

inside

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HOKIESPORTS

The Official Publication of Virginia Tech Athletics



TEEING OFF

Tech coach Carol Robertson, players Amanda Hollandsworth and Allison Woodward, and assistant Russell Abbott comprise the Tech women's golf program, which held its inaugural practice at the Pete Dye River Course in late August



WHAT'S INSIDE:

Expansions and renovations have made Lane Stadium better than ever over the course of 50 seasons

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HOKIES KICK OFF 2014

Nearly 63,000 fans arrived at Lane Stadium for Virginia Tech's season-opening football game against William & Mary, and they witnessed an efficient, workmanlike performance from the Hokies, who dispatched the Tribe 34-9. Quarterback Michael Brewer threw for 251 yards and two touchdowns, and Shai McKenzie paced a freshman contingent that made multiple contributions, rushing for 106 yards and a score in the win.

THE STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPERIENCE

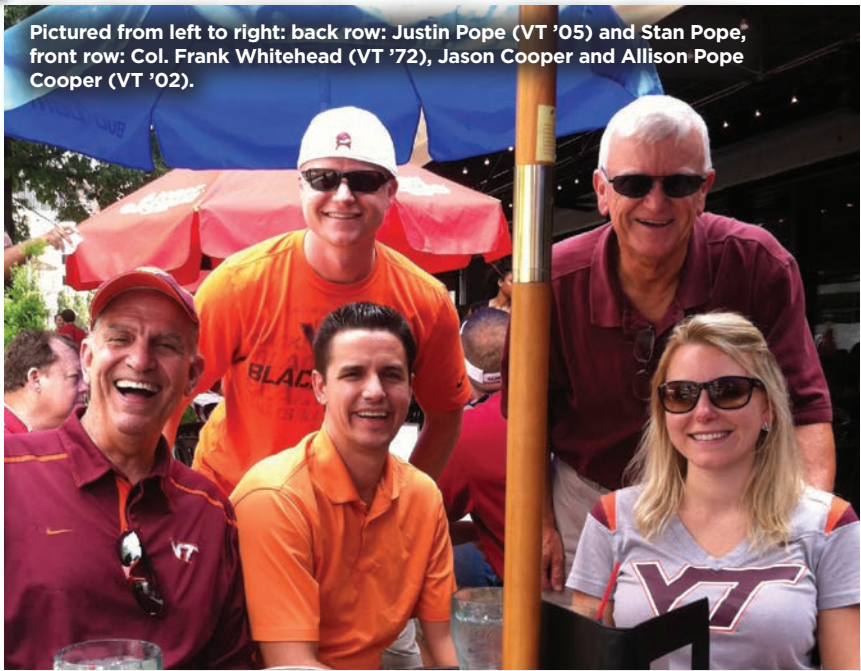
"I really can't say enough about the Hokie Club and those who donate to it. I can't put it in a sentence. A scholarship means the world to me and all those on scholarship and those working toward one. Just not having to worry about paying for things because all that's paid through a scholarship check. There's a peace of mind there, and that allows us to focus on our academics and on football. It means the world, and I'm very appreciative of it."

Caleb Farris
Senior | Football

"I'm so appreciative of those who give for scholarships. I never thought I'd get a scholarship. When I was younger, I never thought of going to college because I knew I couldn't pay for it, but when I got that scholarship, it changed everything. I could come here and get a free education and play football. It's a blessing, so thank you to them."

Deon Clarke
Junior | Football

The Donor File



Pictured from left to right: back row: Justin Pope (VT '05) and Stan Pope, front row: Col. Frank Whitehead (VT '72), Jason Cooper and Allison Pope Cooper (VT '02).

Allison Pope Cooper

HOKIE CLUB LEVEL: Platinum

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WHAT YEAR DID YOU GRADUATE?
2002

FAMILY: Jason (husband); Caroline and Waverly (daughters); Justin (brother, '05); Stan and Charlene (parents); Frank (uncle,

Q&A

Q: A Hokie is ...

A: I have to explain this a lot to people outside of Tech, and my answer over the years has developed into, "Well, if you don't know, you haven't been to Blacksburg." Among many things, a Hokie is someone who embraces orange and maroon, is in the stands before kickoff, gets chill bumps when they hear "Enter Sandman," doesn't leave the stadium when it rains or snows, smiles when they see another Hokie and is happy not to be a Wahoo.

Q: The Hokie Nation is real because ...

A: There is not a day that goes by in North Carolina that I don't see a car sporting a VT license plate, sticker or magnet!

Q: What is your best memory of Virginia Tech athletics?

A: There are many, but the 2003 Miami game and the 2006 Clemson Thursday night game were electric.

Q: How did you get involved with the Hokie Club?

A: I joined the year after I graduated at the minimum giving level because I was just starting graduate school.

Q: Do you have any tailgating traditions?

A: Our tailgate menu is planned the week before the game. My aunt and uncle drive in from Northern Virginia, my brother from Richmond and my parents from Waverly, so we all meet at our hotel and pile into one car that is decked out with Virginia Tech magnets and flags. We tailgate both before and after the game, and the pregame and postgame reports are always on our radio.

Q: What motivates you to give back to help Virginia Tech athletics?

A: I was fortunate to grow up in a very small southeastern Virginia town with a football and track coach as a father. I experienced firsthand the positive influence athletics had on the youth

and our community. Nothing beats a fall Saturday in Blacksburg – the hustle, the bustle, the camaraderie and spirit of our fans. I am proud of all of our student-athletes and the time that they devote to my alma mater. That is why my family gives back.

Q: I'm a Hokie Club member because ...

A: I want to continue our rich tradition of athletics excellence and ensure that Virginia Tech students have the same great experience I had when I was there.

Q: What are you most excited about this football season?

A: We have a Thursday night home game! I was pretty upset when we didn't have one scheduled last year. I haven't missed a Thursday night game in Lane since 1999, so I am really looking forward to the Miami matchup this year.

PLEASE WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS OF OUR STAFF:



Steve Adams | Associate Director of Development

Adams joined the Hokie Club team on Sept. 8 as associate director of development. He graduated from Virginia Tech in 1988 with a degree in education (management). He most recently served as a senior account executive in sales for Clear Channel Media and Entertainment for the past 11 years.

Adams has been involved with the Richmond Hokie Club since 1992 and has served as president, vice president, secretary, event chair, sponsorship chairman, media coordinator and Hokie representative. He also served on the Virginia Tech Athletic Fund Board of Directors and the Executive Committee, the Regional Campaign Committee

in Richmond for the Campaign for Virginia Tech, and as a co-host of the radio program, "Tech Talk Tuesday" in Richmond for the past 15 years.

Adams will have leadership responsibility for the following Hokie Club areas: Staunton/Waynesboro, Charlottesville, Harrisonburg, Covington/Clifton Forge, Fredericksburg, Tri Cities, Lynchburg, Appomattox, Amherst/Nelson County, Commonwealth, Halifax County, Southside, Emporia and Franklin/Southampton.

While at Virginia Tech, Adams worked as manager for the football team. He and his wife, Jeannie, have two daughters, Courtney and Katie.



Scott Hughes | Annual Giving Officer

Hughes joined the Hokie Club team on Aug. 26 as an annual giving officer. He graduated from Virginia Tech in 2004 with a degree in communications and a minor in history. He also received his MBA with a concentration in sports management from Tiffin University (Ohio) in 2013. This past year, he served as annual giving officer for Virginia Tech for academics, and he has a demonstrated track record in building relationships with alumni and friends. He exceeded the fundraising goals that were expected in that position.

His background also includes college football

coaching at Glenville State and Jacksonville University, and he was a high school outreach coordinator at Fortis College in Florida for four years.

Hughes will have leadership responsibility for the following Hokie Club areas: Giles County, Pulaski County, Radford, Bluefield, Tazewell, Beckley and Kanawha.

While at Virginia Tech, Hughes was a walk-on for the football team, playing quarterback, wide receiver, defensive back and special teams. He and his wife, Courtney, live in Christiansburg.



Shendale Simpson | Gift Accounting Manager

Simpson joined the Hokie Club team in March as gift accounting manager. She graduated from Bluefield College with a degree in management and leadership in 2011. She also received associate degrees from New River Community College in accounting and business in 2006 and 2007. She most recently served as an assistant director of gift accounting for University Development at Virginia Tech, a position she held for seven years. She brings extensive experience in management, gift accounting principles and financial reporting. Simpson will manage our fiscal technician team.

Simpson and her husband, Trey, have two daughters, Jade and Lexi, and live in Dublin.

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Tech inks Beamer to two-year contract extension

Tech AD Whit Babcock announced on Aug. 27 the signing of head football coach Frank Beamer to a two-year contract extension, ensuring that the longtime coach can remain at the head of the helm through Jan. 1, 2019.

The move came just three days before the Hokies' season opener against William & Mary. "This well-deserved extension is a reward for 27 tremendous years, certainly, but also is based upon my observations and work with him these past seven months," Babcock said in a statement. "His integrity and work ethic is even better than advertised, and he still has that competitive fire and wants to move Virginia Tech forward. I believe in him and support him, his staff and our team. We look forward to a successful 2014

season and beyond."

Other than the additional two years, the remainder of the terms of Beamer's contract stay pretty much the same. Beamer, the winningest active coach in the Football Bowl Subdivision, is in his 28th season with the program. Under his leadership, Tech has won seven conference championships, earned six BCS appearances and finished ranked in the top 20 in 16 of the past 21 seasons.

Just as impressive has been his program's performance in the classroom. The Hokies scored a 977 on the NCAA's multi-year Academic Progress Rate (APR) – the program's highest score ever. In 11 of the past 13 years, Tech has graduated at least 70 percent of its football

recruiting class.

"I can honestly tell you that our program currently stands atop a rock-solid foundation," said Beamer, who turns 68 in October. "This coaching staff is the best I've ever had. We've had an influx of talented, young student-athletes into our program, and we're hard at work recruiting more just like them. So I'm confident in the character and talent of our coaches, players and support staff.

"Then, you see this impressive, state-of-the-art indoor practice facility on its way up, which shows the continuing dedication from this university, its people and our fans, and our future can only be bright. I'm proud of where we've been, and I'm extremely excited about where we're going."

Tech freshman worried about more than football

Melvin Keihn had enough to concern himself with when he arrived on Tech's campus in early July. He needed to take care of his classes. He needed to get to lifting sessions and position meetings on time. He needed to show the coaching staff his skills once practice started in August.

But these days, the young man from Towson, Maryland, has a more pressing concern – and he can do little about it.

Keihn was born in the West African nation of Liberia, and he moved to the United States when he was 8 to live with his father (his parents are divorced) to avoid becoming a casualty of a civil war occurring in the country at the time. His mother remains in Liberia, a nation now receiving worldwide attention

because of the Ebola virus outbreak.


The disease, which has no cure, has killed nearly 1,500 people so far, with roughly half of those in Liberia. Thus, Keihn's concern for his mother is warranted.

"Not only her, but also everyone has to be careful about that," Keihn said. "If you shake someone's hand or talk with someone, the virus can spread easily. So I worry about her and all my brothers and sisters. You have to be careful with what you do and be careful about who you're surrounded by and how you interact with them."

Keihn, who played seven snaps on special teams in the Hokies' season opener against William & Mary, hasn't seen his mother since he left Liberia more

than 10 years ago. He moved in with his father, who lived in Washington, District of Columbia, and later, the family moved to Woodlawn, Maryland, just outside of Baltimore. Later on, Keihn lived with his high school coach, Biff Poggi, at the Gilman School.

Keihn's ultimate goal is to get his mother to the U.S. In the short term, he focuses on football and academics, with concern for his mother never far from his thoughts.

"Sometimes, it's hard to keep focused, worrying about the health issues, and at the same time, going to school and playing football," he said. "It's a lot to take care of, but at the same time, I'm using that as motivation and trying to get through everything I can to get her up here when I get a chance to." 

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editor's desk | by Jimmy Robertson

Future is now for Tech football, as youth movement is in full swing

The Virginia Tech football team won its season opener against William & Mary rather easily. The Hokies rolled up 488 total yards, ran for 222 yards and only gave up 193 yards defensively.

But of all the numbers that came out of that game, the ones that intrigue this writer the most were this – Tech played nearly as many true freshmen (10) as it did seniors (12).

That might come as a surprise to some, but Tech's coaches said they were going to play a lot of the 2014 recruiting class and lived up to that. Seventeen true freshmen made the dress squad for the season opener, and 10 got in the game, gaining experience in hopes of helping the rest of this season.

In other words, the future is now.

"If they're [the freshmen] that good and they can help us, then let's play them," said running backs coach Shane Beamer, who played freshmen Marshawn Williams and Shai McKenzie at tailback. "We're all about competition. We're always trying to upgrade the talent on this football team. If there is a guy that has come in as a freshman and gives us a better chance to win, then let's play him. That's our mindset right now."

Playing Williams and McKenzie made sense for Beamer considering the Hokies' struggles running the ball a year ago and considering both graduated from high school early and enrolled at Tech last January. That gave them an advantage over "typical" freshmen. Williams got to go through spring practice, and while McKenzie

missed it while rehabbing a torn ACL, he at least got a feel for how things get done within the football team and spent valuable time in the strength and conditioning program.

But other factors led to those two playing. Last year's starter, Trey Edmunds, has been slow to return from a broken leg suffered late last season, and both Chris Mangus and Jerome Wright have left the program, thus exacerbating the need to play Williams and McKenzie.

Of course, depth isn't the overriding decision to play someone as a true freshman. Sometimes, sheer talent is.

"I told my guys [the returning running backs] before spring practice that this was a critical spring because we had guys coming in that were good and were going to compete," Beamer said. "They want to play from day 1. We do lack depth in some issues, but I think we played those guys because we've upgraded the talent."

