

TSL Extra

Issue 7, May 16, 2001

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TSL EXTRA

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ON THE COVER

*This month's cover photo of Bryan Randall courtesy of the Newport News Daily Press.
Photography by Brian Totin.*

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers:

And now, ladies and gentlemen, we enter into one of the great voids in sports: the summer. For a college sports fan like me, the long summers, dominated by baseball, NASCAR, and the NBA playoffs, are pretty boring.

Every year, I tell myself I'm going to pay attention to major league baseball again, like I used to, and darn it, I am going to follow the Mets and care again, like I used to. But I just can't do it. Ever since Dwight Gooden fell victim to the nose candy (and that was a long, long time ago), my interest in the Mets has waned, never to return.

I also can't root for my Philadelphia 76ers anymore, not like I used to, because Allen Iverson (did I spell his name right? Who cares?) is a joke when compared to one of my sports idols, Julius Erving. Iverson is probably a better all-around player than Dr. J. was, but as a human being ... forget it. Erving is a hall-of-famer in that department, while the best Iverson could hope for is to be a janitor in that hall of fame. Hey, Allen, at the next press conference, take off those stupid sunglasses. It's rude to wear them indoors.

And NASCAR? I hear it's a fascinating sport full of intrigue and strategy, but I'll never know, because I can't bring myself to watch it and pay attention. Every time the Roanoke TV guys lead with a NASCAR story (in other words, just about every night), I just doze off. That's not knocking NASCAR (I'm not dumb enough to do that, here in Southwest Virginia). I'm just not interested.

Into this void step TechSideline.com and the TSL Extra. The college sports world isn't exactly full of news during the summers, and if it is, it tends to be the wrong kind of news, mainly player arrests and transfers. But nonetheless, we here at TSL and the TSL Extra attempt to keep you entertained and informed even when there isn't much going on that's entertaining and informative.

The TSLX will help you get through the summer months with more of the types of analysis, insight, and commentary to which you have become accustomed. It's not always easy, but it seems to work itself out. Every month, I wonder what in the heck we're going to write about, and every month, it falls together quite unexpectedly. It's a pleasure to produce this little monthly publication that requires so much work yet yields so much satisfaction to me, and hopefully to you.

We're now entering the second half of our first year. Thanks to everyone for making the first half of the year a success, and we hope you enjoy the second half and decide to renew your subscription when your time comes.

Without further ado (is it obvious I have nothing of import to say here?), enjoy issue #7.



P.S. – As we do our best to earn an honest living, we greatly appreciate your unwillingness to share your TSL Extra password with others, as well as your discretion in not posting any of TSLX's articles on any websites, including our own.

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Recruiting Profile: Bryan Randall

by Neal Williams

Bryan Randall attended Virginia Tech's spring football game April 21 along with a number of the Hokies' other recruits.

He stood on the sidelines at Lane Stadium and took some time to scan the stands. It was nothing like he'll see this fall when Tech begins its 2001 season with a full house of 55,000 or so at every home game. The crowd for the spring game was about 18,000 – well short of capacity.

But it was just a spring game, not even really much of a game. And it was still more people than Randall had ever seen at any game in which he'd played at Bruton High in Williamsburg.

It gave him an idea of what he was in for when he enrolls at Tech and attempts to become the man to replace quarterback Michael Vick.

Vick left Tech two years early and was drafted No. 1 by the Atlanta Falcons on the same day as the Hokies' spring game.

Someone has to be behind center Sept. 1 when Connecticut pays a visit.

"It's kind of surprising when you see something like that," Randall said of the spring-game turnout. "I'd never seen that many before and they're all rooting for the team you're going to be playing for. You can tell how much they love football.

"It is a little pressure and it's fun at the same time. You know you have to get the job done."

On the January day when Vick officially declared for the National Football League draft, Tech associate head coach Billy Hite said Vick's decision was going to change a lot of lives.

Count Randall's among them. Playing with and learning under Vick was a major consideration in Randall's decision to attend Tech.

"I wanted to go to Tech and sit behind Vick and redshirt just like he did," Randall said. "I wanted to just get used to the atmosphere at the college level and study behind him. He had been there. I was sure I could learn a lot from him, different little stuff you need to know that you can learn from the quarterbacks in front of you. I just wanted to get in and get my feet wet."

Then Vick said I'm gone.

That decision didn't change the appeal of Tech for Randall. It merely changed the reasons for the appeal. Somebody floored it and everything lurched ahead at a much faster speed than Randall originally planned to travel.

"Now I'm more geared toward getting ready right now," Randall said. "It's not as relaxed as it was before. It's kind of, turn it on right now. You don't have time to sit back and get your feet wet as much.

Cover Story

Bryan Randall

“I don’t see it as a negative at all. I see it as an opportunity, a great opportunity. I made my mind up to go in early when Vick decided to go. They’re talking about a true freshman maybe playing.”

Randall will move to Blacksburg June 30, enroll in some summer school classes and begin preparation in earnest for the upcoming season.

He doesn’t want to come off as cocky when he talks about his chances of being the Hokies’ No. 1 quarterback. Randall, a perfectly polite young man, is anything but brash. He just has the attitude he has to have, and he expects all five of the quarterback candidates to be thinking the same way.

Junior Grant Noel, who emerged as No. 1 after the spring, will come into preseason drills thinking the job is already his and he has to continue to perform to hold on to the spot. Redshirt freshman Jason Davis will come in thinking his improvement and spring game performance give him a legitimate chance.

Randall and fellow quarterback recruits Will Hunt and Chris Clifton will come in eager to show a true freshman can indeed run the show.

“Everybody going in trying to compete for the job has to think, ‘I’m going to be the next Tech quarterback,’” Randall said. “That’s how you push yourself, it’s kind of like a goal now you want to achieve. That’s as high as it can be. I’m going to work hard to get it. If it happens that I don’t get it, so be it. But I am going to work my hardest.”

We’ll never know if Vick could have played as a true freshman, because he didn’t. Facts are facts and one fact is this: Few true freshman play anymore at the Division I level. The Hokies only used three true freshmen last season and only one of those – cornerback Eric Green – was a year removed from high school. Jim Davis (prep school) and Kevin Lewis (January enrollee) were two years removed from high school.

The college game is much faster, much more physical and much more cerebral. The typical high school playbook, even for an advanced prep team, reads like a comic book compared to a college team’s playbook.

On the night of a recent interview, Randall was out preparing for his upcoming prom. Many of Tech’s 2000 seniors were preparing for the NFL.

Physically and mentally, playing collegiate ball is a significant challenge. That said, Randall might have the right combination of gifts to make it happen even though he’s young. He won’t turn 18 until Aug. 16, almost two weeks after fall drills begin.

“Bryan is very mature for his age,” said Kyle Neve, Randall’s football coach at Bruton. “The pressure is on him immediately. Bryan is used to pressure. If anybody has a chance to do it, he does. It would be rough for anybody, but if you had to have a formula for a kid to do it, he’d be it. He has

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Bryan Randall

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the total package.”

Randall’s resume is indeed impressive. He played on both sides of the ball. In fact, he made first-team all-state as a safety as a senior and had to settle for second-team all-state on offense. He was the Group AA player of the year.

As a junior, Randall was the Group AA player of the year in basketball. A point guard, the 6-2, 205-pound Randall plans to play basketball at Tech as well.

“I’ve been playing basketball longer than football,” Randall said. “I thought if I was going to excel in anything growing up it would have been basketball. But football is my main sport now.”

Said Neve, “He’s very good at basketball. He’s strong and gifted physically and he can just outmatch people.”

Randall as a junior became the first player in Virginia prep history to rush and pass for more than 1,000 yards in a season. He did it again as a senior. “What makes that more amazing,” Neve said, “is that he also had 147 tackles (as a senior). He never comes off the field.”

To top it off, Randall also added track to his list this year, mostly so he could work on his speed. And yet he’s strong enough to be one of Bruton’s weight men.

Away from athletics, Randall is in the National Honor Society and is president of the youth choir at New Zion Baptist Church in Williamsburg.

“As far as what I’ve seen over the past four years, the young man is an outstanding athlete and an outstanding student,” said Littleton Parker, who coaches football at Southampton High. “The young man is a class individual. He’s the same way in defeat as he is when he wins.

“By far, at least the past two years, he was the best athlete in this district and perhaps one of the better ones in the state. It’s unbelievable some of the things he does on the football field and the basketball court.”

Randall is lifting weights as well as running track this spring. He says he’s a “pretty decent” lifter and he’s looking forward to getting into strength coach Mike Gentry’s program full time.

The mental adjustment, he thinks, will be a bigger test than the physical. “I’m not a small guy and I’m going to get stronger being with Coach Gentry,” Randall said. “You have to make sure you’re smart enough to play that game. It moves a lot faster and it is a lot more complicated. In high school, you don’t really read too many defenses. They don’t throw a whole lot at you.

“I see this as a great challenge. I’m a competitor and I compete to win. I’m going to do whatever I can possibly do to be prepared, be at the peak of where I need to be. At the college level, there are so many great players. The guys who work hard and prepare the best are the ones who turn into

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Bryan Randall

the really great players.”

Neve says Randall’s best assets aren’t centered around numbers.

“The intangibles,” he said, “like leadership. He just makes everybody in the huddle better. They believe in him. He’s not a yeller. He’s quiet and confident. He has a bunch of things you can’t coach, you either have them or you don’t.”

Parker thinks his former rival can make the transition smoothly.

“I think he’s physically ready and he’s further ahead mentally than most high school seniors,” Parker said. “It is definitely a different ballgame, no doubt about that. But he is very capable. On both sides of the football.”

Tech is set at safety. Quarterback is where there’s a huge hole.

“That’s all you hear living around here. ‘I can’t wait for you to get down to Tech, I’m excited for you,’” Randall said.

Randall wore No. 5 in high school (No. 20 for basketball). That’s the current number of senior rover Kevin McCadam. Randall says he’ll wear “4” in 2001 and consider switching to “5” the following season.

He would not, he insisted, wear Vick’s No. 7, even if that was his old number.

“I think if you took No. 7, you’d put a lot of unneeded pressure on yourself,” Randall said. “People would look at you and say, ‘He’s wearing Vick’s number. Does he play like Vick?’

“There will be enough comparisons to Vick. You don’t need any extra.”

The Money Makers, Part 2: Football

by Will Stewart, *TechSideline.com*

In part 1 of “The Money-Makers,” we took a look at overall athletic revenue and expenses for Division 1 athletic departments in the 1998-99 academic year. For an important follow up to that article, see “The Money-Makers: Follow-up to Part 1” in this issue. The follow-up includes some notes of clarification, some additional data, and the correction of a fairly significant error in the Big 10 data.

This article, Part 2 of the series, looks at football income and expenses. We’ll go over the statistics for the BCS conferences, compare them to some non-BCS conference data, and tell you who the top money-makers and money-losers are in college football.

First, a reminder: the data are from the 1998-99 academic year (the 1998 football season). Some of the data may have changed rather significantly since then, most notably if a school has undergone a conference realignment, finished a stadium expansion, or had their conference’s TV or bowl contracts change. So this data should be taken for what it is: a snapshot from two seasons ago. Even as such, it still points out unchanging truths and macro trends for the schools discussed.

The football data in this part will be presented in a similar fashion as the overall data in Part 1.

The Data

The format of the data is very simple. The data covered in this part of the series consist of three numbers for each school: revenue, expenses, and profit/loss. As with the overall data presented in Part 1, definitions of the categories of data (revenue and expenses) are not given. Here is TSL’s best guess at what each category includes:

Revenue: this figure is the total revenue made by a university’s football program. This figure includes ticket revenue, TV contract revenue, and football bowl money. The revenue figures probably include concession sales and advertising/signage income, including income from radio broadcasts.

