

inside

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# HOKIESPORTS

The Official Magazine of Virginia Tech Athletics

**WHAT'S INSIDE:**

Kyshoen Jarrett's great career came to an end with the bowl win, and now he sets his sights on an NFL career in hopes of providing for his family

## HOKIE HIGH

J.C. Coleman came up big for the Hokies, rushing for a Tech bowl-record 157 yards as the Hokies rolled past Cincinnati 33-17 in the Military Bowl

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## inside HOKIESPORTS

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## HOKIES BOWL OVER CINCINNATI

Virginia Tech got 157 yards rushing and a touchdown from J.C. Coleman, and Greg Stroman's (No. 3 in the photo) score off a fumble recovery enabled the Hokies to knock off Cincinnati 33-17 in the Military Bowl played at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis, Maryland, on Dec. 27. The win marked Tech's 11th bowl win and extended its string of winning seasons to 22 straight.

## THE STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPERIENCE

"The Hokie Club is one of the main driving forces behind why Virginia Tech has had so much success over so many years, and I'm very thankful for their contributions to our program."

Derek Di Nardo  
Redshirt Senior | Football

"I'm really appreciative of the Hokie Club raising money for student-athletes so that we can play the games we love and to give us all an opportunity to receive a great education."

Ronny Vandyke  
Redshirt Junior | Football

## The Donor File

### Kristin Sorenson

**HOKIE CLUB LEVEL:**  
Student Hokie Club

**CURRENTLY RESIDES:**  
Winchester, Virginia



### Q&A

**Q: A Hokie is ...**

**A:** Talented. Unique. Intelligent. Passionate. Loyal. Spirited. A friend. One who serves.

**Q: The Hokie Nation is real because ...**

**A:** There is no other community out there that is as dedicated, hardworking, passionate, spirited and loyal as the Virginia Tech Hokies. When I was looking at colleges, school spirit was at the top of my list. Tech blew every other school I looked at out of the water in that category, and I knew I wanted to join Hokie Nation. Once I got to campus, it only got better. One of my favorite Hokie Nation memories is when I was at a national park in North Dakota, and I saw a guy in a Tech t-shirt and yelled, "LET'S GO" out of the blue, to which he answered "HOKIES!" Hokies are everywhere, and we love it.

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

**A:** My two best Virginia Tech athletic

memories are both from my freshman year - our win over Georgia Tech in the Thursday night football game in 2010 and our victory over No. 1-ranked Duke in basketball the following semester. It was a freezing cold Thursday night, and I never won the football lottery, so I bought a ticket at the last minute to go to the game. Thankfully I did because it was so much fun and exciting, and the win and fireworks that lit up Lane Stadium made the experience an unforgettable one. Later in the year, my best friend and I watched the Hokies storm the court after we upset No.-1 ranked Duke in Cassell!

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

**A:** I joined the Student Hokie Club wanting to get more involved with Tech and the athletics department while I was a student. I was a lucky winner of a game day field pass my last semester and got to be down by the tunnel for

"Enter Sandman" during the Boston College game this past season. Now THAT was something you just don't get to do every day.

**Q: What caused you to become a fan of Virginia Tech?**

**A:** The Hokie Bird and our infectious school spirit, of course!

**Q: Describe your perfect day at Virginia Tech.**

**A:** My perfect day at Tech would include a basketball game, some West End London broil, down time at the pylons, and a long walk on the Drillfield.

**Q: My favorite Virginia Tech sports are ...**

**A:** Football and basketball! Lane Stadium is a wonderful gathering place for me and 66,233 of my closest friends, but Cassell provides a more intimate atmosphere of the most potent mixture of excitement and team spirit. GO HOKIES!



# THANK YOU!

The Hokie Club staff joins me in thanking each and every one of you who supported our student-athletes in 2014. Whether your gifts went to the Annual Fund to support the ever-growing tuition, room and board, and institutional fees, or to fund an endowed scholarship that will help to educate a Hokie male or female athlete in perpetuity, or whether your gift helped construct or equip a much-needed new facility - we say "Thank you."

Your dollars paid sound dividends, as our NCAA graduation success rate (GSR) was 88 percent, with five sports earning perfect 100 percent scores. Half of our 600 student-athletes maintain grade-point averages of 3.0 or better, and our cumulative individual team GPA is almost 3.0.

During the past 12 months, the Hokies have

won ACC championships in wrestling and men's swimming and diving; finished in the top 10 at the NCAA Wrestling Championships for the second straight year; advanced to the Sweet 16 in women's soccer for the fourth time in program history; and saw our men's golf, men's tennis and softball squads qualify for NCAA play. Buzz Williams was hired to coach men's basketball, and Carol Robertson has started our women's golf program. Your support has played a role in these accomplishments and will do so even more moving forward.

The Hokie football program closed the year strong, defeating rival UVa to keep the Commonwealth Cup for a record 11th straight year. The Hokies then marched to Annapolis, Maryland, and defeated a 9-3 Cincinnati

team 33-17 in the Military Bowl to finish their 22nd consecutive bowl game and their 22nd consecutive winning season.

Now more than ever, we need all Hokies on board supporting our student-athletes. The future looks bright, as recruiting efforts are continuing to attract better student-athletes, which translates into improved results in competition. Director of Athletics Whit Babcock and his team continue to improve the fan and game-day experience in all of our sports venues. It is a great time to be a Hokie, and we look forward to seeing you in Blacksburg.

The VTAF fundraising team is now fully staffed and looking forward to working with you as, together, we move Virginia Tech Athletics forward in 2015.

### Lu Merritt

Senior Director of Development for Intercollegiate Athletics

**Foster to remain at Tech for long haul**

Though rumors swirled throughout the month of December, Virginia Tech defensive coordinator Bud Foster ended all the speculation, agreeing to a new five-year contract to remain with the Hokies' program through the 2019 season.

"I can't thank Whit [Babcock, Tech's AD] and Dr. [Timothy] Sands [Tech's president] and everybody enough for being proactive," Foster said, getting choked up in a postgame interview with Mike Burnop following the Hokies' 33-17 win over Cincinnati in the Military Bowl. "For me, this is home."

The 55-year-old Foster, who just wrapped up his 20th season as the defensive coordinator at Tech and his 28th season as a Hokie overall, will

be paid base salaries of \$600,000, \$625,000, \$650,000, \$675,000 and \$700,000 each of the next five years. On top of that, he will receive a \$300,000 retention bonus each year and bowl bonuses depending on the bowl.

Foster guided a unit that finished the season ranked third nationally in sacks (3.69 per game) and tackles for a loss (8.4 per game), fourth in third-down conversion defense (opponents converted 28.8 percent of the time), 14th nationally in pass efficiency defense (109.17), 14th nationally in scoring defense (20.2 ppg), and 21st nationally in total defense (343.8 ypg). They were tied for sixth nationally in red-zone defense, giving up just 18 touchdowns to opponents in

their 42 trips.

The Hokies' defense did all that despite missing two of its best players in tackle Luther Maddy and cornerback Brandon Facyson, both of whom were lost for the season with injuries. Also, mike linebacker Chase Williams missed four games with a knee injury.

In Foster's 20 seasons as the defensive coordinator, the Hokies have finished in the top 20 nationally in total defense on 12 occasions, including eight of the past 10 years heading into this season. In 2006, he won the Broyles Award, which goes annually to the nation's top assistant coach, and he has been a finalist for the honor on three other occasions (1999, 2001 and 2005).

**Seven enroll for spring semester**

The Tech football program announced the addition of seven scholarship members to the program, all of whom will be enrolling at Tech for the spring semester. The group includes four graduating from their respective high schools early in Adonis Alexander, a safety from Charlotte, North Carolina; Mook Reynolds, a cornerback from Greensboro, North Carolina; Carson Lydon, a linebacker from Tarpon Springs, Florida; and offensive lineman Austin Clark from Lexington, Virginia.

The remaining three are players who spent this past fall at prep schools – Yosuah Nijman, a defensive lineman from Maplewood, New Jersey; Tyrell Smith, an offensive lineman from North Brunswick, New Jersey; and Xavier Burke, a tight end from Lawrenceville, Virginia. Smith and Burke signed with Tech last February.

Reynolds, a 6-foot, 175-pounder, is rated among the top 15 prospects in North Carolina by several recruiting services, while Alexander,


a 6-foot-3, 193-pounder, is ranked among the top 30. Reynolds finished with 65 tackles and an interception. Lydon, one of the top 150 prospects in the state of Florida, recorded 93 tackles, three sacks and two interceptions this past season for East Lake High School. Clark, a 6-6, 295-pounder who played at Rockbridge County High School, is ranked among the top prospects in Virginia by several recruiting services. Nijman, a 6-7, 268-pounder who played at Fork Union this past fall, is considered by several recruiting services as the top prep school prospect in Virginia.

Burke, a 6-4, 250-pounder, recorded 95 tackles as a senior at Brunswick High School in 2013 on his way to being named the Group 2A Defensive Player of the Year, but played tight end at Fork Union and projects at that spot. Smith, a 6-4, 285-pounder, played on the offensive line at Cushing Academy, a prep school in Massachusetts this past fall.

**Eighteen Tech athletes graduate in December**

Virginia Tech held its mid-year commencement exercises on Dec. 19, and 18 student-athletes received their degrees.

That list included eight football players – offensive linemen Brent Benedict, Caleb Farris, Laurence Gibson (who picked up a second degree) and David Wang (who received a master's degree in curriculum and instruction), defensive lineman Dadi Nicolas, defensive back Kyshoen Jarrett, former backup quarterback and holder Trey Gresh and whip linebacker Derek Di Nardo.

The list also included two baseball players (Jake Joyce and Devin Burke), two men's soccer players (Ben Lockler and Drew Ranahan), two women's swimmers (Brittany Boone and Katarina Filova), two volleyball players (Megan Beckwith and Tori Hamsher), women's soccer standout Katie Vensen and men's swimmer Morgan Latimer. 



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**editor's desk | by Jimmy Robertson**

**More potent offensive attack could lead to successful 2015 season for Tech**

Most people take off the final week to 10 days of a calendar year, preferring to enjoy holidays with family and celebrate the start of a new year.

In the Tech athletics department, quite a bit of work got done during this span. Tech AD Whit Babcock ended some of the speculation about Frank Beamer's future and signed Bud Foster to a new contract. The Hokies closed the season with a bowl win, and in doing so, extended their streak of winning seasons to 22 straight.

So it was, indeed, a productive final week of 2014.

Now it's time to look to the 2015 season, and the football program's New Year's resolution should be to improve the offense. This subject, among others, came up during Babcock's meeting with Beamer at season's close as they evaluated the program.

"We talked about that," Babcock said. "It was more about what areas are we going to improve in and how are we going to get there."

"One thing that helps is players. With a lot of the injuries – and with recruiting coming up – and players returning, there are some positive strides there. But certainly we touched on that [the offense's performance]. We don't deny that we need to get better on that side of the ball. Ideally, we'll get better in all facets."

Besieged by youth and injuries, Tech ranked 93rd nationally in scoring offense (24.1 ppg) and 96th in total offense (365.3 ypg). The Hokies' 34 sacks allowed and 26 turnovers also were among the worst in the nation.

Tech lost six games, but only five by a touchdown or less, and offensive coordinator Scot Loeffler remains optimistic about the future.

"I told the younger guys that we're going to have the toughest, most get-after-it offseason in the country," Loeffler said after the bowl game. "We're close. We've got talent. If we get this thing right, we have a chance to do what Virginia Tech has always done. We have a lot of work ahead of us. The pieces of the puzzle are starting to fall together, and we're going to have a great offseason."

Just how close will be the question that needs to be answered this offseason and spring.

Numbers don't always tell the story, as Hokie Nation well knows. But numbers often tell a big portion of the story.

Looking back at the Hokies' offense this past season, and looking ahead to 2015, here are 10 numbers for thought:

- **709** – Number of yards receiving by Isaiah Ford, the most by a freshman in a single season at Tech.
- **230** – Number of points scored by true or redshirt freshmen this past season.
- **117** – Average number of yards rushing by J.C. Coleman in the Hokies' final four games. He only started one of those four games (Wake Forest).
- **56** – Number of receptions by Ford this season, the third-most in a season at Tech.
- **45** – Number of passes caught by Bucky Hodges this season. He was one short of tying the school record for a tight end (Mike Burnop).
- **26** – Number of touchdowns scored by Tech's freshmen. The Hokies scored 36 touchdowns this season.
- **7** – Number of touchdown receptions by Hodges this season. He was tied for first in touchdown receptions by tight ends in the ACC.
- **6** – The Hokies' top six scorers this past season were freshmen, including five true freshmen.
- **5.8** – Average yards per carry by Coleman in the Hokies' final four games. He's 5-foot-7.
- **3** – Number of passes caught by Demetri Knowles this season. He caught 45 last season.
- **1** – Michael Brewer's rank on Tech's single-season list for pass completions and pass attempts. He completed 262 passes this season and attempted 441.

There is a lot to be optimistic about for Hokie Nation heading into the 2015 campaign. Tech won three of its final four games, and 15 starters return (eight on offense). Luther Maddy and Brandon Facyson return on defense, and for the first time since the 2007 season when he worked at Michigan with Chad Henne, Loeffler will be working with his returning starting quarterback.

Yes, there is some uncertainty on the offensive line, and the schedule looks to be more difficult. But this team beat UVa after a horrible loss at Wake Forest, and then won a bowl game essentially without its head coach. Players and coaches showed resiliency and were rewarded at the end.

"I like the way that's trending," Babcock admitted.

It's certainly trending in the right direction. The coming months (winter workouts, signing day and spring practice) will go a long way toward determining if the Hokies can keep it that way.

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## First year under Babcock's leadership complete, Tech athletics now looks for a big 2015

January 22 will mark the one-year anniversary of the day that Whit Babcock learned he would be the new athletics director at Virginia Tech.

"I remember exactly where I was standing when the phone rang," Babcock said, smiling as he recounted that call. "It's been an exciting first year. We've put things in place, but man, the first year went by fast. It's been a whirlwind."