Tech's staff also played two true freshman receivers (Isaiah Ford and Cam Phillips) and a freshman kicker (Joey Slye). All were expected to play. Tech lacked big plays out of its receivers last season, and Ford and Phillips possess that ability. Ford actually started and deserved to, given his performances in practices and scrimmages, and Slye won the kicking job over two other freshmen.

Tech's staff played two true freshmen on the offensive line (Eric Gallo and Braxton Pfaff), not surprising considering that Brent Benedict and Mark Shuman have been lost for the season with

injuries. They also played two defensive backs in Greg Stroman and C.J. Reavis, both of whom played only a handful of plays at the end of the game.

The playing of Stroman and Reavis came as a surprise considering Tech's depth in the secondary.

"The way we play nickel defense now, you've got to have a certain number of defensive backs ready to play," defensive backs coach Torrian Gray said. "If you get an injury and you don't have enough guys, then you've got to catch those guys [the freshmen] up to speed. Those guys are talented and will continue to progress as the season goes along, so we thought they were ready to take that step."

"They give us depth. They give us security. They're going to help us out on special teams. That all factors in. Then next year, those guys are going to be better for having gone through this."

Finally, defensive end Melvin Keihn also played, but only on special teams. Tech's staff wants better play on special teams and obviously wasn't afraid to use Keihn in that role.

Playing true freshmen appears to be the new trend in college football. Tennessee played 21 in its season opener. Southern Cal played 11. Oregon played nine.

Tech now has played 21 combined the past two seasons. Four years ago, the Hokies played just two (Derrick Hopkins and Kyle Fuller).

In the end, it doesn't matter. You play your best and try to win – and Tech's staff thinks this current group of true freshmen can do exactly that. 



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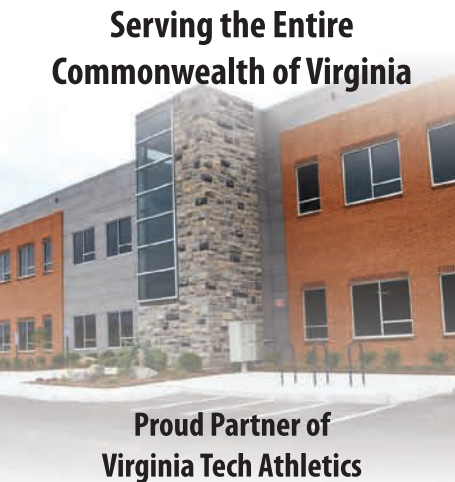
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Tech offense hoping to stay in tune for 2014 season



Tech offensive coordinator Scot Loeffler expects the Hokies' offense to be much improved this season, even with all the youth on that side of the ball.

There were times during the 2013 football season when Virginia Tech offensive coordinator Scot Loeffler felt as if he was conducting an orchestra without all the musical instruments. It's difficult to conduct an award-winning symphony if it doesn't have ... for instance ... a brass section.

Because of injuries, attrition, inexperience and a dip in talent at some spots, Virginia Tech's offense never truly had the look Loeffler wanted last year.

But in 2014, with an influx of young talent, the Hokies' attack will reflect more of Loeffler's personality.

More no-huddle? You bet.
Integral use of tight ends? Absolutely.
Productive in the red zone? No doubt.
Efficient, with fewer turnovers? Must happen.
That's what Loeffler has seen so far in 2014.

"I think we've made a lot of improvements from last year," Loeffler said. "We needed to run the ball better and protect the ball. Those were the two main areas we needed to improve over last year. And we needed to get better at some positions, too. I think we have. I know we have."

With a new quarterback, exciting new tailbacks and dynamic talent at tight end – which is one of Loeffler's favorite weapons – the Hokies feel they've made a big upgrade in their talent level

with the additional offensive threats.

"They [Tech's freshmen] are going to make typical freshman mistakes," Loeffler said. "For example, in the first game against William & Mary, Cam [Phillips] lined up wrong, and so that took a touchdown off the board. Things like that happen with freshmen, and we need to get those things cleaned up as the season progresses. But they [Tech's freshmen] are smart guys who are really into it."

One of the smartest players on the team is quarterback Michael Brewer, the levelheaded, even-keeled Texan who transferred to Virginia Tech from Texas Tech. Brewer quietly completed 23 of 30 for 251 yards in his debut, with two touchdowns and an interception.

"We have a very cerebral guy behind center," Loeffler said. "He's a decision maker. He's a manager. He can run the show. He's the CEO of our company. Any time you have a smart guy behind center making decisions for you, you have a chance."

Listed at 6-foot, Brewer isn't the biggest quarterback ever. But he's got those intangibles that make him a winner.

"I've had the opportunity to be around a lot of great quarterbacks and the only difference with Michael is that he's not 6-foot-4 and 240 pounds. That's typically what I've had," Loeffler

said. "But what he does have are the intangibles and the mental makeup we want."

Lineage plays a role in that. Brewer's father, Robert, played quarterback at Texas in the early 1980s, and he earned MVP honors in leading Texas to a 14-12 comeback win over Alabama in the 1982 Cotton Bowl.

His grandfather, Charlie, also played quarterback at Texas. He played for legendary coach Darrell Royal in the 1950s.

Michael Brewer lost one game as a high school quarterback, winning four straight state championships. So he, like his father and grandfather, is used to success.

"He was born with some traits that quarterbacks have," Loeffler said. "Leadership, poise and the mentality to put everything together. I think there's some bloodlines, for sure."

Loeffler also told me he's "super excited" about the potential this year of Virginia Tech's tight ends after seeing them in action during the first few weeks of this season.

"We have athletic tight ends who can get out in space and we can formation them in many different sets," he said. "That's a huge advantage for us."

Freshman tight end Bucky Hodges is one of the most unique athletes and prospects Tech's had in a while. He came to Tech as a quarterback out of Virginia Beach, Virginia. Midway through his redshirt year, Tech's coaches asked him to play on the scout team and emulate North Carolina tight end Eric Ebron.

He did so many things naturally at the position that the coaches asked him to consider staying there. He did so, and now the Hokies have a terrific weapon, particularly in the red zone.

"You can't coach 6-6, 240 pounds," Loeffler said. "He's athletic, smart and loves the game. He

is going to get better and better week by week."

Ryan Malleck's return from last year's shoulder injury is a tremendous boost to the position as well. Tech's offense wasn't the same last year when he went down with that injury last August.

Malleck not only helps Tech in the passing game, but also in the running game. He has improved tremendously as a blocker.

"Ryan is a quiet leader who has a great hold on our football team," Loeffler said. "He doesn't speak a lot but when he does people listen."

So what are the other areas to watch during the early part of this season?

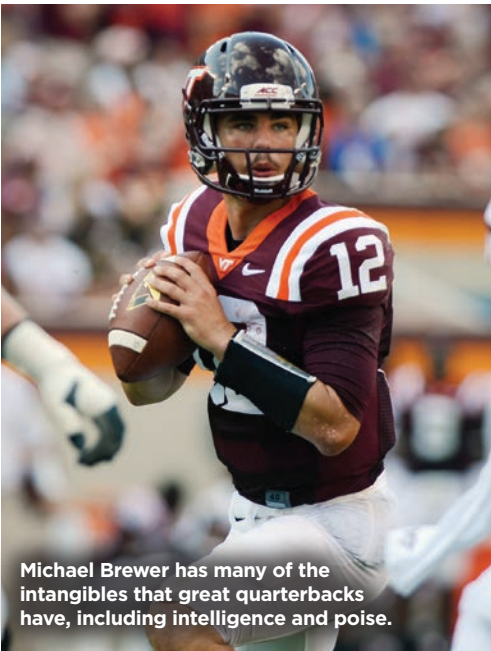
"For us to be successful with our young talent, we need to stay in phase with the chains," Loeffler said. "In each game, we want to have just two plays of third-and-11-plus, and just four plays that are third-and-7 to 10 yards. You want to look back after the [William & Mary] game and see that, 10 times, we had third down-and-3 to 6 yards to go."

In other words, this team, with its young talent, has to be good on first down.

"We can't jump offside and be first-and-15, or second-and-15," Loeffler said. "You have to stay on schedule on first and second down. In college football, your odds of converting a third-and-15 are just about 17 percent. We need to stay on schedule, which is to have positive plays on first down."

Football sabermetrics aside, Loeffler is most excited about the infusion of talent he has to work with this year, including Hodges, freshman backs Shai McKenzie and Marshawn Williams, and rookie receivers like Isaiah Ford and Phillips.

"We have some guys with a lot of talent, but they're young. So our goal this week, and every week, will be to protect the football and run it," Loeffler said. "We know [defensive coordinator] Bud [Foster] is going to play great defense on the other side. Our charge is to run the football and




Michael Brewer has many of the intangibles that great quarterbacks have, including intelligence and poise.

not turn it over."

And where the Hokies are as a team right now in September is nowhere near how good they can be in October or November.

And that is very encouraging.
"I believe the great teams and great players have a hunger to improve each week," Loeffler said. "We need do that. In week 10, we need to get better for week 11. If we do that, our young guys will gel, and we'll have a really good team."

Strings? Check.
Brass? Check.
Woodwinds? Yep.
Percussion? For sure.
Loeffler's symphony seemingly has all the parts for 2014.

Now we need to see how well these guys play together over the next three months. 



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Keeping up *with* Compliance

The compliance corner answers questions concerning the governance of intercollegiate athletics and its impact on our athletics department. Have a question? Please send it to inside@hokiesports.com and we'll answer it in upcoming issues. Now, here are a couple of questions that we've received from Tech alums and fans over the past few months, with responses from Tim Parker, Associate AD for Compliance:

Q: I have noticed over the years that freshmen rarely, if ever, serve as hosts for football recruits on official visits. Is there some reason for this? Is there an NCAA rule, or is this just left up to the discretion of the coaching staff? Just curious. Thanks, Jed in Christiansburg, Virginia.

TP: "Good question. The NCAA does not prohibit a freshman from serving as the host of a recruit on an official visit, and it does happen from time to time here at Virginia Tech. In most of those cases, the freshman went to the same high school as the recruit on the official visit, so there is a previous relationship there. But mostly, coaches feel more comfortable pairing upperclassmen with recruits on visits. Upperclassmen generally are more mature and have a better feel for the program – and can do a better job of 'selling' that to recruits."

Q: I read recently where [former Virginia Tech basketball player] Trevor Thompson is trying to get a waiver to play next season at Ohio State after transferring from Tech. How is that going to happen? I thought he had to sit out a year like Seth Allen is doing for us this year. Thanks, Katie in Christiansburg, Virginia.

TP: "My understanding – from media reports – is that Trevor is appealing for a waiver from the NCAA rule requiring basketball transfers to sit out from competition for one academic year, arguing that he transferred to be closer to his father, who underwent surgery to repair some damage from a neck fracture suffered several years ago and now needs additional surgery."

"There are some issues that come into play with any waiver like this. No. 1, in this type of situation, the NCAA committee that will rule on this request normally requires that the student-athlete transferring move within 100 miles of where the relative lives. Trevor's father lives in Indianapolis, which is about 175 miles from Columbus."

"Also, the committee will look at the timing or progression of any illness. Was the surgery scheduled before or after the transfer? Determining the role of the illness in the actual transfer decision will be pivotal."

"Regardless of the final ruling in Trevor's case, he will not lose one of his four opportunities to play. He will still have three seasons of eligibility remaining for Ohio State, even if he is required to sit out during the 2014-15 season."

Q: So, now that the five power conferences have more autonomy to make their own

rules, what happens next? Are football and basketball players going to start getting paid? Thanks, Bruce in Blacksburg.

TP: "The NCAA Division I Board of Directors did vote to allow schools in the "Power Five" conferences (ACC, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac 12, SEC) to write some of their own rules. Many of these will be more permissive than current Division I rules, some will be more restrictive."

"These measures will permit the five conferences to decide on things such as the composition of scholarships, insurance benefits for players, staff sizes, recruiting rules, and mandatory hours spent engaged in required athletically-related activities. All other Division I schools – on a conference-by-conference basis – will have the ability to utilize any permissive amendment adopted by the Power Five."

"Initial proposals via autonomous legislation will emerge very quickly. In order to be voted on at the next NCAA convention (January 2015 in Washington, D.C.), these legislative amendments must be submitted by the five conferences no later than Oct. 1."

"An increase in the value of a full athletics scholarship is likely to be the first significant issue addressed. How this will play out is still very much up in the air. Stay tuned." *VT*



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SHANNON MAYROSE

Women's Soccer | Freehold, New Jersey

by **Jimmy Robertson**

Shannon Mayrose, a sixth-year senior, has been a success both on the pitch and in the classroom for the Tech women's soccer team. A two-time member of the All-ACC Academic Team for women's soccer, Mayrose graduated in May with a degree in human development and is working on her master's in counselor education. Her future plan is to become a guidance counselor.

What led you to pursue a path toward the goal of eventually becoming a guidance counselor?

"I started in human development because I knew I wanted to do some type of social science. Then I started doing research on what type of jobs you could get, and it was teacher, social worker and all the general social science jobs when you think of helping others. Then I came across guidance counselor.

"I had a very positive experience with my guidance counselor in high school. She had a positive impact in my life, and that was something that motivated me and shed light on what role I want to play in an adolescent's life. So I started looking into becoming a school counselor.

"The summer before my senior year, I interned at my high school back home, and I loved it. It was fast-paced, and every day was different. I like the team atmosphere, just coming off team-building stuff with soccer my whole life. After that, I was set on becoming a school counselor."