I do not believe this figure includes money contributed to a school’s athletic fund (i.e., Virginia Tech’s Hokie Club), or money made from licensed apparel. It may or may not include money from apparel and shoe deals, such as Nike’s contract with Virginia Tech, in which Nike outfits some of Virginia Tech’s teams with uniforms and shoes, in exchange for being able to place their logo on the uniforms. These contracts have a certain cash value, and I’m not sure if the football portion is included here in these figures.

Expenses: this figure is the total expenses incurred by a university’s football program. This figure includes salaries for football administrators and football coaches, travel expenses, scholarships, equipment, promotional costs, etc.

As with the overall data from Part 1, this data may or may not include expenses for capital projects, such as stadium construction, practice field construction, etc. It probably includes cash expenditures for capital items (for example, Frank Beamer’s new football practice fields that were just built,

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at a cost of about \$1 million, might show up as a line item under expenses), but it probably does not include capital projects that were funded by taking on debt (for example, if Tech took out a \$15 million loan to finance stadium expansion, the portion that was paid for by the loan would probably not appear as an expense).

Profit/Loss: this figure is football revenue minus football expenses. If the number is in parentheses, then it's a loss, not a profit.

Virginia Tech's Data

For the 1998 football season, here is Virginia Tech's set of data:

School	Football Rev.	Football Exp.	Net
Virginia Tech	\$11,466,861	\$7,601,331	\$3,865,530

This data is for the 1998 Music City Bowl season. Since then, football income has increased dramatically for Virginia Tech. Ticket income, TV appearance money, and bowl income have all increased:

- Ticket income has increased. The average per-game cost of a season ticket has gone from \$23.00 in 1998 and 1999, to \$28.00 in 2000 and 2001. Average attendance went from 49,044 in 1998, to 52,518 in 1999, to 56,272 in 2000. Estimated ticket revenue increase from 1998 to 2000: \$2.69 million.
- Television appearance money has increased. Virginia Tech received \$1,450,000 in appearance money in the 2000 season, up from \$1,225,000 in 1999 (1998's figure is unknown). Tech's regular season TV appearances went from 7 in 1998, to 9 in 1999, and to 11 in 2000. Estimated increase from 1998 to 2000: \$500,000 (assumes \$950,000 for 1998).
- Bowl income has increased. The Big East's bowl revenue sharing formula distributes bowl money to all conference teams, but it rewards the teams that make the actual appearances in bowls. This is unlike other conferences, where bowl money is split evenly amongst all members. In 1998, Tech was in the \$750,000 Music City Bowl (and received somewhere between \$1.2 and \$1.6 million in total bowl revenue sharing). In 1999, the Hokies went to the \$12 million (est.) Sugar Bowl (receiving somewhere between \$4 million and \$6 million), and in 2000, Tech went to the \$1.4 million Gator Bowl (receiving around \$1.8 to \$2.0 million in revenue sharing). Estimated increase from 1998 to 2000: \$500,000, with a much bigger increase in 1999.

Crunching the ticket sales, TV money, and bowl money together leads to an estimated increase in revenue from 1998 to 2000 of \$3.69 million, for a total take in 2000 of about \$15.2 million. Here are the numbers in table form:

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Estimated VT Football Revenue Figures for Tickets, TV, and Bowls

Season	Ticket Rev.	TV Revenue	Bowl Rev.	Total
1998	\$6,768,072	\$950,000	\$1,400,000	\$9.1 million
1999	\$7,247,484	\$1,225,000	\$5,000,000	\$13.5 million
2000	\$9,453,696	\$1,450,000	\$1,900,000	\$12.8 million

Note: these figures are very rough estimates and are included only for comparison purposes. Ticket revenue in particular may vary widely from the figures shown here, as it is affected by the number of comp tickets, single-game versus season ticket sales, etc. Also note that TV figures are appearance income figures only and do not include Tech's portion of revenue sharing from the Big East TV contract.

This is not to say that Virginia Tech is rolling in dough. While things have gotten more comfortable for the Hokies (and they had already gotten pretty comfortable as far back as 1995, when Tech made their first Sugar Bowl trip), expenses have gone up, too, most notably coaches salaries.

The Big East's Data

Now let's take a look at the Big East Football Conference as a whole:

Big East Football Conference Revenue/Expenses

Team	Revenue	Expenses	Net
Boston College	\$10,078,701	\$7,437,088	\$2,641,613
Miami	\$11,559,508	\$9,426,101	\$2,133,407
Pittsburgh	\$8,517,000	\$6,106,000	\$2,411,000
Rutgers	\$4,483,855	\$5,899,463	(\$1,415,608)
Syracuse	\$20,246,709	\$15,835,442	\$4,411,267
Temple	\$3,072,893	\$3,882,163	(\$809,270)
Virginia Tech	\$11,466,861	\$7,601,331	\$3,865,530
West Virginia	\$12,726,868	\$5,523,691	\$7,203,177
Big East Average	\$10,269,049	\$7,713,910	\$2,555,140
BCS Conf. Ave.	\$13,719,125	\$7,226,445	\$6,492,680

Note: BCS conferences include ACC, Big 12, Big East, Big Ten, PAC 10, SEC, and Notre Dame (63 schools).

That's quite a bit to talk about, particularly since I included the averages for the 63 teams in the BCS conferences (all six BCS conferences plus Notre Dame). Let's start by talking about the Big East teams, and we'll finish with relating the Big East to their BCS conference brethren, and what those numbers mean.

First of all, as Jim Alderson pointed out in last month's article "The Big East/ACC Merger," Temple's paltry revenue and expense numbers show why they were ejected from the Big East Conference recently. The \$3.8 million in expenses is the major sticking point, because it is over \$2 million lower than the next lowest school, Rutgers (\$5.9 million).

While Temple's \$3.1 million in revenue looks bad, the \$3.8 million in expenses says, in no uncertain

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terms, “We’re not spending money on our program to try and make it better.” The Owls followed up their \$800,000 loss in 1998 with another \$800k loss in 1999.

The Owls did make some progress, and there was hope on the horizon. In late 2000, they put the finishing touches on their \$7 million version of the Merryman Center, a practice-and-football-office facility called Edberg-Olson Hall. They have been promised the use of the Eagles’ planned state-of-the-art stadium on Saturdays starting in 2003, and Temple showed a modest improvement on the field to four wins last year, up from two in each of Coach Bobby Wallace’s first two seasons. But Temple always seemed doomed to be a victim of their commuter-school status and an apathetic fan base.

Meanwhile, Rutgers is the only other school in the Big East whose revenue and expense figures are even close to Temple’s paltry totals. The Scarlet Knights had three big advantages over Temple: full membership in the Big East, their own on-campus football stadium, and a more interested fan base (i.e., better home attendance — Rutgers averaged a not-so-good 24,556 fans per game in 2000, but it was one-third better than Temple’s 18,612).

Also, Rutgers’ football expenses, i.e. their commitment to the program, is much more in-line with their Big East brethren than Temple’s low numbers. Rutgers’ revenue could use some significant improvement, but if new coach Greg Schiano can win some football games with the home-grown talent he is recruiting, the ticket sales and TV appearances that boost revenue will follow.

Once you get beyond Temple and Rutgers, the only two programs in the conference that lose money on football, things start to look better. Pittsburgh is the only remaining team in 1998 that had less than \$10 million in football revenue, and that number is probably on the uptick in the last few years. Boston College, Miami, and Virginia Tech all run programs with reasonable revenue and expense levels, and they all netted \$2 million to \$4 million dollars from football in 1998.

The picture of football financial health in the Big East is WVU, where they were second in the conference in revenue (\$12.8 million) and seventh in expenses. It all added up to a whopping \$7.2 million net. Those figures support the widely-held notion that the Eers got a lot of bang for their buck from Don Nehlen.

As for Syracuse’s \$20 million in revenue and \$15 million in expenses? Methinks there *might* be some creative accounting going on there. Granted, the Orangemen were the Big East’s BCS Bowl representative for the 1998 season, which would inflate both revenue and expenses, but those numbers are outrageous. The \$20 million in revenue might be attainable, but the \$15.8 million in expenses reeks to the high heavens of number-shuffling. Not that I’m accusing Syracuse of anything rotten. I just think that expense figure is artificially inflated somehow. It would be interesting to hear an explanation for it.

The bottom line for the Big East as a whole, when compared to their BCS brethren, is that the Big East’s average expense numbers (as inflated as they are by the Syracuse figure) are right in line with their contemporaries. Their average revenue figure, however, is not. The result is that the

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average BCS team makes \$3.9 million more off of football than the average Big East team.

I would imagine that the damage done here is not so much to the football programs in question as it is their non-revenue sports. If the Big East football programs are only clearing \$2.5 million on average, that's less money to feed and support their non-revenue, or Olympic sports. Where conferences like the Big 12, Big Ten, SEC, PAC 10, and ACC really stand out over the Big East are in their non-revenue sports.

Speaking of how the Big East compares to the other BCS conferences, let's take a look.

Comparing the BCS Conferences

The BCS Conferences are, of course, the six conferences that are part of the BCS contract: the ACC, Big 12, Big East, Big Ten, PAC 10, and SEC. Let's break down total football revenue and expenses and per-team football revenue and expenses for those conferences.

Total Football Revenue and Expenses, 1998 Season

By Conference, Sorted by Revenue

Conference	Revenue	Expenses	Net
SEC	\$224,289,263	\$91,286,938	\$133,002,325
BIG TEN	\$172,264,821	\$79,225,859	\$93,038,962
PAC 10	\$138,362,898	\$78,988,525	\$59,374,373
BIG 12	\$130,184,979	\$71,470,417	\$58,714,562
ACC	\$89,193,101	\$62,833,808	\$26,359,293
BIG EAST	\$82,152,395	\$61,711,279	\$20,441,116

Per-Team Football Revenue and Expenses, 1998 Season

By Conference, Sorted by Revenue

Conference	Per-Team Rev.	Per-Team Exp.	Per-Team Net
SEC	\$18,690,772	\$7,607,245	\$11,083,527
BIG TEN	\$15,660,438	\$7,202,351	\$8,458,087
PAC 10	\$13,836,290	\$7,898,853	\$5,937,437
BIG 12	\$10,848,748	\$5,955,868	\$4,892,880
BIG EAST	\$10,269,049	\$7,713,910	\$2,555,140
ACC	\$9,910,345	\$6,981,534	\$2,928,810
Average	\$13,719,125	\$7,226,445	\$6,492,680

Note: the averages include all BCS teams and Notre Dame (63 teams total). The Irish made \$27.8 million and spent \$9.7 million for a net of \$18.1 million.

These figures establish the SEC as the undisputed king of football revenue. If you ever thought that the Big Ten and PAC 10 were comparable to the SEC in football revenue (as I did), you now know that you were wrong. The Big Ten and the PAC 10 are certainly head and shoulders above the Big 12, Big East, and ACC, but the gap between them and the SEC is clear.

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Looking at the per-team revenue figures, you can draw a line between the trio of SEC/Big Ten/PAC 10 and the trio of Big 12/Big East/ACC. The per-team net figures aren't quite so clearly split into two groups of three, thanks mostly to the Big 12. On average, Big 12 teams don't bring in much more revenue than ACC and Big East teams, but they're much more frugal, leading to a higher per-team net. As you can see, the Big 12 is not far behind the PAC 10 in per-team net.

The Big East and ACC were almost dead-even in 1998, although the figures were skewed in both cases (revenue and expenses) by Syracuse's totals.

Expenses are fairly uniform across the BCS conference teams. The conferences all spend within the range of \$5.9 million to \$7.9 million per team. But revenue fluctuates between \$9.9 million (ACC) and \$18.7 million (SEC) per team.

One big reason for the difference in revenue is stadium size. It's impossible for a Big East team like Tech with a 56,000-seat stadium to match the ticket revenue totals of Michigan, with their 107,500 seat stadium. As a rule, SEC, Big Ten, and PAC 10 stadiums are bigger than Big 12, Big East and ACC stadiums, and they are generally packed with more fans.