Of course, Babcock's biggest move in year No. 1 was luring basketball coach Buzz Williams from Marquette to take over a Virginia Tech men's basketball program that had finished in the ACC's basement three straight years. Babcock, and the university's administration, made a bold statement with its financial commitment to Williams, his assistants and the basketball support staff.

Year No. 2 began with Babcock releasing a five-paragraph statement under the headline that read "Babcock and Beamer have higher expectations. Anticipate improvement next season."

Both the AD, and his legendary football coach, know that 7-6 seasons don't fly at Virginia Tech.

"We both understand the significance and importance of a successful, national brand for Virginia Tech football," Babcock said.

That "significance and importance" translates to tickets sales, Hokie Club donations, university development and more. It's the financial train that carries every other sport at Tech. It's also critical to local and regional businesses from restaurants to hotels to clothing stores and more. Virginia Tech football isn't just a team. It's one of the region's leading economic drivers.

"We have to be better, and I'm confident we

will," Babcock said on our bowl edition of Tech Talk Live! from Washington, D.C. "I have the confidence in Coach [Frank] Beamer, who's led us to championships before, when he says we have the parts to get us back there again."

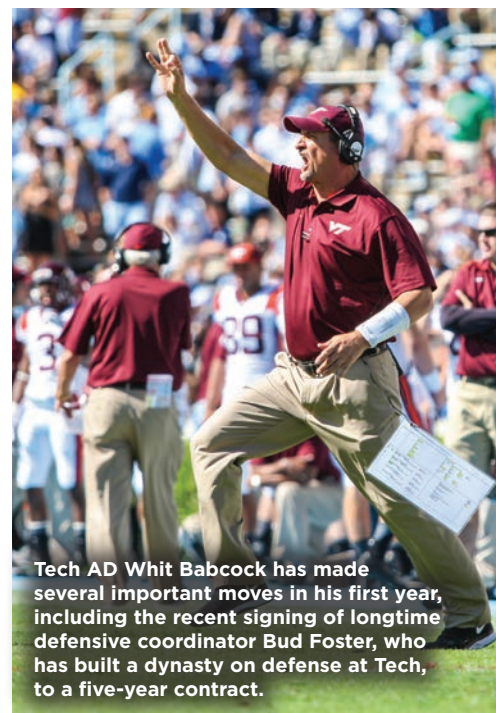
Babcock said he supports the plan that Beamer has in place for 2015. And after 22 straight winning seasons, "he [Beamer] has earned the opportunity to elevate our program back to where we all want it to be, competing for ACC championships."

Step No. 1 for Babcock was re-signing defensive coordinator Bud Foster to a new five-year contract.

"We knew going into the year that Bud had earned a very significant retention bonus that was due at the end of the year, but his contract was basically a series of addendums going back to 1997," Babcock said. "Basically, we wiped the slate clean and started over."

Foster has built a dynasty on defense at Tech during his tenure as the Hokies' coordinator. Losing him would be nothing short of catastrophic at this point for Tech's program, and - as Foster showed in his emotional "This is home" interview with Mike Burnop following the Military Bowl - his heart is in Blacksburg. (See the entire interview here: <http://www.hokiesports.com/videos/#!/videos/all/BudzdpjrvJTI8Kkiceko-qDyOecYLSM{>

The Hokies' 2015 defense should be tremendous. All four defensive line starters, all four backups, and the injured Luther Maddy return. Depth is huge, and the Hokies will return their top eight linemen.



Tech AD Whit Babcock has made several important moves in his first year, including the recent signing of longtime defensive coordinator Bud Foster, who has built a dynasty on defense at Tech, to a five-year contract.

In fact, 19 of the 23 defensive players on the Military Bowl depth chart, plus Maddy and cornerback Brandon Facyson are back. End result? Tech will return a really solid, experienced defense in 2015.

As for the offense, this isn't 2012 when the Hokies sputtered their way through a bowl win over Rutgers. After that season, Beamer made massive changes, replacing receivers coach Kevin Sherman, line coach Curt Newsome, quarterbacks coach Mike O'Cain, and he brought in a new coordinator to replace Bryan Stinespring, who

moved to the role of tight ends coach and recruiting coordinator.

Everyone knew it would take a couple of years for a new offense to click, and this year's unit gets a pass because of the number of injuries on the offensive line and at tailback.

Tech freshmen scored the majority of points in 2014, and rookies Isaiah Ford, Cam Phillips, Wyatt Teller and Bucky Hodges are among those who will have bright careers at Tech. Repeating a familiar theme, if Shai McKenzie, Marshawn Williams and Trey Edmunds had been healthy this past season, the Hokies would have finished far better than 7-6.

Still, Tech will need more consistent offensive line play and dramatic improvement in its kicking games if the Hokies are going to have a better year this coming fall. The 2015 schedule is much tougher, with road games at Boston College, East Carolina, Miami and likely Coastal Division favorite Georgia Tech. All four of those teams won in Blacksburg this past season. Throw in a trip to Purdue and the opener against Ohio State, and you can see the weekly challenges this team will face.

This upcoming spring practice at Tech will be huge for guys like quarterback Michael Brewer, Ford and others who weren't here for spring ball last year. If the offense can get healthy and be more consistent, the Hokies have a shot to have a terrific team this coming season.

The 2014 team came together and won its final two games, which was tremendously gratifying not only for the seniors, but also for longtime observers of the program. Similarly, Babcock talked about Hokie Nation coming together this spring. Following the example set by the staff and players is a good place to start.

We are getting tremendous effort and commitment from our players on the field and in the classroom, and we are getting unwavering dedication from our coaches and support staff in the meeting rooms and on the recruiting trail.

As Loeffler said after the bowl game, "We need to have the best offseason and spring practice in Virginia Tech history," and that goes much farther than just the kids on scholarship and the coaches.

Here's what has to happen:

1. Virginia Tech has to close strong in recruiting and sign "difference makers" in February. Seriously, Feb. 4 has to be one of the biggest days in Hokie football history.

2. When that football schedule comes out,

and season tickets go on sale, Tech fans need to buy them all on a season-ticket basis, as was the case from 1999-2012. Tech needs to get that sellout streak going again.

3. Spring practice needs to be huge for some of the younger guys, especially the offensive linemen and kids who redshirted in 2014. Also, the Hokies need to keep kids on the field and out of the training room.

4. We need to have the highest engagement and attendance ever for our Hokie Club tours in 2015. Babcock and his staff have listened. Tech has enhanced fan experience with pregame activities at Lane Stadium and Cassell Coliseum. The staff has improved the sound system and lighting at Cassell and totally changed the interactive nature of and content of the Hokievision video scoreboards. Tech has improved concessions and created mini plans and restructured ticket pricing to make tickets affordable. The Hokie Village was a huge hit in the fall, and more exciting plans are on the way as well. This is a big spring for the team, but it's a big one for the Hokie Club, too.

5. Most importantly, Tech fans need to feel really proud of what's happening here. Look at the economic and NCAA issues that many of Tech's peer institutions are having. Look at Tech's graduation rates compared to its peers. Examine that 22-year long bowl streak (sixth-longest in college football history) and see how amazing that really is. Look at what kids like Ford, Hodges, Teller and McKenzie and basketball's Justin Bibbs have done already during their freshman years. Pretty neat, eh? Understand how nice Tech's new indoor practice facility will be when it opens later this summer (<http://www.hokiesports.com/indoorpracticefacility/>) and take pride in knowing that your support, your Hokie Club donations paid for this. No state funds and no taxpayer dollars. Just your commitment to build college football's preeminent indoor building. It will be a \$21.3 million glass palace. Take a video tour here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rpeyQAw\\_-\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rpeyQAw_-_s)

It will be one year since Babcock got that phone call on Jan. 22, 2014, and a lot has happened in the 12 months since. A lot of exciting things have been put in place in the last year.

As a result, the next 12 months should be even more exciting.

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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](mailto: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, Senior Associate AD for Compliance:

**Q: When basketball players are at Tech over the holiday break, do they receive per diem to pay for meals since the dining halls are closed? How does all that work? Thanks in advance. Penny in Maybrook, Virginia.**

**TP:** "NCAA bylaws allow institutions to provide up to four meals per day to any student-athlete who is required to remain on campus for practice or competition during institutional vacation periods. The official vacation period at Tech this year spans from Dec. 19 through Jan. 18.

"Three of the daily meals may be provided as either food or per diem (money). The additional meal – if provided – must be provided in the form of food.

"This flexibility during break only applies while student-athletes are required to be in Blacksburg and does not apply while teams are traveling for away-from-home competition. The maximum per diem amount permitted by NCAA regulations to be given to a student-athlete is that which can be provided to an employee of the same school."

**Q: Do the teams practice during exams? I know the basketball teams don't have any weekday games during exams. It seems like time should be allotted for studying and preparing for finals. What's the NCAA rule on this? Thanks, Matthew in Lynchburg.**

**TP:** "Teams that are 'in' their competitive season are allowed to practice, but must stay within the

four-hour daily, and 20-hour weekly, limits for countable athletically related activities. Teams that are not in their competitive season must halt permissible athletically related activities – such as weight training, conditioning or watching film – one week prior to the beginning of the final examination period and continue to refrain from these activities through the conclusion of each student-athlete's final exams."

**Q: What exactly is the six-hour rule and the thought behind it? Why does it cause football players to miss bowl games? Thanks, Don in Blacksburg.**

**TP:** "NCAA regulations require that a student-athlete pass at least six credit hours each semester to be eligible for postseason competition that occurs between semesters (these six hours must be degree-applicable, unless a bachelor's degree has already been earned). You hear about this rule more in December, and mostly in relation to football players who haven't passed six hours in the fall and thus aren't eligible to compete in their respective bowl games. But the rule also applies to spring sports, many of which begin postseason competition after the spring semester ends.


"The primary purpose of the six-hour rule is to set a minimum academic expectation for each term, so that each student-athlete always must continue to move toward graduation if he/she wishes to remain competitively eligible.

Secondarily, it keeps players with NFL aspirations from shutting it down academically during their final fall semester and acts as a powerful incentive as well for those student-athletes participating in other sports with professional opportunities.

"The gripe with the rule comes mostly from student-athletes who already graduated the previous semester and have a season of eligibility left. They don't see the need to have to pass six hours when they've already got their diplomas. That is a legitimate discussion – and many people agree – but unless and until the rule is amended, it will continue to apply to everyone."

**Q: Can the football players at UAB transfer anywhere now that the school has discontinued its football program? Thanks, Scott in Christiansburg.**

**TP:** "This question is in reference to the University of Alabama at Birmingham, which last month became the first Division I school to discontinue sponsoring the sport of football since Pacific University made its decision in 1995.

"Yes, all of the UAB football student-athletes will be able to transfer without penalty to any NCAA school in Division I, II, or III. Pursuant to NCAA bylaws, UAB football players technically need permission from the UAB athletics department to contact other schools about a transfer, but the granting of this permission is automatic in cases where a sport is dropped." 



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# KELLI STOCKTON

Women's Swimming & Diving | Fairfax, Virginia

by Jimmy Robertson

Tech women's diver Kelli Stockton has established herself as one of the top divers in school history. She holds the school record in the platform event and finished in the top 25 of all three diving events at the NCAA meet last spring. She graduates in May with a degree in business, and the two-time All-ACC Academic Team member eventually wants to pursue a career in event planning. First up, though, is a pursuit toward qualifying for the 2016 Olympic Trials held in Indianapolis in June of that year.

**Q: Why did you decide to major in business?**

**KS:** "I decided to major in business because I ultimately want to do something involving event planning. I also wanted something that, if I changed my mind, I would have a major that could lead to multiple different career possibilities."

**Q: Why have you decided on event planning as a career path?**

**KS:** "Event planning has always been something that has interested me. It involves a lot of organization and planning which are two things that I think I excel at. I enjoy planning events for my family and friends, so making a living doing that would be an added bonus. I have actually had multiple people tell me I should consider it. Eventually, I would love to be a wedding planner."



**Q: Have you done any internships, co-ops, etc., and what did you learn from those experiences?**

**KS:** "I have not had any internships yet. I have had a few coaching jobs, though, and I think they taught me a lot about the responsibilities involved with having a job."

**Q: Where have you coached and what sorts of things did coaching teach you that**


**you think would help you in your future profession?**

**KS:** "I have coached a few different summer league teams [in the Northern Virginia Swimming League], as well as helping coach my previous club team at home. Having these coaching jobs, I think, taught me a lot about both being responsible and how to work with children of various ages, as well as taught me a lot about diving in general that you can't really learn just from being an athlete. It gives you a different perspective."

**Q: What are your future plans?**

**KS:** "I am moving to Columbus, Ohio, after I graduate to continue my diving career for another year. I'm going to try and make the 2016 Olympic Trials. I am also planning on getting an internship this summer to get some work experience."

**Q: Do you have any future internships on the horizon?**

**KS:** "I do not currently have an internship lined up, but I am looking for one. I am actually going to continue my diving career at a different university (not in school, though), so ideally I would love to have an internship in the athletics department to start out with." 

# KYLE BUTTS

Men's Swimming & Diving | Washington, D.C.

by Jimmy Robertson

Kyle Butts has been a member of the Tech men's diving team for the past four seasons, and he has made the All-ACC Academic Team for men's swimming and diving in each of the past three years. Butts graduates in May with a degree in finance, but he wants to pursue a career in the entertainment industry first before taking on a finance-related profession.

**Q: Why did you decide to major in finance?**

**KB:** "You'll use money your whole life no matter what you do. I thought it would be valuable to learn as much as I could. It [his major] was definitely going to be business related. I like stocks. I like the equity market, which is probably what drew me to finance over accounting. Accounting is a bit monotonous. I like the uncertainty of the equity market and tracking it and watching it, both for school and personally."

**Q: Have you done any internships, co-ops, etc., and what did you learn from these experiences?**

**KB:** "I worked with my dad over the summer. It's a business continuity strategy company, and my dad actually started it. It's called Continuums. I kept his books and made capability statements and kept track of expenses. It was real-world application of what I had learned in the classroom. I learned a lot about what you can and cannot write off as a business expense."