You have a busy fall planned aside from participating on the women's soccer team and taking graduate school classes. Please tell us about it.

"I'll be doing an internship at Auburn High School in Riner this fall. I did my practicum [a course of study that involves applying classroom knowledge], which was less hours but the same concept, last spring at Auburn Middle School. They switch you around to different schools to give you a broad range of different grade levels and see what kind of population you enjoy working with the most.

"An intern role is different than a practicum. I'll be more ingrained in the school. I'll have my own case loads and my own students that I'm working with and will be responsible for, and I'll probably be working one-on-one with students, working with groups of students, doing classroom guidance




and doing career exploration. I'll probably be making sure seniors are on track for graduation. It's going to be a lot of fun, especially for me since I have an interest in high school and those grade levels."

Then in the spring, you'll be at a different school, right? And then you'll start applying for jobs?

"Yes, I'll be going to a different county. I'm thinking Salem or Roanoke County because my school, the Roanoke Higher Education Center [a collaborative effort among 16 in-state schools, including Virginia Tech], is based out of Roanoke,

so I commute back and forth. I can go to my school during the day and then to my classes at night. I don't know what school, but I'll be in an elementary school.

"As far as the job situation, I'm really just trying to get through the fall. I plan to start looking and applying for jobs over winter break. I don't have anything set in stone. I don't have anchors anywhere. It would be nice to go home. I'm originally from New Jersey, and it would be nice to go back so that I could be near my family. But I don't have a plan set in stone. I'll just go with the flow and go with any opportunities that present themselves." 

HUNTER KOONTZ

Men's Tennis | Richmond, Virginia

by **Jimmy Robertson**

Hunter Koontz, a senior on the men's tennis team, had a winning record during the dual meet portion of Tech's season last academic year, and then he made the ACC's All-Academic Team for the second time in his career. He started out in engineering at Tech, but changed majors and now plans to graduate with degrees in both finance and accounting either next spring or next December.

First of all, what led to you changing your major from engineering to finance, which is just as difficult a field?

"When I came here, I wasn't sure what I wanted to do at all. My dad graduated from Tech with a civil engineering degree, so I thought, 'Why not give it a shot?' But a year and a half in, I wasn't really enjoying it. I didn't think it was for me, and playing tennis made it pretty tough. I wasn't doing terrible in it, but it was a lot of work for something that you're not that fond of.

"I liked some of the classes. But being on the tennis team and missing so much [class], it was incredibly hard to catch up. Then I took Multivariable Calculus, and that put me over the edge. That was the class."

So what led you to pursue finance and accounting?

"I wanted to switch to business, but a lot of the guys on the team were in finance and recommended it. I decided to give it a shot. I wasn't sure what branch of business I wanted to be in, and I think I like accounting more now that I've taken more classes. That's why I chose financial accounting. If I can do accounting and finance, that would be good. It would give me a lot of options."

What is it about finance and accounting that you like so much?

"I've always been a numbers guy. I like math. It's more that you have an equation, numbers that you plug in, and you find out the answer pretty quickly. It's more mathematical than anything. That's what appeals to me. A lot of people hate accounting, but I'm not one of those people."


What are your future plans?

"I've been giving it a little bit of thought, and



one of the reasons I want to double major in finance and accounting is that I want to get my CPA [certified public accountant license] after college. I think that would give me a few options of what I could do in the accounting field.

"Beyond that, I haven't thought about it too much. I still don't know if I want to leave my one

passion, which is tennis, because I've been doing that the last 14 years of my life. There's still a chance I could do something with tennis. I don't want to throw that out the window. I don't think I'll be playing professionally, but I could still be a teaching pro. There are a lot of things I could do with tennis. So I'm still deciding." 



Tech women golfers Amanda Hollandsworth (left) and Allison Woodward will have a year to hone their games before beginning competition in 2015.

TEE TIME FOR TECH WOMEN

The Tech women’s golf team held its inaugural practice on Aug. 28 at the Pete Dye River Course – the latest step in the development of the program as it heads toward competition in 2015

by Jimmy Robertson

Those looking to develop their patience in all facets of life may want to schedule a session with Tech women’s golf coach Carol Robertson, who holds an undergraduate degree in public administration, a master’s in sport management, and thanks to recent life experiences, a Ph.D. on the subject of patience.

In addition to raising a 1-year-old son with her husband, a trying task for any first-time parents, Robertson spent the past 13 agonizing months waiting to perform her passion – coaching young women golfers.

The wait, though, is over.

“Finally,” Robertson said. “When I was proud to accept this job, it should have – but it didn’t – occur to me that I would be here several months without players to coach. I miss it. I’ve missed it so much. It’s about these kids and the relationship you build with each of them, and it

all starts the first few days. They’re finally here, which is good.”

The Tech women’s golf team held its inaugural practice as a program on Aug. 28, as the two players on the team – Amanda Hollandsworth and Allison Woodward – met with Robertson and assistant coach Russell Abbott at the Pete Dye River Course practice facility near Radford, Virginia, for the first of what will be many practice sessions this season.

Tech officials added women’s golf to their slate of varsity sports in May of last year, with the goal of hiring a coach, putting together a team and then beginning competition during the 2015-16 school year. They named Robertson the inaugural coach in July of last year, and in November, she signed Hollandsworth and Woodward to letters-of-intent in what marked her first recruiting class.

“I’m pretty excited,” said Hollandsworth, who

verbally committed to Tech first and thus stands as the program’s first recruit. “Words can’t explain how it feels to be here. It’s one thing to say you’re going to Tech and start a program, but it’s another to actually be here and meet all the people who are so happy to meet you. It’s a great experience. I wouldn’t want to be anywhere else.”

Hollandsworth, a native of Floyd, Virginia, and Woodward, a Unicoi, Tennessee, native, will take redshirt years this season and be eligible for the next four years, starting in 2015. They will spend this season getting ahead academically, while honing their games under the tutelage of Robertson and Abbott.

Unfortunately, they will not be able to compete in any tournaments unless they find some in which Virginia Tech is not affiliated. Even then, they would need to pay their own travel expenses and any other fees, per NCAA rules, and they

probably would need to juggle any class conflicts.

The benefits, though, outweigh the negatives.

“For me, it [redshirting] was a draw,” Woodward said. “It gives you a year to get acclimated not only to school, but also to all the other stuff you have going on.

“I feel blessed to have this redshirt year to practice up and see how good of a golfer I can become with all these tools around me.”

The two of them spent the first day of practice meeting with Jennie Zabinsky, Tech’s director of sports nutrition, and Sarah Armstrong, an academic coordinator in the Student-Athlete Academic Support Services office. They also posed for pictures with the department’s photographer, and they met men’s coach Jay Hardwick and members of the men’s team.

In fact, in a nice gesture, Hardwick stopped his practice and had his players introduce themselves to Hollandsworth and Woodward. The two of them may compete against the men’s team this fall and spring when the men’s schedule allows for it.

“Jay [Hardwick] and I have briefly talked about it, and he’s all for it,” Robertson said. “They’re pretty busy with their competitive season, but when they’re out of season in late fall or early spring, we’ll be able to do some of that. We’d like to have a little insider tournament to get the competitive juices flowing.

“It’s going to take some very creative thinking and motivational practices to keep them motivated. Imagine a football team going and working out and doing all these things, and then ‘Sorry you don’t get to bash people on Saturday.’ We have the same competitive spirit, and you want to go out and represent Virginia Tech and beat some people. So we’ll have to find a way to simulate that for the next year.”

Though teammates, Hollandsworth and

Woodward are not roommates. They live in the same dorm – Cochrane Hall – but live on different floors. That decision affords them the opportunity to meet other people since they figure to be seeing each other with regularity over the next eight months.

The two, though, were acquainted before coming to Tech. Both have competed in the Scott Robertson Memorial Tournament, a prestigious junior tournament held in Roanoke, Virginia, each spring. Two years ago, they came across each other in a long drive competition. Woodward belted it 270 yards and expected to win it, but Hollandsworth cranked one 306 and ended up victorious.

“I was like, ‘Sorry,’” Hollandsworth said, laughing.

“Amanda got me. She pounded it,” Woodward said. “I hit it around 270, and I was happy with that. I’ll go home thinking that’s pretty good. But man, she can pound it. I thought I was a long-ball hitter until I played with her, so I’m so stoked. She can really hit it.”

Interestingly, both nearly wound up at other schools. Hollandsworth committed to play at Old Dominion, where Robertson served as the head coach. Robertson left to become Tech’s head coach, and Hollandsworth decided to back out of her verbal commitment and sign with the Hokies, bringing her within 30 minutes of her hometown.

“Coach Robertson was the No. 1 reason I was going to go to ODU,” Hollandsworth said. “The beach might have been a little factor in that, too, but mostly, it was Coach Robertson. She’s going to be the difference in my golf game, I’m sure.

“Then, coming here, I told several people, it’s weird. My biology professor is from Floyd. There are so many people from Floyd who come out here [the River Course] and play. It’s nice to know people, but then again, it would be nice to

go somewhere and not know anybody. But I have the rest of my life to move around, and I can see my family more.”

Woodward faced a more difficult decision. She grew up 90 minutes from the University of Tennessee campus in Knoxville. She dreamed of being a Volunteer and playing at an SEC school.

But Robertson convinced her to come to Blacksburg for a visit – and that changed everything.

“When it came down to it, I talked with everyone – my mom, my dad, my brothers, and of course, they’re all UT fans,” Woodward said. “But they told me, ‘We’re an Allie fan. Whatever you decide, that’s what we are.’


“It took a lot of praying, and I cried a lot. But it felt right coming up here. Coming up here on my unofficial and looking around, I thought, ‘This is where I’m meant to be.’”

Now that they are here, they get to take advantage of this upcoming season without worrying about the pressures of competition. They get to work out, get a nutrition plan, practice at a state-of-the-art facility and play regularly on one of the most beautiful – and toughest – courses in the country. Robertson and Abbott plan to work extensively with them on every aspect of their games.

All this will make them better golfers a year down the road and four years down the road.

“I think this redshirt year will be a great, great benefit for them,” Robertson said. “They have all the tools to be a top Division-I ACC golfer. They need the structure and the time and the development year to prove that.”

Robertson has waited a year to get them here. She’ll have to wait another year to see them compete.

But she’s banking that her patience will be rewarded. In a big way, too. 

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50 SEASONS AT LANE STADIUM

Tech’s football home has undergone a series of changes since that first season in 1965, but it still continues to provide golden memories for Tech fans

by Jimmy Robertson



1964

Initial construction of the west side of the stadium

Continuing construction of the west side

1965

A look at the construction of the press box area

It is the first building that students coming to Virginia Tech’s campus for the first time, or those returning to campus to continue their studies, see. They drive along U.S. 460, an asphalt path that meanders through a pastoral setting, and the building rises up, roughly a mile in the distance.

The highway leads to a stoplight, and students, or perhaps those riding with their parents, take a right onto Southgate Drive, one of the main arteries into Tech’s campus. The building towers over everything else, commanding one’s attention, and those seeing it for the first time usually gape in awe.

Lane Stadium is an impressive display of concrete, steel, glass, lights, and of course, Hokie stone, the defining architectural feature of nearly every building on this campus wedged into the Blue Ridge mountains of Southwest Virginia. It is beautiful and awesome, and yet intimidating.

Lane Stadium is a building, a football stadium, and a home to one of the nation’s best football programs over the past two decades. Yet it is certainly so much more.

Yes, the concrete, steel and Hokie stone comprise it. But what goes on inside its cavernous walls define it.

Those who attend football games know this, and as they drive onto Southgate and approach the stadium, they can feel the sensations. They envision fans draped in maroon and orange hunkered around their grills in the parking lots. They see kids in oversized jerseys tossing pigskins. They almost hear the rhythmic pulsing of “Enter Sandman” and their feet probably start tapping the floorboard of their vehicles. They cannot wait to start jumping.

This season marks the 50th in which Lane Stadium has been Tech’s football home. The venue just keeps getting better with age.

THE VISION

Dr. T. Marshall Hahn was more than just a Virginia Tech president, the 12th in the university’s history. The man also was a visionary.

Now 87, Hahn took over the presidency at Tech in 1962 at the ripe old age of 35 – still the youngest Tech president to date. Perhaps emboldened by youth, Hahn quickly stamped his mark on the athletics area.

Hahn, along with trusted sidekick Stuart Cassell, oversaw the finishing of the construction of Cassell Coliseum, the school’s basketball home, in 1962. Then he decided to embark on another project – one much loftier than Cassell Coliseum.

In 1963, Hahn pitched a project to Tech’s Board of Visitors that called for the construction of a 35,000-seat football stadium to be built not far from Miles Stadium, Tech’s football home at that time, and just south of Cassell Coliseum. Miles Stadium only seated around 15,000.

Hahn chuckled when recalling that meeting with the Board.

“I think probably they thought I was crazy, but they were too polite to say so,” he said. “The question was raised – how in the world would we get 35,000 people in and out of Blacksburg? There was only one road in and one road out at that time.

“There were some doubters, but the Board of Visitors was enthusiastic at that time about the progress we were making, and they agreed we should saddle up and get moving immediately.”

The university’s athletics department found itself trying to work through tumultuous times in the early 1960s. Tech won the Southern Conference football championship in 1963, but the league had been weakened when some of the bigger schools – North Carolina, Clemson, NC State, Duke and Maryland – left in the mid-1950s and formed a conference called the Atlantic Coast

Conference. At the time, Tech was the lone charter member of the Southern Conference remaining.

In the spring of 1964, Tech officials decided to withdraw from the Southern Conference. The move allowed Tech the flexibility to schedule like institutions in the region, with the hope being that playing, and winning, some of those games would make the school more attractive to the ACC.

