interceptions.

28 Alonzo Tweedy (6-2, 188, r-Soph.) – 10/175. Played in all 14 games, mostly on

special teams. Had 18 tackles (12 solo) and recovered a fumble.

16 Zach Lockett (6-3, 216, r-Sr.) – 0/160. Played in all 14 games and had four tackles (one solo).

ROVERS

2 Davon Morgan (6-0, 196, Sr.) – 802/94. A second-team All-ACC selection. Started all 14 games. Had 82 tackles (53 solo), including one for a loss. Had five interceptions and a fumble recovery.

26 James Hopper (5-9, 180, r-Fr.) – 69/85. Played in 12 games and had 10 tackles (five solo).

40 Wiley Brown (5-10, 194, r-Soph.) – 0/91. Played in all 14 games and had 13 tackles (eight solo).

FIELD CORNERS

20 Jayron Hosley (5-11, 170, Soph.) – 699/104. A first-team All-ACC selection. Led the nation with nine interceptions. Had 39 tackles (34 solo), including one for a loss.

37 Jacob Sykes (6-1, 190, r-Jr.) – 34/88. Played in 12 games and had four tackles (two solo).

BOUNDARY CORNERS

21 Rashad Carmichael (5-10, 186, r-Sr.) – 666/63. Started 12 games and played in 13, missing a game with an ankle injury. Had 40 tackles (31 solo), including 1.5 for loss, and four interceptions.

17 Kyle Fuller (5-11, 178, Fr.) – 417/119. Played in all 14 games, starting six. Had 32 tackles (22 solo), including four for a loss.

9 Cris Hill (5-11, 180, r-Jr.) – 74/106. Played in 11 games. Had five tackles (four solo).

SAFETIES

15 Eddie Whitley (6-1, 195, Jr.) – 747/58. Started 13 games, missing a game with a shoulder injury. Recorded 80 tackles (55 solo), including four for a loss, and two interceptions.

1 Antone Exum (6-0, 219, r-Fr.) – 486/36. Played in 14 games, starting five. Had 45 tackles (28 solo), including 1.5 for a loss.

49 Ron Cooper (5-10, 189, r-Sr.) – 3/15. Played in three games.

SPECIAL TEAMS

KICKERS

97 Chris Hazley (6-1, 196, r-Sr.) – 0/77. A first-team All-ACC selection. Missed his first field goal, but then made 21 straight, setting a Tech single-season mark. Was 7-for-7 from beyond the 40. Led the team in scoring with 116 points.

48 Justin Myer (6-1, 214, Jr.) – 0/91. Had 94 kickoffs, with 30 going for touchbacks.

PUNTERS

30 Brian Saunders (6-0, 198, r-Sr.) – 0/120. A second-team All-ACC selection. Averaged 44 yards per punt.

SNAPPERS

50 Collin Carroll (6-3, 240, r-Jr.) – 0/133.



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INJURIES LEAVE TECH SHORT ON NUMBERS AS HOKIES ENTER NEW YEAR



With his strong play this season, Jeff Allen now ranks in the top 20 at Tech in career scoring and the top five in career rebounding, career steals and career blocked shots.

On a recent ACC teleconference, a reporter asked Tech head coach Seth Greenberg to comment on Evans' performance.

The question caused Greenberg to pause for a moment, considering that the Hokies do not have a player named Evans on their roster.

"You mean Erick Green?" Greenberg asked. The reporter apologized and said yes.

"Don't worry, if I had an Evans, I'd play him, too," Greenberg joked.

The joke epitomizes the state of Tech's basketball program after Greenberg recently saw two more players go down with injuries, including an All-ACC player in Dorenzo Hudson.

Hudson, a senior, underwent surgery for an injury to his right foot – one he initially injured last season – and will miss the remainder of this season, leaving Tech without a double-digit scorer. Also, Greenberg and the sports medicine staff agreed it is best to shut down Cadarian Raines for the rest of the season. Raines, a sophomore, suffered an injury to the fifth metatarsal on his left foot last season and has undergone two surgeries, including one last April.

Both players will apply for medical hardship waivers from the NCAA and should receive them. These waivers would enable them to preserve a year of their eligibility. So, though a senior, Hudson could return next season.

The two join JT Thompson and Allan Chaney among those lost for the season.

Perhaps surprisingly, Tech won five straight heading into a stretch of ACC games without those integral parts.

"We're still a work in progress," Greenberg said. "We're not the same team we were a few weeks ago when we thought we'd have Dorenzo and Cadarian. But I like our team. We're developing a chemistry, we're unselfish, we're taking care of the ball, and we're making shots."

The injuries forced Greenberg to shuffle his lineup. He moved Malcolm Delaney over to Hudson's vacant shooting guard spot and inserted Erick Green as his point guard. The move has freed Delaney, Tech's top scorer, for more scoring opportunities and he continues to make the most of them, averaging 19 points per game and shooting 46 percent from the floor entering a Jan. 8 game against Florida State.

"This was an opportunity to get him off the ball," Greenberg said. "We can get him out in transition more."

Where the injuries affect Tech possibly even more is with its practices. Greenberg shortened his practices and doesn't force his team to go up and down the court as much.

"It really affects us," he admitted. "We can't go up and down and we're really limiting reps. It's hard to simulate Florida State's [Tech's first January ACC opponent] size and quickness when you're practicing with two or three walk-ons."

Still, the Hokies headed into their ACC stretch with a 9-4 mark and wins over teams like Oklahoma State, Mississippi State and Penn State. According to Greenberg, the team hasn't become demoralized over the injuries.

"It's a concern, but we haven't had a bad practice yet," he said. "We're in a good place. I like the way we're playing. Winning has put us in a good place and we've got to find a way to keep winning."

A RECORD-SETTING NIGHT AGAINST MOUNT ST. MARY'S

In the Hokies' final game before ACC play continued, they destroyed Mount St. Mary's at Cassell Coliseum on Jan. 3 in a record-setting performance. Tech won 99-34 and shot a school-record 69.2 percent from the floor. The Hokies held Mount St. Mary's to 17 percent shooting from the floor – the lowest ever by a Tech opponent.

"I am very pleased with the way we've handled this series of games, pre-Christmas, post-Christmas, and post-New Years, which I think are the toughest for all basketball teams to handle," Greenberg said, referring to the St. Bonaventure, USC Upstate and Mount St. Mary games. "After the first three minutes of the game, I thought we handled ourselves with poise."

The 65-point margin of victory marked the second largest in school history, as the Hokies beat Washington & Lee by 81 points in 1959.

"I'm not sure how great our defense played today, I've got to be honest with you," Greenberg said. "At times, we did some nice things. We were good on ball screens. We were better on the ball. I just wanted to get some energy from our guys."

"I watched Mount St. Mary's on film and Penn State had to make a buzzer shot to beat them ... So, I didn't expect this, but we made shots."

Green paced the Hokies with a career-high 17 points. All 10 Tech players who dressed scored in the game.