I wish I had time to research the stadium size and attendance figures, but we'll have to give a hypothetical example, instead. Using the Virginia Tech/Michigan example, if both teams sell out their stadiums for 6 home games at \$30 a ticket, Michigan would make \$19,350,000 off of ticket revenue to Tech's \$10,080,000. That's a \$9.27 million difference over the course of a season.

That's a sloppy example, because not all tickets are paid for in either scenario, and other factors affect ticket revenue, but you get the idea. The SEC and Big Ten, with their huge stadiums and large fan bases, generate millions more than other conferences from ticket revenue alone.

There are other factors that influence revenue, most notably TV contracts and bowl tie-ins, but stadium size is a big factor that can't be overlooked.

The Non-BCS Conferences

As you would expect, football revenue falls off sharply once you get beyond the non-BCS conferences and start looking at Conference USA, the MAC, the WAC, etc.

Here's a look at the previous per-team revenue table, with non-BCS conferences added in:

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(continued from page 13)

Per-Team Football Revenue and Expenses, 1998 Season

By Conference, Sorted by Revenue

Conference	Per-Team Rev.	Per-Team Exp.	Per-Team Net
SEC	\$18,690,772	\$7,607,245	\$11,083,527
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ACC	\$9,910,345	\$6,981,534	\$2,928,810
BCS Average	\$13,719,125	\$7,226,445	\$6,492,680
CUSA (8 teams)	\$4,950,345	\$4,399,421	\$550,925
MT. WEST (8)	\$4,141,779	\$3,715,431	\$426,348
WAC (9)	\$2,439,608	\$3,616,464	(\$1,176,856)
MAC (13)	\$1,428,138	\$2,292,140	(\$864,002)

Note: the BCS average includes all BCS teams and Notre Dame (63 teams total). The Irish made \$27.8 million and spent \$9.7 million for a net of \$18.1 million.

Some important notes about this data:

1.) In 1998, Conference USA did not include East Carolina, but the data shown in the table does include ECU.

2.) In 1998, the Mountain West did not exist. At the time, its 8 teams were combined with 8 WAC teams in a 16-team WAC. The 8 present-day Mountain West teams broke away to form a new conference, and the 8 leftover teams added Nevada to form a new 9-team WAC. For purposes of displaying their data, the teams are broken out into their present-day configurations.

The split between the WAC and Mountain West (explained in item #2) is very interesting. The 8 teams that broke away from the 16-team WAC are essentially the money-making teams. The 8 that were left behind were the money-losing teams. Only 3 of the 8 teams that broke away lost money in 1998: Colorado State (\$23,611 loss), UNLV (\$664,545), and Wyoming (\$653,623). Of the 8 teams left behind, only 2 *made money* in 1998: Fresno State (a \$602,430 profit) and Southern Methodist (\$16,439 profit).

Of course, part of the reason the money-losing WAC teams failed to turn a profit was the travel expenses associated with being in a 16-team WAC, so their position may have improved since the split. But in general, that was a case of the haves leaving the have-nots. The breakaway teams included relatively high-profile programs like Air Force, BYU, Colorado State, San Diego State, and Wyoming. The left-behinds included Fresno State, Rice, San Jose State, and Tulsa.

The Top-Ten Money-Makers and Money-Losers

The next three tables present:

- 1.) The top 10 money-making schools in terms of total revenue
- 2.) The top 10 money-making schools in terms of net income

Feature

The Money Makers

3.) The bottom 10 money-making schools in terms of net income

Note that the figures are presented for the BCS conferences and Notre Dame only (63 schools). This only affects the last table — if all Division 1 teams were included, the first two tables would not change.

Top 10 Schools in Football Revenue, 1998-99				
Team	Conf.	Revenue	Expenses	Net
Tennessee	SEC	\$32,825,857	\$15,997,451	\$16,828,406
Florida	SEC	\$29,669,188	\$10,944,681	\$18,724,507
Alabama	SEC	\$28,248,408	\$6,496,556	\$21,751,852
Notre Dame	IND	\$27,857,388	\$9,749,181	\$18,108,207
Ohio State	BIG TEN	\$26,445,720	\$9,348,423	\$17,097,297
Penn State	BIG TEN	\$25,422,289	\$9,834,292	\$15,587,997
Washington	PAC 10	\$23,707,647	\$13,096,034	\$10,611,613
Auburn	SEC	\$22,946,979	\$8,807,274	\$14,139,705
Georgia	SEC	\$22,530,118	\$5,231,044	\$17,299,074
Nebraska	BIG 12	\$21,925,356	\$8,818,412	\$13,106,944

Top 10 Teams in Football Net Income, 1998-99				
Team	Conf.	Revenue	Expenses	Net
Alabama	SEC	\$28,248,408	\$6,496,556	\$21,751,852
Florida	SEC	\$29,669,188	\$10,944,681	\$18,724,507
Notre Dame	IND	\$27,857,388	\$9,749,181	\$18,108,207
Georgia	SEC	\$22,530,118	\$5,231,044	\$17,299,074
Ohio State	BIG TEN	\$26,445,720	\$9,348,423	\$17,097,297
Tennessee	SEC	\$32,825,857	\$15,997,451	\$16,828,406
Penn State	BIG TEN	\$25,422,289	\$9,834,292	\$15,587,997
Auburn	SEC	\$22,946,979	\$8,807,274	\$14,139,705
Nebraska	BIG 12	\$21,925,356	\$8,818,412	\$13,106,944
Louisiana State	SEC	\$17,791,048	\$5,554,875	\$12,236,173

Bottom 10 Teams in Football Net Income, 1998-99				
Team	Conf.	Revenue	Expenses	Net
Rutgers	BIG EAST	\$4,483,855	\$5,899,463	(\$1,415,608)
Temple	BIG EAST	\$3,072,893	\$3,882,163	(\$809,270)
Vanderbilt	SEC	\$7,657,373	\$8,076,040	(\$418,667)
Duke	ACC	\$6,234,600	\$6,486,099	(\$251,499)
Iowa State	BIG 12	\$3,599,933	\$3,822,117	(\$222,184)
Baylor	BIG 12	\$3,623,700	\$3,791,286	(\$167,586)
Wake Forest	ACC	\$5,130,043	\$4,713,134	\$416,909
Maryland	ACC	\$7,246,759	\$5,600,314	\$1,646,445
Virginia	ACC	\$8,862,824	\$7,160,675	\$1,702,149
Washington State	PAC 10	\$6,777,476	\$4,947,642	\$1,829,834

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The Data

As usual, the data that went into this report are available. If you want to see the complete set of data for football revenue and expenses, you can access the data as a web page, or you can download the Microsoft Excel 97 file.

Web Page link — note that this is a large file, but it still loads fairly quickly:

<http://www.techsideline.com/tslextra/issue007/footballrevenue9899.htm>

MS Excel File (Excel 97 compatible):

<http://www.techsideline.com/tslextra/issue007/footballrevenue9899.xls>

(Right-click the link and do a “Save Link As” or “Save Target As” to save the Excel file to disk.)

The Money Makers: Follow-up to Part 1

by Will Stewart, *TechSideline.com*

Part 1 of “The Money-Makers” from last month’s issue of the TSL Extra gave overall revenue and expense figures for Division 1 athletic departments for the 1998-1999 academic year. Most readers found the data to be fascinating reading, as did I, but it also brought up plenty of questions.

The biggest question is, how do so many athletic departments lose so much money? Don’t the bills have to get paid? What’s going on here, when an athletic department like Pittsburgh’s can lose \$8 million dollars, as shown in the figures, and then turn right around and do it *again* the following year (as revealed in a Dec. 28, 2000 article in *The Detroit News*)?

Not being an expert in the world of college athletics finances, and having no business or accounting background at all, I don’t know the answers to those questions, except for one: yes, the bills have to get paid. How they get paid varies widely from school to school, particularly when comparing private schools to public schools.

A bigger point to be made here is that looking at the revenue and expense totals for an athletic department, as we did in Part 1, does not give you the overall financial picture of that athletic department. There are unreported sources of income and probably unreported expenses buried within the records of a university’s athletic department. The revenue and expense totals we saw in Part 1 only tell part of the story.

A wise man once said, “The more I learn, the more I realize I need to learn.” In my case, running Part 1 of this series not only taught me (and you) quite a bit, but it brought forth a learning opportunity. What started my education was this email:

Will:

After 25 years in higher education financing, I have to tell you that your article comparing revenue and expenses at major universities was way off base. You cannot compare private and public universities. They keep their records and their accounts in different forms.

In most public universities, tuition funds cannot be used to fund intercollegiate athletics. In private universities, the opposite is true. Intercollegiate athletics are considered as part of the academic mission at some universities, and a portion of the general funds of the university are budgeted to go to that expense. Therefore, the university shows revenue and expenses, with the deficit being covered by budget funds from the general fund.

This is especially true in the Big East and other conferences with private universities. I know for a fact that this is true at Georgetown, BC, SU, SJ, SH and several other schools.

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I can't believe you would think that the management of those universities would allow their athletic department to run deficits of the magnitude shown in your article. The Presidents would fire their Athletic Directors. If not, the Boards of Directors would get rid of the presidents.

Your mistake was a common one. However, private universities have many ways of hiding their true revenues and expenses. That is why they are private.

Okay, so maybe I was a little naïve to present the figures in the fashion I did, as if to say, "University XYZ's athletic program takes in A dollars and spends B dollars, meaning that they lost C dollars," as if there was no other money available from other sources. In my own mind, I know that money comes from somewhere else, and the bills do somehow get paid, but I didn't specifically address that point in my article.

I started an email conversation with my new friend, whom I'll call MB, and he enlightened me on some aspects of college sports financing, most importantly the difference between public and private universities in funding athletics. Did MB have all the answers? No. Did MB leave me a little smarter than before? Uh, I think so.

Private Versus Public

This was the most educational part of my dialogue with MB. MB pointed out that private universities, unlike most public universities, can use tuition funds and general funds to cover athletic department shortfalls. This is one of many reasons why private school tuition is higher than public school tuition.

The Big East is probably the biggest mish-mash of private and public schools among the BCS conferences (ACC, Big 12, Big East, Big Ten, PAC 10, and SEC). Its members range from large land-grant universities like Tech and WVU down to smaller private schools like Georgetown, that don't play Division 1-A football. In between are Boston College and Miami, relatively large private schools that attempt to compete (and in Miami's case, *do* compete) at the highest levels of Division 1-A football.

"A private university," MB explained in a later email, "doesn't 'lose' money on athletics for long. No one can afford it. The Athletic Department goes through the same budget process as all other University Departments. The only difference is that, unlike academic departments, the athletic department has revenue. The basic question is: does their revenue have to cover their expenses? In most state institutions, the answer is YES. In most private institutions, the answer is NO."

Ah, so the athletic departments at public universities are under pressure to balance the revenue/expense bottom line that private university athletic departments are not necessarily under. That explains why schools like Virginia Tech usually report break-even or turn a profit, while schools like

Money Makers Follow-up

Harvard report a \$4.2 million shortfall, only to have the difference covered by money from the university's general fund, a transfer of assets that doesn't show up in the revenue and expense columns from Part 1's data.

Not to mention, as MB said, that accounting and reporting practices vary widely between public and private universities, and even from one private school to the next, or from one public school to the next.

Breaking Down the Big East

Knowing that, let's take the Big East schools, break them up into private versus public universities, and revisit that financial data from Part 1.