As president, though, Hahn looked at the situation from an even broader perspective.

“I continued to preach the gospel that, as the university emerged into national distinction, its’ reputation lagged in time behind where the university had actually reached, and anything we could do to link the name of the university with comparable universities would be helpful,” he said. “Successful intercollegiate athletics certainly was very effective in that area.

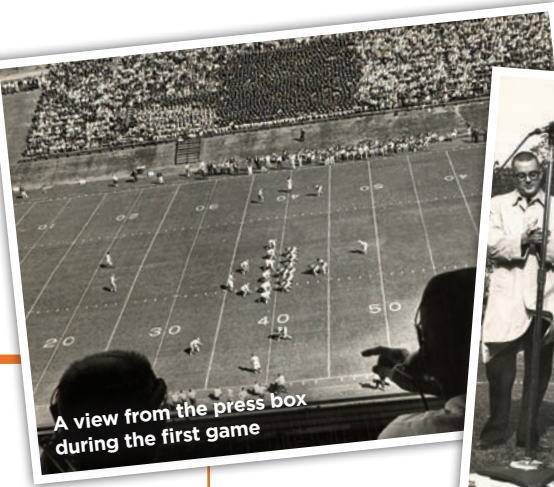
“We also needed the space where the dormitories are on the site of the old Miles Stadium [behind War Memorial Gym]. We needed that area to build additional student residences. We were trying to avoid spreading too far, so that the distances between the dormitories and the buildings where the students took classes wouldn’t be so far.”

Thus, he and his staff made the pitch for the new football stadium. The Board of Visitors ultimately agreed to Hahn’s proposal.

There was one slight problem, though. “We didn’t have any money to speak of,” Hahn said.

ENTER MR. EDWARD H. LANE

Hahn refuses to take a lot of credit for his role in the construction of Lane Stadium. Instead, he points to two other men who played integral roles – Cassell, who played a key role in the building which bears his name, and Edward H. Lane.



A view from the press box during the first game



Then-Governor Albertis Harrison (behind the microphone) dedicating the stadium in the name of the Lane family



An aerial view of the stadium several years after initial construction was completed



Construction of the addition on the east side



Installation of modern lighting system



2001



Installation of a new playing surface and permanent north end zone seating (top)

Both men performed numerous tasks related to the project, but for simplicity's sake, Tech fans should look at their roles this way – Cassell worked with the architect and contractors to keep costs down, while Lane raised the money. The Board of Visitors, concerned about costs, liked this two-pronged approach.

“We worked with a contractor – I can’t remember his name right now – but he agreed to construction progress payments and agreed that there would be no penalty if we had to stop midstream until we raised more money,” Hahn said. “I recommended to the Board that we build the stadium in the location where it is now. We actually had bulldozers standing by the last game of the season.”

Workers actually began construction on the stadium in April of 1964. Following the 1964 season, workers razed the old Miles Stadium, making it imperative that the new stadium be at least ready for play in time for the 1965 season.

Fortunately, there were no delays in construction. A lot of credit for that goes to Lane, a former student at Tech who founded what became The Lane Company, a furniture company in Altavista, Virginia, with his father. Lane spearheaded an educational foundation project that raised more than \$3 million for the construction. He himself made a sizable contribution to the project.

“We went down to Altavista to see Ed and made the pitch, and he and his family made a substantial gift as a stimulant to his thousands of fellow alumni to get on the wagon, too,” Hahn said. “He was very helpful.”

Construction workers worked furiously just to get the stadium ready for play for the 1965 season. They knew it wouldn’t be anywhere near

completion, but hoped to get enough done to allow for competition.

In short, that is exactly what happened. On Sept. 24, 1965, Tech’s freshman team played the first game ever at the stadium against Maryland’s freshman team. The school’s varsity team took the field on Oct. 2 against William & Mary.

THE FIRST GAME

Old photos and video footage reveal a partially completed stadium. A chunk of the west side wasn’t completed. The north end zone, as Tech fans today know it, consisted of a small hill. The south end zone opened to a parking lot. The east side didn’t have seats yet, so fans sat on concrete or on the ground. The three-level press box wasn’t finished, but was completed enough to allow for media members and coaches to do their jobs. The scoreboard was rudimentary compared to today’s behemoth.

Perhaps because of the unfinished state of the stadium, or perhaps because football wasn’t America’s obsession back then the way it seems to be today, a couple of Tech players said there wasn’t the excitement one might have expected leading up to that first varsity game against William & Mary.

“There wasn’t a lot of excitement for the first game in the new stadium,” said Bill Edwards, a linebacker and one of three captains on the 1965 team. “There was probably more excitement for the Virginia game because it was the dedication and it was the first time in some time that we [the current Tech team] had played Virginia on the campus at Virginia Tech.”

Mike Saunders, a former lineman and also a captain on the 1965 squad, expressed similar sentiments.

“There was a lot of excitement, but I’m not so sure it was any more ‘special’ than any other game going in,” he said. “We had played in a lot of stadiums that size or bigger – or comparable, let’s put it that way. We had been in those kinds of environments, but the fact that we had our own was pretty neat.”

Ray Smoot, a legend in Tech circles for his work within the university as the head of the Virginia Tech Foundation, was also at that first game. He remembers that day well.

“It was my first college varsity football game,” he said. “I was a freshman then. I also remember that the stadium wasn’t completed. The east side wasn’t completed, and I don’t think the press box was finished.”

“The other thing that I remember was that the ball game was boring [laughing].”

Tech managed to win the first varsity game at the stadium, beating William & Mary 9-7. The Gobblers trailed 7-0 at halftime, but scored nine points in the fourth quarter. Kicker Jon Utin hit a 34-yard field goal with 4:31 left in the game, and then quarterback Bobby Owens scored on a 13-yard run with 37 seconds left to lift the team to the 9-7 victory. Owens’ touchdown capped an eight-play, 80-yard drive that took less than two minutes.

Tech went on to win its other two home games that season. The Gobblers knocked off rival Virginia 22-14 on Homecoming on a day in which the stadium was dedicated and named after Mr. Lane. He insisted it be named not for him, but for his family.

The Gobblers closed the 1965 season with a win over VMI in Roanoke. That gave Tech the sweep of in-state schools – something of utmost importance in those days.

“Back in those days, they had the ‘Big Five Championship’ – Virginia Tech, the University of Virginia, William & Mary, Richmond and VMI,” Smoot said. “They were the five major state teams. That went on for several years. There wasn’t any playoff or anything like that, but I remember the newspaper always had the Big Five standings. Those five teams played each other, at least to an extent. They didn’t always play each other, but they did most of the time.”

That 1965 season marked the start of Hokie dominance at its new home. Tech also did not lose a game at Lane Stadium in 1966 (though the Gobblers tied West Virginia at 13). The 1966 season marked the first season for a familiar name among Hokie Nation – current head coach Frank Beamer. He played on the freshman team in 1965, but did not play in that freshman game at Lane Stadium on Sept. 24 that year.

“Coach [Jerry] Claiborne brought in six quarterbacks that year, and I was the sixth,” Beamer joked when asked about the game. “The next week, they moved me to defensive back.”

EXPANDING OVER THE YEARS

Lane Stadium continues to defy conventional logic. The older it gets, the better it looks.

Of course, it looks so great today because of its numerous facelifts and transformations over the years. It started out as a 35,000-seat stadium that took nearly four years to build – original construction wasn’t completed until 1968 – and cost \$3.5 million. Now it holds nearly 66,000 seats in a relatively enclosed space.

Over a 15-year span, in the late 1960s and 1970s, athletics department officials added various bleacher seating and other seating that pushed the capacity to 40,000. But the first big

expansion project came about in 1977.

University officials and then-athletics director Frank Moseley started a project that called for the addition of 39 rows of seating on the east side of the stadium. It would add approximately 12,500 seats, an upper concourse area and a snack bar, all at a cost of \$3.2 million.

The project was supposed to be completed in time for the 1979 home opener against Appalachian State, but delays pushed the project back. It was finished in time for the 1980 season and brought the capacity of Lane Stadium to more than 50,000.

The big expansion projects, though, occurred in Jim Weaver’s tenure. The former Tech AD, who retired at the end of 2013, took advantage of the program’s success in the late 1990s and early 2000s – and the money that those successes subsequently produced – and pushed through two major stadium initiatives.

In 2002, a \$37 million project resulted in the addition of 11,000 seats built into a double-decked structure in the south end zone. The project included 15 luxury suites, two indoor club areas, a new visitor’s locker room and a media center. Workers started the project in 2001 and finished before the 2002 season.

Then, in 2004, Weaver spearheaded a project that saw the demolition of the press box tower on the west side. The press box was replaced by a structure that ran the entire length of the west side stands and included additional luxury suites, private club seating areas, a president’s area, a press area, offices for the Virginia Tech Athletic Fund, a ticket office, a new lighting system, and more. It took two years to complete, cost \$52.5 million to finish and increased capacity to more than 66,000.

Factoring in north end zone bleacher seating and a new playing field (2002), Weaver committed nearly \$100 million to Lane Stadium during his time as the AD.

“No, not really,” Weaver said when asked if he ever hesitated at such a commitment. “I felt like we were in good shape financially – as good as we could be. I thought we needed to do it while the enthusiasm was there and while we were playing as well as we were.”

“I thought it was the best time of my tenure to do something like that. We had played for the national championship [in 1999] and had gotten the invitation to join the ACC [in 2003]. So we were able to move forward on it and make it become a reality.”

Weaver made a point to say that the inclusion of a new academics center within the west side of the stadium really sold university officials and the Board of Visitors. Tech’s previous academics center for athletes was a small room housed on the third floor of Cassell Coliseum, and Weaver wanted something nicer both to help student-athletes with their studies and thus boost graduation rates and also for recruiting purposes.

“I thought it was most important because I knew how desperately we needed it,” Weaver said. “The academic support area was on the third floor [of Cassell Coliseum], and it was just too small and it wasn’t first class enough to do what it needed to do.”

“When you are engaged in the recruiting process, you’ve got to have a facility that parents can understand how it’s going to help their child, and I think, when you go to the west side now and go up to that third floor, it says a lot about our commitment to academics. It’s simply a terrific addition.”



ENTER SANDMAN

Every Tech fan has a favorite Lane Stadium memory. Saunders and Edwards, two of the three captains of the 1965 team, vividly remember the Homecoming win over Virginia, which then was making its first visit to Blacksburg in 27 years. Beamer remembers a 1966 game against Florida State in which Tech used a goal-line stand to win. He also remembers intercepting a pass against Richmond and out-running Spiders quarterback Buster O'Brien to the end zone for his only

collegiate touchdown. After scoring, he threw the ball up in the air. Those who played in the early 1980s remember Ron Zollicoffer's catch to beat William & Mary. The 1990 team drilled Virginia in the season finale in the "black shoes" game – Tech's players painted their cleats black before the game – after the Cavaliers had been ranked No. 1 most of the year. No one will forget the 1999 season when ESPN Gameday came to Blacksburg for the first time, and the Hokies beat Syracuse 62-0. Three weeks later, they beat Miami 43-10, and in the season

finale against BC – under a beautiful sunset – they capped off a perfect regular season with a 38-14 win. But today, nothing defines Lane Stadium more than the playing of "Enter Sandman" as the team runs out of the tunnel before kickoff. For the past 14 years, Tech fans have become part of the stadium's "Enter Sandman" culture. Since 2000, the athletics department has started playing the first part of the Metallica song as the team runs out of the tunnel. The fans start jumping as soon as the song begins. It is a scene

beyond description, and the song serves as the university's de facto school anthem. The marketing folks at Tech now play the snippet late in games when the Hokies need a big play. They played it late in a 2009 game against Nebraska. Quarterback Tyrod Taylor hit Danny Coale for an 81-yard gain, and three plays later, Taylor found Dyrell Roberts for the winning touchdown with 21 seconds left. It still serves as Weaver's most favorite moment. "That would rank at the top of the list for me,"

he admitted. "Not so much how it ended, but just to play a first-rate opponent like that and be able to win ... that really kept the momentum rolling for us." Beamer's had many "Enter Sandman" moments, but one came on one of the saddest days of his life. In 2004, his mother, Herma, passed away only hours before Tech took the field against Maryland in a Thursday night affair. Beamer elected to coach the game, and his team wasn't about to lose on this night, blasting the Terrapins 55-6.

"There was never any doubt of what she would want me to do," Beamer said. "It seemed like all the breaks went our way that night. We jumped on Maryland pretty good, but I don't know if we were that much better than Maryland." It'd be remiss not to mention the importance of those Thursday night games at Lane Stadium. They have been beneficial to the program over the years, particularly during the Beamer era. In fact, Tech has played more ESPN-televised Thursday night games than any program in the nation, compiling an 11-4 mark at Lane Stadium alone in

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that setting.

Knowing that the entire nation is watching, Tech fans bring it on that night. The playing of “Enter Sandman” on Thursday night at Lane Stadium makes for one of the special moments in a college football season.

“The Thursday night games have been special,” Beamer admitted. “The atmosphere has always been good.

“But that night, it’s usually beyond good.”

THE FUTURE

What will Lane Stadium look like 10 years from now? 20 years? 50 years? No one really knows.

No projects are eminent. Sure, speculation centers on taking out the bleacher seating in the north end zone and building a structure similar to that in the south end zone. Some talk of bowling in the north end zone, thus enclosing the stadium.

That assumes, though, that the current athletics department administration wants to add seats. Doing so seems unrealistic at the moment, given the nationwide problem that many schools are facing when it comes to selling tickets. Current AD Whit Babcock has no plans to expand the stadium, and credited Weaver and former university president Dr. Charles Steger for keeping the stadium at its current capacity.