**Q: I understand that you're involved with SEED [Student-managed Endowment for Educational Development] here at Tech in which the university lets a group of students, with guidance from faculty advisers, invest a portion of the school's endowment for experience. How has that experience been?**

**KB:** "I like SEED because it's hard. It's challenging. Everyone in there is brilliant – the smartest people at Tech. They breeze through their course work and spend all their time on SEED. I'm not the smartest, but what I lack in aptitude, I make up for in hard work."

"It's separated into sectors, and I'm one of the technology sector analysts. My sub-sector is Internet media, so the Facebooks, the Googles, the Netflixes, stuff like that. I've analyzed all those companies. I've really enjoyed it. I like that part of finance."



**Q: But your immediate future doesn't involve finance, does it?**

**KB:** "After school, I'm going to pursue a career in entertainment. Acting, film and television are really the only things I've wanted to do. Finance is a great plan B."


"I enjoy finance, but it's more of an interest than a passion. I feel like I have a short attention span when it comes to certain things, especially academically. Granted, a career in sales and trading, capital markets or investment banking would be exciting, and probably far more lucrative, but I just can't sit still for that long."

"My answer to the 'What do you want to be when you grow up?' question has changed a lot for a few reasons. But since I can remember, the only thing I've ever really wanted to be is an actor. You can be anything. It's a chance to wear the shoes of someone often nothing like yourself and make it real. I'm envious of those who do it well. It's like playing pretend when you were a kid, but it's structured and challenging. It's art."

**Q: Do you have a background in acting or entertainment?**

**KB:** "I signed with a manager in eighth grade and did auditions and workshops and acting classes throughout middle school and high school and even now when I go home over the summer. Acting has always taken a backseat to athletics ... I always wondered what would have happened if I had started acting full time back then."

"My mother has been in the industry for 20-30 years, just small stuff. Both of my parents did a commercial for a car dealer in Baltimore. It was funny to watch. Seeing how funny and animated and confident my mom is kind of made me want to do that. It also scares me a lot. Being in front of a lot of people scares me. But just like diving, that's what draws me to it. Before you know how to do dives, they seem impossible. But that's what makes it interesting."

"I plan on building my resumé a little bit around D.C., Baltimore and Philadelphia for a few months until I get some legitimate credits. Then it'll be New York or L.A., just dream chasing." 

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Greg Stroman was heavily involved in the Military Bowl, running twice, catching a pass, returning punts and returning a fumble for a touchdown in the Hokies' 33-17 win.



# HOKIES' MILITARY BOWL VICTORY A RUSH

J.C. Coleman had a record-setting day, and Tech got big plays from its defense and special teams to storm past Cincinnati in the Military Bowl

by Jimmy Robertson

Given the battles that the Virginia Tech football squad faced in 2014, perhaps it was best fitting that the Hokies fought their last “skirmish” of this season in a bowl game entitled the Military Bowl.

After 60 minutes of heavy gridiron combat, Tech claimed victory.

The Hokies saluted the end of the 2014 season with a flourish, getting contributions in all three phases of the game and marching past Cincinnati 33-17 in the Military Bowl played Dec. 27 at the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis, Maryland.

J.C. Coleman rushed for a Tech bowl record, Joey Slye tied a Tech bowl game kicking record and the Hokies' defense forced three turnovers, all of which led to the program's 11th bowl victory.

More importantly, the win enabled the Hokies to finish with a 7-6 record on the season. Tech won three of its final four games to extend its streak of winning seasons to 22 straight.

“I know 7-6 isn't what our fans wanted or us as coaches, but the toughness and resiliency that our guys have shown while ignoring the outside noise throughout the season, and then to come out there and play like they did ... I couldn't be any happier for a group of kids,” associate head coach Shane Beamer said.

Shane Beamer filled in for the Hokies' general, Frank Beamer. The elder Beamer underwent throat surgery in early December and wasn't heavily involved in the staff's planning for the game. But he flew to Annapolis the day before the game and watched over the proceedings from the coaches' box.

Following the game, Beamer told John Ballein, Tech's associate AD for football operation, to read a speech that Beamer – who still has trouble speaking – had written to the team. Then after the speech, Ballein said that, even though Beamer couldn't speak, he could still dance, and Beamer's dancing in the locker room set off a wild celebration.

“We knew how badly he wanted to be out there, and the surgery obviously didn't allow him to be on the sidelines,” Tech quarterback Michael Brewer said. “He's a tough guy. He probably shouldn't have even been at the game. I'm so happy for him.”

The Hokies started turning the tide in this one right before halftime. Cincinnati kicker Andrew Gantz hit a 25-yard field goal with 36 seconds left in the half to tie the game at 10. But

on the ensuing kickoff, Tech's Der'Woun Greene returned it 46 yards to the Tech 49. Three plays later, Slye lined up for a career-long 49-yard field goal and nailed it as time expired, giving the Hokies a 13-10 halftime advantage.

Then, on the opening drive of the second half, the Hokies – behind the running of Coleman – went 75 yards in 11 plays. Brewer's 1-yard touchdown pass to Ryan Malleck capped the drive and gave the Hokies a 20-10 lead.

Coleman ran for 43 yards on that drive. He finished with 157 yards on 25 carries, breaking the Tech bowl record of 153 yards shared by former tailbacks Kevin Jones (vs. California, 2003 Insight Bowl) and Darren Evans (vs. Cincinnati, 2009 Orange Bowl).

Coleman received the game's Most Valuable Player Award.

“It means a lot,” Coleman said of the award. “But it's more than the MVP. It's finishing the season off well, doing it for Coach Beamer and sending the seniors out the right way. It's huge for this team.”

Coleman got plenty of help in this one. The big play in the game came on the ensuing possession. The Bearcats got to midfield, but on second-and-5, Tech's Deon Clarke blitzed and nailed Cincinnati quarterback Gunner Kiel, separating him from the football. Nigel Williams picked up the loose ball for the Hokies and returned it 26 yards before fumbling, but the Hokies' Greg Stroman scooped it up and willed his way the final few yards into the end zone for the touchdown.

“I was going to go block,” Stroman said. “I saw him [Williams] pick it up, and I was running after him to go block. Then it [the ball] just came loose, and I was in the right place at the right time, just trying to get in there [the end zone]. He [the Cincinnati player] was trying to rip at the ball, and I was just trying to get in there. My teammates helped to push me in.”

That score gave the Hokies a 27-10 lead, and Kiel never returned to the game, suffering a head injury on the play. With their backup quarterback already injured and another quarterback suspended, the Bearcats were forced to use Michael Colosimo, a walk-on who had attempted just three passes on the season.

The tandem of Stroman and Coleman set up the Hokies' next score. Stroman's 37-yard punt return got Tech into Cincinnati territory and a 29-yard run by Coleman put the Hokies in the red zone. That ultimately led to another Slye field goal, a 38-yarder with 13:20 left in the game that made it 30-10.

Cincinnati got on the board with 10:35 left in the game on a 43-yard touchdown pass from Colosimo to Chris Moore. But Tech recovered the



Tech's players doused associate head coach Shane Beamer in the waning moments of the Hokies' win over Cincinnati. Frank Beamer coached from the coaches booth, a byproduct of early December throat surgery.

onside kick, and Slye's 33-yarder accounted for the final margin.

Behind Slye, the Hokies went 5-for-5 in the red zone – the territory inside the opponent's 20-yard line. Slye's four field goals tied the mark for made field goals in a Tech bowl game previously held by Justin Myer, who kicked four in the Hokies' overtime loss to Michigan in the 2012 Sugar Bowl.

Such red-zone efficiency and three forced turnovers by the Hokies' defense that led to 10 Tech points helped the Hokies overcome a 155-yard disadvantage in total offense. The Bearcats amassed 489 yards; Tech 334.

But the Hokies rushed for 210 yards and won the time of possession battle (30:56-29:04). Coleman, all of 5-foot-7, only lost six yards in the game on his 25 carries.

“I am very proud of J.C.,” Tech offensive coordinator Scot Loeffler said. “That guy is a true Virginia Tech guy, inside and out. He had four guys in front of him at the beginning of the season, and we went through an injury bug. For that guy to do what he did, to keep a great mentality and do what he did, is very special.”

The postgame proceedings were an emotional

affair. Tech's players dumped water on Shane Beamer, and Frank Beamer's locker-room dancing will be re-lived forever.

This bowl meant a little more than maybe some others. Tech was founded on military principles, and a group of Corps of Cadets stood out in the stands with the plethora of maroon and orange that made the day feel like a home game at Lane Stadium.

To get a feel for what transpired, one need to do nothing more than to watch Mike Burnop's interview with Bud Foster, Tech's beloved defensive coordinator, on [hokiesports.com](http://hokiesports.com). Foster, fresh from the battlefield, broke into tears talking about the season and the bowl win.

“This wasn't the type of year we wanted, but our kids fought our tails off, and I couldn't be more proud of our seniors,” Foster said to Burnop. “They did a super job of leading this football team when maybe people thought we were down and out. They weren't going to let that happen. This is a great win and a credit to our seniors.”

Tech's seniors closed their careers with 33 wins and two bowl wins, though none more memorable than their final victory.



Kyshoen Jarrett had a great college career, but now is hoping to play in the NFL to take care of his mother (center), a brother with disabilities (middle, in wheelchair) and his other two brothers' families.

# FAMILY GUY

Kyshoen Jarrett's great career at Tech ended following the Military Bowl, and now he's hoping for an NFL future that will enable him to provide help for his mother and better care for his brother

by Jimmy Robertson

He's only 22 years old, but possesses the face of maturity, one of experiences encountered usually by those much older. His is a face that tells a story.

But Kyshoen Jarrett reveals that story only when asked.

Jarrett's successful football career ended in perfect fashion for someone playing his last collegiate game. Tech's longtime rover played yet another integral role in victory, helping the Hokies knock off Cincinnati 33-17 in the Military Bowl to secure Tech's 22nd straight winning season.

Jarrett celebrated quietly, yet another sign of maturity. College complete, he now sets his sights on the next goal, one of more importance – taking care of his family.

“Now that I'm out of college and pursuing this career coming up, hopefully everything goes well and things can get a little lighter for her,” he said.

“Her” would be his mother, Vinise Capers, the woman who raised four boys basically by herself, including one, Daishawn Capers, with severe disabilities stemming from an accident as an infant. He is in a wheelchair and legally blind.

Hokie Nation learned about Daishawn during a video feature on Jarrett at halftime of one of the Hokies' football games this past season. Fans left with a new appreciation for Jarrett and his relationship with his half-brother.

The video feature, though, only told a portion of Jarrett's story. The youngest of the four boys, he was born in Bronx, New York. His family later moved to a place on Staten Island, and then, at the age of 5, he watched as his parents divorced.

The care of the four boys essentially fell to Capers, who ultimately moved the family to Tannersville, Pennsylvania, not far from New York City. Jarrett's father, Shoen Jarrett, remained in the picture, though from a distance.

“We're cool,” Jarrett said of his relationship with his father. “We have a father-son relationship like any other.”

Capers, though, bore the burden. She found someone to watch Daishawn during the day while she worked a job close to her home in



The Tech defense is going to miss Kyshoen Jarrett (No. 34), who ranked in the top three in tackles each of the past three seasons and led the team this season.

Tannersville. That allowed her to be near Daishawn in the event she needed to come home quickly. Most in that area commute 90 minutes or so into the city to work, so her family considered her job a blessing.

Raising four boys would be a big chore. Factoring in Daishawn's disabilities made it all the more challenging. But the other three brothers welcomed the role of helping. They got Daishawn ready each day, brushing his teeth, changing his clothes, feeding him and doing whatever else needed to be done.

The challenges became greater as Daishawn got older. He became heavier, which caused issues for Capers. She contemplated moving him into a care facility.

The boys said no.

“Me and my brothers didn't think it was such a good idea,” Jarrett said. “He was a part of the family. He brought everyone together in a sense.”

As Jarrett's two brothers got older and

eventually moved on to the next phase in their lives, they left their roles as the caretakers for Daishawn in the hands of Jarrett. He would come home from football practice and help his mom with Daishawn's needs.

Capers often took Daishawn to Jarrett's football games, where Jarrett attracted the attention of college recruiters while doing work for East Stroudsburg South High School. Daishawn cheered every time he heard Jarrett's name over the loudspeaker. He does the same each time he comes with Capers to Lane Stadium for a game.

Jarrett and his brother developed that bond that only brothers develop. No one really knew about the relationship because Jarrett never viewed it as anything out of the ordinary.

“No one was really curious,” Jarrett said. “Just like here, people didn't find out I had a brother with multiple disabilities until late in my high school career. Like here, people didn't know until

my sophomore year for the Pitt game, and then it became more public this year with the game when they showed the video.

“I didn’t go out of my way to tell anybody. I didn’t think it was a big deal. He’s my brother. His disability doesn’t make me feel some type of way or influence me in some type of way.”

Jarrett eventually committed to play at the University of Pittsburgh. But the Panthers administration fired Dave Wannstedt, and Jarrett decided to come to Virginia Tech, where he played as a true freshman and moved into a starting role his sophomore year. He never moved out of it.

With three of the boys out of the house, his mother eventually moved herself and Daishawn to Raleigh, North Carolina, a move that allowed her to be closer to Jarrett and to the locations of several of his games (Duke, North Carolina, Wake, etc.). She found a better job and better home care for Daishawn.

It was a situation in which everyone won. “Just better care for my brother and making the best decisions for them,” Jarrett said of the move. “Job-wise, she’s doing well, and it’s quiet. It started getting crowded in Pennsylvania because more people were moving in from New York and New Jersey. So this is the best situation for her and my brother.”

Jarrett contemplated leaving school early a

year ago. He submitted his paperwork to the NFL Draft Advisory Board, but it was more so to get a feel for what he needed to work on in addition to finding where he stood in the eyes of those who knew best.