GREEN EXCELLING AS A STARTER

Speaking of Green, the sophomore from Winchester, Va., entered the Florida State game having scored in double figures in five consecutive games (Penn State, Mississippi State, St. Bonaventure, USC Upstate and Mount St. Mary's). His best performance came against Mount St. Mary's when he scored a career-high 17 points on 6-of-7 shooting from the floor and 4-of-6 from the free-throw line. He also dished out four assists.

In that five-game span, Green averaged 14 points, 2.6 rebounds and 2.6 assists per game – which coincided with him moving into the starting lineup after Hudson's injury.

"He knows he's going to play a lot and he's not afraid to make mistakes," Greenberg said. "He's playing well. He's shooting it well, he's attacking the basket and he's been good defensively. I'm proud of the way he's embraced this opportunity."

Greenberg said he never contemplated keeping Delaney at the point guard position and inserting Green at the shooting guard spot. He wanted Green to play his more natural point guard spot.

"Erick can play the shooting guard spot, but we thought if we put him there, then he'd just be Malcolm's caddy and just defer to Malcolm," Greenberg said. "We thought the only way to get Erick to attack would be to put the ball in his hands. That was our mindset."

ALLEN CONTINUES ASSAULT ON RECORD BOOKS

Jeff Allen continues to move up the charts in several different categories. The senior from Washington, D.C., had 14 points and 12 rebounds against Mount St. Mary's for his sixth double-double of the season and the 34th of his career.

Allen moved into the top 20 in all-time

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scoring at Tech and he ranked fifth in rebounding, steals and blocked shots as of Jan. 8.

"It feels pretty good to know that," Allen said of his numbers. "I think my quickness and my length and the way I can anticipate helps me do a lot of that. I think it's special to be in the top five in steals as a power forward."

DELANEY NOW HOLDS FREE-THROW RECORD

In Tech's win over Mississippi State, Delaney made six free throws and that enabled him to surpass Bimbo Coles for the most free throws made in school history. Coles made 593 free throws during his career. Delaney had 606 made free throws for his career as of Jan. 8. Delaney also currently ranks as Tech's all-time leader in free-throw percentage at 84.5 percent.

With his 19 points in the win over St. Bonaventure, Delaney also moved into the top five on Tech's all-time career scoring list, surpassing A.D. Vassallo. He should be able to move past Perry Young (1,899 points) into fourth place, but catching Dale Solomon (2,136 points) will be challenging. 



Malcolm Delaney's ability to get to the free-throw line and to make them has enabled him to become Tech's all-time leader in free throws made.

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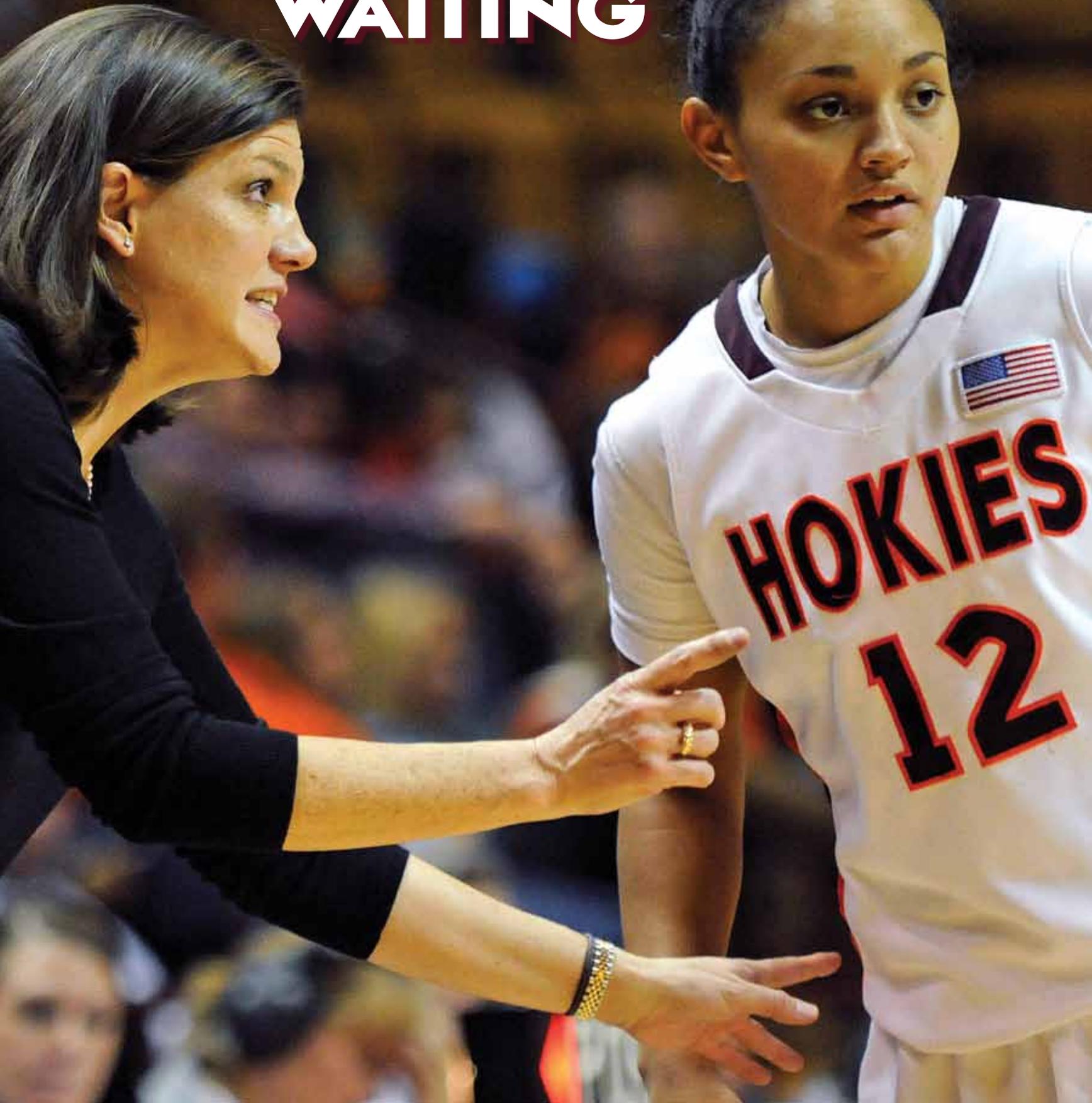
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COACH -IN- WAITING



AFTER A SOLID CAREER AS TECH'S POINT GUARD, NIKKI DAVIS HOPES HER FUTURE IS IN COACHING

By Marc Mullen

When Nikki Davis walked into the Elkhorn Middle School gymnasium in the fall of 1998, the youngster wasn't expecting a lot to come out of the basketball tryout. Susan Tracy, the team's coach, encouraged Davis to attend, but since Davis had never really picked up a ball before, she was nervous and didn't know how she compared to the other girls.