“Certainly there were days when they could have taken the stadium up to 80 [80,000], and

now you’re seeing everyone downsizing and coming back,” Babcock told The Daily Press’ David Teel in an article recently. “So they had great foresight on that.”

Today, Lane Stadium simply looks fantastic, like the beauty queen who never ages. Tech officials have done a terrific job of balancing the stadium’s modern look while implementing those features that pay tribute to its wonderful past.


It beckons Tech fans of all ages and races and backgrounds to come in and reside within its walls each autumn, to come and experience something that cannot be experienced by watching a 60-inch black box bolted to a slab of drywall at one’s home.

Those who have been to games know this. Those who have played on its field can attest to it, even the ones who played 50 seasons ago.

“It’s exciting for us,” Edwards said. “It’s exciting to see what’s there 50 years later, something that we were a part of and realizing our humble beginnings of playing that first game at Lane Stadium, with the way it was. Over the years, going back to games and seeing where the school is and where the stadium is ... it’s always been a great home-field advantage.”

“What we really can’t believe is what Frank and others have done with the program, with what we know used to be there,” Saunders said. “It’s still the same field, but we feel pretty proud of having played in the first game and are really blown away

by where it is now in terms of all the hoopla and all that goes on.”

The 2014 season is Tech’s 50th at Lane Stadium. Nearly everyone would agree – the stadium has never been more golden. 

LANE STADIUM “FIRSTS”

- First game – Oct. 2, 1965 vs. William & Mary (Tech won 9-7)
- First score – Jon Utin (34-yard FG vs. William & Mary)
- First touchdown – Bobby Owens (13-yard run vs. William & Mary)
- First televised game – 1966, vs. Florida State (a 23-21 win)
- First loss – 1967, Miami (14-7)
- First CBS game – 1982, vs. Miami (a 14-8 loss)
- First ESPN game – 1990, vs. Virginia (a 38-13 win)
- First BIG EAST game – 1992, vs. West Virginia (a 16-7 loss)
- First BIG EAST win – 1993, vs. Temple (55-7)
- First ESPN Thursday night game – 1994, vs. West Virginia (a 34-6 win)
- First ESPN Gameday appearance – 1999, vs. Syracuse (a 62-0 win)
- First ACC game and win – 2004, vs. Duke (a 41-17 win)


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26 Inside Hokie Sports

Then-Governor Albertis Harrison (middle) and then-Tech president Dr. T. Marshall Hahn (far right) dedicated Tech's new stadium on Governor's Day on Oct. 23, 1965, and named it after Edward H. Lane (between Harrison and Hahn) and his family. The other two gentlemen are believed to be G. L. Furr (far left), the chairman of Tech's Development Council, and H.C. Wyatt, the rector of Tech's Board of Visitors at the time.



THE MAN BEHIND THE NAME

Tech fans love coming to Lane Stadium, but only a few have any knowledge of Edward H. Lane, the man who was a driving force behind the construction of the Hokies' football home

by Jimmy Robertson

Tech fans often talk about their love of Lane Stadium. Many plan their vacations, and some, their weddings, around fall pilgrimages to Tech's storied football home. They easily can cite their fondest memories at Lane Stadium, rattling off a top five at the blink of an eye.

But when it comes to answering how Lane Stadium got its name, Hokie fans respond a little more slowly. Veteran attendees of Tech's games, a number that gets slimmer with each passing year, may remember, but the younger guard has no clue about the man and his family who played such a monumental role in helping shape what is now one of the most iconic places to play football in America.

"That stadium is named after a great man," Beau Lane said. "It's not just a name on a stadium."

Beau Lane is the oldest grandson of Edward Hudson Lane, the man who made a sizable contribution to the construction of Lane Stadium and who also headed up an educational

foundation project that raised more than \$3 million for the stadium's construction. University officials named the stadium after the Lane family, though in essence, Ed Lane deserved the accolade.

Beau Lane, who today runs a horse farm in Paris, Kentucky, reveals a detailed history of his grandfather's life, and it's one that certainly Tech fans can appreciate – a blue-collar story about a man who worked his way to the top and built an empire in the furniture business.

Ed Lane started working at the age of 16. His father and three brothers ran Lane Brothers Construction, an Altavista, Virginia, company that built 32 miles of what was then the Tidewater Railway (now part of Norfolk Southern), and he helped with the books. After graduating from high school, he decided to attend Virginia Tech.

Not long after arriving in Blacksburg, tragedy struck.

"He caught the measles or the mumps, I can't remember which, and in those days, they sent you

home," Beau Lane said. "He went home and got well, but his mother caught it and died. That hung over him all his life."

Beau said his grandfather did not graduate from Tech, and instead, he ended up getting married and joining the Navy. But Ed Lane found his way back home. His father, John, had bought a bankrupt box factory in Altavista for \$500 in 1912, and he and Ed started running the factory, with Ed – at the age of 21 – handling most of the day-to-day operations.

Perhaps by fate, Ed Lane happened to run into a woodworking professor whom he knew from his days at Tech. He showed the professor the vacant plant and started asking the professor questions about the equipment needed to produce cedar chests.

"The guy that sold the plant, a man named Mr. Bobbitt, told granddad that he thought he could have made it if he could have made more cedar chests," Beau said. "He was selling them pretty

good. That's where granddad got the idea. His woodworking professor told him what equipment he needed, and he shopped all over the country and got some new stuff and started making chests."

Lane's cedar chests became an immensely popular item and thus a thriving company, one called Standard Red Cedar Chest Company, emerged in 1912. People from around the world wanted cedar chests in those days because cedar wood repelled moths and was decay-resistant. The company gradually expanded into different types of furniture, from tables to accent pieces, and became known as The Lane Company, Inc., in 1922.

Lane, with help from his father, navigated the company through difficult times, particularly during the Great Depression. He did so by using a characteristic that is rare in some people – common sense. He hired good people, and in its heyday, the company consisted of more than 1,000 employees. He always kept his office door open as an invitation for any employee to come in and talk to him.

He also accepted nothing less than the best. Beau Lane said that, at the end of the inspection line at the Lane factory, hung a sign that said, "Is good enough really good enough?"

"He was the kind of guy that had more common

sense than any man I've run into in my lifetime, and I'm 72," Beau said. "He was a very, very wise man. He always said he was an old country boy trying to get along, but he wound up being voted the top furniture man in the last century [he was the furniture 'Man of the Year' in 1951] and the first man put in the furniture hall of fame."

"He was just one of those guys, regardless of what time in history he would have come along, he would have been a success. He used to say a man could only accomplish so much by himself. He said, 'I'm not the smartest guy around, but I've surrounded myself with smart people.'"

People sought out Ed Lane for advice. Beau Lane still has letters from U.S. presidents and other dignitaries who sought his counsel, and he said former Virginia Governor and U.S. Senator Harry Byrd tried to get his grandfather to run for governor, but he refused, preferring instead to run his business.

In spite of his busy schedule, he still found time to support Virginia Tech. He served on the Board of Visitors from 1956-66, and he also once served as the president of the Virginia Tech Student Aid Association. He and Tech's president at the time, Dr. T. Marshall Hahn, struck up a friendship. Hahn relied on Lane's leadership to push through the building of what became Lane Stadium.

"I knew him fairly well," Hahn said. "He was on

IHS extra | learning about ed lane

the Board of Visitors, and subsequently, he invited me to be on his Board of the Lane Company. We were friends, and the friendship grew over the years."

On Oct. 23, 1965, during Tech's game with rival Virginia on Governor's Day, then Governor Albertis Harrison, Hahn and other university officials dedicated the new stadium, naming it after Ed Lane and his family. Following the game, the team signed a game ball and gave it to Lane.


Today, Beau Lane has that ball.

"I still cherish it," he said.

Ed Lane passed away in 1973. This season, Lane Stadium celebrates its 50th as the home of Tech football.

Beau Lane, who attended Tech and played football for one season under Jerry Claiborne before deciding to leave school, came back last season at the invitation of former quarterback Bob Schweikert. He once roomed with Schweikert, who later worked for Ed Lane. He said he couldn't believe what Lane Stadium has become.

He knows his grandfather would be proud, too – even though much of Hokie Nation doesn't know a lot about the important role he played in getting the stadium off the ground.

"He's not known much now," Beau Lane said. "But in his time, the ground shook when he walked." 

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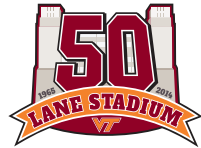
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EDWARDS A BIG PART OF TECH HISTORY ON THE FIELD AND OFF OF IT

This is the second in a series of features spotlighting former Virginia Tech players who played in the very first game at Lane Stadium in October of 1965. Bill Edwards, one of three tri-captains for the 1965 season, made Tech history by becoming the school's first academic All-American in football.

by Jimmy Robertson

During his senior year of high school, Bill Edwards faced what might be deemed as a difficult decision, one nearly impossible to make as a native Virginian.

An older brother went to school and played football at the University of Virginia. Another older brother went to school and played football at Virginia Tech. So which school should Edwards choose?

As it turned out, his academic goals were the tiebreaker.

“My middle brother came to Virginia Tech and played at Virginia Tech until he broke his neck during the 1962 season,” Edwards said. “He’s an engineer also, and I wanted to be an engineer. The University of Virginia didn’t encourage players to major in engineering, so I decided early on to come to Virginia Tech. And really, I never even visited other schools.

“I wanted to play at Virginia Tech because my brother had played there and had broken his neck and was partially paralyzed, and I wanted to fulfill his dream and mine as well.”

Charlottesville was only 30 minutes from his Orange, Virginia, home, but Edwards made history at Virginia Tech, becoming Tech’s first academic All-American in football. He also earned honorable mention All-America honors on the field following the 1965 season. He was one of three tri-captains on the 1965 squad, along with Mike Saunders and Bobby Owens, and like his teammates, played in the first varsity game at Lane Stadium, as Inside Hokie Sports celebrates the 50th season of the venue by spotlighting various players who played in that game.

Before talking about that first game and about Lane Stadium, Edwards made a point to say that expectations were low for the 1965 team entering that season. Tech won the Southern Conference in 1963 behind quarterback Bob Schweikert, running back Sonny Utz and a host of good players. But most of those players left after the 1964 season, leaving fans to wonder if 1965 would be a rebuilding year.

“In 1965, we started the season with two players who had lettered for two years and a total



After a terrific football career at Tech in the mid-1960s, Bill Edwards, seen here with wife Suzanne, enjoyed success in the professional world, working for more than four decades in environmental engineering.

of 18 lettermen on the ball team,” Edwards said. “The preseason predictions said we’d be lucky to win five games. They didn’t give us a chance. We were an independent at that stage. So all the preseason magazines didn’t give us a whisper or a prayer of a chance to have a good season. We ended up winning seven ball games.”

Tech won its first two games that season, beating Wake Forest in Roanoke and claiming victory at Richmond. That set up the inaugural varsity game at Lane Stadium, one against William & Mary on Oct. 2.

Edwards noted that the stadium wasn’t quite finished. That came as no surprise. The timetable was tight, with construction beginning in April of 1964, and university officials ambitiously expecting it to be completed for the 1965 season. They even oversaw the tearing down of Miles Stadium right after the completion of the 1964

season.

Most of Lane Stadium got completed – but not all of it.

“They had the concrete finished on one side, but no seats,” Edwards said. “People sat on the concrete. On the other side of the field, people sat on wooden bleachers.

“But we were just glad to have a place to play football. We had played the last game in the old stadium. We saw the construction of the new stadium every day on the way to the practice fields, which were directly across the street from the stadium in those days. It was always a wonder to walk by and not know what was on the other side.”

Tech won the game 9-7, getting a late touchdown from Owens to seal the victory. The Gobblers went on to win all three games at Lane Stadium that season, including a victory over

Virginia on the inaugural Governor’s Day when Governor Albertis Harrison and Tech president T. Marshall Hahn dedicated the stadium.

Like many others, Edwards remembers the Virginia game more fondly than the William & Mary game. It marked Virginia’s first visit to Blacksburg in 27 years. The two teams played mostly in Roanoke during that span.

“Virginia was the big in-state rival and was an ACC team,” he said. “We were the stepchildren on the street with no conference affiliation at that stage.”

After beating VMI in the season finale, Tech concluded the 1965 season with a 7-3 record. It marked the end of Edwards’ career, and his list of accomplishments at Tech is lengthy. In addition to being both an academic All-American and a football honorable mention All-American, he was a member of Omicron Delta Kapp (national honorary leadership fraternity), Chi Epsilon (honorary Civil Engineering Society), the Monogram Club and the German Club while at Tech.

In the spring of 1966, with his playing career over, Edwards signed a free-agent contract with the Dallas Cowboys. After a brief stint with the Cowboys, he returned to Blacksburg to finish up coursework on his degree. He and Saunders served as graduate assistants for coach Jerry Claiborne, while finishing their undergraduate

work and working on their masters. Edwards graduated from Tech with a degree in civil engineering in 1966 and he got a master’s degree in civil/sanitary engineering in 1967. In 1968, he married his wife Suzanne.

He started working for the Virginia Department of Health in 1967, serving as a regional director in Abingdon, Virginia, and keeping tabs on the management and administration for public water supplies and wastewater facilities in a 20-county area. He also taught classes at Wytheville Community College, not far from Abingdon.

In 1975, he went to work for Dewberry and Davis, a engineering firm in Fairfax, Virginia. He oversaw an array of initiatives related to water and wastewater design and construction management, and he worked his way up the ladder to managing principal.

After 17 years in Northern Virginia, he moved his family to Atlanta, where he took a job as the president and CEO of Lockwood Greene Technologies. He managed eight full-service offices with more than 300 engineers working on a broad range of projects.