His return led to an event-filled fall. He assumed more leadership responsibilities on the football team, and he led the Hokies in tackles – he has finished in the top three on the team in tackles each of the past three years. Jarrett struggled a little in the Pittsburgh and Miami games, but he played his best football at the end of the season.

Not coincidentally, the Hokies won three of their final four games.

“I learned how not to be uptight during our preparation week and have fun,” he said. “When I started having fun, that’s when I had my best performances. I feel like I’ve gotten better in multiple areas of my game. I’m disappointed that we were 7-6, but we got to a bowl game and won it, and we’ve had some high points to the season.”

Jarrett’s final month in Blacksburg consisted of graduating with a degree in human development and minors in communication and sociology, and also making a marriage proposal. The Saturday following Tech’s win over rival Virginia in the season finale, Jarrett orchestrated a scavenger hunt for his longtime girlfriend that led to him

asking for her hand in marriage in front of his family and her family. She said yes, though they plan on waiting to set a date.

The proposal was another grown-up decision by this young man, the latest of many.


Now, he prepares for the biggest job interview of his life. Yes, he has a backup plan in place, with a degree that allows him to pursue careers in things like working with those with disabilities or counseling or perhaps broadcasting.

But none of those bring in the financial resources that an NFL career would, resources that would provide the best care for his brother and make sure his mother only works when she wants.

“It was tough for her working and then making sure he had the proper care and making sure that the people coming into the home to take care of him were the right-spirited people,” Jarrett said. “She had to make sure they were staying positive and not doing anything to him that they shouldn’t be doing. She had to stay on top of a lot of things, so I’m sure it was pretty stressful for her.

“Now, based on my situation, God willing, maybe I can lessen the load.”

It would make for the perfect next chapter in Kyshoen Jarrett’s story.

Hopefully by May, it’s exactly the one that will be written. 

## GETTING TO KNOW KYSHOEN JARRETT

**Q: What has been your most memorable play at Tech?**

**KJ:** “I’ve had a couple, but the most recent one was getting a pick against UVA in the third quarter. To get a pick in your last college [home] game, under the lights on national TV, that was a great time. When you watch the film, each play has a number. My [jersey] number is 34 and I got a pick on play No. 34. That’s pretty memorable.”

**Q: Who was the most underrated player on Tech’s team this past year?**

**KJ:** “There are several, but I’d say Chase Williams. He stuck it out for four years, and in his fifth year, he had a chance to play. He flies around, and he knows the game. He’s got a high IQ in the game.”

**Q: Who is your favorite NFL team?**

**KJ:** “I’m a Giants fan. It’s my hometown, and my brothers are Giants fans. That was the team I started watching. We’ve also had some Hokies go to the Giants [e.g. Jayron

Hosley and David Wilson], so that’s pretty cool.”

**Q: What do you like to do in your free time?**

**KJ:** “Just relaxing. I’m not much of a book reader. I watch a lot of movies. Me and my fiancé go bowling a lot or go to the movies. I have a puppy, so he takes up most of my time. I’m pretty basic. I didn’t have too much dramatic school-wise this semester, so I was able to concentrate on football.”

**Q: Now that your final season has just ended, what are your immediate plans?**

**KJ:** “I’m going to begin to start training. Hopefully, I’ll get invited to a bowl game [an all-star game], but that’s not assured at all. I’ll continue to work, and hopefully I’ll get an invite to the [NFL Scouting] Combine. I know we’ll have the Pro Day here. Whatever is in God’s plan, whatever He feels fit for me to do, that’s what I’ll do.”




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## football | season-ending depth chart

returned for a touchdown against North Carolina. Led the team in pass breakups (15) and passes defended (17). Also recovered a fumble.

**3 Greg Stroman (6-0, 164, Fr.)** - 12/124. Played in all 13 games, starting the Military Bowl. Saw most of his action as the Hokies' punt returner. Averaged 6.9 yards per return on 36 returns. Played on defense in the Duke, Miami, Virginia and Cincinnati games. Played on offense as a receiver against Cincinnati, catching one pass for six yards and running twice for four yards.

### FIELD CORNERS

**19 Chuck Clark (6-0, 208, So.)** - 770/80. Played in all 13 games and started 11 of those. Finished third on the team in tackles with 73 (50 solo), including 8.5 for a loss. Also had 1.5 sacks, an interception and 11 pass breakups.

**2 Donovan Riley (5-11, 207, Jr.)** - 508/155. Played in all 13 games, starting seven. Had 53 tackles (38 solo), including one for a loss. Had a sack and two interceptions, one of which he returned for a touchdown against Ohio State. Also recovered a fumble and forced a fumble.

**31 Brandon Facyson (6-2, 189, So.)** - 103/7. Started three games before missing the rest of the season with a lower leg injury. Will apply for a medical hardship waiver. Had six tackles (five solo).

### ROVERS

**34 Kyshoen Jarrett (5-11, 200, Sr.)** - 784/65. Played in all 13 games and started 12 of them. Led the Hokies in tackles with 88 (52 solo), including three for a loss. Also led the team with three interceptions. Broke up five passes and forced a fumble.

**23 Der'Woun Greene (5-10, 187, r-So.)** - 27/40. Played in nine games, starting one. Had four tackles (one solo). Returned two kickoffs for 73 yards (36.5 ypr), with a long of 46 yards.

### FREE SAFETIES

**8 Detrick Bonner (6-1, 206, r-Sr.)** - 796/62. Started all 13 games. Finished fourth on the team in tackles with 72 (41 solo). Had 6.5 tackles for a loss and 3.5 sacks. Also had an interception and a forced fumble.

**21 C.J. Reavis (6-1, 207, Fr.)** - 11/93. Played in 12 games, mostly on special teams. Had eight tackles (four solo). Also forced a fumble - at Duke, which the Hokies recovered and converted into a game-winning touchdown - and blocked a kick.

**24 Anthony Shegog (6-2, 207, r-Fr.)** - 4/29. Played in six games, mostly on special teams. Had three tackles (one solo).

**26 Desmond Frye (6-2, 198, Jr.)** - 6/6. Played in the first two games before undergoing season-ending surgery on his shoulder. Will apply for a medical hardship waiver.

**29 Greg Jones (6-2, 202, r-So.)** - 0/72. Played in 10 games, all on special teams.

### SPECIAL TEAMS

#### KICKERS

**46 Joey Slye (5-10, 216, Fr.)** - 0/80. Connected on 20 of his 28 field-goal attempts, with a long of 49 yards. Was 0-for-4 from beyond 50 yards, but 4-for-6 from 40-49 yards. Made 16-of-18 from 20-39 yards. Kicked off 27 times for 1,626 yards (an average of 60.2 yards per kickoff), with five touchbacks.

**30 Mitchell Ludwig (5-11, 202, So.)** - 0/28. Kicked off 34 times for 2,042 yards (an average of 60.1 yards per kickoff), with nine touchbacks.

**38 Michael Branthover (5-9, 202, Sr.)** - 0/3. Kicked off three times for 173 yards (an average of 57.7 yards per kickoff), with a touchback.

#### PUNTER

**27 A.J. Hughes (6-1, 209, Jr.)** - 0/123. Punted 83 times and averaged 39.9 yards per punt, with a long of 60 yards. Had 13 punts of more than 50 yards. Placed 22 punts inside the 20-yard line.

#### SNAPPER

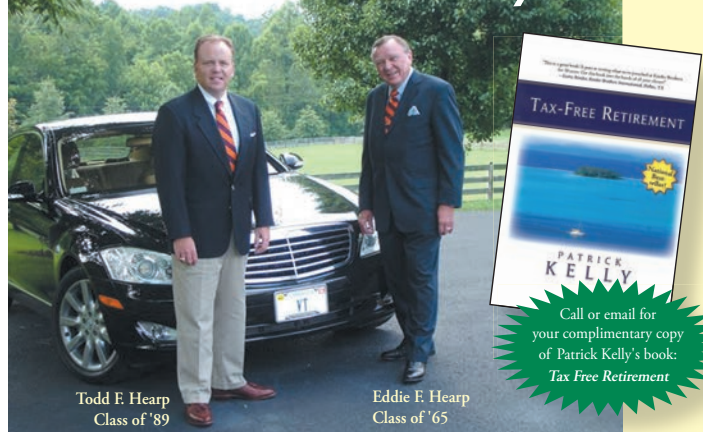
**59 Eddie D'Antuono (6-6, 267, r-So.)** - 0/133. Played in all 13 games. 

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Vinny Mihota (maroon, left) is one of several Tech players who took redshirt years this past fall, and the defensive tackle is looking forward to the start of spring practice.



## SEASON OVER, THOSE WHO TOOK REDSHIRT YEARS READY FOR SPRING

Sixteen players spent their falls working on the scout team and getting stronger in the weight room, and now they're ready for more of a hands-on role within the Hokies' program

by Jimmy Robertson

After one of Tech's final bowl practices in Blacksburg, Vinny Mihota walked off the field toward the Hokies' locker room. He took off his cleats and slammed them against the sidewalk, sending bits of mud flying through the air.

It's a ritual that he performed with regularity this fall. His role in helping the Hokies extend their bowl streak to 22 straight seasons consisted of working his tail off in every single practice – and not playing a down.

Mihota took a redshirt year this past fall, and in doing so, he assumed a role on the Hokies' scout team, spending his fall mimicking the opposing team's defensive tackles. Collectively, those on

the scout-team defense gave Tech's offense a look at what it might see from the opposing defense on game days.

Having done the monotonous, yet important, work, Mihota – like many in his situation – is ready for the next phase in his development.

"Honestly, I wish we could go straight into spring workouts and skip the break," he said. "So I can get back in the weight room with the team."

Mihota was one of 16 members of the 2014 recruiting class to take a redshirt season this past fall. That number seems a bit surprising considering how many true freshmen played this past season. Tech's staff played 11 true freshmen,

though one of those – offensive lineman Braxton Pfaff – signed in 2013 and deferred enrollment until January of 2014. Pfaff played this season, but an injured shoulder limited him and he probably will get a medical hardship waiver to preserve the season.

Tech's staff played all those freshmen because the program simply lacked depth. Attrition in the 2010 and 2011 recruiting classes basically left the staff with little option other than to play 22 true freshmen the past two years.

But help figures to be on the way, particularly on the lines. Three offensive linemen and two defensive linemen, including Mihota, took

redshirt seasons.

Mihota graduated from high school early and enrolled last January. The Fredericksburg, Virginia, native went through spring practice, and defensive line coach Charley Wiles decided to move Mihota from end to tackle. He thought Mihota could be a solid end, but a better tackle.

Mihota agreed to the move.

"I like tackle," he said. "It's an adjustment, but I enjoy it. You run through people instead of around them. There's a lot more technique involved than you'd think."

"I feel like I've learn the position a lot more. Coming out of high school as an end and moving down to tackle, there is a lot more fundamentals and footwork to learn. I'm learning how to play the position, and I got a lot stronger and faster in the weight room."

Mihota said he weighed 270 pounds and that he added 30 pounds since spring practice. He's nearly at his target weight.

"I'd like to be 275 or 280," he said. "I don't want to get any slower."

The other defensive lineman who took a redshirt season is Steve Sobczak, who played with Mihota at Massaponax High School. Tech's staff went after Sobczak late in the recruiting process, and the coaches are certainly glad they did. They like his potential.

Sobczak gives the Hokies a bigger presence at defensive tackle, while Mihota gives them athleticism. Teamed with Ricky Walker, who played this season as a true freshman, the trio provides a nice foundation for the future.

"There's a certain level of toughness that I like about those guys," Wiles said. "I had Vinny in the spring, and he's a little all over the place with his technique. If we can get him squared away ... he's better out of a right-handed stance than a left-handed one. We've been playing him out of a left-handed stance just because Sobczak can't right now. Vinny's quicker out of a right-handed stance, and I really like his movement. I think he's going to be a really good player."

"I think Sobczak, the more I'm around him, the more I like him. You have to watch him now. He's got to be more disciplined with his eating and all that. He can't be getting to 320 pounds. We'd like him at 285, and he's about 295 right now. We've got to keep a grip on that. But he's got a heavy shoulder, and he's got some quickness. He'll be a guy that continues to get better as he sees himself on video. He has a little natural pass rush to him. There's not a lot of stiffness there that I've seen. I look forward to coaching him in the spring. I like the kid."

It's the line on the other side of the ball that needs the most attention, and the group of

Pfaff, Eric Gallo, Billy Ray Mitchell and Colt Pettit represent a critical part of any future Tech success. Pfaff, as mentioned above, and Gallo played this season as true freshmen, while Mitchell and Pettit took redshirt seasons.

Mitchell, the Westwood, New Jersey, native, needed a redshirt season. He arrived at Tech weighing 250 pounds after a summer bout with mononucleosis.

"That was awful," Mitchell said. "Right now, I'm eating as much as I can and lifting as much as I can. I'm back to 285, and my target is 305. I think I could get to 315. Coach [Mike] Gentry [Tech's associate AD for athletic performance] is doing everything right. I feel like I haven't lost a step since putting on 35 pounds since I've gotten here that. It's just a matter of getting faster at this point."

Mitchell and the rest of the young offensive linemen will get close scrutiny this spring, as line coach Stacy Searels attempts to replace three seniors – David Wang, Caleb Farris and Laurence Gibson – who depart. Finding tackles is key, and it remains to be seen if the 6-foot-3 Mitchell and Pettit fit in at the tackle spots.

They both have worked there at times on the scout team. That work certainly made them better players as they adjusted to the college game.

"It took me two or three weeks just to get used to the speed," Mitchell said. "I don't think anyone in the ACC can be faster than Corey Marshall or Dadi Nicolas. Once you get used to it – and I've been playing right and left tackle and Dadi Nicolas and Ken Ekanem are out there – it's a matter of going from a high school playbook to a college playbook, which is very different. But once you get used to it, it's easier."

Speaking of the playbook, two guys who got a dose of it this past fall were quarterbacks Andrew Ford and Chris Durkin, the two freshman signal callers in the 2014 recruiting class. Both took redshirt seasons.