She ended up making the team that season and, as the tallest player on the squad, played the forward position. But unlike most 11-year-olds who are still thinking about wanting to be a doctor, a lawyer or maybe an astronaut when they grow up, she made a decision that day that put her on a path for a career in basketball.

"I started playing basketball in the sixth grade, which, in Kentucky, is very late," Davis said. "So I end up playing, and from there, I went on. Fortunately enough, I had some of the greatest coaches in middle school and mentors that helped me stick with it and develop and come to love the game of basketball."

That tall forward grew into a 5-foot-7 point guard who, along the way, had an historic four-year high school career in the state of Kentucky, played one season at the University of Alabama and is now in her final season of her college competition at Virginia Tech.

With only a couple of months left in her collegiate career, Davis has one remaining



Nikki Davis takes advantage of every opportunity afforded to her that can assist in pursuing her future profession. Here, she studies film with assistant coach Shellie Greenman.

goal – to play in a collegiate postseason tournament.

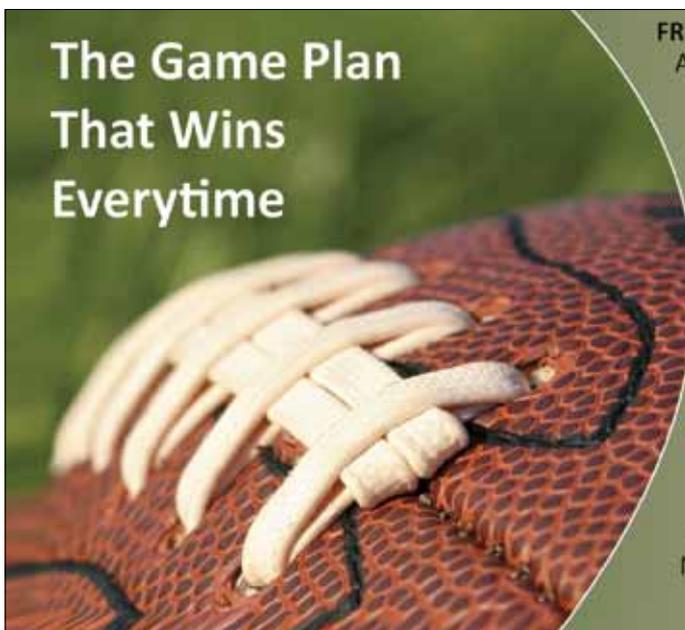
"That's always been a goal of mine, and unfortunately, I've never gotten to do that," Davis said. "So, my last go-round, that's what we are fighting for. Whether we have to do that in any way we can, that's our main objective."

"Individually, I just want to have fun and enjoy this game that I love. There are records that you can chase after, but at this point, I'm never really big on stats. I just want to get the job done. I'm not saying

I don't want the credit or anything. I just want to be able to enjoy it and have fun and win."

Davis hopes the love and passion for the game that started more than 12 years ago will translate into a future in the business. Whether she starts out playing overseas, or if she continues with her education and becomes a graduate assistant, Davis wants ultimately to be a Division I head coach.

"I will probably have to go home at some period of time, but what I'd like to do when I'm finished playing is to be a



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coach," she said. "I hope the road ahead of me is coaching. That's my passion and that's really something that I am interested in and hoping that I can do."

"Nikki definitely has the ability to play professionally overseas," Virginia Tech head coach Beth Dunkenberger said. "While there is more demand for post players than guards in the European leagues, she is skilled and can score."

"Also, she has always expressed her desire to become a college coach one day. She brings high energy and a great enthusiasm for the game. Those traits will help make her a good recruiter and coach."

Since coming to Blacksburg, Davis has taken advantage of a couple of opportunities related to her future endeavor. After transferring from Alabama to Virginia Tech, she had to sit out a season according to NCAA regulations. Then, this year, she has been mentoring a pair of underclassmen at the point guard position.

"It was a long year of just practicing, weights and running, and not playing," Davis said in response to sitting out the 2007-08 season. "It helped me be more of a coach and learn our offenses, how to make reads in them, and learn the way things needed to be run."

"I wanted to make sure I made the most

out of that year that I had to sit out. I was always just trying to learn and find some positives in it."

And in mentoring the younger guards, she said, "Kyani [White] works hard and she always wants to learn more. She's not afraid to challenge me in practice whether it be playing really tight defense or asking questions all the time."

"Aerial [Wilson] is a scoring machine. So I am just trying to teach her certain things, too. I'm trying to help them and show them things, and they both have been very receptive to it. I learned through my experiences as well as what coaches and other players have taught me."

The pair should soak in as much advice from the departing senior as they can since her credentials include helping Lexington Catholic High School to four straight championship title games, becoming only the second school in the state of Kentucky's history to achieve that. Lexington Catholic won back-to-back state championships her junior and senior seasons, and earned a final national ranking of sixth after the 2005 season and third in 2006. Also, the school retired her No. 12 jersey, making her one of just six players at the school to receive that honor.

At Tech, she enjoyed a career-high (at

the time) 11-assist night as the Hokies upset 10th-ranked North Carolina 79-64 on Jan. 14 of last year, poured in a career-high 29 points in a 73-69 victory at Miami 10 days later, and just last month, upped her career high to 12 assists, one shy of the single-game school record. She added 16 points for her first collegiate double-double in a 94-78 double overtime win at William & Mary earlier this season.

"I think the UNC upset is probably my favorite since I didn't have one single assist in that Miami game," Davis said about her time, so far, at Virginia Tech.

For her career as a Hokie, Davis is closing in on the top 10 list in career assists and steals. Entering the new year, she was averaging 5.4 assists per game, which put her tied for 29th in the nation, and her 254 assists were 63 shy of the top 10. Meanwhile, she was also tied for 39th in the country in steals per game (2.9), and her 128 career steals were just 29 shy of putting her name onto that list.

"I'm not really a stats person, but I wish that I would have been able to play all four years at one university and been able to see how well I would have done statistically," Davis said. "It's an honor and it's great to be mentioned with those girls, but I really don't think about it too much. I just play." 

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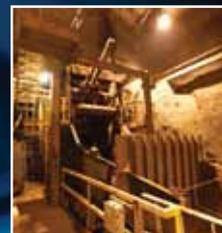
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COACHING CAROUSEL

FORMER TECH STANDOUT CHARLIE THOMAS' LOVE OF BASKETBALL HAS TAKEN HIM TO MANY DIFFERENT PLACES

Charlie Thomas grew up in Harrisonburg, Va., and grew up around the sport of basketball.

He's perfectly content growing old with it, too.

One of the key cogs on Tech's 1973 NIT championship team, Thomas has spent a lifetime playing and coaching basketball. The playing part started as a kid, but the coaching part started sort of by accident, and he's found himself at many obscure places as a result.

"I wanted to find something I would enjoy doing," Thomas said. "My major was recreation, and I thought I would be a park ranger or design parks. Then I thought about getting into refereeing or working with kids. I had done that before and it was fun. Then it turned out that I started coaching."