“We did a lot of special nuclear work for the U.S. Department of Energy – and if I tell you about it, I have to kill you,” he joked. “No, it was classified work.”

Edwards worked for Lockwood Greene for nine years. In 2001, he took a job as a vice president

and program manager for AMEC Earth & Environment, remaining in Atlanta. In 2006, he moved again, taking a job as a vice president and regional leader for Stantec Consulting and again still staying in Atlanta. He oversaw the company’s U.S. East operation, with most responsibilities centered on marketing and growth strategies.

In 2011, after more than 44 years working in the engineering field – he was a registered engineer in 17 states and the District of Columbia at one time – Edwards retired, and he and his wife live in Woodstock, Georgia. Their oldest daughter graduated from Tech and the youngest graduated from Auburn, and they have three grandchildren.

Edwards gets back to Blacksburg on average about once a year. The trip always brings back a flood of memories.

As it should, especially when you represent such a big part of Tech history and when you’ve helped set the foundation for future greatness.

“If you look at the humble beginnings of Miles Stadium and the beginnings of Lane Stadium and the expansions that have occurred and the number of fans there and the excitement surrounding Virginia Tech football, to have been a part of that is really unbelievable,” Edwards said. “To look at where we are today and where we’ve come from as a university and as a college football team is unbelievable.”

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SMALL-TOWN SUCCESS STORY

Tech offensive lineman Caleb Farris comes from a small town and played at a small high school, but he has developed into a three-year starter, and this season, anchors the Hokies' offensive line

by Jimmy Robertson

In 2010, a self-proclaimed country boy from Rockbridge County, up the interstate 90 minutes or so from Tech's campus, arrived in Blacksburg, a member of the 2010 football recruiting class and a part of the Hokies' future.

His size enabled him to dominate on the high school level, and he expected to enjoy similar successes at the collegiate level, though he knew his future teammates would be similar stature.

But Caleb Farris' real awakening to college football came when he took on Derrick Hopkins in one-on-one drills during one of his first practices with the Hokies.

"I'll never forget it," Farris said. "I met Derrick Hopkins at a camp the summer before he came in, and someone was talking about, 'Yeah, Derrick Hopkins is here. He's also going to Tech.' This is after I had committed to Tech."

"I don't follow recruiting, so I didn't know him. I went up and introduced myself, and Derrick was a real nice guy, but he didn't really look like a huge recruit. He wasn't a huge specimen. He was a shorter guy, real stocky and real thick."

"We got out there, and man, if he didn't whip my butt a couple of times in one on ones. I knew then the level of competition rose up from high school. When you get to college, it's the best of the best."

That happened in the spring of 2011. Nowadays, though, only the best of the best whip Farris' tail. It rarely happens.

In the millionth example of the inaccuracy of recruiting ratings, Farris was a three-star recruit coming out of Rockbridge County High School, and yet he has enjoyed a five-star career. He has morphed from a little-known prospect into a three-year starter, as he plays his senior season in Blacksburg. His start against William & Mary marked his 19th straight at Tech.

No one on Tech's staff really envisioned this. Farris wasn't the crown jewel of offensive line recruits in that 2010 class. Guys like Nick Acree, Mark Shuman and Laurence Gibson possessed more "stars" and more "upside." Farris, though, is the one who played as a true freshman and who worked his way into the starting lineup

midway through his sophomore season. Injuries derailed the careers of Acree and Shuman, while Gibson started for the first time midway through last season. In fact, Acree never played a game at Tech, while Shuman got in just 10 games over the past four years.

Farris' is a feel-good story for a young man who tells people he is from Lexington, Virginia, because he knows very few have heard of Fairfield, a tiny dot on the Virginia state map.

"I take pride in it," he said of his career. "I know my parents and everyone are proud of me. Just coming from a smaller area, I always wanted to play ball at the next level, but I never imagined playing here. Just going through the

process, you think, 'Yeah, I'd like to play a little ball.' Then the D-II guys came and talked to me, and then the I-AA guys came and talked to me. It all started rising. Tech and other schools started talking to me. Then it came to a point, and I realized, 'I can play.'

"That was cool for me, but I knew I had to keep working. I hadn't arrived yet. I had to earn my keep, and that's the way I approach every day. I'm a senior now. I come in the weight room every day and earn my keep. I go on the practice field, and I have to earn my spot. Being a senior, you have a few more responsibilities, just trying to bring the young guys along. But basically, you just need to keep working hard and keep your

Caleb Farris started every game last season and played more than 900 snaps from scrimmage. He has played more than 1,400 snaps combined the past two years.



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football spotlight | caleb farris

nose to the grindstone.”

That Farris chose to come to Tech came as no surprise to those closest to him. He liked the idea of being close to home and near his parents, who attend just about every game, both home and away.

The truth of the matter, though, is that Farris grew up a Tech fan. A few members of his family own season tickets, and he went to several games as a kid. Some of his relatives' children have graduated from Tech. He knew of Tech's history and tradition – he witnessed it often as a child and as a teenager.

Once he received the scholarship offer from Tech, he spent little time thinking about it. He took it.

“It was surreal,” he said. “I’ve known I wanted to come here ever since I was a little guy, and then I got the opportunity to play a little ball.

“When I was in high school, I never had a thought that I’d be playing D-I football. I come from a small town and small high school. I didn’t look at myself as being a superb player. I just loved to play ball. Then I started getting some interest. Then the big fish started recruiting me, and I thought, ‘Wow, this might be possible.’ It worked out and Tech gave me an opportunity to play, and I took that.”

Farris got on the field his first season, seeing action in five games. His sophomore season, he played nine games, starting the final five as the center.

Last season, he started every game at left guard, but new offensive line coach Stacy Searels moved him back to center for this season. The move makes perfect sense, too. Why not take your most experienced, consistent and dependable lineman and play him at the spot that makes the line calls and actually starts the play?

“I just like to play,” Farris said of the position switches. “It doesn’t bother me. I’m comfortable at both, but I guess I prefer center. You get to run the offense, and you’re in the middle of everything. I like center a little better, but I just enjoy playing.”

Farris hopes to be playing after this season – in the NFL. Every player in college football shares that same dream. Yet, according to the NCAA, less than 2 percent of college players get to play professionally.

Unlike most players, Farris is realistic about his chances. He took advantage of the resources that Tech offers, and thus gave himself options for his future.

Farris will graduate in December with

a degree in apparel, housing and resource management, and also a minor in business. He could work as a representative for a company or in human resources, or do something related to the “people” side of business. A field study at the Blacksburg Parks and Recreation Center gave him valuable experience, and more importantly, something to put on his resumé.

“You need to have your education, your contacts, your network in place,” Farris said. “After December or the bowl game in January, I’m going to be in the real world. I’m going to need to find a job to be able to exist in the real world because football might not be there for me. You have to be realistic about that.

“You’ve got to come in here and perform on the field and hope for the best. But you’ve got to prepare for the worst – and the worst isn’t too bad. The worst is having a free education and going and finding a job and getting started with your life. The worst-case scenario isn’t too bad.”


In the short term, though, there is the 2014 season. Farris expects Tech’s offense to run smoother in year No. 2 of Scot Loeffler’s scheme. As a result, he hopes the Hokies return to where they were his freshman year when they won an ACC title.

He likes the talent on this 2014 squad. More importantly, he likes the attitude.

“As good as we want to be,” he said when asked how good this team can be. “There’s a whole new attitude about this team. It started back in the spring with lifting and rolled into morning workouts. Morning workouts are tough, and it’s a grind. In past years, I felt that people were like, ‘Man, I don’t want to be here.’ This year, it’s like, ‘Let’s go in here and get this work in. Let’s go get better.’

“Then it rolled into spring ball. We had the same intensity and same attitude, and we took that into the summer. Coach [Mike] Gentry [Tech’s associate AD for athletic performance] has said a few times that this was one of the better groups we’ve had. Every offensive lineman made his conditioning test, and that’s the first time that has happened in years.

“So things like that. I feel like there is a whole new attitude. That’s not to knock past teams. That’s just my take. We’ve got a great group of guys. We’ve come together as a team. So we’ll be as good as we want to be.”

And hopefully, they’ll be as good as he has been. It would make for a great story, one not unlike his. 

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Flowers excited about fresh start in San Diego

by Jimmy Robertson

Tech fans will be watching with gusto the San Diego Chargers every weekend this fall to catch two of the more popular Hokies ever to play in Blacksburg – receiver Eddie Royal and cornerback Brandon Flowers.

The two of them are good players and even better friends, and Flowers said recently that little has changed between the two of them now that they play on the same team again.

“He still can’t get open against me in practice,” Flowers laughed during a phone interview on Sept. 1. “Not a chance.”

The statement certainly reveals the mindset of Flowers these days – a relaxed, confident and happy player. He signed with the Chargers in June after the Kansas City Chiefs released him, and the move reunites him with his former teammate, Royal. Royal played at Virginia Tech from 2004-07, while Flowers played from 2005-07, forgoing his final season and making himself available for the NFL Draft.

Flowers is glad to be in San Diego after a difficult season last year with Kansas City. He made the Pro Bowl, but statistically, his numbers dipped. He recorded 68 tackles – the second-most in his career – but he only had one interception, his fewest since joining the league. He played in 13 games, all starts, but that, too, marked the fewest of his career.

Flowers struggled in part because of the way the Chiefs used him. Kansas City head coach Andy Reid hired Bob Sutton as his defensive coordinator before last season, and Sutton likes bigger cornerbacks. He ended up using Flowers – not the biggest of guys – as someone to cover slot receivers. Flowers was used to covering receivers on the outside, and thus struggled at times.

The Chiefs also released him to save \$3.5 million against the salary cap, which seems bizarre after signing him to a five-year, \$50 million extension in 2011 (\$22 million guaranteed). But they needed the money to sign other players, including quarterback Alex Smith, who recently signed a four-year, \$68 million contract, with \$45 million guaranteed.

“They had to take care of the quarterback,” Flowers said. “The NFL is a business. I understand that. Sometimes, the money isn’t there, and the salary cap doesn’t let you keep all the players that you want to keep.

“I have nothing against the Chiefs as an organization and nothing against Andy Reid. He’s a great coach. I spent six years there, and I really enjoyed it.”

It didn’t take Flowers long to find a new home. Actually, it only took a couple of weeks. He considered San Francisco, but decided on signing with San Diego because of his familiarity with the organization. Plus, the Chargers and the Chiefs are in the same division, so he gets two opportunities each season to gain revenge on the Chiefs.

It also helped that several Chargers players reached out to him to persuade him to come to San Diego. That includes Royal, who also called Flowers’ father in hopes of persuading Flowers to San Diego.

“It [his decision] was really because of the way the guys reached out,” Flowers said. “Phillip Rivers [San Diego’s quarterback] called, and Eric Weddle [San Diego’s safety] called. Eddie called me. Those guys made me feel wanted. I knew what type of team they had, and we’ve got a chance to be special.”

Flowers, who agreed to a one-year deal for \$3 million with an additional \$2 million available if he meets certain incentives, will be the starter at one of the cornerback spots. The move to San Diego also allows him to return to his familiar role of manning up on the outside receiver.

That has him excited about the season.

“I just want to play the game I’ve been playing,” he said. “This is a fresh start and a fresh team, and I’m playing the position I want. So it feels good.”

Flowers still keeps up with the Hokies, and he tries to make it back for spring games when he can. He remains in contact with former Tech players D.J. Parker, Justin Harper and Cory Holt, and talks occasionally to current defensive backs coach Torrian Gray.

He also said his dad, Willie, still keeps up with the Hokies. Willie Flowers became a fan favorite among Hokie Nation after Tech fans learned that he drove to every game from Delray Beach, Florida, to watch his son play.

“My dad is doing real good,” Brandon said. “He still wears his Tech gear, and he still comes to every one of my games. He doesn’t drive because it’s too far, but he comes. He’s still doing the same thing.”



After six seasons with the Kansas City Chiefs, former Tech cornerback Brandon Flowers now calls San Diego home.

Willie Flowers will be doing a lot of flying out West this season. The Chargers only play three games on the East Coast, though one of those is against Miami on Nov. 2. San Diego faces a tough schedule because it takes on the likes of New England and Baltimore and all teams from the NFC West (thus, Seattle and San Francisco). A trip to the playoffs will be earned, for sure.

But Brandon Flowers is optimistic.

“We have the talent to do something special,” he said. “But you can’t just talk about it. You have to put in the work. If we put in the work day in and day out, we’ll be a hard team to beat.”

Here are the former Tech players currently with NFL organizations:

by Jimmy Robertson

ARIZONA CARDINALS

6 Logan Thomas – The Cardinals drafted Thomas in the fourth round of this past May’s NFL Draft, and the former Tech quarterback signed a four-year, \$2.65 million contract, with a \$432,092 signing bonus, the only guaranteed money in the contract. He will be one of the backups to Arizona’s starter, Carson Palmer, this season.

41 Eddie Whitley – Whitley has yet to play in an NFL game since joining the league in 2012 as an undrafted free agent with the Dallas Cowboys. But Arizona officials thought enough of him to sign him to a two-year deal worth \$930,000. He will make a base salary of \$420,000 this season.

The Cardinals placed Whitley on injured reserve a week before the season began because of a broken foot. He will miss the entire 2014 season.

BALTIMORE RAVENS

2 Tyrod Taylor – Taylor enters his fourth season as the backup to starting quarterback Joe Flacco in Baltimore. A year ago, Taylor played in three games, completing just 1-of-5 for 2 yards, with an interception. He rushed eight times for 64 yards.

Taylor has played in 13 games in his three NFL seasons. He is entering the final year of the four-year, \$2.15 million contract that he signed as a rookie.