Ford, like Mihota, actually came to Tech in January of 2014 and went through spring practice. He knows the offense better than Durkin, who came to Tech in July, but he needs to get stronger and improve his arm strength.

Durkin probably possesses the higher "upside" of the two. He checks in at a burly 6-4, 235 pounds, with the athleticism to run. Unfairly or not, many compare him to Tim Tebow, who was coached by Tech offensive coordinator Scot Loeffler during Loeffler's time at the University of Florida.

Most of Durkin's development came about in August practices and during time spent in

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quarterback meetings. He saw a little scout-team work, but spent most of practices near Loeffler and the rest of the quarterbacks.

"I think I've got a good foundation now," Durkin said. "I'm looking forward to learning the protections better, learning our reads and checks. Just things like that. It's complicated. It's a lot of work. But we've got an offseason now, and I'm looking forward to grinding and learning as much of it as I can."

Durkin and Ford potentially represent the future of Tech football. After all, they play the most important position on the field.

Tech loses quarterback Michael Brewer after next season – and right now, there isn't an heir apparent. So this spring practice should go a long way toward figuring out the future of the position.

"It's going to be really cool. It's going to be a battle this entire offseason and this spring, and I'm looking forward to it," Durkin said. "I'm very excited. I don't want to look too far ahead, but I'm looking forward to the spring and looking forward to competing and getting out there again."

Tech's staff can't wait to see this young group competing this spring – a group that includes seven who enrolled in January, with two who signed with Tech last year (offensive lineman Tyrell Smith and tight end Xavier Burke). Though they played a bunch of talented young players this past season – Marshawn Williams, Isaiah Ford, Cam Phillips and Greg Stroman just to name a few – the coaches like the ones on the way.

On defense, the backfield gets an infusion of youth and talent with the addition of guys like Terrell Edmunds, Holland Fisher and Shawn Payne, and the coaches really like linebacker Raymon Minor. On offense, receivers Jaylen Bradshaw and Kendrick Holland give a depth-shy receiving group some added talent. Two more



Andrew Ford (right) took a redshirt year this past season, and the left-hander from Pennsylvania will be in the quarterback mix this spring behind starter Michael Brewer (left).

tailbacks enter the fray, including D.J. Reid and Trayvon McMillian, a 6-0, 200-pounder who may be the most gifted of Tech's young players.

"He's really got great make-you-miss ability," running backs coach Shane Beamer said. "He's the one guy that is fast and explosive, and he's got great moves and great ability to make you miss. He's got home-run hitting ability as a running back. I'm excited about that from a kick return standpoint as well. He has a chance to be a really, really special player."

"They've [Reid and McMillian] both changed their bodies physically. That's the one thing that stands out. They've worked their tails off in the weight room. They got stronger, bigger and more

explosive. They're still learning the running back position, but they seem more natural at running back. We're excited about them."

On special teams, kicker Michael Santamaria and walk-on Carson Wise both could challenge Joey Slye this spring.

All these guys are anxious for spring practice – and they should be. The redshirt season officially ended with the conclusion of the Military Bowl, and winter workouts commence soon. Spring practice is only two months away.

The opportunity is there for everyone. After all, Tech's staff isn't afraid to play young players.

Whether these players take advantage of the opportunity is up to them.



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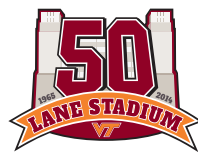


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## Former Tech safety enjoying coaching success

*Mike Scharnus recently won his fourth state championship ring as a high school head football coach, and he's been a winner at all of his coaching stops*

by Jimmy Robertson



Mike Scharnus, a former Tech safety (1978-81), has led Altavista High School, one of the smaller schools in Virginia, to three state championships. (Photo courtesy of The News & Advance in Lynchburg, Virginia)

Readers of this publication know that former Tech student-athletes rarely make repeat appearances in the “Where Are They Now?” section of this magazine.

But former football player Mike Scharnus has become rather adept at doing things over and over – and such a trait makes him one of the best in his profession, arguably the best.

Scharnus, who appeared in the “Where Are They Now?” section of Nov. 2, 2001, issue of hokiesports.com the newspaper with brother Jerry, currently works as the head coach of the Altavista High School football team in Altavista, Virginia – near Lynchburg – and recently guided the Colonels to another state championship. Altavista beat Essex High School 22-20 in Salem, Virginia, on Dec. 13 to claim its second consecutive Group 1A state title and cap a perfect 15-0 season.

The Colonels now have the longest winning streak in the state – 25 games and counting.

“We didn’t try to dwell on the streak or winning another state championship too much during the season,” Scharnus said in a phone interview recently. “Obviously, it was there. It’s a pretty neat accomplishment. It’s the first time we’ve done it, so it’s kind of cool.”

“The kids and coaches took it game by game. As the season wore on, there’s always pressure. When you get in the playoffs, there is pressure. There was probably a little more with that expectation, but it always gets hairy in playoff time.”

The championship game win adds to Scharnus’ already impressive resumé as a coach. His may be the most impressive resumé of all the former Tech players coaching at the high school level.

Scharnus now owns four state championship rings as a head coach, including three during his eight-year stint at Altavista. He took over at Altavista in 2007, inheriting a program that had not recorded a winning season in nine years. In his third season there, he led the Colonels to the

state title.

“The first thing, you always have to have some sort of talent,” he said. “As I go back over the schools I’ve gone to, each one had some talent coming up.

“Here, it was the same thing. Altavista has always had some talent, some skill guys. The big thing was to develop some linemen. We needed to get them in the weight room. So we had some talent, and then we altered some things weight-room wise to get it going.”

Scharnus essentially saved football at Altavista. The school, which sits in a town of roughly 3,500 people, only has around 400 students. More than 10 years ago, school officials contemplated doing away with football and actually agreed to play an independent schedule instead of a district slate, which enabled them to schedule games against schools closer to their size. Still, they enjoyed little success.

At that time, Scharnus was coaching at

Rustburg High School, another small school in the same county as Altavista. He guided Rustburg to the 2000 state championship (Group AA, Division 3), his first, but he was inexplicably terminated as the head coach following the 2006 season.

After successful stints at previous stops – he led Carroll County High School and Liberty High School to the state playoffs before taking the job at Rustburg – Scharnus could have landed a premier job at any number of the state’s better high school programs. But he and his wife, Rhonda, and their three children (daughter Abby, now 22; son Clayton, 19, and daughter Delaney, 11) wanted to remain in that area.

So after hearing about the Altavista opening, Scharnus went after it, knowing full well the challenges of the position.

“When I was let go at Rustburg, I had the opportunity to interview here and at E.C. Glass [High School], which is a bigger city school in Lynchburg,” he said. “I chose not to look at the Glass job because of different things. The administration wasn’t as strong, that kind of stuff.

“Coming here [Altavista] was a drop down to Single-A, but I didn’t think much of it. I just enjoy coaching football and working with the kids. It’s a numbers game in Single-A. You’ve got to have numbers or you’re going to struggle. That was the issue here when I got here. It’s always been a

fight. We’ve always had to work at it to keep the numbers up and that kind of thing.”

Scharnus, who also teaches at the school, said he targeted athletes at an early age and then developed relationships with them. Many weren’t playing football because of the program’s losing culture, but they eventually bought into him and longtime assistants Dave Close and Mike Reavis, and their philosophy.

It also helped that Scharnus was a college athlete. The Maryland native lettered all four years of his career here at Tech (1978-81) under coach Bill Dooley. A safety, he intercepted former Miami quarterback Jim Kelly in the 1981 Peach Bowl – Kelly later played in four Super Bowls and is in the Pro Football Hall of Fame. He also once intercepted former West Virginia quarterback Oliver Luck, who is set to be the No. 2 man at the NCAA office.

Those types of accomplishments give him added credibility when coaching young people.

“I don’t talk too much about that,” he said. “But they know. They’ll find things on Google and ask me. I don’t make a big deal about it.”

Scharnus tries to get back to Blacksburg for a game at least once a year, but did not make it back this season. His team’s success and deep playoff runs the past two years have sliced into Saturday leisure time, but he said he kept in touch with

a few of his old teammates. He ran into former teammate Cyrus Lawrence, Tech’s all-time leading rusher, at an all-star game in Lynchburg this past summer.

Scharnus did go to Tech’s bowl game in Annapolis, which is only 20 minutes from where he grew up. It afforded him the opportunity to see his alma mater and to see a former player of his, Jerrell Jordan, a defensive end for Cincinnati.

Those who know Scharnus best probably aren’t surprised at his success and won’t be surprised if there is more success to come. He works hard and keeps things simple, which sounds simplistic.

But as four state championship rings attest, it works.

“I’m confident enough to know that if we work hard as a coaching staff and do common-sense things and be simple with what we do, then we’ll have some success,” he said. “I think that’s the formula for everyone.

“When I got here, I wasn’t looking at, ‘I wonder if we can turn this thing around.’ At some other schools, I did. I wondered if we could turn it around. Here, I was fortunate and happy to have a job and a new start. It felt good to get away from where I was and let’s see what happens here. I felt very fortunate to get the job.”

The players, parents and fans at Altavista share similar feelings. They feel fortunate to have him.

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## MOON TRYING TO RISE FOR ONE LAST NCAA SHOT

Tech wrestler Chris Moon, a two-time NCAA qualifier, has overcome some difficult times going back to his high school days and will need to get past a couple of injuries in the coming weeks to make the NAAs for a third time

by Marc Mullen

His final season at Tech is certainly not going as he had hoped. Sure, Chris Moon scored a 6-1 decision over Ohio State's Justin Kresevic to help the Hokies to a dual-match victory in arguably the biggest win ever for a Tech wrestling program when they upset the No. 4-ranked Buckeyes on Nov 23. But nothing else, at least from an athletics standpoint, has gone right for the redshirt senior this season.

He had only wrestled three times (as of press time), losing his other two dual-meet bouts, and he missed competing in the prestigious Midland Championships over winter break, as injuries – shoulder and knee issues – have sidelined him for most of the first half of the season. But a final

season at a school not going as planned is nothing new for the Fauquier, Virginia, native.

"I actually got into trouble at my high school near the end of my junior year," Moon said. "Me and two other guys did a senior prank, and we played a game of paint ball in the school and we got expelled. So I didn't even have a choice to stay [at Fauquier County High School]. I really liked the school and the people there, but I had to go somewhere else to finish school.

"So I went to Wyoming Seminary, which is Pennsylvania [near Wilkes-Barre]. It's a boarding school, and I just went there for my senior year and it was awesome. The school is really good for wrestling and academics."

According to Moon, there were about two weeks left in the academic year when he and two of his friends shot paint balls at each other in the school around 3 a.m. one morning. The kids didn't think they'd get into too much trouble, but the administration said they had "guns" on school property and in the school.

The expulsion came rather late, a couple weeks before classes were to begin in the fall, and the family had to figure out something really quickly. They made the decision to send Moon to Wyoming Seminary.

Moon wanted to go to college and wrestle, and he worried about how coaches would perceive him after the incident. He showed his true character

by making sure any schools looking to recruit him for wrestling were aware of the situation.

"Chris came to our camp between his junior and senior year, and that's when we noticed him," Tech wrestling coach Kevin Dresser said. "We followed him through his senior year, and he kept doing better. Then he won the prep nationals.

"But we knew about that incident, and they were very upfront about that. The ironic thing about that whole incident is that if I had to rank the 30 guys on my roster, the first guy that I think would get in trouble down to the 30th guy – a guy that would have to move schools because of a 'junior high' incident – Chris Moon would have been the last guy I would have thought.

"So I think that was just so out of character for him, and at that time, we didn't know a whole lot about Chris. But looking back five years later, I think 'Wow, that kid right there was made an example of.' I think they should have done a lot more research on him. You don't let a kid like that leave your school, and not from a wrestling standpoint, but from a character standpoint."

Moon's high school career consisted of two trips to the Virginia Group AAA state tournament, where he finished as the runner-up in 2009 at 152 points a year after placing seventh as a sophomore. But his wrestling talents were on full display when he moved to the boarding school.

At Wyoming Seminary, he compiled a 44-7 record his senior year – pushing his overall win total to 170 – and he capped it by becoming a 2010 Prep National Champion at 160 pounds.

"It was kind of weird just going to a new place and for my senior year, especially, but I made some friends up there, and I enjoyed it," Moon said. "They had a really good wrestling team. We were, like, top five in the country in high school, and so it was really good.

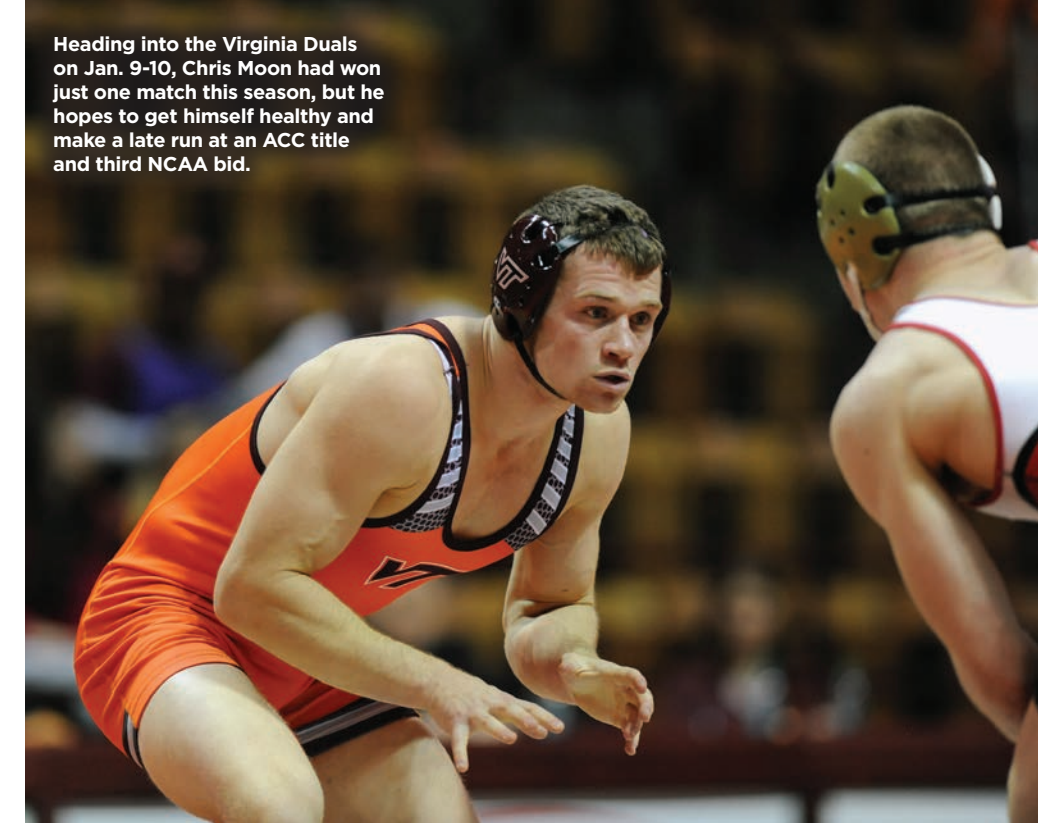
"It definitely showed me a different side of wrestling, and I learned a bunch of different techniques there, so it was probably a good experience for that."