Thomas first made a name for himself as an outstanding player. A defensive stopper with an ability to score, the former Ferrum Junior College standout teamed with Bobby Stevens – another Ferrum great – and Allan Bristow to lead the Hokies on a magical run during the 1972-73 season. The Hokies went 18-5 during the regular season and received an invitation to the 16-team NIT.

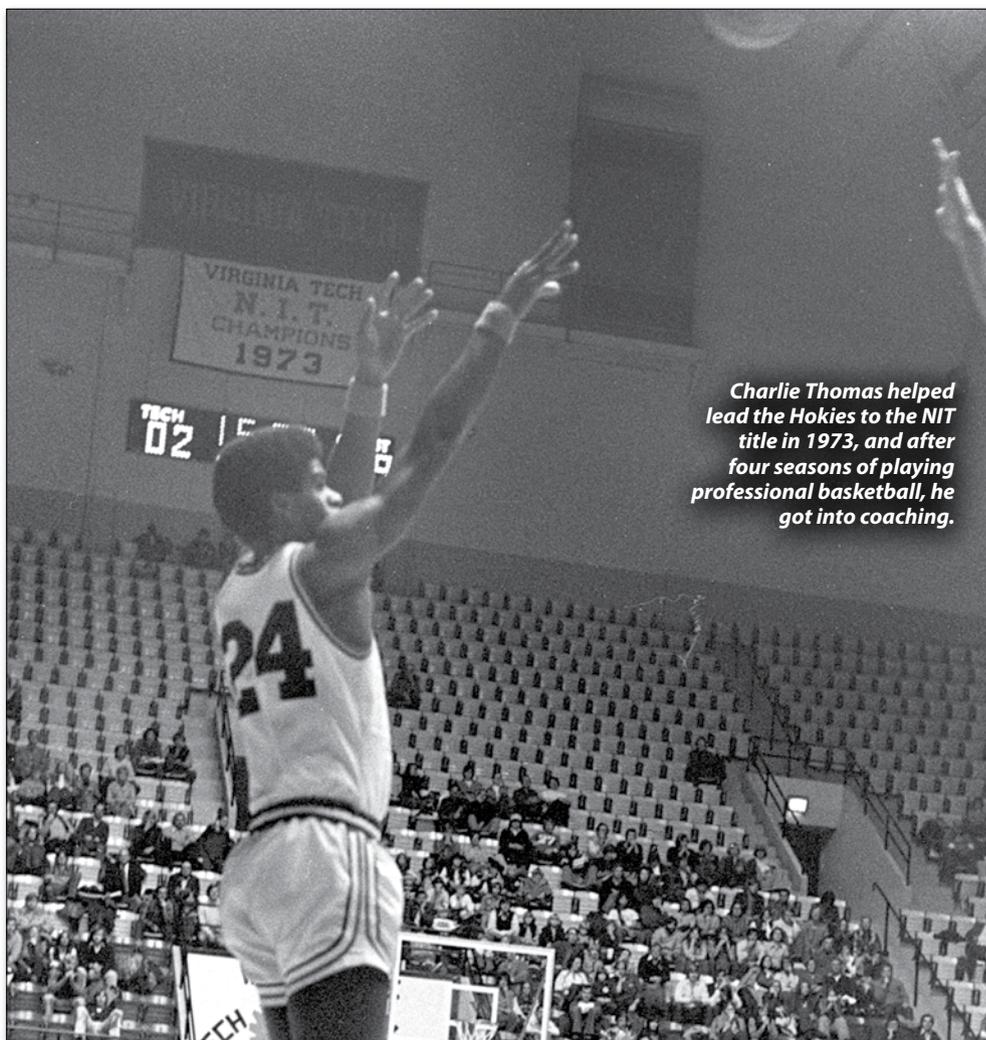
While in New York City and at Madison Square Garden, Tech beat four teams by a total of five points, a run culminating in a 92-91 overtime victory over Notre Dame in the championship game, as Stevens hit a game-winning jumper at the buzzer.

"We weren't in awe of anyone," said Thomas, who averaged 13 points per game that season. "We knew we had a good team. We knew if we could get a few breaks and have a little luck, then we could win – and that's what we did."

Thomas played at Tech for one more season, and then he played basketball professionally overseas, traveling to Luxembourg, where he played for one year. Then he spent three years in Venezuela.

He came back to Blacksburg and finished up coursework toward his degree in 1978. Through a friend, he landed an assistant coaching gig at Panhandle State University in Goodwell, Okla. He drove out to Oklahoma, where he lived in a dorm on campus and made \$3,000 a year.

"After two years, I couldn't do it any more for \$3,000," Thomas said. "So I came back to Virginia and opened a vintage records store in Harrisonburg. I had a friend who owned an



Charlie Thomas helped lead the Hokies to the NIT title in 1973, and after four seasons of playing professional basketball, he got into coaching.

auction house, and I'd buy records from him and sell them."

That gig lasted less than a year before basketball came calling again. Through another friend, he wound up becoming an assistant coach at Wilson Memorial High School in Fishersville, Va., which started his journey of coaching for 25 years at five different schools.

In 1987, after stops at Emory & Henry and Bristol College, Thomas got an offer to be an assistant at San Francisco State in downtown San Francisco. The job paid \$23,400, so he packed up his wife, Chery, and two kids, Shonda and Chaz, and moved into a one-bedroom apartment in San Francisco.

"We put the kids in the bedroom and my wife and I slept on a pullout couch for two years," he said. "Then after a couple of years, I got bumped to around \$29,000 and we moved into a two-bedroom apartment down the hall."

In 1988, head coach Tim Franklin left and Thomas got the head job. He stayed in that role for more than 16 years, winning

Northern California Athletic Conference coach of the year honors in 1989-90 and 1993-94. In 2005, he decided to resign and retire.

"Things started to get a little hectic," Thomas said. "A new AD came in and there were a bunch of changes. It was a tough job anyway, so I decided to get out."

He still stayed around basketball, though. He watched Chaz play at Cal San Luis Obispo until Chaz graduated last year, and he's spent the past three years as an assistant at West Hills College, a junior college, in Coalinga, Calif.

He hopes to get back East at some point. He came back several years ago for a reunion of the NIT championship team, but hasn't been back since.

"I appreciate what Coach [Don] DeVoe and his staff did for me," Thomas said. "I was a little bit of a rebel back then, but what they taught me has made me a better coach. They made me grow up, and I hope the young men I've been around have grown up the same way." 

HOKIES IN THE PROS

HARPER LEARNING AND STAYING PATIENT WHILE ON BALTIMORE'S PRACTICE SQUAD

For a guy who's played in just three games in his three-year professional career and who basically works in a scout-team role, Justin Harper sounds about as happy as a person can possibly be.

"I love it here," Harper said. "Just getting drafted was a blessing, and I love this organization."