Revenue and Expenses for Big East Schools, 1998-99				
University	Public/Private	Revenue	Expenses	Net
Connecticut	Public	\$24,440,099	\$23,733,840	\$706,259
Pittsburgh	Public	\$12,323,000	\$20,045,000	(\$7,722,000)
Rutgers	Public	\$23,938,578	\$23,938,578	\$0
Temple	Public	\$5,427,711	\$11,711,551	(\$6,283,840)
Virginia Tech	Public	\$20,845,889	\$20,319,646	\$526,343
West Virginia	Public	\$24,016,068	\$24,831,971	(\$815,903)
Boston College	Private	\$22,339,561	\$27,331,158	(\$4,991,597)
Georgetown	Private	\$8,644,696	\$11,149,364	(\$2,504,668)
Miami	Private	\$23,581,713	\$27,890,899	(\$4,309,186)
Notre Dame	Private	\$38,014,825	\$34,245,459	\$3,769,366
Providence	Private	\$4,791,753	\$10,786,530	(\$5,994,777)
Seton Hall	Private	\$6,017,932	\$6,788,209	(\$770,277)
St. John's	Private	\$5,777,013	\$11,655,446	(\$5,878,433)
Syracuse	Private	\$36,376,607	\$38,214,074	(\$1,837,467)
Villanova	Private	\$6,373,852	\$13,409,343	(\$7,035,491)

Viewed in this way, the data for Big East schools start to make more sense. As a group, the private schools "lose" much more money than the public schools, with the curious exceptions of Temple and Pittsburgh, which we'll get to in a moment.

As noted in Part 1, only 3 of the Big East schools reported a profit or broke even in 98-99: UConn, Rutgers, and Virginia Tech. It's not a coincidence that those three schools are public schools.

Of the other three public schools, WVU nearly broke even, losing \$800,000 on a budget of \$24 million. If I remember correctly, that year was the beginning of the asbestos problems in WVU's basketball coliseum, and they incurred unexpected expenses in travel costs, repair costs, and lost ticket revenue.

But what about Pittsburgh and Temple? They're public schools, and they lost \$6.2 and \$7.7 million dollars. Question for you: what do they have in common? Answer: they're both in the state of

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(continued from page 19)

Pennsylvania.

As my friend MB said in one email, “The state of Pennsylvania allows some creative financing.” Translation: the bills are getting paid somehow, and those schools didn’t really “lose” those amounts of money.

Looking at the private schools, one sees a sea of red ink, but according to MB, the shortcoming is covered from the general funds of the respective universities. Notre Dame made money on athletics (because they’re Notre Dame), but the remaining private schools all “lost” an average of \$4.2 million on athletics.

So now that we know a little bit more about how the athletic departments at public versus private universities are funded, we have managed to explain away the numbers logged by the Big East Conference teams as reported in Part 1. And those that we couldn’t explain strictly as public versus private, i.e. Temple and Pitt, can be explained as a creative use of accounting under the rules and laws of their home state, Pennsylvania.

That’s my interpretation of my conversation with MB. If I’m wrong, you may see a follow-up to this follow-up next issue.

What About “Athletic Fees”?

One question remains unanswered: what about those “athletic fees” that students are sometimes charged? What do they fund?

Virginia Tech charges an athletic fee that is mandatory for full-time students (12 hours or more) and optional for part-time students. The fee was \$116.00 for the 2000-2001 academic year, and according to the Virginia Tech Bursar’s web site, it is a “Non-refundable mandatory fee for all students in residence paying full tuition; for support of athletic program operations. This fee allows students the privilege of picking up free student tickets for in-season home athletic events. Fee is applicable to both graduate and undergraduate students in residence, but is optional for students paying less than full tuition.”

That’s a vague description (“for support of athletic program operations”), and I’m not sure how to interpret the “in residence” clause — does that mean on-campus student’s only? I don’t think so. But the bottom line is, the athletic department gets \$116 from each student who pays the fee.

In 1999, Virginia Tech had 19,496 full-time undergraduate students and 2,857 full-time graduate students. Assuming every one of them paid the athletic fee, that’s a total of \$2.59 million, assuming that the fee was the same back then as it is now. And that doesn’t include any part-timers who chose to pay the fee.

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Private universities typically don't charge a dedicated athletic fee, but instead allocate money to athletics from the tuition and fees paid by students, or from general funds they may have from other sources.

Shuffling Numbers

If I could sum up my email conversation with MB, I would do so in three statements:

- 1.) Private schools run revenue/expense deficits, but the difference is often/always covered by student tuition and fees, or other general funds.
- 2.) Public universities may run revenue/expense deficits, but the real situation is usually not as dire as it seems due to creative accounting. Private universities can be creative, too, because they don't have state auditors looking over their shoulders.
- 3.) Regardless of how deficits are covered or accounted for, *any* athletic director, public or private, is going to receive pressure to bring his costs more in line with his revenue and budget, either by cutting costs or increasing revenue. Hence Providence, a private university, dropping men's baseball to cut costs, instead of raising tuition and fees.

Corrections to the Part 1 Data

One reader caught a pretty severe error in the Big Ten revenue/expense data in Part 1. I have since lost the original email, but the reader alerted me to the fact that the Big Ten expense data seemed to be incorrect. She added the expense numbers up and got a higher total figure than I did, and found that instead of Big Ten schools making \$2.3 million per team, as I had reported, they actually lost \$165,000 per school.

This is a pretty serious error. My calculations somehow dropped about \$27 million in expenses from the Big Ten's total. I reported Big Ten Conference income as \$415,624,664 and expenses as \$390,344,592, when the actual expense total, if you added up the figures in my spreadsheet using a calculator, came out to \$417,441,606.

The error was easy to find. My original spreadsheet had Purdue's expenses listed as \$27,097,014, but the problem is, the person who entered the data actually typed in "\$27,,097,014" for the figure — notice the extra comma? When I started adding that "number" into spreadsheet formulas, it totaled up as a zero instead of the actual numeric value.

In addition to finding the Purdue expense error, which threw the calculations off significantly, I was able to track down data for Oregon, which had been missing from the PAC 10 totals. Here are the previous tables from Part 1 and the updated tables from this follow-up:

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(continued from page 21)

Total Revenue and Expenses by Conference, 1998-99 (Sorted by Revenue - Original)

Conference	Revenue	Expenses	Net
BIG TEN	\$415,624,664	\$390,344,592	\$25,280,072
SEC	\$373,318,030	\$364,558,615	\$8,759,415
BIG 12	\$306,710,344	\$309,871,721	\$(3,161,377)
PAC 10	\$269,579,656	\$265,761,865	\$3,817,791
ACC	\$226,996,942	\$222,907,003	\$4,089,939
BIG EAST	\$224,894,472	\$271,805,609	\$(46,911,137)

Total Revenue and Expenses by Conference, 1998-99 (Sorted by Revenue - Revised)

Conference	Revenue	Expenses	Net
BIG TEN	\$415,624,664	\$417,441,606	(\$1,816,942)
SEC	\$373,318,030	\$364,558,615	\$8,759,415
BIG 12	\$306,710,344	\$309,871,721	\$(3,161,377)
PAC 10	\$303,708,855	\$301,224,632	\$2,484,223
ACC	\$226,996,942	\$222,907,003	\$4,089,939
BIG EAST	\$224,894,472	\$271,805,609	\$(46,911,137)

Note: corrections made added Purdue's previously-omitted expense totals to the Big Ten and added Oregon's revenue and expense totals to the PAC 10.

Per-team Revenue and Expenses by Conference, 1998-99 (Sorted by Per-team Revenue - Original)

Conference	Per-team Rev.	Per-team Exp.:	Per-team Net
BIG TEN	\$37,784,060	\$35,485,872	\$2,298,188
SEC	\$31,109,836	\$30,379,885	\$729,951
PAC 10	\$29,953,295	\$29,529,096	\$424,199
BIG 12	\$25,559,195	\$25,822,643	\$(263,448)
ACC	\$25,221,882	\$24,767,445	\$454,438
BIG EAST	\$16,063,891	\$19,414,686	\$(3,350,796)

Per-team Revenue and Expenses by Conference, 1998-99 (Sorted by Per-team Revenue - Revised)

Conference	Per-team Rev.	Per-team Exp.:	Per-team Net
BIG TEN	\$37,784,060	\$37,949,237	(\$165,177)
SEC	\$31,109,836	\$30,379,885	\$729,951
PAC 10	\$30,370,886	\$30,122,463	\$248,422
BIG 12	\$25,559,195	\$25,822,643	\$(263,448)
ACC	\$25,221,882	\$24,767,445	\$454,438
BIG EAST	\$16,063,891	\$19,414,686	\$(3,350,796)

Note: corrections made added Purdue's previously-omitted expense totals to the Big Ten and added Oregon's revenue and expense totals to the PAC 10.

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I apologize for the Purdue error, and if you downloaded the spreadsheet, please correct it in your version. I scanned the spreadsheet for other double-comma entries (I had noticed one *before* running my article and had caught it) and did not find any.

You can find the Oregon data, and any other data that is missing from the original spreadsheet, at this Web address:

<http://chronicle.com/stats/genderequity/>

Simply do a search on any team of interest. You can even pull up lists of other teams in the selected team's conference.

That's it for follow-up comments to Part 1 of "The Money-Makers." I hope you learned something, as I did.

Now, I can only hope Part 2 isn't so chock full of unclear points and mistakes in the data ...

The Big East at 10

by Jim Alderson

A decade has passed since the creation of what was then known as the Big East Football Conference. A conference round-robin did not begin until 1993, but 1991 was the year the conference hung out its football shingle. It has been an eventful ten years. Tech, the last member chosen to fill out the conference, has benefited the most, as BE membership has enabled us to reach heights unimaginable prior to our inclusion. Some others haven't done too badly, either.

Four times in the ten years, a BE team has played for the MNC. Forty percent isn't too shabby. In the eight years of round-robin play, four different teams have won conference championships; few conferences have conferred championship rings during the same time period on half their teams. There have been bumps and glitches along the way, such as Miami's probation, and a perception that the Big East is not that good, generally voiced whenever Syracuse wins the league.

The league is not without potential problems down the road, as membership retention remains an iffy proposition and the unwillingness of large numbers of fans from seven of the member schools to travel to bowl games, coupled with NCAA rules that only allow Tech to play in one per year, means that guaranteed BE bowl slots are going to be hard to come by.

All in all, however, and especially from Tech's perspective, it has been a positive thing. What follows is a look at all eight teams, from the past to the future, going from the bottom (or in this case, booted) up, ending of course with the good guys.

Temple

The past: The Owls were reeling as the Big East began football play. Jerry Berndt was the coach, brought in to deal with the probation inflicted during the reign of former coach and former Hokie QB Bruce Arians (Arians was Tech's primary signal-caller in 1974). Berndt had somehow stumbled into a 7-4 record in 1990, which included a victory over Tech, but in 91 and 92 had begun what were to be the hallmarks of Owl football, the 2-9 and 1-10 record. He was axed and Ron Dickerson was brought in.

It was one of the worst coaching hires in the history of football. Dickerson took a bad program and made it worse, turning in a five-year ledger of 8-47; three of the victories coming in his last year, 1997, three times in five years going 1-10, and of his 8 victories, 3 were against MAC programs. In the Big East under Dickerson the Owls were a woeful 4-31, beating Pitt twice, Boston College once, and a Rutgers program that was being trashed just as badly by Terry Shea once.

Dickerson was unceremoniously fired after 1997, and Bobby Wallace was brought in. Wallace turned in a pair of 2-9 seasons in his first two years, spicing things up in 1998 with the biggest upset in the history of BE football, that stunner over Tech. Wallace got the Owls to 4-7 last year, wildly successful by Temple standards, and has done a rather remarkable job in taking what was truly a ground zero rebuilding job and turning the Owls into a fairly competitive team.

The present: An improved team and a weak out of conference schedule has Temple dreaming of a winning season and a bowl bid. Lots of luck. While new coaches at Rutgers and West Virginia

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might enable the Owls to manage a 6-5, their lame duck status means the only way they get one of the BE's bowl slots is if there is nobody else to fill it.

The future: Grim is an understatement. Temple will be booted from the BE after the coming season, and snatched away will be the lifeblood of their program, the fat television check. How a program that spends less money on football than many I-AA programs will replace that cash seems quite difficult. Also, Bobby Wallace, who has tried to parlay that 1998 win over Tech into another job, can be expected to soon be out the door. They are talking big at Temple, but for all intents and purposes, as a major football player, they are done.