His decision to choose the Hokies over several other state schools – Moon knew he wanted to return to Virginia to wrestle and continue his education – was easy, as he comes from a Tech family.

He is the son and grandson of former Tech graduates. Also, Moon, who was really interested in the engineering program at Tech, heard a lot about what the Tech program could offer from Andy Perez, a mechanical engineering major at the time, and older sister Jessica Moon, now Perez's fiancé.

"Yeah, he hyped it [the school] up a lot and told me all the things you get to do, and that had a lot of influence, too," Moon said. "But Jessica, who is two years older than me, went here and my younger brother Ben [by two years] goes here

Heading into the Virginia Duals on Jan. 9-10, Chris Moon had won just one match this season, but he hopes to get himself healthy and make a late run at an ACC title and third NCAA bid.



now. Lauren, my younger sister, is a senior in high school, and we are still trying to convince her to come here, but she doesn't know yet."

Moon has made the most out of the opportunities afforded him here in Blacksburg. He has already graduated with a degree in electrical engineering, and he is a two-time NCAA qualifier, ironically, becoming the first and only former Fauquier High wrestler ever to make it to the Division I NCAA Wrestling Championships.

He's qualified at two different weight classes, first as a sophomore at 174 pounds, and then after taking a redshirt season, last year at 165 pounds.

"I was really excited my sophomore year when I made the NAAs," Moon said. "At the ACCs, that was a huge semifinal match. The kid I wrestled [NC State's Quinton Godley] had beaten me twice in the regular season, and so I beat him in overtime, and it was a great emotional win for me. It felt good to earn that automatic bid.

"But at the NAAs, I struggled, and I think it had a lot to do with my size. I was really undersized for my weight class. When I got there, I wrestled the No. 2 seed right off the bat, and he was just overpowering me. There wasn't really much I could do. I didn't have a good showing, but I knew I had some time to make it back again.


"Then I redshirted, so that I could actually go down [a weight class]. I wrestled at 165 [pounds] during my redshirt year, and it was good. I got to do a lot of open tournaments, and I got to wrestle in practice against Pete Yates, who was really

good [a two-time ACC champion and NCAA All-American], so that helped me out a lot."

Moon, who had to wait and see if he would earn an at-large bid to the 2014 NCAA Championships after dropping the ACC Championship semifinal match this time around, got the bid and performed better. After dropping his first bout to the No. 3 seed, he won a pair of matches – one by major decision – before being eliminated.

His goals for this season are similar to every wrestler who puts on a singlet in this conference – win an ACC title and be an All-American, which means finishing in the top eight at the national event. Right now, though, his goal is to get back on the mat. Moon jokes about those injuries, saying, "I'm just getting old. When you've been wrestling for a long time, your body just starts to feel it. So I'm just trying to get a little healthier."

"It's unfortunate right now that he's really battling some injuries, and he's probably really frustrated with those," Dresser said. "This was his fifth year. He's already graduated, and he could have easily not stuck around for a fifth year. But he's got two more months to figure it out and hopefully we can get him healthy."

Not knowing what the future has in store is nothing new to Moon, who had to wait an entire summer before finding out his fate for his final high school year. He's playing the waiting game again, trying to find out just how much more his body can handle for one last run toward his athletics goals. 

## GETTING TO KNOW CHRIS MOON

**Q:** What is your career plan once you are done with school?

**CM:** "I want to start in electrical engineering since that's what my degree is in, but I want to focus on power systems. I want to go into some design analysis or protection, something like that. I don't have a job lined up yet, but I have been looking at some that would interest me."

**Q:** You did an internship in Philadelphia this past summer. What was living there like?

**CM:** "I actually lived with my old roommate, who used to wrestle here, too. His name is Bobby Lavelle, and I stayed at his house in Holland, which is about a 45-minute commute to Philadelphia. It was a crazy culture shock. The driving up there was insane, and I didn't even know how to parallel park when I went up there, but I learned real quick. It is definitely different up there. The people are different, and the buildings are huge, but I enjoyed it."

**Q:** What was your favorite class at Tech?

**CM:** "My senior design project that I did for a class called design and power engineering. We built a radial transmission model. It was an advanced protection system for radial transmission lines, and they would communicate. So if there was a single phase or a three-phase fault, which just means the lines are down or lightning has hit it, it would just trip the breakers so that the lines weren't active. It would shut off the power to the line, and we built a model that simulated that."

**Q:** What do you do for fun?

**CM:** "I used to enjoy skateboarding a lot, but I got away from that. I really don't do that anymore. I would say just hanging out with friends and family."

**Q:** What's the one meal you crave when you get done with a wrestling season?

**CM:** "My mom is an awesome cook, and I would want her chicken pot pie. That's really



good, and I would give her credit for that. She makes it a lot when I go home."

**Q:** What was the greatest Christmas present you ever received?

**CM:** "That was definitely in middle school when I got this red Honda XR-80 dirt bike. I used to love that thing."



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## After another successful December, Hokies fall in first two contests of 2015

by Marc Mullen

Under head coach Dennis Wolff, the Virginia Tech women's basketball team has enjoyed great success over the past two seasons in the month of December, compiling a 9-3 record in the span.

In fact, in their four years under Wolff, the Hokies are an incredible 14-4 in the month of December at Cassell Coliseum, and that included a five-game winning streak that ended the 2014 calendar year – tying for the longest winning streak by the Hokies under Wolff.

However, the success didn't continue into the first week of 2015, as Tech let its ACC opener slip away in an overtime loss at Clemson and then dropped a 15-point decision to Virginia at Cassell on Jan. 4, extending the Cavaliers winning streak over the Hokies to 17 straight.

"No one likes to lose to Virginia here in anything, so this loss doesn't sit well with the coaching staff, and it doesn't sit well with the players," Wolff said after the UVa setback. "We've had a number of close games that they've been able to pull out, and I don't have an answer to it. If I did, I'd be sitting here feeling better about the way we played.

"We have to figure it out. And I'm not sure if it's the preparation on either end for their team and our team. I don't get caught up in the numbers that are out there. I get more caught up in trying to prepare the team for the next game. So they created problems because of how physical [Sarah Imovbioh] is inside. We made some adjustments, but we have to give up some things defensively with the way our roster is constituted right now, and that's what we chose to do and they made some shots."

Imovbioh, a 6-foot-2 center from Nigeria, was one of five Cavaliers to score at least nine points, and she added a game-high 11 rebounds in her team's win, a contest that was just a four-point margin at halftime, but saw UVa distance itself in the second half.

It was a different story in Tech's opening ACC contest at Clemson, as the Hokies led the entire second half, minus the last 50 seconds, and actually had a 10-point advantage with less than six minutes remaining. But the Tigers held Tech to just six points over those final minutes of regulation and five minutes of overtime to register the comeback win.

"An extremely disappointing loss," Wolff said following the Clemson game. "I thought the team



Sidney Cook, the 6-foot-2 transfer from Seton Hall, is starting to emerge as a much-needed option on offense for the Hokies, who dropped their first two ACC games as conference play opened.

played hard, but clearly in the last three or four minutes of the game, they [the players] lost their composure, and we turned the ball over so many times it took away our chances of winning."

After the UVa loss, Wolff summed up his thoughts on the Hokies' opening week of the 2015 year.

"Obviously, this was not the way we wanted to start the first weekend of ACC play including Friday night [at Clemson] and this game," he said.

Despite the great December record the past two years, the Hokies have failed to carry that momentum over into January. At press time, Tech hadn't won in January since an upset of then-No. 8 Maryland in College Park in 2012.

### CAMP ENJOYS DECEMBER TO REMEMBER

Tech freshman guard Rachel Camp has certainly established herself as one of the team's, if not the league's, top scorers for the 2014-15 season, as the Forest City, North Carolina, native has scored at least 10 points in 11 contests this season so far, and that included seven games of at least 20 points.

After hitting for 20-plus in two games during November, Camp poured in at least 20 in four games during December, which helped her earn the ACC's Freshman of the Week honor on the Dec. 15.

The two games that accounted for the nod included a 29-point, 12-rebound, four-assist

effort against North Carolina Central – a game in which she tied the school's record for most points scored by a freshman in a single game. She followed that with her third straight double-double and set the Tech mark for most points scored by a freshman in a 33-point, 11-rebound, six-assist game against Western Carolina.

Ironically, in the win, sophomore guard Vanessa Panousis added 24 points and five assists, giving the Hokies their first 30-point, 20-point combination in almost 30 years – when Joyce Waddy (31) and Susan Walvius (29) did it in a 1986 game versus Mercer.

"I was pleased with how we played and these two [Panousis and Camp] had terrific games," Wolff said after the Western Carolina game. "I am proud of them both and congratulations to Rachel for breaking the scoring record.

"But I think they both played unselfishly as the game went along. They continued to try and make the right plays."


Stymied in her first ACC game at Clemson – she was held to just six points, her lowest output since the season opener – Camp rebounded with a 23-point, seven-rebound effort in the loss to Virginia. At one point, she scored 12 of the team's 16 points to help Tech, which had trailed by double digits, get back to within four by halftime.

### COOK SETTLING IN AFTER TRANSFER DELAY

Sophomore Sidney Cook, who transferred to Tech from Seton Hall, missed the first four games of the season before being granted a waiver by the NCAA. She has settled into her role for the Hokies, and it started with a solid performance against Radford, coincidentally, the program's 600th career win.

"I think we needed more consistency out of the team, and Sidney Cook had good minutes," Wolff said after the Radford contest. "She played 14 minutes and had nine points and nine rebounds, and those are very good minutes.

The former BIG EAST All-Freshman Team selection has averaged more than eight points and nine rebounds per game during a four-game stretch starting with the Radford game – and she started three of those four games. Her best game was a 14-point, 11-rebound showing in 40 minutes of action in the Clemson loss, her fourth career double-double, but first for Tech.

"We had very good production out of Sidney and Taijah [Campbell]," Wolff said after the UVa game. "What we need to do is get better production by the group. We need to stay positive and make some coaching adjustments. It's a long season, but we need to try and get some of the other players who are struggling to get back in the flow." 

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## ACC opener latest in string of close losses for the Hokies

by Jimmy Robertson

Devin Wilson answered the question immediately and with no hesitation.

After playing 38 grueling minutes against Syracuse in a 68-66 defeat, he was certainly fresh when it came to fielding missives from postgame media members.

"I take it in a bad way," he said of Tech's loss despite a valiant rally that sliced a 22-point deficit to two points. "We lost. As much as we fought and tried to come back, we lost."

"I'm disappointed," fellow guard Justin Bibbs said, echoing Wilson sentiments. "I thought we should have won."

For the second straight season, the Hokies opened ACC play with a game against Syracuse, and like last year, Tech found itself behind quickly. The only difference this time around was that the Hokies made a game of it.

Tech trailed by 22 points with 2:51 remaining in the first half and by 19 points at halftime. But it opened the second half with a 21-7 run to climb back in it, and Wilson's two free throws with 6:34 brought the Hokies to within a basket, 51-49.

Syracuse built the lead to 62-51 with 2:22 left, but the Hokies wouldn't go away. It helped that the Orangemen struggled from the free-throw line, making just seven of their final 17 attempts in the final 2:22.

The Orangemen led 68-66 and had Ron Patterson going to the line for two attempts with 4.3 seconds left. But Patterson missed both of them, and the Hokies, out of timeouts, raced down the court.

Bibbs brought the ball up, and he found Müller in the corner. Malik Müller launched a 3-pointer as time expired that came up well short.

It marked yet another loss on the final possession. So far this season, the Hokies have lost four games by three points or less.

Afterward, head coach Buzz Williams wanted no part of a discussion about moral victories with this young team.

"We've lost four of our six losses by one possession. Does that mean we're good, or does that mean we suck?" Williams said. "It means we're 8-6. It's what Coach [Bill] Parcells [former NFL coach] said – you are what your record says you are. I don't think that with each passing day that you can continue to say the same thing over and over. At some point, you have to get past that."

"That's not me being a jerk or me saying that I'm right and our team is wrong. What if we had



Freshman Justin Bibbs continues to play well for the Hokies, having scored in double figures in 11 of Tech's first 14 games.

won half of those? How many people would be in this room? What if we had won all of them? We've only won one of them. Only one of our eight wins is a one-possession game, but four of those six losses are one-possession games. But they [the Orangemen] also could have beaten us by 50. West Virginia could have beaten us by 60.

"We need to put ourselves in a position to deserve the right to win a game. You can't play a preseason top-25 team who has done all the things that Coach [Jim] Boeheim has done at Syracuse since before I was born ... you can't play 20 minutes and think, 'Man, I feel good!' No, it's 40 minutes. We knew that yesterday when we woke up."