Harper, a former wide receiver at Virginia Tech, works on the practice squad of the NFL's Baltimore Ravens. He was drafted in the seventh round of the 2008 NFL Draft by the Ravens, as part of a Tech draft contingent that included offensive lineman Duane Brown, receiver Eddie Royal, receiver Josh Morgan, linebacker Xavier Adibi and others.

Ravens officials saw him as more of a developmental project, so they placed him on the practice squad during his rookie season. He stayed on the practice squad for much of last season as well, but toward the end of the year, injuries at the receiver position created an opportunity and Ravens coaches put him on the active roster. Harper played in three games, and though he didn't catch any passes, he made his contributions in other areas.

"I had a couple of blocks that led to touchdowns," he said. "I loved it. I loved being out there and playing. God really blessed me to get that experience and I tried to make the most of it."

"That's what you have to do when you're on the practice squad. When guys go down, they [the coaches] look to you to be ready."

As a practice squad player, Harper does basically everything the other players do, perhaps even more. He only gets paid less – practice squad players make an average of \$5,200 a week, or \$88,400 per season (some make more, depending on the team).

The rest of the job, though, resembles that of his teammates. He sits in all the position meetings and studies opponents' defenses. But he also watches film of the other team's best receiver because, as a practice squad player, he emulates that receiver in practice, with the goal being to prepare his team's defensive players for what they may see on the field on Sundays.

"I do everything the guys do," he said. "I'm sitting in all the meetings and I try to give our defense the best look pos-

Justin Harper, who played three games for the Ravens in 2009, hopes his future is still with the organization after three years mostly on the practice squad.



Photo courtesy of Phil Hoffman/Baltimore Ravens

sible. I take a lot of pride in that. Then I'll also get some reps with our offense.

"I'm the only practice squad player who travels with our team, and I think that shows that they [the coaches] do like me. I do what they ask, and it's a privilege that they ask me to travel with them."

When Harper goes on road trips with the team, he's not just a fan kicking it with the players. On the contrary, he takes advantage of that time to learn, too.

"I watch those guys and see how they prepare for a game," he said. "I'm watching Anquan Boldin all the time to see what he's doing and how he's focusing on what needs to be done."

"I even warm up with the team, even though I'm not going to be playing. I watch those receivers as they're warming up and then stand on the sidelines during the game. It's all about learning and being prepared for when your time comes. My time is coming."

His time may come next season. NFL rules allow players to stay on the practice squad for just three seasons. After that point, the team must keep the player on the active roster or else the player becomes a free agent, thus free to sign with any other NFL team.

Harper feels confident his future is with the Ravens.

"My goal next season will be to come in and make the 53-man roster," he said. "They've kept me around for a reason, so I need to come in, compete and show them that I can play in this league."

"I love the organization here and I love Ozzie [Newsome, Baltimore's GM] and Coach [John] Harbaugh and [Cam] Cameron [Baltimore's offensive coordinator]. My time isn't right now, and if you think about it, this is how my time went at Virginia Tech. It really didn't happen for me until my fourth year. I think my freshman year I caught maybe five passes, and then my sophomore year, I caught 10 or 15 [actually 16], and my junior year, I caught around 20 or so [21]. Then my senior year, I was one of the leading receivers [41 catches]. So my opportunity is going to come. It's just a matter of time."

Harper loves the Baltimore organization and he loves the players, a close-knit bunch that reminds him of his days at Tech. He spends a lot of time hanging with Derrick Mason, a longtime NFL receiver who has shown Harper the ropes, and also Marcus Smith, another receiver whom Harper con-

siders one of his best friends.

He also spends a lot of time with Ed Reed, the Ravens' safety and one of the NFL's best ever. Most of his conversations with Reed center on the Hokies' recent domination of Reed's alma mater – the University of Miami.

"We've beaten them, what, three of the past four seasons now?" Harper said. "I wear my Virginia Tech hat all the time. All the guys hear about it. My locker is four lockers down from Ray Lewis' and he hears from me, too."

"They're all great guys, though. Just great guys to be around. It really reminds me of my Virginia Tech days. They're great players, too, so I'm getting better every day just going against guys like Ray and Ed. When you have that opportunity, why not take advantage of it?"

Harper maintains contact with his former Tech teammates, and several of them plan to come to Blacksburg to work out over the summer. He also keeps in contact with a few of the current members of Tech's squad whom he knows.

"I always make sure to stop by and see all those guys whenever I can," he said. "I'm never going to leave my Hokie family." 



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TRACK AND FIELD TEAMS IN GOOD SHAPE TO CONTINUE RECENT SUCCESSES

The last time the Virginia Tech men's and women's outdoor track and field teams competed together, they had just finished a season in which both attained their highest finish at the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships in Eugene, Ore., while departing senior Queen Harrison became the first female ever to capture both the 100-meter and 400-meter hurdles crowns in the same national meet.

Fast forward seven months and gone on the women's side from last year's outdoor contingent are Harrison, Kristi Castlin and Asia Washington (Washington returns for the indoor season) – a group that earned 15 All-America honors, 15 ACC individual titles and led Tech to four ACC team titles.

Meanwhile, on the men's side, the Hokies return most of their national team, which finished a school-best 10th in the country. In terms of the ACC team that placed a school-best second, all but two return, and that does not include a major thrower coming back from injury. This all sets up what the coaching staff feels is the team's best chance at its first ACC men's title.

"I really feel good about our chances at the conference level and then going into the national level and being able to maintain a top-10 finish," Tech director of track and field and cross country Dave Cianelli said. "That's sort of our goal, and this has been stated within our staff, and I think our student-athletes have bought into this. They want to win an ACC team title and finish in the top 10 at the NCAA Championships."

"This should be the best team we've ever had as long as everyone stays healthy. The key players are there, this team has the ... potential is sort of a funny word. You look at what we've got on paper and they have the opportunity to be a much better team than we had last year and we had a very good team last year."

The women will field a very young, but deep, team, as they welcome Cianelli's largest freshman class, with 23 newcomers joining the program. Although he lost that successful class that finished a school-best fifth at the 2010 NCAA Outdoor Championships, Cianelli believes that this class could rival what the 2006 class accomplished, and along with the upperclassmen, this team has the quality and depth to place in the top three at the conference level and maintain a top-10 finish at the NCAA Championships.

"I think it's difficult to replace a Queen Harrison



Alexander Ziegler finished third at the 2010 NCAA Indoor Championships in the weight throw and will be a contender again this season.

or a Kristi Castlin because they came in and were extremely successful from their first year," Cianelli said. "But as in all sports, there's a time when they're going to be done, graduated, and moving on. So you have to prepare yourself."