Rutgers

The past: Things seemed bright for Rutgers at the dawn of the BEFC. Under Doug Graber, the Knights went 6-5 in 1991 and followed up the next year with a 7-4 log that included a thrilling last-second Hail Mary win over Tech. Things declined as the next three years produced records of 4-7, 5-5-1 and 4-7. The natives had become restless and Graber was fired. Brought in was Terry Shea; sheer disaster followed. In five years Shea compiled an 11-44 record that was deceptively good, as three of his wins came against Division I-AA teams, another over weakling Buffalo and three more against the service academies. Shea was a Dickersonian 4-31 in the Big East, half of the conference wins over Temple (even though Shea managed what would have seemed impossible, actually compiling an overall losing record of 2-3 to the Owls). Few coaches have ever been more deserving of being fired, which Shea was within seconds of the end of last season.

The present: Alumnus Greg Schiano becomes the latest to move into the coaching graveyard that is Rutgers football. He takes over a team that is the least-talented in the Big East by a wide margin. He recruited decently in his first year, and several of the incoming frosh should quickly be on the field, not exactly good news because a team that plays large numbers of true freshmen is a team that loses large numbers of games. Games against Buffalo, Connecticut and Navy are winnable; anything else and Schiano should receive Coach of the Year consideration.

The future: Rutgers remains the BE's enigma. They are a large university located in the middle of New Jersey's huge amounts of high school talent, few who give their state university a second look. Rutgers should have been the school to accomplish what Tech did. They did not, in large parts due to lousy coaching and administrative indifference and in some cases hostility to the football program. No one in the Rutgers front office has given the high-profile boost to winning football that Dr. Torgersen gave Tech. Schiano will have to convince both high school seniors and a largely skeptical Rutgers community that winning football is obtainable and beneficial. It will be a daunting task.

West Virginia

The past: Don Nehlen's Mountaineers went 11-9-2 in the BE's first two football seasons before making a big splash in 1993, going 11-0 and winning the first year of conference round-robin play. Success generally followed, with winning seasons and bowl bids in 1994, 96, 98 and 2000, Nehlen's

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last, sandwiched around losing marks in 1995 and 99. They followed up their perfect 93 conference record by going 4-3 four straight years and 5-2 in 1998, operating usually just behind the top-of-the-BE pack of Miami, Syracuse and Tech, before slipping to 3-4 league marks both of the last two years. Nehlen's teams were always tough and physical, and he made up for the lack of in-state recruiting prospects by establishing a recruiting network that scoured the entire east coast for quality players, with much of Nehlen's success built upon Florida recruits.

The present: The Neers have replaced an established winner with an unproven coach. Rich Rodriguez, another in the "let's hire an alumnus and see if lightning strikes twice" method of hiring college football coaches made popular by Frank Beamer, takes over his alma mater. He has instituted sweeping changes on both sides of the ball, installing the run and shoot offense he and mentor Tommy Bowden successfully ran at Clemson and Tulane, and bringing in former Tech Defensive Coordinator Phil Elmassian to install Tech's attacking defense. The problem is they are doing it with Nehlen's personnel, recruited for entirely different systems. It should be a transition year in Motown; Coach Rod will need time to match abilities to schemes. Matching last year's 6-5 record should be difficult.

The future: Recruiting is the big thing here. West Virginia, the state, produces few quality college football prospects. Nehlen compensated through an extensive network of contacts, particularly in Pennsylvania and Florida. Can Rodriguez build a comparable network, and how long will it take? If he is able to have the same success in recruiting other people's back yards as Nehlen, records comparable to Nehlen's can be expected. If not, the BE will have another Rutgers on its hands.

Pittsburgh

The past: The glory days of Tony Dorsett, Dan Marino, the MNC and national prominence were a dim memory when the BE began playing football in 1991. The dreary days of Paul Hackett were drawing to a close with a 6-5 1991 record and one of 3-9 in 1992, Hackett's last. Johnny Majors, who won big at Pitt in the Seventies before leaving for Tennessee, had been forced off the Vols sideline in a palace coup led by his assistant Phil Fulmer, and was brought back to Pittsburgh in the hopes he could restore the Panthers' fading luster. It didn't happen.

Things had changed in Pennsylvania, and Joe Paterno had moved into a dominant position that Majors could not crack. His recruiting was poor, and it showed in his four-year record of 12-32, 7-21 in the Big East. Majors gave up the ghost after 96, and Walt Harris, the star of John Cooper's Ohio State staff, was brought on board in 1997. He caught both Tech and Miami in down years and experienced early success, going 6-5 and sneaking into the Liberty Bowl. A rebuilding job that included ridding the program of malcontents recruited by Majors then began, evident in the 2-9 mark in 1998. Harris improved to 5-6 in 1999 before getting back to a bowl last year with a 7-4 slate.

The present: Pitt [I don't care what the Pitt[sburgh] administration wants to call them, the Panthers are still Pitt to me and virtually all of their alumni] seems poised to crack the top of the BE. Harris has followed the Frank Beamer blueprint of building a program, sans the scholarship-losing proba-

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tion, and has gradually improved recruiting. The Panthers move into the city's new football stadium, which they will share with the Steelers, and their early OOC of home games against East Tennessee State, DI-A newbie South Florida and UAB is designed to acclimate them to their new digs and establish some sort of home field advantage in preparation for what will be a huge game for the Harris regime, a Thursday night home game with Miami. If Pitt wins that one, and they just might, they could roll to a huge year, especially with Tech also paying a visit in November.

The future: Bright, as long as Harris sticks around. He was denied the opportunity to interview to replace Cooper at Ohio State, which probably doesn't sit too well, and a big year might have Harris casting around for the big payday that the financially strapped Pittsburgh athletic department probably couldn't match. There is opportunity in Pittsburgh, however. Joe Paterno at Penn State is coming to the end of the road, and the recruiting inroads already made by Harris could turn into a bonanza when JoePa finally catches the Bear's record and calls it quits.

Syracuse

The past: Syracuse was the prime mover and shaker behind the creation of Big East football, and at its inception in 1991 were a marquee team. Dick MacPherson built a fine program, taking the Orangemen to four straight bowls before tiring of winning games and heading to the New England Patriots. Paul Pasqualoni took over and the bowl streak reached six straight by 1992. It came to a screeching halt in Lane Stadium late in the 1993 season as Tech pounded SU 45-24 for an Independence Bowl berth in a game that marked the first in a series of bad losses suffered by Pasqualoni-coached teams in Blacksburg.

Syracuse finished 7-4 in 1994 with no bowl bid. Things perked up the next year with the arrival of quarterback Donovan McNabb, who in four years led SU to records of 9-3, 9-3, 9-4 and 8-4, two outright Big East championships, and a share of a third. McNabb could never get the Orange over the Top Ten hump, however, and Syracuse winning conference championships with mediocre records had much to do with the Big East being classified as a lightweight conference. The championships left with McNabb, and Pasqualoni has struggled to a pair of 6-5 records since McNabb's departure.

The present: Pasqualoni has been under fire, and this year probably will not help. Most of the offensive staff checked out with McNabb, and Syracuse has struggled on that side of the line ever since. The underpinning of the fine defense that has carried the Orangemen has also now graduated, just at the time the OOC has been seriously upgraded. Pasqualoni recruits fairly well, and there is sufficient talent to avoid a plunge to the bottom of the BE, but even another 6-5 record should be considered a major accomplishment. If Syracuse stumbles as expected early against that killer OOC, things could go sour in a hurry, and this year could be the beleaguered Paul P's last running the Orange.

The future: Murky. If the season goes into the tank and Pasqualoni is fired, a new staff has to establish itself in a conference where the top continues to improve. Syracuse is always going to be tough at home due to the Carrier Dome, which provides one of the finest home-field advantages in

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sports. Syracuse is always going to have problems outside the Carrier Dome on grass, which means it will be very difficult to ever achieve the kind of success achieved by Miami and recently Tech. There seem to be problems on the horizon in upstate New York.

Boston College

The past: BC went 4-7 in 1991, before Tom Coughlin improved them to 8-2-1 in 1992, good for a Hall of Fame Bowl bid. The good times continued in 1993 with an 8-3 mark and a Carquest Bowl appearance. Coughlin then left for the Jacksonville Jaguars, and was replaced by longtime NFL and former Tech assistant Dan Henning. What followed was a case study in running a program into the ground. Henning did cop a third straight bowl bid in 1994, the Aloha, before dropping to 4-8 in 1995 and 5-7 in 1996. Henning also presided over a major gambling scandal, lost control of his program, and generally demonstrated why some assistants should stay just that. He was canned and former George Welsh assistant Tom O'Brien was brought in. O'Brien struggled to a pair of 4-7 records his first two years before breaking through in 1999 with an 8-3 mark and an Insight.com Bowl game. The record slipped to 6-5 last year, still good enough for the Aloha Bowl, which the Eagles won over Arizona State.

The present: BC has a pretty good offense, logical for a former offensive coach. The Eagles struggle defensively against good teams, however, and quite a few dot their 2001 schedule. They will be a dangerous team capable of beating anybody on a given Saturday, but lack the overall talent to win every game day. 7-4 seems like their level.

The future: Fairly solid. Boston College comes across as the quintessential middle of the pack team. There is enough talent to keep the winning records and minor bowl bids flowing, and O'Brien seems capable of keeping it that way. There is not, however, the financial backing or interest in the program for the Eagles to do much more than occasionally challenge the top of the conference. O'Brien seems to be getting dug in after being passed over in the confused search to replace his mentor George Welsh, and may be on Chestnut Hill for the long haul. This can be a good, but not great, program.

Miami

The past: Miami has one of the best college football histories around during the last couple of decades. They got the Big East Football Conference off to a rousing start by winning the MNC in 1991 and playing for it the next year, losing to Alabama. They were quite surprised in 1993 when West Virginia won the first year of conference round-robin play, but bounced back in 1994 to again play for, and lose, the national championship game, this time to Nebraska.

Following that season, Miami coach Dennis Erickson observed the NCAA wolves gathering around the Orange Bowl and decided to get as far away from Miami as he could while still remaining within the continental United States, taking over the Seattle Seahawks. After an extended search that found Miami administrators often being told "No" by coaches not wanting to deal with the impending probation and sanctions, the job went to former Canes assistant Butch Davis. He finished 8-3 in his

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first season before the NCAA hammer dropped and Miami voided its share of the conference title.

Another 8-3 and a share of the BE championship came in 1996 before the loss of scholarships hit with a losing 5-6 slate in 1997. Butch and the Canes rebounded quickly, however, going 9-3 in 1998 and 9-4 in 99 before re-claiming past glories and winning the BE last year. Davis, after loud and long claims that he was at Miami for good, then followed Howard Schnellenberger, Jimmy Johnson and Erickson before him and bolted for greener pastures, heading for Cleveland and a \$3 million salary.

The present: Miami once again found that successful coaches were not beating down their door for the job, in large part due to lousy timing by Davis in leaving just before Signing Day. The job went to Davis' offensive coordinator, Larry Coker. The big question mark concerning the Canes is whether Coker is up to the job. Davis was an excellent recruiter and Coker inherits one of the most talented rosters in the country; the Canes should be very good. How good depends on the abilities of Coker and the new staff. A killer out of conference schedule would seem to rule out national honors, and even a conference title depends on a December trip to Virginia Tech, where Coker will face a head coach and staff much more experienced and wiser than he and his.