CHICAGO BEARS

23 Kyle Fuller – Fuller became the third brother in his family to be drafted, as the former Tech cornerback went in the first round of this past

May’s NFL Draft to the Bears, who selected him with the 14th pick. He figures to play extensively this season, and in particular, as a nickel cornerback.

Fuller agreed to a four-year contract with the Bears shortly after the draft, with an option for a fifth year. The total value of the deal is \$9.687 million (all guaranteed).

19 Josh Morgan – After spending two seasons with his hometown Washington Redskins, Morgan landed in Chicago in the offseason after the Redskins voided his deal. He agreed to a one-year contract worth \$730,000 with the Bears, and he expects to be the team’s No. 3 receiver behind Brandon Marshall and Alshon Jeffrey.

Morgan, now in his seventh NFL season, played in 14 games last season, starting seven of them. He caught 20 passes for 214 yards.

CLEVELAND BROWNS

69 Winston Painter – Painter expected to spend this season on the Denver Broncos’ practice squad, but five days before the season opener, the Cleveland Browns signed Painter and added him to their 53-man roster. As a result, he will earn \$420,000 (as opposed to \$107,100 for being on the practice squad).

Painter, a sixth-round draft pick by Denver in the 2013 NFL Draft, spent most of his rookie season on the Broncos’ practice squad.

DALLAS COWBOYS

Ryan Williams – The Cowboys signed Williams in the offseason after Arizona released

him this spring. They cut him to get down to the roster limit of 53, but they ended up signing him to their practice squad.

Williams has played in just five regular-season games since the Cardinals took him in the second round of the 2011 NFL Draft. He missed two seasons with various injuries.

DENVER BRONCOS

64 Will Montgomery – Montgomery, a former Tech guard/center, found himself released this past spring after six seasons with Washington in a move that saved the Redskins nearly \$2 million against the salary cap. He signed a one-year, \$1.2 million deal with the Denver Broncos, and he could make more than \$2 million provided he reaches certain incentives.

Montgomery is in his ninth season in the NFL. He spent his rookie season with the Carolina Panthers and nearly two seasons with the New York Jets, who released him midway through the second season.

DETROIT LIONS

10 Corey Fuller – Arguably the least known of the Fuller brothers, Corey continues to surprise people with his rapid development from track standout to NFL receiver. Drafted in the sixth round of the 2013 NFL Draft, Fuller spent his rookie season on the Lions practice squad and worked his way into a reserve role this upcoming season. He signed a four-year, \$2.28 million contract coming out of the draft.

52 Darryl Tapp – Tapp’s tenure with his

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favorite NFL team, the Washington Redskins, ended after just one season, as the former Tech defensive end signed with the Detroit Lions after his one-year deal with the Redskins expired following last season. Tapp played in just 11 games last season, recording a career-low 10 tackles and a sack.

A week before the season opener, the Detroit Lions cut Tapp, as the team needed to trim players to get down to the 53-player roster limit. But the Lions re-signed Tapp just three days later after placing another defensive end on injured reserve.

Tapp enters his ninth season in the NFL (four with Seattle, three with Philadelphia and one with the Redskins).

GREEN BAY PACKERS

11 Jarrett Boykin – Boykin played in 16 games last season for Green Bay, starting eight of them, and he caught 49 passes for 681 yards, including three catches for touchdowns. He averaged 13.9 yards per catch.

Boykin, who is the No. 3 receiver for the Packers, signed with Green Bay in 2012 after the Jaguars released him as an undrafted free agent. He later signed a three-year \$1.44 million contract with Green Bay in 2012 and thus is entering the final year of that deal.

HOUSTON TEXANS

76 Duane Brown – One of the NFL’s best offensive linemen, Brown is entering his seventh season in the league, all with the Houston Texans. Brown started 14 games a year ago, missing two games because of a toe injury. He had started every game the previous two seasons.

In 2012, Brown agreed to a six-year, \$53.4 million deal (\$22.08 guaranteed) with the Texans. The deal started in 2013.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

32 Antone Exum – After an injury-plagued senior season, Exum still managed to get selected in May’s NFL Draft, as the Vikings selected him in the sixth round. The former Tech cornerback agreed to a four-year, \$2.335 million deal with the team.

The Vikings are looking at Exum more as a safety than a cornerback. Provided he stays healthy, he could help the team in several different roles this season.

NEW YORK GIANTS

28 Jayron Hosley – A former Tech cornerback and All-American, Hosley suffered through a difficult season a year ago, playing in just 11 games and starting one after starting six

games as a rookie. He finished last season with just nine tackles and missed five games with leg injuries.

Hosley will miss the first four games of this season after being suspended by the NFL for violating the league’s substance abuse policy. He agreed to a four-year, \$2.637 million contract, with a \$515,000 signing bonus, after the Giants took him in the third-round of the 2012 NFL Draft.

Nick Becton – An undrafted free agent in 2013, Becton spent much of his rookie season on the San Diego Chargers’ practice squad (he was active for two games during the regular season). He played in one of those games, seeing action in San Diego’s game against Oakland in the fifth contest of the season.

The Chargers cut Becton on Aug. 25 during the preseason, but the former Tech offensive tackle found employment with the New York Giants, who signed him to their practice squad on Aug. 31.

NEW YORK JETS

1 Michael Vick – Vick, a former Tech quarterback, is in his 12th season in the NFL. After spending his first six seasons with the

Atlanta Falcons and the past five seasons with the Philadelphia Eagles, Vick signed with the New York Jets in the offseason, agreeing to a one-year, \$4 million deal. He stands to earn another \$2 million based on playing-time incentives. He will be the backup to starter Geno Smith this season.

Last year, Vick started six games and played in seven, missing several games with a hamstring injury and then losing his job to Nick Foles. He completed 77 of 141 for 1,215 yards, with five touchdowns and three interceptions. He also ran for 306 yards on 36 carries and scored two touchdowns.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

93 Jason Worilds – Last year marked Worilds’ best season as a pro, as the former Tech defensive end started 11 games and played in 15. He recorded career highs in tackles (63) and sacks (8), and he also forced two fumbles.

Worilds finished the final season on the original four-year contract he signed with Pittsburgh as a rookie. The Steelers placed the transition tag on Worilds in the offseason (giving them the right to match any offer he received) after the two sides could not come

to an agreement on a long-term contract, and Worilds ended up signing a one-year, \$9.754 million deal.

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

11 Eddie Royal – After a disappointing debut season with the Chargers, Royal bounced back last season, setting a career high with eight touchdown receptions and tying for the team lead. He also averaged a career-best 13.4 yards per reception.

Royal, who started three games and played in 15, caught 47 passes for 631 yards on the season in mostly a backup/third receiver role. He is entering the last year of a three-year, \$13.5 million deal that he signed in 2012.

26 Brandon Flowers – The Kansas City Chiefs released Flowers in June in a cost-cutting move, and he wound up signing a one-year deal with the Chargers. The deal paid him a \$1.5 million signing bonus and will pay a \$1.5 base salary. He can earn \$2 million more in incentives.

Flowers, a former Tech cornerback, started 13 games for the Chiefs last season and finished with 68 tackles and one interception. He will be a starter in San Diego this season.

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

31 Kam Chancellor – For the second straight year, Chancellor started every game for the Seahawks and played a big role in helping the team to its first Super Bowl victory. He finished with 10 tackles and an interception in the Super Bowl game.

The two-time Pro Bowler recorded 99 tackles and three interceptions from his strong safety spot last season, and he also forced a fumble.


Chancellor is entering his fifth season in the NFL, all with Seattle. He agreed to a five-year, \$35 million contract in April of last year.


WASHINGTON REDSKINS

23 DeAngelo Hall – Hall, a former Tech cornerback, enters his 11th season in the league, including the past seven with the Redskins. He has started every game for Washington for the past four years.

A year ago, Hall recorded 78 tackles (57 solo) and intercepted four passes, returning two for touchdowns. He also forced three fumbles.

The three-time Pro Bowler signed a four-year \$17 million contract with the Redskins this past February after wrapping up a one-year, \$1.25 million deal.






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AN ASSIST FROM FAITH



Tech women’s soccer standout Kelsey Loupee, one of the program’s all-time leaders in assists, credits a rededication to faith and active participation in Athletes in Action for turning around her career

by Marc Mullen

One does not need to go much beyond than the bio part on her Twitter profile to understand Kelsey Loupee. It’s all there, typed out in 27 characters and four spaces.

“AO1 Colossians 3:23 VTWS #9”

Taking that snippet in reverse, the Littleton, Colorado, native is a senior midfielder on the Virginia Tech women’s soccer team who wears the jersey No. 9. She rededicated herself to her faith midway through her college career in Blacksburg, hence the Biblical verse from Colossians. Finally, she enjoyed a tremendous experience in Brazil this summer because of her connections with Athletes in Action, a national group of athletes who use sports as a platform for sharing their faith.

“AO1 – that means ‘Audience of One,” she said. “So instead of playing to glorify yourself, it’s playing to glorify God, which is something that I definitely have learned a lot about through my college career here by being part of Athletes in Action.

“It’s been real special for me to transform my way of playing from playing all about me and trying to be the best player to trying to make my team really good. That’s obviously important to me, but it’s also important that I am a player of good character that makes people question: Why do I play that way? Why am I such a team player? Why am I always so positive? And those answers give me an opportunity to share my faith, which is really important to me.”

It’s been a neat transformation for a young woman who used to be a self-described “chubby girl with a mullet,” someone who was not very graceful for being an athlete. She’s broken her collarbone twice, but not in a competitive environment, and her workouts on plyometric boxes have left two big scars on her left shin.

As a kid, she tried all types of activities, but never really got into a comfort level in any of them.

“I actually tried a lot of sports, even after I started playing soccer, which was one of my first,” she said. “I tried T-ball, and I was the only girl on an all-boys team. But because I’m left-handed, I would hit the ball and run to third

base, so I didn’t last long in that sport.

“I did ballet for about a day, but I was bigger than my instructor – she was this little petite Asian, beautiful dancer – and I really didn’t fit in to dancing. I did gymnastics as well, and I didn’t fit into that either.

“Then, my dad actually coached my brothers in wrestling, and they were all pretty good. To get all four of us out of the house, he would take me to practice, too, and that lasted until I started learning the moves and using them on my brothers. My mom didn’t want me to be a wrestler, so I couldn’t go anymore. After that, I just played soccer, and that one stuck.”

My mom didn’t want me to be a wrestler, so I couldn’t go anymore. After that, I just played soccer, and that one stuck.”

All four of the Loupee children – including older brothers Christopher (27), Kyle (25) and Cory (23) – played soccer growing up. The two oldest played at Colorado School of Mines, either on the varsity or club team while continuing their educations, while Cory played club soccer at the University of Wyoming.

Loupee also knew from a young age that she wanted to play soccer in college, so she took to the sport as much as she could. Interestingly, the family never had cable television, and the kids were not allowed to play video games. So rather than sneak over to a friend’s house to do either – as her brothers sometimes did – she said she would just go outside and practice.

“I was pretty blessed to have the opportunity to play with a really good club team [the Colorado Rush],” she said. “We played at a really high level, and we made the state tournament every year. We made it to the finals, we made it to regionals, and we made it to nationals my last year of club soccer.

“My club experience was really good, and through that, I knew I wanted to play college

soccer from even before I started playing competitively, which is like U-11 [under 11 years old]. It’s never been a question in my mind that that’s what I wanted to do.”

She wanted to play at the next level, but she didn’t just want to go to some small school in her home state of Colorado. She wanted to play on the biggest stage that she could. So during

the recruiting process, she sent out letters to every school that made the NCAA Division I national tournament the previous couple of years.

One of those schools was Virginia Tech, which made it to the third round of the NCAAs in 2010

and got beat in the first round in 2011. The Hokies expressed an interest in her, but they just weren’t at the top of her list.

Yet maybe there was a little divine intervention that followed.

“Being a naïve, young high schooler, I was like ‘Virginia Polytechnic Institute ... I don’t even know what that means. That doesn’t sound like anything I want to do,” she said. “But my mom pushed me into looking more into it because she knew that it wasn’t just a technological and engineering school. There was more to it.

“And actually Chugger [Adair, Tech head women’s soccer coach] played in college with my club coach [Andrew Kummer] from back home, and they were good friends. So there was that really good connection there. I don’t remember what it was, but I finally decided I was going to go visit the school. There wasn’t a thought in my mind, though, that I wanted to go to Virginia Tech.

“It was more like, here’s this school that I’m going to go visit, so I might as well get used to the process, and this is a school that I can do that at. Then I got here, and by the end of my trip, I can’t really pick out a specific thing, but I just had this feeling that this is where I was

“My dad actually coached my brothers in wrestling, and they were all pretty good. To get all four of us out of the house, he would take me to practice, too, and that lasted until I started learning the moves and using them on my brothers. My mom didn’t want me to be a wrestler, so I couldn’t go anymore. After that, I just played soccer, and that one stuck.”

– Kelsey Loupee on playing multiple sports growing up



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Kelsey Loupee went to Brazil over the summer with an Athletes in Action group and one of the stops was Ipatinga, where she shared her faith with a group of young people in that city.

supposed to be. A week later, I committed, and it's been the best decision I've made."

Her first three years at Tech have been a rollercoaster ride, with its shares of ups and downs. As a freshman, Loupee started 19 games and played in all 23 of the Hokies' matches. She helped the team advance to the Sweet 16 for the first time in school history.

She scored two goals and dished out seven assists as a freshman, but suffered through a sophomore slump. She made just six starts and played in 19 games, but that experience brought her to the place where she is today.