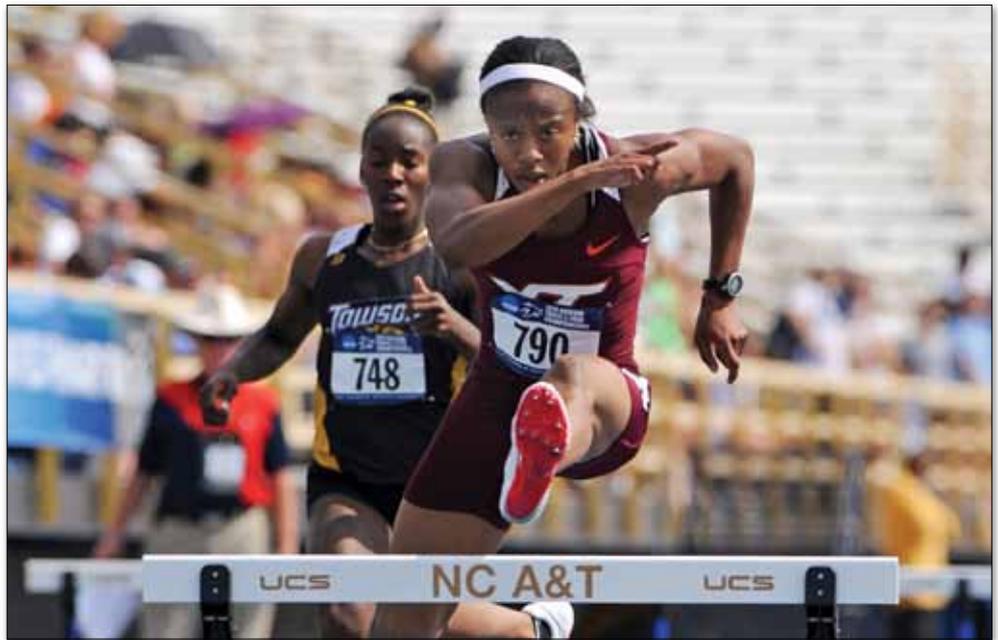
With Harrison sticking around as a volunteer assistant, she can help the Hokies' newest crop succeed as she did. What follows is a breakdown of the main areas of both track programs, starting with Harrison's replacements.

WOMEN'S SPRINTS/HURDLES

"I think we've got an outstanding young group of sprinters and hurdlers who have tremendous potential," Cianelli said. "We'll see how they perform as freshmen. I think they're certainly one of the best groups that we've had come in from a talent aspect, but until they're here and they are actually performing at this level, it's kind of hard to rate."

That young class includes freshmen Kristen Brown, Ebony Scott and Zakiya Tyson. Brown was one of the top hurdlers in the nation last year as a senior in Maryland. Scott and Tyson are sprinters out of North Carolina

They will join a trio of current All-ACC performers in the sprints in juniors Aunye Boone and Ogechi Nwaneri, sophomore



Two-time All-American Asia Washington returns for a final season of indoor competition and will be looked upon to provide leadership to a freshman-laden women's track and field team.

Funmi Alabi, and two-time All-American Washington, who is currently working on her graduate degree and has an indoor season remaining.

"Asia's been to the national championships in the 400," Cianelli said. "I think she's really the leader of this group. She has

the most experience and is a natural leader.

"So collectively, I think this is a very solid group and we will see how they develop. Coach [Charles] Foster has done an outstanding job, and I think he'll do the same with this group. And they'll be very well represented at the ACC level."

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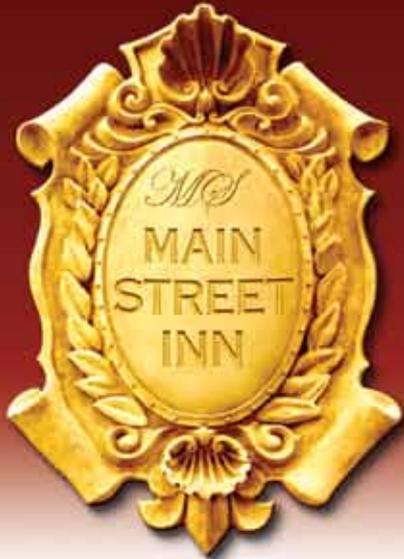


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WOMEN'S DISTANCE

Again, another of the greener areas of the team, but it is also one of the deepest. Five of the seven top runners from a group that finished fifth at the 2010 NCAA Regional Cross Country Championship were first-year athletes. Mix that in with the upperclassmen, and Tech should have a strong showing in the ACC Championships.

"The ACC is a tough, tough conference when it comes to, well, any event area, but especially the distance area," Cianelli said. "We're going to find out pretty quick how good we are."

A couple top returners include redshirt sophomore Sammy Dow, who finished fourth last year in the ACC in the steeplechase in only her first year competing in the event, and senior Jess Trapeni, who will run the longer 5,000- or 10,000-meter events.

Among the freshmen, two pairs of high school teammates who have stayed together to become Hokies highlight the newcomers. They include West Springfield [Va.] High graduates Paige Kwartunas, who was an all-region performer in cross country, and Alex Watt, who will run middle distance events, while Deep Run graduates Courtney Dobbs and Madalyn Nuckols are slated for the longer distances. Lastly, Taylor Crosson, a 5,000-meter runner, completes the core of the freshman distance class.

WOMEN'S POLE VAULT

A pair of seniors solidifies this event for the Hokies. Competing for one last season will be Kelly Phillips, a 2008 All-American and ACC champion who looks to return to her pre-injury status. Despite a wrist injury that slowed her down in 2009, she was still able to finish second at the ACC Championships. Senior Caitlin Thornley has also been a five-time scorer at the ACC Championships.

"The pole vault has been a very strong event for us over the years," Cianelli said. "Coach Bob Phillips, who was an All-American here in 1980, has been our pole vault coach on a volunteer basis now basically for the past 28 years. He's developed one of the consistently best pole vault programs in the nation."

Sophomores Emma DeJarnette and Leigh Allin, and freshmen Lizzy Powell and Brown join the group. DeJarnette scored last year at the ACC Indoor Championships, while the other three come into their first year of competing for the Hokies from different paths.

WOMEN'S THROWS

Contrary to the other three event areas on the women's side, the throwers are not a deep bunch. They are more quality than quantity, and two should be competing at

the national meets this season.

Senior Dorotea Habazin returns for one more season. She looks to add to her list of accomplishments that include a 2010 NCAA runner-up finish in the hammer throw and an ACC championship in the weight throw.

Then newcomer Samira Burkhardt comes into Blacksburg with a personal record of 56 feet, 0.25 inches, in the shot put and is expected to be one of the top shot putters in the nation this year. If she threw her personal record at last year's NCAA Championships, she would have finished third.

"That's a very strong event nationally right now. Obviously, there's no 'gimmies,'" Cianelli said. "Coach [Greg] Jack does a wonderful job in developing his athletes, and I believe she's going to be right there nationally starting this year."

MEN'S SPRINT/ HURDLER/JUMPERS

A number of All-ACC performers and NCAA regional qualifiers return in this area for Tech, making this group much stronger than last year, and that should make a big difference at the conference meet.