The future: Good and fair. Miami is located in one of the hottest of high school football hotbeds. Location alone guarantees a lot of talent will continue to come into the program. The Canes should always be very good. The sort of coaching stability that has been a large part of the success at Tech continues to be elusive. The coaches leave because Miami, as a moderately-funded program at a private school, cannot provide the budget or the facilities found at rivals Florida and Florida State, or many of the heavyweights increasingly found on Miami's OOC. They will always compete for the Big East crown, but a fifth MNC is going to be tough to come by, and conference championships are not a given. With a fan base as volatile as Miami's, can any coach win enough to please them? Coker is now under the microscope. Can he succeed, and if he does, how long does he stick around?

Virginia Tech

The past: The creation of Big East football finally gave Tech its long-sought conference home, as the Hokies beat out Louisville and East Carolina for the eighth and final membership spot. Tech did not exactly set the world on fire in the first season of 1991, as the over-scheduled Hokies went 5-6. Disaster struck the next year as numerous second-half leads were blown by a depth-shy Tech team that ended with a 2-8-1 record and loud howls for the head of Frank Beamer. Athletic Director Dave Braine ignored them, keeping Beamer and instead ordering him to rid his staff of several assistants.

The changes worked. In 1993, Tech blew to a 9-3 record culminating in an Independence Bowl rout of Indiana. The good times were just beginning. A Gator bowl bid came the next year, and then Tech hit the big time, heading to the Sugar and Orange Bowls the next two years. The next two years brought two more bowl bids before Beamer escalated the program again, going 22-2 over the last two seasons, including a trip back to the Sugar Bowl in 1999, this time for the MNC.

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The present: It is the Year After at Tech. The man on the spot is quarterback Grant Noel. How well he responds will be the key to sustaining Tech's Top Ten run. While there are three well-regarded frosh quarterbacks on the way, Tech's offense cannot be learned in three weeks in August. Noel will be given every opportunity to prove he can lead a team otherwise laden with talent. True freshmen quarterback teams do not win big, and if Tech starts one it will be a sure indication the staff has written off the season. The early schedule is perfect to provide experience and confidence for Noel and the reloaded offensive line expected to pave the way for what should be a devastating ground game. Experience means a lot, and the Tech defense will have more of it, and should be dominant. Special teams, as they always are under Beamer, are a given. The game at Pitt will be very difficult, but this team can easily go 9-2, with 10-1 a distinct possibility.

The future: Bright. The program is on solid ground and should remain there. Recruiting has been dominant in the state, and the staff is now starting to take it to the national level enjoyed by most top programs. Coaching stability, which has been paramount in Tech's rise in the college football rankings, is now the envy of all other Big East programs. It will be key to Tech remaining at the top.

Frank Beamer's well-publicized dalliances with other programs have been an annoyance, which hopefully, as other schools become weary of being toyed with or used, will stop. An important question is can the funds be found to keep the senior staff so vital to the program's success intact, as Tech will remain for the foreseeable future a budgetary middle-of-the-pack program. The coaching staff must also deal with the huge expectations eleven wins each of the last two years has placed on the program. But, all in all, these are not bad problems to have. Few Hokies would trade them for those facing Temple or Rutgers, for instance, or most teams Virginia Tech plays.

Short Take: Catching Up With Danny McGrath

by Scott Veith

Virginia Tech's wrestling team could use a 275 pound high school district champ from central Virginia. Unfortunately for the wrestlers, this district champ will be strapping on the pads for the Tech football team next year.

Danny McGrath, a 6'2" guard from Herndon, VA, will bring the mentality of a wrestler to the Tech O-Line next year. He chose Tech over Virginia, Penn State, Maryland, Notre Dame and others.

"Tech's program is on the rise," McGrath said. "I want to be part of a team that just keeps getting better and stays at the top."

The lineman started his high school career as a two sport athlete, participating in football and baseball. Classmates and teammates convinced him to go out for the wrestling team his junior year, and his mat career skyrocketed.

His senior season, the wrestling squad finished with a district championship and was sixth in their region. McGrath was 22-6 on the year and won the district tournament as well.

"I think I just got used to the pressure of wrestling," McGrath said. "It's a lot of pressure, especially as the heavyweight. A lot of times, the match comes down to you. I liked it."

Although he made no mention of trying to wrestle in addition to playing football at Tech, don't rule the possibility out just yet. He said he's bored when he doesn't have a full schedule. And he said rather candidly that three sports have kept him in shape over the past two years.

"I like playing three sports," McGrath said. It keeps me active. It keeps me from being fat and lazy"

McGrath was a three year starter at offensive guard in high school and spent time on the defensive line as a junior and senior. Like many high school linemen, McGrath played nearly every play of his senior season, save the kick-off and kick return units.

But with a three-sport schedule on top of a busy high school social life, the questions about being prepared for college football arise. College offensive lineman need to be strong from day one to avoid being lost in the wash.

McGrath says don't worry. He's devised a plan to take 90 minutes out of his day at high school to hit the weights. He gave up a study hall and gym class to get an-hour-and-a-half in the weight room.

"My bench is up to 380, he said." And I'm squatting 460, so I'm doing O.K."

Not bad for a kid who, among three sports, has played over 60 games since September. By the way, his baseball team starts playoffs this weekend. They'll need the big first baseman to continue the sweet swing that has earned him a pair of home runs and over 20 RBI this year.

Danny McGrath

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Despite the workout schedule and the natural athleticism, McGrath said he'll probably redshirt next year. He'd like to get his bench over 400 and his 40-yard dash time under 5.0 seconds before he's competing against athletes from Miami, Boston College and Virginia.

McGrath said he's ready to get to campus. He's been committed to Tech for nearly two years and he's been excited about joining his new teammates since the day he signed.

"This (football) season, I was already signed, so I was matched up against the best guy every week," McGrath said. "They always wanted to challenge the Tech kid."

Get used to it, Danny. There's plenty more where that came from.

Inside the Numbers: Bowl Ratings and Attendance

by Will Stewart, *TechSideline.com*

Back in issue #2, a contact in the television industry sent me a spreadsheet of college football TV ratings for the 2000 season. It was interesting data that gave us a good idea about where the Hokies fell in the ratings game.

At the time, my contact promised to send me bowl ratings and attendance figures for a future article. He came through a few weeks ago, and here we are, at "Inside the Numbers," to take a look.

In 1998, there were 22 bowl games. In 1999, that number increased to 23 (the Mobile Alabama Bowl was added), and in 2000, it went up again to 25 (with the advent of the GalleryFurniture.com and Silicon Valley Classic bowls).

For the 2001 season, the New Orleans Bowl has been added. It will pit Sun Belt and Mountain West teams against each other in the Superdome on December 18th. As of April 27, 2001, 25 bowls had received certification from the NCAA for the 2001 season. The MicronPC Bowl has not been recertified yet, but it is expected to receive recertification, which will make it the 26th bowl for 2001-2002.

But that's a sidebar. The purpose of this latest "Inside the Numbers" article is to see how well Virginia Tech did in both bowl ratings and bowl attendance during the 1998-2000 time period. We'll present statistics for TV ratings, attendance, and attendance as a percentage of stadium capacity to see how well the Hokies stacked up.

First, here's a reminder of how to interpret TV ratings.

Understanding TV Ratings

Availability: Free over-the-air network TV (CBS, ABC, NBC, Fox) reaches 100 million households. Cable and satellite networks (ESPN, ESPN2) reach 80 million households.

Rating: percentage of households that are watching a network out of those that *could* watch a network. For example, a 5.0 rating on CBS means that roughly five million households watched the game (5 out of 100). A 5.0 rating on ESPN means that roughly four million households tuned in (4 out of 80).

Share: the percentage of households watching a particular show out of the total number of households that have their televisions turned on at the time.

Households (HH): the number of "houses" that were actually watching, in other words a raw, numerical measure of the number of viewing households, as opposed to Rating and Share, which are percentages. Household data is expressed in thousands, so an HH=2500 is 2.5 million households.

Example: The 2000 Big XII Championship game aired in prime time on ABC, had a rating of 8.2, a share of 14.8, and the number of households was 8,366,000. This means that the total number of

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households that had a television on during that time was about 55,500,000 (8.3 million out of 55.5 million is about 14.8%), thus deriving an audience share of 14.8. (Exact percentages will be off due to rounding and actual number of households in the U.S.)

The Music City Bowl

Tech played in the inaugural Music City Bowl against Alabama in 1998, wiping out the Tide 38-7 in a romp that kicked off the present-day Hokie hysteria. The 1998 "MCB," as it is affectionately called by Hokie fans, was played in Vanderbilt's stadium, which had a capacity of 41,000. The bowl has since moved to Adelphia Coliseum, the 67,000-seat venue that serves as the home of the Tennessee Titans.

Here are the TV ratings, attendance, and percentage of capacity figures for the Music City Bowl since its inception:

Music City Bowl TV Ratings and Attendance, 1998-2000

Season	Capacity	Teams	Attendance	% Cap.	Rating	Share	HH
1998	41,000	Alabama - Virginia Tech	41,248	101%	2.4	4.7	1841
1999	67,000	Kentucky - Syracuse	59,221	88%	2.8	6.2	2130
2000	67,000	Mississippi - West Virginia	47,119	70%	2.1	4.3	1660

Note: all three MCB's were played on Dec. 28th or 29th, all three were televised nationally on ESPN, and all three started at 4:00 or 5:00 p.m.

It's hard to say how many people would have attended the 1998 Music City Bowl had the stadium been bigger. Many Hokie and Tide fans could not obtain tickets, due to the huge demand from both schools. Given more space, it's not unreasonable to think that 50,000 to 60,000 fans would have attended the game. We'll never know.

Kentucky traveled very well to the 1999 Music City Bowl, so the attendance figures for 1999 are not a surprise, despite the presence of Syracuse, which travels very poorly. But why a Kentucky-Syracuse matchup drew better TV ratings than Virginia Tech-Alabama is a mystery. The games were both played on December 29th, which fell on a Tuesday in 1998 and a Wednesday in 1999, so the day of the week was not a factor.

The Sugar Bowl

For Sugar Bowl attendance and ratings are skewed by the fact that the Sugar Bowl was the national championship game in 1999/2000, but not in the other two years. So for this section, we'll take a look at the Sugar Bowl numbers, but later on, we'll look at national championship game ratings and attendance.

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Sugar Bowl TV Ratings and Attendance, 1998-2000

Season	Capacity	Teams	Attendance	% Cap.	Rating	Share	HH
1998	76,791	Texas A&M - Ohio St.	76,503	100%	11.5	20.4	11408
1999	76,791	Florida St. - Virginia Tech	79,280	103%	17.5	27.6	17683
2000	76,791	Florida - Miami	64,407	84%	13.0	21.2	13245

Note: all three Sugar Bowls were broadcast nationally on ABC. Game times were all between 8:00 and 9:00 pm. The game was played on 1/1/99, 1/4/00, and 1/2/01.

The great attendance and TV ratings for the 1999 championship game are no surprise, because it was the highly-hyped championship game, and it featured a marquee team in Florida State. The Hokies got down early but staged a stirring comeback, ensuring that viewers stayed tuned in.

The attendance figure for last year's Florida-Miami game is pathetic and reinforces the Canes' reputation as a team with fans that don't travel well. According to ESPN.com, the crowd of 64,407 was the smallest to ever watch a Sugar Bowl in the Superdome. Miami sold less than 10,000 of the 15,000 tickets both schools were required to take, while Florida sold all of theirs.

By comparison, the 1995 Sugar Bowl between Virginia Tech and Texas drew 70,283, which was perceived at the time as a low draw. But it was better than last season's Sugar Bowl by nearly 6,000 fans, and it even topped the 1998 attendance figure of 67,289 for Florida State-Ohio State.

The Gator Bowl

This is a very interesting set of data, because the last three Gator Bowls have included Notre Dame, Miami, and Virginia Tech. This gives us a great chance to compare the drawing power and TV ratings power of the three schools.