"I came in [her freshman year] pretty confident because my club team had just made it to the national championship, literally, like two days before I had to report," she said. "It was funny. I actually played in the game. We went into overtime in the national championship game and lost, so that was disappointing. But I flew home from Arizona to Colorado, and my car was already packed to drive out here. So I got in a car with my parents three hours after we got home, and we drove all the way across the country to get to Blacksburg. Not sure if that was the best idea, but we got here and moved in and then the following morning, we ran a fitness test, so that was pretty crazy.

"Then the next year, I didn't eat enough, and I was working out so hard that I really tore my body down. So where I thought I was training to help myself to get better, I took it too far, and that was a setback year for me.

"But in the long run, it was the best thing for me because I was able to question why I was playing soccer and if it was important enough for me to live a certain way. I think

it really refocused me, as tough as it was not being able to play as much. I think, in the end, it definitely made me a better person, a better player and a better teammate."

During her junior year, the Hokies enjoyed the most successful season in program history by reaching the College Cup. Loupee again scored a pair of goals and racked up 10 assists, the third-most in a single season at Tech. That pushed her career total at the end of the 2013 season to 19, which was tied for the third-most in a career.

Much of her confidence and success, though, can be traced back to her decision during her rough sophomore year to join then-teammate Emily Siegel at an Athletes in Action meeting on campus. It really made a difference.

"When things weren't going so well, I realized I couldn't rely on myself for everything," she said. "So Emily, who is a graduated senior from last year, invited me to a meeting and then I just started going regularly.

"Then I got involved in a Bible study, and through that, this past summer, I got the opportunity to go to Brazil through a soccer ministry. We were able to go over there and play soccer and share the gospel and work with all these kids in an environment that is totally different than here. And we were able to help people who are less fortunate than us."

Loupee was the only person from Virginia Tech who went on the trip. She started off by heading to Canada for a week to train and work on how to share the gospel. Then the group went to Brazil for more than two weeks to play games, run camps and visit elementary

schools. They even had an opportunity to take in a World Cup game.

"Athletes in Action Soccer is based out of a town near Vancouver, so I started up in Canada," she said. "There was a women's team and a men's team, so we obviously played separately, but at camps, we would run different stations, where someone might share their testimony, and in other parts, you just played with the kids and that was all of us mixed together.

"We were actually in a city called Ipatinga, and we were there for most of the time, when we worked with the schools and the church out there. Then at the end of the week, we went to the city of Belo Horizonte, and that's where we got to see the Belgium versus Algeria game. They both actually made it out of group play, and that was pretty cool.

"The whole experience, being in Brazil, a country that just loves soccer, and being able to say, 'OK, I've been there,' was so awesome. Soccer has been my whole world, just like it's been for a lot of these people, and just to be able to share the gospel with them and help them realize that soccer isn't everything – it's a very special gift, but it's from God – was amazing. Athletes in Action has definitely changed my life and has brought me a lot of amazing opportunities like that."

Loupee's future plan - after her playing career

women's soccer spotlight | kelsey loupee



Soccer is the national pastime in Brazil, but the young people who attended the Athletes in Action camp run by Kelsey Loupee and other volunteers were receptive to the lessons being taught to them.

is over - is more than likely to head back to Colorado and hopefully enroll in Colorado State University's Peace Corps-Master's International Program, a program that integrates a master's in food science and human nutrition [a branch of her undergrad degree in human nutrition, food

and exercise] with Peace Corps field experience. Once finished, she'll explore new opportunities.

Sounds like a perfect plan for someone whose Twitter bio references the Bible passage "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord, not for human masters."

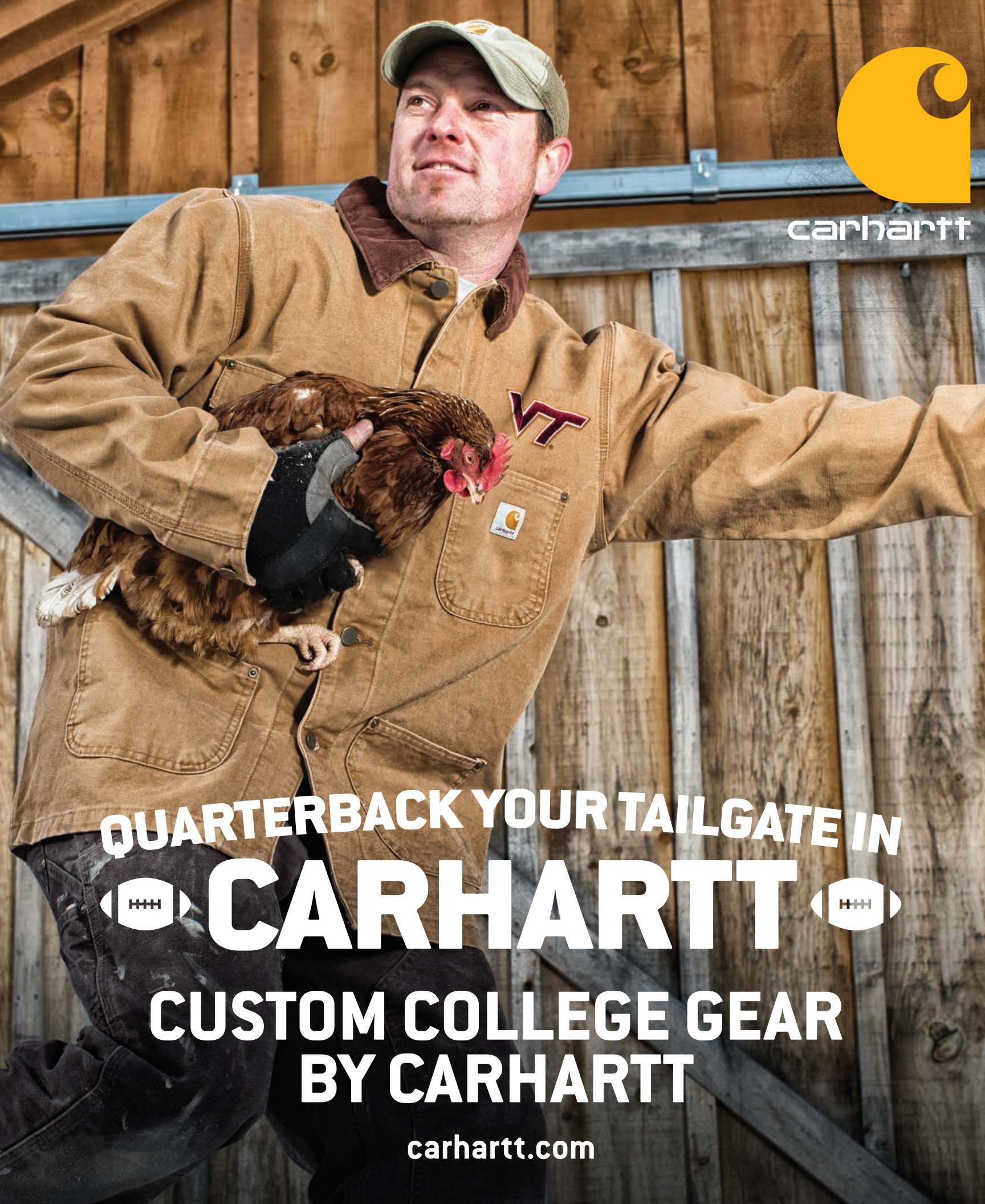
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SUCCESSFUL DEBUT SEASON FOR HAHN

Former Tech pitcher Jesse Hahn has enjoyed a terrific rookie season with the San Diego Padres and is optimistic about his future with the big-league club

by Marc Mullen

Every major leaguer has his story and it's been played out in baseball movies over the years – "The Rookie" often comes to mind. It's the day the minor league player is called into the manager's office and notified in some offbeat way that he has just had his dreams fulfilled by getting called up to the major leagues.

It's a moment that will forever be remembered and recounted time and again, as the player's hard work and persistence has paid off with a chance to play in the show. That was no different for former Tech player Jesse Hahn, who recalled his story recently in a phone conversation from the San Diego Padres clubhouse.

"Well, my manager with the San Antonio Missions Double-A team, Rich Dauer, called me into his office after one of our early games, and he told me to bring my clippers," Hahn said. "I'm kind of the clubhouse barber, and I cut a lot of the guys' hair. But he told me to bring my

clippers with me because Bud Black [the Padres' manager] might need a haircut – you're going to the big leagues.

"As soon as he told me, my eyes lit up, and it just got so surreal. It was just a dream come true, and I was so happy. I had a smile on my face the rest of the day. The first one I told was my girlfriend, Jessica Pauley, who's a Hokie as well, and then I told my father. And then just word spread out across the family, and the next couple of days, my phone was just blowing up left and right with congratulations."

Hahn made his major league debut in San Diego on June 3 of this year against the Pittsburgh Pirates and started off strongly. He ended a perfect first frame by striking out reigning MVP Andrew McCutchen and then struck out the side in the second.

A shaky third and fourth ended his night. He pitched 3.2 innings and struck out five, but it

would be his next start on June 14 that the Groton, Connecticut native, will remember for the rest of his life – a 5-0 win at the New York Mets in which he tossed six innings and struck out seven, while also notching his first major league hit and RBI.

"That was a 'must' win for me," a joking Hahn said. "But that was awesome. I had a bunch of family and friends there, and pitching in front of people that have supported you for a long time means a lot and kind of gives you that extra edge to go out there and want to compete more.

"As soon as I ran out on that field, I looked up and saw everyone in the family section. It was just awesome to win and to have my first good major league start in front of all of them. It meant a lot to me."

And the hit?

"Yeah, I'll remember it as a screaming line drive," Hahn said. "But the last time I hit was back in high school, and that was about seven years



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ago. I was a very average hitter in high school, so being an average hitter and picking up a bat seven years later and trying to face Zack Wheeler is not an easy task. So I was proud of that moment. I may have been more pumped about that than getting a win that day.”

Hahn would go on to win six of his next seven starts, a span that included a seven-inning, three-strikeout performance in which he allowed just one earned run against St. Louis on July 30 – a date that coincided with his birthday.

At the end of July, he was 7-2, with a 2.01 ERA in nine starts. Around the league, Rookie of the Year possibilities started surrounding his name. However, three winless starts later, combined with his 40-plus innings that he worked in the minors, resulted in him approaching his innings limit for the year, and he was reassigned back to Double-A San Antonio.

“I had an inning cap this year of 110 innings, and I hit that already,” Hahn said. “So I’ve been slowed down a little bit. I’m sure the organization doesn’t want me to throw too many more innings, but I will probably pitch out of the bullpen a few more times in September.

“Next year, I’ll take the offseason to get stronger and build up my leg strength and come in as, hopefully, a full-time starter next year. I want to compete for a spot in the rotation right out of spring training.”

In all, Hahn was reassigned and called back up to San Diego three times, including on Aug. 30. That could really hurt the psyche of a young pitcher, but he took it all in stride, knowing what the Padres’ plan was for him. He made sure he was ready for whenever the call came again.

“A lot of guys had told me the hardest part is not making the big leagues. It’s staying here, and I’ve experienced that this year,” Hahn said. “You

Former Tech pitcher Jesse Hahn has pitched well in his rookie season for the Padres, going 7-3 in his 12 starts. He will pitch out of the bullpen the remainder of the season to preserve his arm after reaching his team-mandated innings cap.



have to stay focused. You have to keep that same mindset when you get sent down because, down there, it’s tough. The minor leagues are a grind, especially in the Texas League, where it’s 100 degrees every day.


“You just have to do the best you can to stay focused and keep your eye on the prize. Your goal is to get back to the majors, and you have to do everything you can to get back up there. For me, when I was optioned down, it was more of a rest for me. I knew I was coming back, but I still needed to make sure I was ready to make that next big league start.”

Hahn says he gets back to Blacksburg every offseason for at least a month to work out, take in some football and basketball games, and to go to “West End. I’m there to eat some West End.”

He was the first of what hopes to be an influx of Hokies in the majors over the course of the next

few years. Ben Rowen, who was also a member of Tech’s eight-member 2010 draft class – the largest ever at Tech – made his MLB debut in June as well, becoming the 17th former Tech player to appear in the majors and just the seventh pitcher.

When Rowen was called up to Texas and saw action on June 15, it marked the first time ever that two former Tech players made their Major League debuts in the same season and gave the Hokies three players in the majors at the time – including Joe Saunders – for only the sixth time.

Among that 2010 draft class, three more players, along with Rowen, finished their seasons in Triple-A – Tim Smalling (Colorado), Austin Wates (Miami) and Justin Wright (St. Louis). The stockpile doesn’t end there, though, as the 2013 draft class – the second-largest ever at Tech – saw Tyler Horan (San Francisco) and Joe Mantiplay (Detroit) end the 2014 season in Double-A. 

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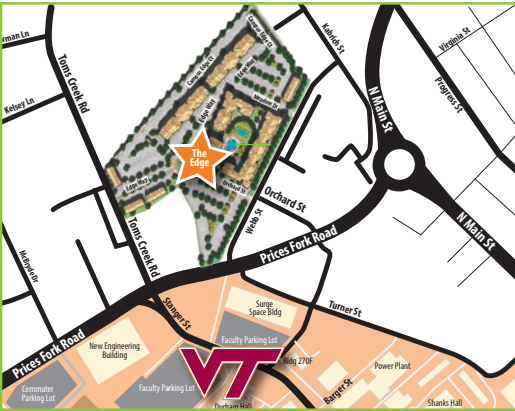
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TEEING OFF

Tech coach Carol Robertson, assistant Russell Abbott and players Amanda Hollandsworth and Allison Woodward comprise the Tech women's golf program, which held its inaugural practice at the Pete Dye River Course in late August