In the sprints, the Hokies return All-ACC performer Keith Ricks, who is a short sprinter (100 and 200) and was a national meet performer indoors in the 60 meters. Also, hurdlers Ebenezer Amegashie and Keare Smith, who were both ACC finalists in the hurdles and run on the relay teams, return.

In the jumps, junior Hasheem Halim, who holds the school indoor triple jump record at 52 feet, 8.5 inches, returns along with football standout sophomore David Wilson, who scored at the ACC meets, both indoor and outdoor, in the triple jump and was an NCAA regional qualifier.

"This is the one area that we've made the greatest improvement and gains over the past two years," Cianelli said. "Those are our primary returnees. Then, with the new people, we have a couple of really good high jumpers that open up another new area for us."

"And so now, there is an area where we haven't had people in the past and now we have a couple of solid jumpers that will be able to step in there and be very solid at the ACC level."

Tech also will get help from two transfers. Ronnie Black, a junior who transferred from VCU, has a PR of 6 feet, 10.5 inches and could do some hurdling as well. Rene Stauss, a sophomore from Germany, has a PR of 7 feet, 1.25 inches.

Two other newcomers include Oklahoma transfer Jeff Artis-Gray and Darrell Wesh, both from the state of Virginia. Originally from Chesapeake, Artis-Gray enters as a sophomore and is a very versatile athlete,

who will hurdle, long and triple jump and be used on relays.

Wesh, a freshman out of Virginia Beach, was the national high school 60-meter indoor champion and was a Virginia state champion in the 300 meters as well.

MEN'S DISTANCE

Junior Will Mulherin, an All-American in last year's 5,000-meter event at the NCAA outdoor championships, highlights a very solid distance group. He is a two-time ACC champion and holds the school record in the 5K at 13:50.79, setting it at the 2010 NCAA Championships.

Classmate Michael Hammond was ACC indoor mile champion and finished second in the 1,500 meters during the outdoor season. He was very close to setting the school record in both events. Another 1,500-meter guy is junior Chris Walizer, an ACC finalist last year.

In the 800, two-time ACC champion Ryan Witt, a senior, returns along with indoor and outdoor ACC scorer Nick McLaughlin. Both have flirted with sub-1:50 times.

Sophomore Jared Berman made the USA Junior Team and was a finalist at the IAAF World Junior Championships in the 3,000-meter steeplechase. He posted a PR of 8:55.33, which is just nine seconds off the school record set in 1978.

"I'm very excited about his future," Cianelli said. "In his first year in the event, and making it all the way to the finals of the World Junior Championships, that's an outstanding year for him. He's got a great future ahead of him and he's only a sophomore this year."

POLE VAULT

This might be the best team in the country, as four of the student-athletes sport personal bests of more than 17 feet, 5 inches, including the school's record holder a senior Yavgeniy Olhovskiy. Olhovskiy, a six-time All-American who returns for his final year, only has indoor eligibility remaining. He has twice been an NCAA runner-up and has a PR of 18 feet, 2.5 inches.

The other 17-footers include junior Hunter Hall, a two-time All-American and the 2010 ACC indoor champion with a PR of 17 feet, 9.5 inches; senior Jared Jodon, who was a 2010 outdoor All-American with a PR of 17 feet, 8.5 inches (and has only outdoor eligibility); and newcomer Stephan Munz, a sophomore transfer from Germany, who comes in with a PR of 17 feet, 5.5 inches.

MEN THROWS

Last, but certainly not least, is the strongest area on the men's side, as two All-Americans



A very strong, deep distance group returns for Tech, led by 5,000-meter All-American Will Mulherin, who set the school record in the event at the 2010 NCAA Outdoor Championships.

return in the hammer throw. Junior Marcel Lomnický, the 2009 NCAA champion in the hammer, and sophomore Alexander Ziegler, the 2010 NCAA runner-up, might be the best 1-2 throwing combo in more than a decade in college athletics.

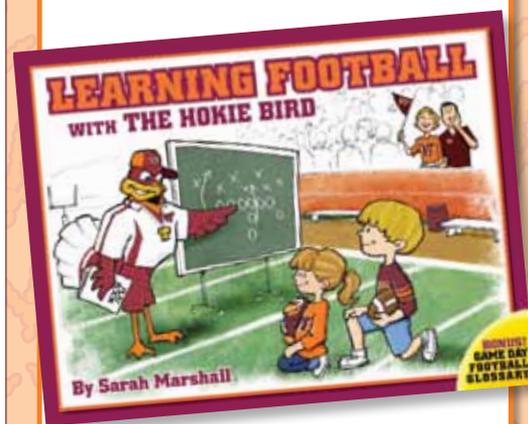
"As a pair, these two guys are two of the best that I can remember in recent history in the NAAs," Cianelli said. "If you look at their PRs, you would have to go back a long ways to find two at that level."

"I think they're going to be tough. Now the returning hammer champ from LSU is back, so there's no gimmes at all. They're going to have to earn whatever they get. But I feel really good about where they are in their development, and I think they're going to have an outstanding year both indoors and outdoors."

Tech also returns junior Matthias Treff in the javelin throw. He was ACC champion as a freshman with a throw of 239 feet, 10 inches, but missed his sophomore season due to injury.

"He'll certainly be the favorite at the ACC meet and then, we hope, will be right in there mixing it up at the NCAA meet," Cianelli said. 

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HOKIES' PEACH BOWL WIN 'GREATEST EVER'

By Chris Colston

(Reprinted from Vol. 4, No. 17 edition of the Hokie Huddler)

Amid a raucous Virginia Tech locker room on the last day of 1986, Carter Wiley said it all.

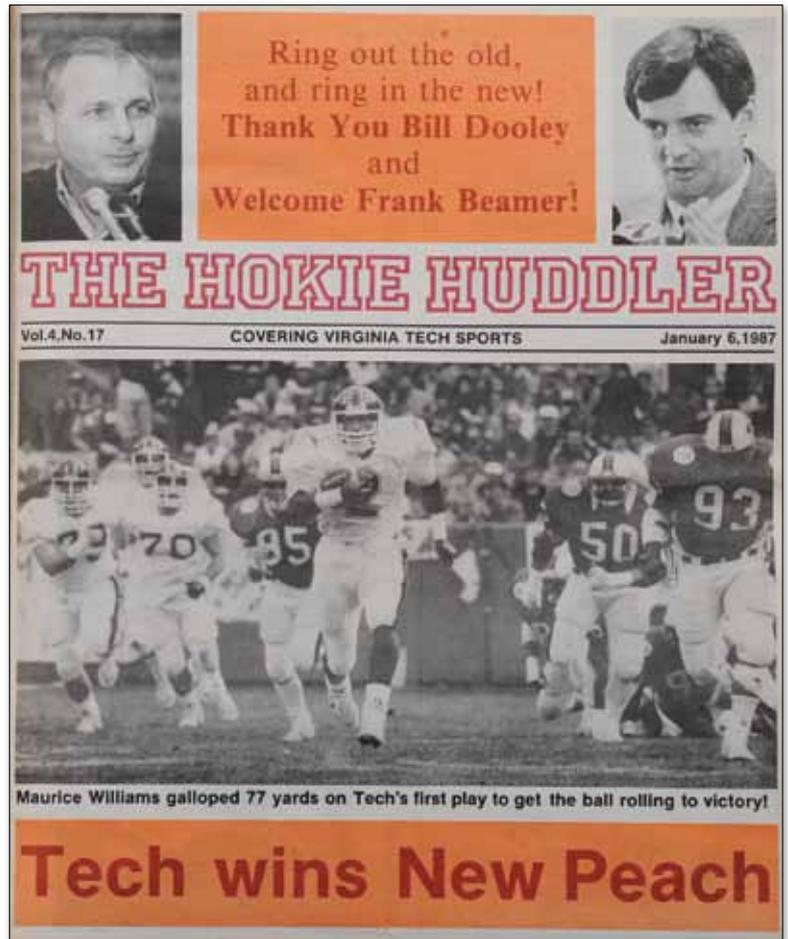
"This isn't the biggest win in the history of Virginia Tech football," he said. "It's the greatest moment in the history of Virginia Tech athletics."