Gator Bowl TV Ratings and Attendance, 1998-2000

Season	Capacity	Teams	Attendance	% Cap.	Rating	Share	HH
1998	76,940	Notre Dame - GT	70,791	92%	6.4	13.4	6333
1999	76,940	Georgia Tech - Miami	43,416	56%	3.8	8.3	3865
2000	76,940	Clemson - VT	68,741	89%	4.8	9.8	4943

This table is more proof for two widely-held theories: (1) Notre Dame does very well in the television ratings; and (2) Miami doesn't travel well at all. Actually, I'm going to promote item #2 from "theory" to "fact."

The attendance figures from the 1998 ND-GT matchup show that not only is Notre Dame a good draw for their own fans, but they draw fans from the other school, as well. When GT was matched up with the Canes the next year, attendance plummeted, due to Miami's inability to bring fans and the fact that GT was playing in the game for the second year in a row. Not to mention that Notre Dame and Georgia Tech both have long, storied football traditions, and to the average GT fan, that holds more appeal than a matchup with Miami.

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The Clemson-VT game was well attended for obvious reasons. Number one, it was perceived as a great matchup between Virginia Tech QB Michael Vick and Clemson QB Woody Dantzler (it turned out to be a mismatch instead). Number two, both sets of fans travel well, enjoy playing against each other, and have mutual respect for each other's programs. Number three, Michael Vick was playing in the game (hence, the good TV ratings).

All in all, there are no surprises in the Gator Bowl data.

National Championship Games

Now let's put the 1999 Sugar Bowl (VT-FSU) up against the 1998 Fiesta Bowl (UT-FSU) and the 2000 Orange Bowl (OK-FSU). I realize I'm misstating the bowl years, but I'm referring to the seasons they applied to, not the actual calendar years they were played in.

National Championship Game TV Ratings and Attendance, 1998-2000

Season	Game	Capacity	Date	Teams	Att.	% Cap.	Rating	Share	HH
1998	Fiesta	73,471	1/4/99	FSU - Tenn.	80,470	110%	17.2	26.4	17081
1999	Sugar	76,791	1/4/00	FSU - VT	79,280	103%	17.5	27.6	17683
2000	Orange	75,000	1/3/01	OK - FSU	76,835	102%	17.8	28.1	18200

Note: all three games were broadcast nationally on ABC and were played at approx. 8:00 pm.

Again, no surprises here — great TV ratings and jam-packed stadiums. The BCS championship game appears to be building momentum as it gets older and ABC/Disney gets better and better at hyping it (they should just rename the ESPN network to BCSPN during the month of December, the way the boys in Bristol *constantly* hype the college championship).

As an aside, I don't know about you, but I'm getting pretty bored with watching FSU play for the national championship. I'm also having trouble getting over the fact that Tennessee figured it out in 1998 and Oklahoma figured it out in 2000, but the Hokies didn't figure it out in 1999. What's "it"? How to beat FSU for the national championship, of course.

Yep, that lost Sugar Bowl game still haunts me.

The Top 20

The remainder of this article is three tables showing the following figures for the last three years: (1) top 20 bowl crowds (number of fans) of the last three years; (2) top 20 bowl crowds (as a percent of capacity) of the last three years; and (3) top 20 rated bowls (in terms of TV households) of the last three years.

Please note when viewing the following tables that the three-year span covered includes 70 bowl games.

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Top 20 Bowl Crowds of the Last 3 Years, Raw Attendance

Rank	Season	Game	Teams	Att.	Cap.	% Cap.
1	2000	Rose	Purdue - Washington	94,392	91,000	104%
2	1998	Rose	UCLA - Wisconsin	93,872	91,000	103%
3	1999	Rose	Stanford - Wisconsin	93,731	91,000	103%
4	1998	Fiesta	Florida St. - Tennessee	80,470	73,471	110%
5	1999	Sugar	Florida St. - Virginia Tech	79,280	76,791	103%
6	2000	Orange	Oklahoma - Florida St.	76,835	75,000	102%
7	1998	Sugar	Texas A&M - Ohio St.	76,503	76,791	100%
8	2000	Fiesta	Notre Dame - Oregon State	75,428	73,471	103%
9	2000	Peach	Georgia Tech - LSU	73,614	71,228	103%
10	1999	Peach	Miss St. - Clemson	73,315	71,228	103%
11	1998	Peach	Virginia - Georgia	72,876	71,228	102%
12	1999	Cotton	Arkansas - Texas	72,723	68,252	107%
13	1998	Cotton	Miss. St. - Texas	72,611	68,252	106%
14	1999	Fiesta	Nebraska - Tennessee	71,526	73,471	97%
15	1998	Gator	Notre Dame - Georgia Tech	70,791	76,940	92%
16	1999	Orange	Alabama - Michigan	70,461	75,000	94%
17	2000	Gator	Clemson - Virginia Tech	68,741	76,940	89%
18	1998	Orange	Florida - Syracuse	67,919	75,000	91%
19	2000	Citrus	Michigan - Auburn	66,928	70,349	95%
20	1998	Outback	Kentucky - Penn St.	66,005	66,005	100%

The top 20 game crowds break down to 3 each of the Rose, Fiesta, Orange, and Peach Bowls; 2 each of the Sugar, Cotton, and Gator Bowls; 1 Citrus Bowl; and 1 Outback Bowl.

The only team to appear in the list for all 3 years is FSU. Teams appearing twice are Tennessee, Wisconsin, Michigan, VT, Notre Dame, Georgia Tech, Clemson, Mississippi State, and Texas.

Virginia Tech's 1998 Music City Bowl with Alabama, which was viewed by 41,000 fans, came in 50th on the list.

Top 20 Bowl Crowds of the Last 3 Years, Percent Capacity

Rank	Season	Game	Teams	Att.	Cap.	% Cap.
1	1998	Fiesta	Florida St. - Tennessee	80,470	73,471	110%
2	1999	Cotton	Arkansas - Texas	72,723	68,252	107%
3	1998	Cotton	Miss. St. - Texas	72,611	68,252	106%
4	2000	Rose	Purdue - Washington	94,392	91,000	104%
5	2000	Peach	Georgia Tech - LSU	73,614	71,228	103%
6	1999	Sugar	Florida St. - VT	79,280	76,791	103%
7	1998	Rose	UCLA - Wisconsin	93,872	91,000	103%
8	1999	Rose	Stanford - Wisconsin	93,731	91,000	103%
9	1999	Peach	Miss St. - Clemson	73,315	71,228	103%
10	2000	Fiesta	Notre Dame - Oregon St.	75,428	73,471	103%
11	2000	Orange	Oklahoma - Florida St.	76,835	75,000	102%
12	1998	Peach	Virginia - Georgia	72,876	71,228	102%

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13	1998	Music City	Alabama - Virginia Tech	41,248	41,000	101%
14	1999	Alamo	Penn St. - Texas A&M	65,380	65,000	101%
15	1998	Outback	Kentucky - Penn St.	66,005	66,005	100%
16	1998	Sugar	Texas A&M - Ohio St.	76,503	76,791	100%
17	2000	Mobile AL	TCU - Southern Miss	40,300	40,646	99%
18	1999	Independence	Mississippi - Oklahoma	49,873	50,459	99%
19	2000	Outback	Ohio St. - South Carolina	65,229	66,005	99%
20	1999	Humanitarian	Boise St. - Louisville	29,283	30,000	98%

A quick scan of the top 10 reveals what games are consistently packed:

- 1.) National championship games
- 2.) Texas in the Cotton Bowl
- 3.) The Rose Bowl
- 4.) The Peach Bowl

After that, it's a hodge-podge populated by teams that travel well, big-name bowls, and bowls with small capacities that happen to hit on a compelling regional matchup.

Virginia Tech appears twice on the list for the 1998 MCB and the 1999 Sugar Bowl. The 2000 Gator Bowl, at 89% capacity, finished at 39th out of 70 bowls.

Top 20 TV-Rated Bowl Games of the Last 3 Years, by Households

Rank	Season	Game	Net	Teams	Rating	Share	HH
1	2000	Orange	ABC	Oklahoma - Florida State	17.8	28.1	18200
2	1999	Sugar	ABC	Florida St. - Virginia Tech	17.5	27.6	17683
3	1998	Fiesta	ABC	Florida St. - Tennessee	17.2	26.4	17081
4	2000	Rose	ABC	Purdue - Washington	14.0	23.9	14295
5	1999	Rose	ABC	Stanford - Wisconsin	14.1	26.8	14181
6	1998	Rose	ABC	UCLA - Wisconsin	13.3	24.6	13263
7	2000	Sugar	ABC	Florida - Miami	13.0	21.2	13245
8	1999	Orange	ABC	Alabama - Michigan	11.3	20.6	11409
9	1998	Sugar	ABC	Texas A&M - Ohio St.	11.5	20.4	11408
10	2000	Fiesta	ABC	Notre Dame - Oregon State	10.7	17.7	10933
11	1999	Fiesta	ABC	Nebraska - Tennessee	9.5	15.0	9589
12	1999	Citrus	ABC	Florida - Mich. St.	9.0	19.6	9108
13	1998	Orange	ABC	Florida - Syracuse	8.4	14.4	8328
14	2000	Citrus	ABC	Michigan - Auburn	7.6	15.3	7747
15	1998	Citrus	ABC	Arkansas - Michigan	7.1	14.9	7071
16	1998	Gator	NBC	Notre Dame - Georgia Tech	6.4	13.4	6333
17	1998	Aloha	ABC	Colorado - Oregon	5.5	17.6	5473
18	2000	Gator	NBC	Clemson - Virginia Tech	4.8	9.8	4943
19	1998	Holiday	ESPN	Nebraska - Arizona	6.0	9.8	4557
20	2000	Cotton	Fox	Tennessee - Kansas St.	4.4	9.1	4489

As expected, the three national championship games are at the top, winning by a significant mar-

Analysis

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gin. They all pulled Ratings in the 17's.

What happens next is interesting: the Rose Bowl games (none of which have been national championship games — next year's Rose Bowl will be the first time it rotates through as the championship) form a second tier (4-6) Rated in the 13's and 14's. They are matched in that second tier only by last year's Sugar Bowl between Florida and Miami, with a 13.0 Rating. It finishes #7 on our list.

I find that interesting because it supports the notion that the Miami Hurricanes draw good television ratings. That's not to discredit the Florida Gators, because they're a good TV draw, too, and that Sugar Bowl was helped by the fact that Miami had an outside shot at the national championship. But nonetheless, I think it's noteworthy that last year's Sugar Bowl was the only non-championship, non-Rose-Bowl game to pull a Rating of 13 or higher.

After that, bowls 8-10 form a third tier of BCS bowls that pulled Ratings around 11. From that point on, bowls 11-20 all have Ratings lower than 10.

Virginia Tech appears in the list twice, at #2 and #18. VT's Music City Bowl appearance, with a rating of 2.4 (1.841 million households), finished #52 out of 70 bowls.

The Data

As always, the data used in this report can be viewed as an HTML document or downloaded as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

To view the data in your web browser as an HTML document go here:

<http://www.techsideline.com/tslextra/issue007/footballbowlratings2000.htm>

MS Excel File (Excel 97 compatible):

<http://www.techsideline.com/tslextra/issue007/footballbowlratings2000.xls>

(Right-click the link and do a "Save Link As" or "Save Target As" to save the Excel file to disk.)

Feature

Inside TSL: One of My Better Days

by Will Stewart, TechSideline.com

Tuesday, April 17th was one of my more interesting days as the GM of TechSideline.com. That was the day TechLocker.com was announced as one of two outlets carrying the Michael Vick autographed prints, and it was also the day that Jim Rome repeated the name of the web site — three times — to a national radio audience.

It started on March 2nd with an email from Locke White, the Licensing Director at Virginia Tech. Locke was brief, to the point, and mysterious:

Give me a call. Working on something neat that you might want to get involved with.—
Locke.

As you can imagine, that sounded intriguing. Licensing Directors have one purpose in life: make money. Any time they say they're working on something "neat," what they're saying is, "We've thought up a new way to make money."