Tech lost to Appalachian State, Penn State and Radford in the final moments of those games as well, but the reasons behind those losses were different. Tech gave up 19 offensive rebounds to the Mountaineers, shot terribly from the free-throw line against Penn State (4-of-14) and let a six-point lead with two minutes left slip away in the loss to Radford.

"I think there are a lot of lessons to learn every day in every way," Williams said after the Syracuse game. "I think we have to play more like we did in the second half, obviously."

"In some ways, this [the Syracuse loss] was a

repeat of the same thing."

The Hokies will get other opportunities during ACC play. The league appears top heavy, with roughly five or six teams capable of winning the title and the rest of the teams being fairly evenly matched.

Tech can compete, and it can win, but only if it plays the way it did in the second half against the Orangemen – with maximum effort and solid execution.

They at least can take that away from the Syracuse loss, albeit begrudgingly.

"We came back from 19, and this young team showed a lot of fight," Wilson finally admitted. "Our coaching staff believed in us. It was just a tale of two halves."

### BIBBS COMING UP BIG

Bibbs was named the ACC Rookie of the Week for the week of Dec. 28-Jan. 3 following his performances against VMI and Presbyterian. He scored 20 points and grabbed four rebounds in the Hokies' win over the Keydets, and he had 13 points and six rebounds in the win over Presbyterian.

Heading into ACC play, Bibbs, a 6-foot-5 freshman from Dayton, Ohio, ranked second on team in scoring (12 ppg) behind Adam Smith.

With his 22-point performance against Syracuse, he had scored in double figures a team-leading 11 times in the Hokies' first 14 games. He also led the team in minutes played, averaging more than 30 per game.

"I just think Bibbs is a good player," Williams said after the VMI game. "He can play the point, play the 2, play the 3, play the 4, whatever numerically you want to call him. He's hard for us to take out of the game."

"I feel bad for him at times. Are we putting too much on him? Absolutely. We're asking him to do all this stuff and remember every position in case something doesn't go right and don't foul because we're going to lose. And I'll try to get him a minute-and-a-half blow each half."

Bibbs' 22 points against Syracuse tied a career high. He also grabbed a career-high 11 rebounds for the first double-double of his career.

### PIERCE GETTING MORE MINUTES

Freshman center Satchel Pierce continues to get more minutes after not playing a single minute in the Hokies' win over VMI. He played 13 minutes against Presbyterian, scoring six points and grabbing four rebounds, and then he played a season-high 23 minutes in the Hokies' loss to West Virginia. In that one, he scored a career-high 10 points and grabbed five rebounds.

Williams suspended Joey van Zegeren indefinitely before the Syracuse game, so Pierce, a 7-footer from Barberton, Ohio, played 16 minutes against the Orangemen's tall front line, and he played reasonably well despite being in foul trouble. He scored four points and grabbed four rebounds before fouling out with 5:08 left.

Pierce was matched up against Rakeem Christmas, a former McDonald's All-American who has started all but two games in his four years at Syracuse. Christmas scored 17 points and grabbed nine rebounds.

At one point, Pierce found himself wide open with the ball, and the crowd begged him to shoot. Instead, he passed the ball to a teammate, showing a little tentativeness. But overall, Williams wasn't disappointed in Pierce's play.

"He continues to grow, and he continues to improve," Williams said. "He's gaining confidence from his work. He's spending more time in the weight room."

"I think he's coming around. When you look at Rakeem Christmas – who is going to be all-conference in nine weeks – and you've never played in an ACC game, you might pee down your leg a little bit, too."

### BEYER WITH CAREER NIGHT

Williams made some lineup changes for the


Hokies' nonconference game against Alabama A&M on Dec. 14, starting walk-on Christian Beyer and former walk-on Will Johnston, who received a scholarship before last season.

Both played well, with Beyer enjoying a career evening. The senior from New Bern, North Carolina, scored a career-high 13 points, hitting 5-of-7 from the floor, 3-of-4 from the free-throw line and grabbing nine rebounds. He tied his career high in minutes with 27.

"I kind of had an idea earlier [Sunday] morning, maybe [Saturday] night based on practices," Beyer said of getting the starting role. "He just kind of threw me in there. It was exciting. I'm used to being thrown in there when energy isn't where it needs to be or they need help on the boards. I saw it as a chance to show Coach Buzz that I'm that backup guy if he ever needs a boost off the bench."

Beyer's previous career high of nine points came at BYU in 2012. He came off the bench in Tech's 97-71 loss and scored nine points and grabbed 11 rebounds in 23 minutes.

The start marked the second of Beyer's career. He started at Notre Dame last season.

Beyer's 13 points marked the first time a Tech walk-on has scored in double figures since Dec. 2, 2000, when Alex Martin scored 13 points against Syracuse in the finals of the 2000 Carrier Classic. 

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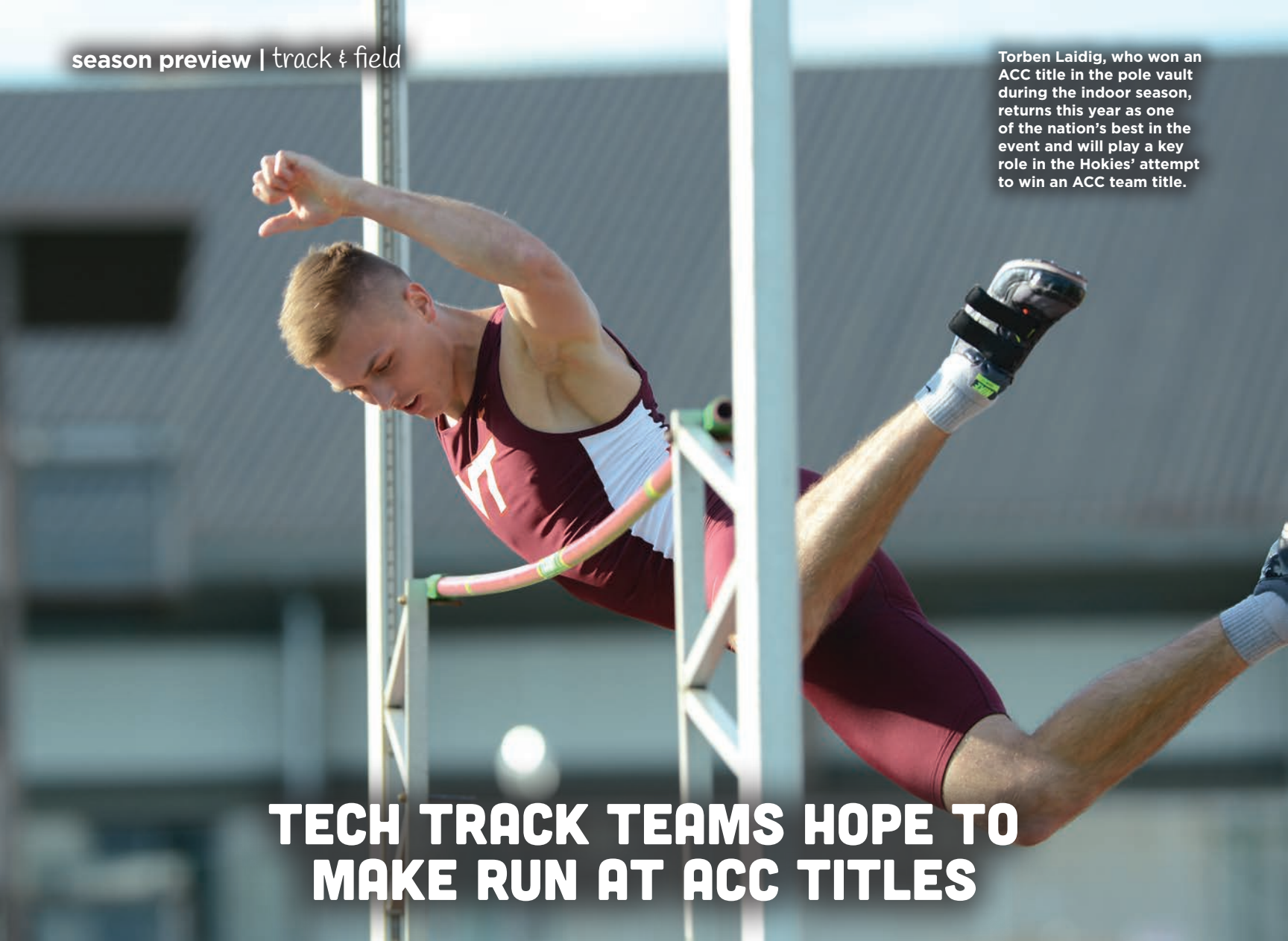
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Torben Laidig, who won an ACC title in the pole vault during the indoor season, returns this year as one of the nation's best in the event and will play a key role in the Hokies' attempt to win an ACC team title.

## TECH TRACK TEAMS HOPE TO MAKE RUN AT ACC TITLES

The Hokies have the depth and talent on the men's side to compete for a crown, while the middle distance runners and throwers on the women's team give the Hokie women a shot at a championship

by Marc Mullen

The competition continues to get tougher and tougher in the ACC when it comes to track and field. The ACC added three new schools last year, and thus, the Virginia Tech men's and women's track and field programs failed to place either of its teams within the top four at either of the indoor or outdoor championship meets for only the second time in 10 seasons.

That the men finished fifth at both and the women were fifth at the indoor meet and sixth at the outdoor meet wasn't a concern for Dave Cianelli, Tech's director of track and field and cross country, as he assessed both of his programs' finishes recently. A more pressing concern for the man who has raised eight ACC trophies with these squads over the past decade

was their national finish, something he hopes will improve in 2015.

Before breaking down each of the different areas on the men's and women's side, Cianelli answered several key questions about the 2015 Tech programs:

**Q: Were you pleased with the ACC results from last year, and what are your expectations for the teams this season?**

**DC:** "Looking back to last year, in hindsight, that's about where I felt we could be, somewhere in the top five with the additions of the new schools in the conference. We had just graduated a big senior class, especially on the men's side. So I thought the teams competed well with the individuals that we had because it was a very

young team on both sides.

"This year, going into it, I'm very confident that both the men and the women will place higher at the conference championships. I think the men are in a position, if everything goes right, to have a shot to win the title – both indoor and outdoor. In fact, outdoor, the men may be a little stronger with the additional events (discus and hammer), and the women should place higher at both meets as well."

**Q: With the addition of the three new teams, did you learn anything about where points may be easier or harder to come by to win a title?**

**DC:** "I think the biggest thing we learned, with the addition of the new schools, was at the

conference meets, everything got a little more diluted as far as the point totals, and it will take fewer points to win a [team] title.

"What I mean is that the point total it took to finish first, second or third a year ago was less than in previous years. So that makes the quality of the meet higher and to score in the top three positions at the conference meet is really critical because you're going to need a certain amount of those to get to the point where you can then add in your fourth through eighth positions to put you in position to win the championship.

"So as far as our program is concerned, we aren't going to change much. We are still going after the events we are good in and go into the conference meet with that goal."

**Q: Were you disappointed in the NCAA finishes last year (neither team finished higher than 32nd)?**

**DC:** "I was on the men's side (tied for 32nd at the indoor meet and tied for 36th at the outdoor meet). I felt we had a chance to be in the top 20, which we go into that meet each year with that goal – top 20 or top 10, if we can. So I was a bit disappointed with our finishes last year because I felt that we should have been in the top 20. On the women's side, I wasn't as much because we didn't have too many shots at the national meet to score.

"For the men, we had a really strong run for the past five or six years (six straight top-20 outdoor finishes, four straight indoor), so I feel like it was just one of those things where it's the law of averages where you are going to have a year where it all doesn't go as planned. That certainly wasn't for a lack of preparation or lack of effort. Those meets are just so high-quality, and each year, there are just so many athletes who have a chance to win a title that anything can happen."

**Q: What has made Virginia Tech such a hotbed for pole vault success – 26 of the 40 titles have been won by Hokies since entering the ACC?**

**DC:** "That really just comes down to having Coach [Bob] Phillips leading that program. He's been a part of the program going back to when he was a vaulter here himself in the early 1980s. So he's been a part of the program for more than 30 years, which is much longer than I've been here.

"His expertise and development in that area ... he's considered one of the best in the country, and his ability to attract talented vaulters into the program is tremendous. So from that standpoint, he is the reason we have such a high-level vault program.

"We've had a great run in the ACC – 12 of the past 16 titles on the women's side, 10 of the past 12 on the men's side, and 26 total. That is an amazing number. We've won 65 percent of

the total number of championships, and when you look at our conference with all of its great programs ... that he's been able to maintain that level over the past 10 years is remarkable."

**Q: The women's cross country team is coming off an NCAA qualification as a team. Will that transition to track and field?**

**DC:** "Absolutely. That group that went to the nationals in cross country has a good balance of middle distance and long distance runners, and that will certainly translate to them being able to score in several different event areas once we get to the indoor and outdoor meets.

"I think we will have an outstanding distance medley relay team, which is an indoor event, and I think we can be one of the best in the country – actually both on the men's and women's side because of the collection of runners Coach [Ben] Thomas has assembled. So that group will be a big factor for us once we get to the conference meet, no question.

"Overall, I think, with the women, we are a year away. We have filled the voids we will be losing this year with our recruiting class, and next year, we will have a lot of returners. I want to see this team finish in the top five, and then we can build on that for the next couple years."

**Q: The men's team seems to have a lot of depth in many areas. What is your assessment of what this team can accomplish this year?**

**DC:** "Overall, this men's team – from a quality and depth standpoint – could really do some special things. The national meet is always so difficult to predict, but I think, with the guys that we have here and what they've done and what I believe they can do – as long as they stay healthy – this could be a top-10 NCAA team and a team that can challenge for an ACC title.

"This team kind of reminds me of our 2012 team as far as the quality and the depth that we have. I am really excited with what this men's team can accomplish at the NCAA level and the ACC level. I don't want to put a ceiling on it, but things just need to fall together.