Wiley could be excused if he was a bit euphoric, but he was right on target. With all due respect to the 1973 Hokie basketball team's NIT championship, the riveting 25-24 win over N.C. State in the 1986 New Peach Bowl must rank first in importance and excitement.

Tech had never won a bowl game in five previous tries. But this year, the Hokies were on a self-proclaimed "mission" to send head coach Bill Dooley out as a winner.

Dooley, of course, was coaching his last game for Tech. If someone wanted to find a good idea for a book, they would have to look no further than Blacksburg: the Peach Bowl finale was a fitting close to a season that might as well have been written by the Brothers Grimm.

The Hokies rebounded from a grim beginning – an excruciating last-minute loss to Cincinnati – to whip Clemson in Death Valley. Then came the Dooley lawsuit. Tech lost its coach, but gained a huge motivational advantage. It would



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lose only once more the rest of the season.

Fittingly, now legendary placekicker Chris Kinzer once again, under stressful conditions, provided the winning margin. Only this time, instead of simply keeping the Hokies in the bowl picture – his last-second 49-yard kick against Kentucky did earlier in the year – it meant a much-coveted bowl victory.

His 40-yard kick sailed perfectly between the Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium uprights with no time left. The stadium exploded; the Hokies won; and Kinzer ran.

“I remember what happened to me against Kentucky,” he said. “I didn’t want to get suffocated under a pile of maniacs, so I got the h--- out of dodge.”

As climactic as the kick was, a fourth-and-3 pass from Erik Chapman to tight end Steve Johnson with 15 seconds left was probably the biggest play of the game, if not the season.

Chapman looked to Dooley for instructions and Dooley pointed to him. “You call the play,” he ordered. There would be no 54-yard field-goal attempt.

That was in Kinzer’s range, but Tech wanted to get closer, and did so when Chapman fired a nine-yard sideline pass to Johnson. “Quick Orange 48,” he said. “It’s just a quick out. It worked every time. They

were playing eight yards off me.”

Now just 45 yards away for Kinzer, Dooley decided to get his kicker a little closer. But on the next play, Tech was whistled for holding. The 10-yard penalty moved the ball back to the 38, and probably out of Kinzer’s range.

Chapman countered with a pass to wing-back David Everett down the left sideline. The ball was there, but reserve State safety Brian Gay jostled him at the 2-yard line. Penalty: pass interference. Sudden rebirth for the Hokies.

“Oh, no doubt about it,” Everett said. “If he doesn’t grab me, I score the winning touchdown.”

Gay hedged a bit about the call. “I thought I made a good play,” he said. “But it happened so quick. I may have brushed him.”

The 15-yard call moved the ball well into Kinzer’s range now. A long wait on the field – the Wolfpack called a timeout to try and rattle him – had no effect on Kinzer. He simply knelt down on one knee and waited.

“I looked over at Coach Dooley, and he looked at me,” Kinzer said. “I just winked at him and said, ‘No problem.’ He winked back at me and smiled.”

The N.C. State defense not only had put

pressure on Chapman most of the day, but also had intercepted him twice, both times setting up Erik Kramer touchdown passes.

Those scores, and a blocked punt by Derrick Taylor that Brian Bulluck recovered in the end zone, gave the Wolfpack a 21-10 halftime lead. “It looked bad,” Wiley said. “We looked to the coaches. It’s up to them to come up with something in times like that.”

“Then Coach Dooley gave us the same pep talk he gave us at halftime of last year’s UVa game. He said to go out and just do the job. ‘If you do that,’ he said. ‘You’re going to win.’ That was an emotional zipper.”

Dooley probably felt like he had to do something after foregoing a sure 35-yard field goal with 47 seconds left in the first half. Instead, he opted to go for the first down on fourth-and-5. “If I could do it over again, I would have kicked the field goal,” he said after the game. “Thank goodness I have the kind of ballplayers who can make up for my mistakes.”

And the kind of ballplayers who wanted to send their coach out a winner. After his brother, Georgia head coach Vince, had come into the locker room to offer his congratulations, Dooley allowed a smile.

“We accomplished something that had never been done in school history,” he said. “It’s a very sweet win.” 

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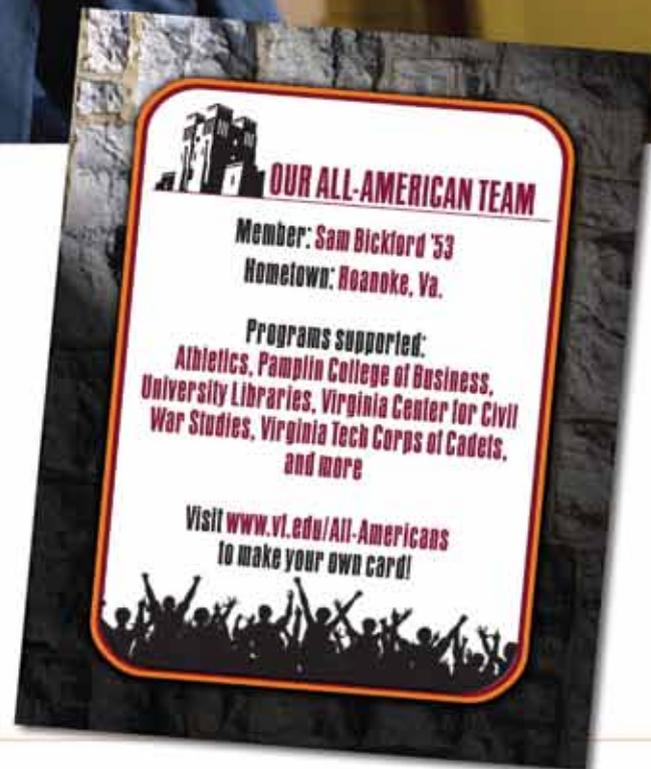


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