"And with hosting the ACC indoor meet, that's a lot of fun. That will make it exciting for our athletes, and it will make a difference. It will give us a little bit more of an edge."

Now, for a quick look at Tech's prospects for 2015 in each event category:

### MEN'S SPRINTS/HURDLES/JUMPS

**Top returner (2014 accomplishments):** Sophomore Dante Price – Indoor: ACC 60-meter and 200-meter competitor.

**Newcomers:** Freshmen Darius Watkins, Will

Kendall, Ryan Shepard and Mackenzie Muldoon.

**Cianelli's take:** "On the sprints side, the individual who really came off an outstanding freshman year was Dante Price. He was consistent all season, and he's going to be a factor in the 100 and 200 [-meter races] for us. His teammate, Alex Ellison, will have to step it up. With the addition of the new teams, everything has gotten better, so everyone has to take it up a notch to be a finalist at the ACC meet, and he's in position to do that.

"Then we add Darius Watkins, who is really an outstanding sprinter out of Georgia, and was a state champion in the 100 and 200. I think he can be a factor right away for us at the conference level. He's really going to open some eyes as a freshman. So those three really form the core of the sprints area.

"Aaron Simpson will be our top hurdler, while we bring in some freshman jumpers whom we will have to watch to see if they develop. There's Will Kendall and Mackenzie Muldoon, a prospective decathlete, and Ryan Shepard as a high jumper. There is also a transfer – Manuel Ziegler – who is a triple jumper, and he'll be a grad student here, and he is outstanding.

"So with these newcomers – the freshmen come in with some good tools and solid marks and could be scorers at the ACC level for us – they give us a presence in that area that we've lacked since that 2012 team."



Grant Pollock, who has only indoor eligibility remaining, should help Tech's chances during the indoor season as he returns to defend his ACC title in the mile.

### MEN'S DISTANCE

**Top returners (2014 accomplishments):** Senior Thomas Curtin – Indoor: ACC 5,000-meter champion; Outdoor: ACC 5,000-meter champion (Note: these are 2013 accolades. He took a redshirt year last season).

Senior Grant Pollock – Indoor: ACC mile champion, NCAA All-American in DMR (sixth); Outdoor: ACC 1,500-meter champion and NCAA All-American (sixth).

Senior Juan Campos – Indoor: ACC DMR finalist (fourth); Outdoor: ACC 1,500-meter finalist (seventh).

Redshirt senior Martin Dally – Indoor: ACC 800-meter finalist (seventh), NCAA All-American in DMR (sixth).

**Newcomer:** Freshman Kevin Cianfarini.

**Cianelli's take:** "This is a very deep group, which is led by Grant Pollock, who will only have indoor eligibility left, but he's a returning mile champion and All-American and has been very consistent for us in his career."

"Thomas Curtin, who redshirted in cross country, is ready to go for track and is one of the best distance runners in the conference, so he's going to be a huge boost to us in the indoor 5,000 and may even run the 3,000."

"The core of this group is really in the 800 and the mile, and that includes Patrick Joseph, who was a USA junior champion in the 1,500 and represented the USA at the World Junior Championships. I think he's got unlimited potential, and he's got range. But with him and Grant indoors, that gives us two great milers."

"In the 800, we are deep with seniors Martin Dally, Kevin DeWillie and Prince Owusu. They

have all been ACC scorers for us, and they will be big contributors again this year. So again, this is about as good as we have ever been in terms of the quality and the depth."

### MEN'S THROWS

**Top returners (2014 accomplishments):**

Junior Tomas Kruzliak – Outdoor: ACC hammer throw champion and NCAA All-American (fifth).

Sophomore Jaka Muhar – Outdoor: ACC javelin finalist (fourth).

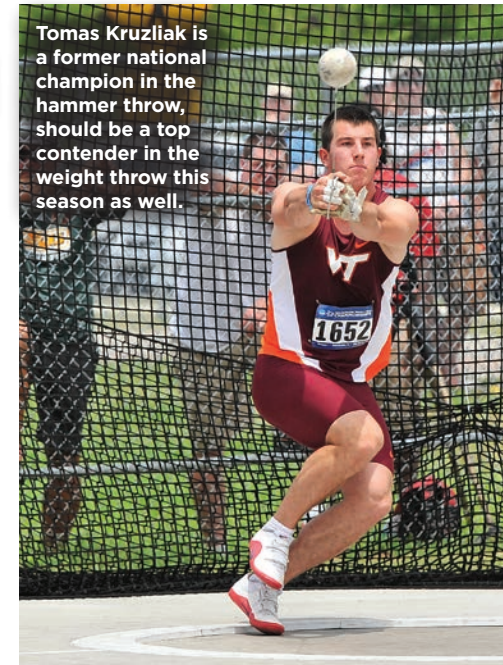
**Newcomers:** Freshmen Marek Barta and Collin McKenny.

**Cianelli's take:** "We'll have some national-level presence with Tomas Kruzliak, who is in his third year. He was a national champion in the hammer as a freshman, so he'll be the top weight guy for us indoors and outdoors. He is a little stronger in the hammer, so he should be vying for another title at the national meet."

"We also have Jaka Muhar back after a year of rehab from surgery, and he's going to be one of the top national javelin throwers. He should be a favorite for an ACC title."

"Then there's freshman Marek Barta, who is primarily a discus thrower, but he'll also throw the shot put at the conference meet to help us score some points. He should be competing for an ACC title in the discus and qualifying for the

national meet. So we'll be stronger in the throws and have a little more of a national presence."



Tomas Kruzliak is a former national champion in the hammer throw, should be a top contender in the weight throw this season as well.

### MEN'S POLE VAULT

**Top returners (2014 accomplishments):**

Sophomore Torben Laidig – Indoor: ACC pole vault champion and NCAA All-American (sixth);

Outdoor: ACC pole vault runner-up and NCAA All-American (15th).

Senior Chris Uhle – Indoor: ACC pole vault runner-up; Outdoor: ACC pole vault finalist (fourth) and NCAA East Regional qualifier.

Redshirt sophomore Jared Allison – Indoor: ACC pole vault finalist (sixth); Outdoor: ACC pole vault finalist (fifth).

**Newcomer:** Junior Jeffrey Linta.

**Cianelli's take:** "We've got Torben Laidig, who was an ACC champion as a freshman and an All-American both indoors and outdoors, returning. He's one of the top vaulters in the nation and made really great strides during his freshman year, and we're expecting big things from him."

"Chris Uhle, this will be his senior year, and he's been very consistent the past three years. He's been a national level qualifier and scored as high as second at the ACC meet. There's also Jared Allison, who is another 17-plus foot guy, and I think he'll make a big improvement this year."

"Torben is almost at 18 feet now, but I think all three of those guys could possibly be over that 18-foot mark. Collectively, this could be our best group when you add in Brad Johnson, who is a young vaulter who is right around 17 feet right now, and transfer Jeffrey Linta, who came here from South Carolina. This group has the potential to be the best group we've ever had, and that will

be huge for us at the conference level as well as the national meet. And they are still pretty young, too."

### WOMEN'S SPRINTS/HURDLES/JUMPS

**Top returners (2014 accomplishments):**

Sophomore Christine London – Indoor: ACC 60-meter hurdle competitor; Outdoor: ACC 400-meter hurdle finalist (eighth) and NCAA East Regional qualifier.

Sophomore Nora McKiver – Indoor: ACC 60-meter hurdle competitor; Outdoor: ACC 100-meter hurdle finalist (eighth) and ACC 400-meter hurdle competitor.

Junior Johnna Dominick – Indoor: ACC high jump finalist (13th); Outdoor: ACC high jump finalist (11th).

**Newcomers:** Freshmen Courtney Blanden, Ama-Selina Tchume, and Shanel Burr.

**Cianelli's take:** "This is a very young group. Coach [Paul] Zalewski, in just his second year, has done a nice job in establishing this group and recruiting some very talented athletes. But they are young, and it takes time to adjust to the collegiate level."

"He's built a great foundation, and I think each year as we move forward here, this group is going to be contributing more and more to the success of the team. If you want to challenge for the top two or three positions at the conference meet, you need a presence in this area."



Hanna Green earned All-America honors in the 800-meter run during the outdoor season last year, and she'll be counted on to help the Hokies in several events this season.

### WOMEN'S DISTANCE

**Top returners (2014 accomplishments):**

Junior Amanda Smith – Indoor: ACC 800-meter champion and NCAA All-American (fifth); Outdoor: ACC 800-meter champion and NCAA East Regional qualifier.

Senior Sarah Rapp – Indoor: ACC 3,000-meter runner-up and ACC DMR finalist (fourth); Outdoor: ACC 5,000-meter champion, NCAA

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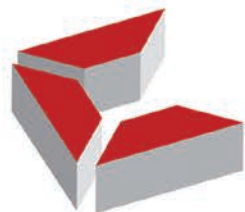
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## season preview | track & field

Championship 10,000-meter qualifier.

Junior Shannon Morton – Indoor: ACC DMR finalist (fourth); Outdoor: ACC 1,500-meter finalist (third) and NCAA qualifier.

Sophomore Hanna Green – Indoor: ACC 800-meter runner-up; Outdoor: 800-meter NCAA All-American (13th).

**Newcomers:** Freshmen Katie Kennedy and Morgan Gallagher.

**Cianelli's take:** "We have a big senior class, led by Sarah Rapp. She will be one of the top distance runners in a conference that's really one of the best distance conferences in the country. There is a lot of talent in the ACC.

"Shannon Morton will certainly be one of the favorites in the mile and will be a member of that DMR team, and I think they should be at the national meet. There's also Hanna Green, who was one of the top freshmen in the country in the 800 meters. She's a tremendous talent with an unlimited upside. She will focus on the 800 again and maybe the 1,500, and she runs the 400 for us on a relay team.

"There's also Courtney Dobbs, who is coming off an injury, and she holds the school record in the 5,000. Also, Amanda Smith is returning as a two-time ACC champion in the 800 meters indoor and outdoor. So we have a strong core group there of which there are a couple of runners who are still young. It's a good mix, and any of these could be challenging for an ACC title this year."

### WOMEN'S THROWS

**Top returners (2014 accomplishments):** Sophomore Eva Vivod – Outdoor: ACC javelin finalist (second) and NCAA All-American (11th).

Senior Sabine Kopplin – Outdoor: ACC javelin finalist (third) and NCAA All-American (seventh).

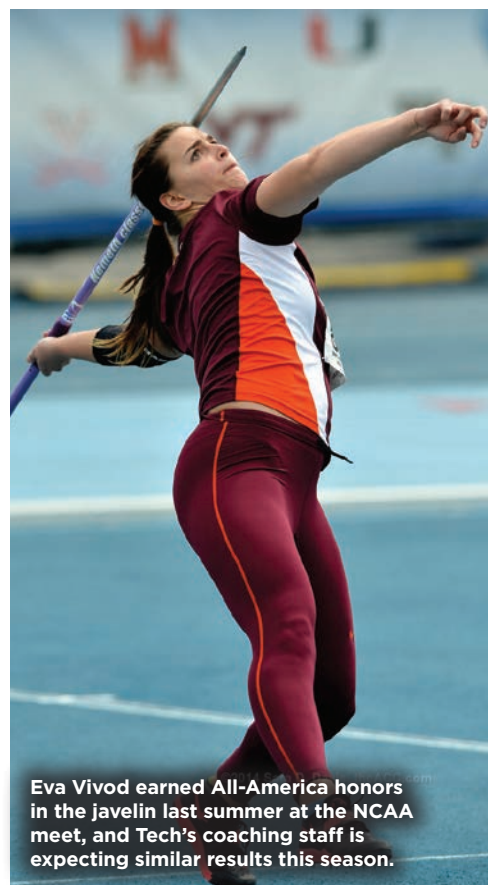
Senior Sarah Kadelka – Outdoor: ACC javelin finalist (fourth) and NCAA East Regional qualifier.

**Newcomer:** Sophomore Irena Sediva

**Cianelli's take:** "This year, we will have several top-notch javelin throwers. Sabine and Eva are returning All-Americans from the outdoor season, and with newcomer Irena, this will give us three top-notch javelin throwers, which is really unique.

"They won't be competing indoors, but once we get to outdoors, we will certainly be able to dominate that event at the ACC meet, and then at the national level, I expect all three of them to be at Eugene [Oregon] in the finals and

scoring for us at the NCAA meet. I expect those three to push each other in order to all have great seasons."



Eva Vivod earned All-America honors in the javelin last summer at the NCAA meet, and Tech's coaching staff is expecting similar results this season.

### WOMEN'S POLE VAULT

**Top returners (2014 accomplishments):** Sophomore Kristen Lee – Indoor: ACC pole vault finalist (ninth); Outdoor: ACC pole vault finalist (10th).

Redshirt junior Erinn Schall – Indoor: ACC pole vault competitor; Outdoor: ACC pole vault competitor.

**Newcomer:** Freshman Sarah Swantko.

**Cianelli's take:** "In the vault, we have Emma King, who redshirted last year, but she was one of the better high school vaulters and a Maryland state champion. So we have her and Kristen Lee – those two will certainly lead that group and collectively fill the shoes of Martina Schulze, who was a multi-time All-American and ACC champion for us.

"So those two will be asked to make up for the points lost with Martina's departure. This event has gotten stronger at the conference level, and they will have to continue to develop and improve to give us that presence in the vault."

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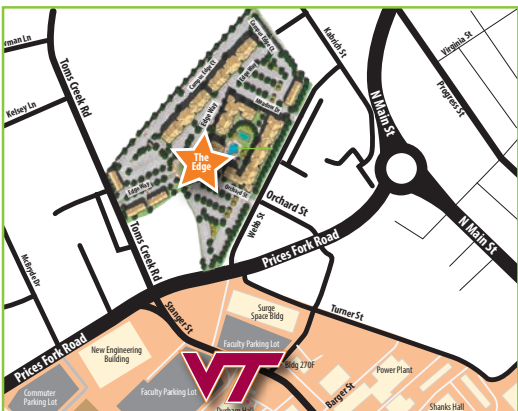
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