So I gave him a call, and he told me about a deal that his department had signed with Michael Vick (more precisely Vick's agency, Octagon) to put Vick's name on a line of products that would generate money for academic scholarships. At the time, White wasn't sure what the full product line was going to be. He knew the old standbys like T-shirts, golf shirts, and hats were going to be part of the deal, but he wasn't sure what else they were going to be able to offer.

But he did know about one item: a limited-edition, signed Michael Vick print. Only 777 made, only 700 sold to the general public, and carrying a whopping price tag of \$125, with the full proceeds going to Virginia Tech's general scholarship fund. Locke White wanted to know if we, along with Tech Bookstore, wanted to have exclusive rights to carry the print.

When you're offered an opportunity like that, your brain goes into cost/benefit analysis mode. Since all proceeds go to VT, that meant there would be no profit built in for TechLocker.com. What a shame, because there isn't a retailer in the world that would turn down the opportunity to carry a \$125 item that they *know* would sell like the proverbial hotcakes.

So what was the upside? Publicity and cachet, of course. Even though TechSideline.com/TechLocker.com wouldn't make any money off the prints, the publicity from carrying them would be significant. First of all, anything surrounding Vick generates big publicity, and secondly, White planned on making a big media splash with the product lines, especially the print.

In addition to the publicity, let's be honest about something that a fledgling Web business like TechSideline.com craves dearly: legitimacy. Being part of a deal involving VT Licensing, Michael Vick, and Tech Bookstore would be a huge feather in our caps, even if it didn't mean putting money in our pockets.

And lastly, the cause is a good one — Virginia Tech's general scholarship fund — and I was itching to show that TechSideline.com and TechLocker.com *can move some product*. Not that we blow away everybody else in VT sales (we don't), but I knew that with a high-interest item like this and

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the motivated, excited audience that visits TechSideline.com, we could make Locke White look like a smart man by selling a bunch of these prints for him.

So we threw our hat in the ring and agreed to help sell the prints. That was in early March, and although Vick's deal with VT Licensing was made public shortly thereafter, White told us to sit on the news that we would be carrying the print. We agreed to take the orders for Licensing (we added an \$8 charge for shipping and handling) and to charge people's credit cards, but Licensing would be doing the actual shipping of the prints.

We also decided as a company to let you, our TSL Extra subscribers, have your 10% discount on the prints. This meant we would have to eat \$13.30 for every \$133.00 print sold to a TSLX subscriber, but we wanted your 10% discount at TechLocker.com to apply to this item, as well.

The Press Conference

So we hunkered down and waited, and we thought April 10th was the big day for the Vick press conference. But Vick had to cancel at the last minute, and the press conference was delayed another week.

Finally, April 17th arrived, and I made my way to the Tech Bookstore, where the press conference was being held. On the way, Jim Rome, who runs the nationally-syndicated Jim Rome radio sports talk show (more on that later), announced that he would be having Michael Vick on during the 1:00 hour. Hmm, I thought, that was interesting, because Vick was supposed to be at Tech Bookstore at 1:30 for the press conference. The wonder of cell phones...

While parking my van, I saw James Arthur, whom many of you know as N2VTFTBL on the TSL message boards and as TSL's recruiting coverage editor and sometime-columnist from August 1999 to July 2000. He was at Tech Bookstore for the press conference, so I invited him into the van to listen to the first part of Mike's interview with Jim Rome.

The interview got underway, and I found myself, for some reason, not really wanting to listen to Mike. Mike once again reiterated how much he wanted to stay at Virginia Tech, but the lure of being the top pick in the draft (which he turned out to be just four days later) was too much, and he had to go. It bugs me to hear him talk like that, because I *know* he wanted to stay at Virginia Tech, it just didn't make any sense to.

"You want to cut this off?" I asked N2.

"Yeah, sure, let's go in," he said.

So we went into the book store. To make a long story short, the press conference was well-attended. Channels 7 and 10 out of Roanoke were there, and so was Channel 13 out of Lynchburg, plus about a half-dozen newspaper reporters, it seemed. Coach Beamer showed up through the front door (he drives a Cadillac STS, for those who are interested), but Vick was hidden in the back

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of the store, out of sight (keeping up with the car theme, I didn't see his Lincoln Navigator in the parking lot).

At about 1:40, ten minutes late, Vick came out, wearing boots, baggy jeans (*all* jeans are baggy these days it seems), and one of the Michael Vick golf shirts with the embroidered VT helmet and Michael Vick signature on the chest.

Locke White, Beamer, Vick, and a couple other folks took up their places behind the podium. Bill Roth emceed the festivities, and he first introduced White and Larry Hincker, an Associate Vice President at VT and the head of University Relations. Hincker spoke briefly of the rise to prominence of VT football under Vick, and then Roth introduced Coach Beamer.

Beamer talked about how great it had been to coach the best player in the country, but more importantly what a great person Vick is. He said he was proud that Vick, who had done so much for Virginia Tech on the field, was doing something off the field as well, by trying to help the Licensing Department make money for the general scholarship fund.

Roth then introduced Vick, and as Vick stepped up to the podium, that's when the media really focused in. The TV cameramen adjusted their lenses, and the still photographers' camera shutters started to click in earnest.

Vick's comments were brief. Vick talked about what a "great ride" it had been at Virginia Tech, and he thanked Coach Beamer for the opportunity to play. He said that he was very appreciative of the things that had happened to him at Virginia Tech, and that's why he was trying to give something back to the university through the Vick licensing agreement. "Virginia Tech will always be home for me," he said, "and I'll always come back. It's a big part of me."

And I was struck once again by the image of a young man who was leaving before he wanted to. Thankfully, it would work out later that week for Michael.

After Vick, Locke White came on to explain the Vick "program," which he says he hopes will generate \$100,000 for the Licensing Department. For perspective, income from licensed VT products generated just \$350,000 in income as recently as 1999. That went up to \$550,000 in 2000, and the forecast for 2001 is \$800,000, including a hoped-for \$100,000 from the Vick products. White says his department is shooting for \$1 million in 2002, which he believes would place Virginia Tech in the top ten nationally.

White talked about the prints, saying that only 700 would be made available to the public at \$125 a pop. "They're going to be available here at the Tech Bookstore," he said, "and on-line at uh, uh, TechSideline.com. We're really excited about it, and we recommend that everyone go out and get on the Internet or come in and buy one of the prints, because once they're gone, they're gone."

I would like to tell you that when he said "TechSideline.com," a murmur went through the crowd, and pencils scribbled furiously, followed by a reporter shouting, "Hey, there's Will Stewart!" leading to a

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mad rush over to me to find out how TechSideline.com got involved in this deal. But of course, no such thing happened.

A humorous side note is that I recalled Locke saying “uh” about five times before saying “TechSideline.com,” but when I sat down to write this article, my tape of the press conference revealed it to be just twice. And although it seemed to me that the wait between “Tech Bookstore” and “TechSideline.com” was a pregnant pause of five seconds or more, it really wasn’t very long at all, barely a noticeable hitch in White’s speech.

A few other things happened at the press conference — White and Vick unveiled an eight-foot version of the print, and Vick was interviewed by the media about his impending selection by the San Diego Chargers (or so we all thought). Mike was very soft-spoken when he was interviewed by the media, most of whom had covered him throughout his Tech career. He look straight at the reporters who were asking the questions, and he smiled several times, appearing to be very at ease with the beat reporters he has grown so used to.

With the press conference over (and no one approaching me to ask how in the world TSL got to be a part of things) I hustled home to put the print up on the home page and write my News and Notes article. Many things to do, and very little time to do them in.

When On Rome...

Imagine my surprise when I got home and logged onto the TSL message board to find that Jim Rome had mentioned TechSideline.com on the air, during his interview with Vick just before the press conference. *Nuts!* I thought, remembering my decision to turn off the radio while Vick was being interviewed. *I must have just missed it!*

But thanks to the wonders of the Internet, I was able to pull up an archive of the broadcast on Rome’s web site. He mentioned TechSideline.com about ten minutes into the interview ... and boy, did he get it wrong. Here’s the excerpt from the end of the interview:

Rome: One final thought, now that you’re about to turn pro, you’ve already gone about setting up a scholarship fund through something called TechSideline.com. What is that all about?

Vick: It’s a scholarship fund. I think I deserved to do that for the people here at Virginia Tech, because they’ve done so much for me. So I’m trying to do things to help out and show my appreciation for everything that’s been done for me here at Virginia Tech, and all the people who have supported Michael Vick throughout my three years here at Virginia Tech.

Rome: What it is, Michael Vick has signed some gear, go to TechSideline.com, you can purchase that, and the money goes to setting up the scholarship fund. Nice, man, very nice. All right Mike, good weekend for you, good luck.

Vick: One more thing.

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Rome: Yeah, man.

Vick: I heard you just had a baby this weekend or last weekend. I just wanted to congratulate you on that.

Rome: That's nice, Mike. Thanks for being on the show, I appreciate that. Good luck this weekend.

Vick: Thank you.

Rome: All right man, be good. Bye. (pause) Michael Vick. All right, very nice. He is good to go, and he is saying all the right things, that he wants to learn, get into camp early. He's looking to study under Doug Flutie to learn the system. He's saying all the right things ... Michael Vick joining us on the program, and he's still doing some things with Tech, too. That does not suck. Very, very nice. He has — TechSideline.com is the way he is setting up the scholarship, if you want to contribute to that, go ahead, check it out, and get some of his gear.

Will here again: all right, Romey, so you totally screwed it up, but thanks for mentioning the web site on the air three times. I won't make fun of you for saying later that there's no way San Deigo GM John Butler was going to trade the #1 pick.

I get a kick out of the way Rome made it sound as if TechSideline.com is Vick's personal project, but as they say, any publicity is good publicity. Contrary to what you might expect, TSL did not get pummeled by tens of thousands of Rome listeners ("clones," as he calls them), and there was no perceptible uptick in traffic either that day or the next few days.

If you've never listened to Jim Rome's show, his show is, in my opinion, 75% garbage. Rome first made a name for himself by calling then-Rams QB Jim Everett "Chris Everett" to Everett's face, even though Everett had warned him not to. It was on the set of Rome's old TV show, several years ago, during taping. Everett got out of his chair and knocked Rome backwards out of his, and the altercation became the Clip Seen Round the World on sports news shows (ESPN SportsCenter definitely had fun with it).

Rome is a punk. He's respectful to his guests, but among his listeners and callers, he encourages endless smack-talk and drivel that anyone with a brain has no interest in listening to. Whereas most radio talk shows consist of back-and-forth dialogue between the host and callers, Rome's callers instead get on the air and then go on rambling, smack-filled monologues for as long as Rome decides to leave them on the air, or until they say, "I am out" and hang up. I don't remember the last time I heard Rome actually *talk* to one of his callers. If you've heard one of these calls, you've heard them all.

In general, the attitude of disrespect that Rome encourages and cultivates is just pathetic. Like I always say, "If you don't have the time or talent to speak or write correctly, then just talk smack." It's much easier and takes no talent. Kind of like rap music.

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But I have to admit that now that Rome mentioned TechSideline.com on the air three times, I no longer think he's just a punk. Now he's a punk who has mentioned the name of my web site on a national radio broadcast.

Okay, so that's not much difference.

That night, only one of the two Roanoke TV sports broadcasts I listened to mentioned TechSideline.com by name — WDBJ-7 did, WSLS-10 didn't. And the Roanoke Times and Richmond Times-Dispatch wrote articles on the press conference without mentioning where to get the prints, leaving both Tech Bookstore and TechSideline.com out of the article.

Cha-Ching!

I was amazed at how well the prints sold through TechLocker.com, despite the hefty \$133 price tag. We sold our first print at 2:38 that afternoon, and by 3:00 had sold 13. By 4:00, it was up to 31, and at midnight, we had moved 82 of the prints. As of May 15, we had sold 226 of them, making \$30,058 for VT's general scholarship fund.

How does that compare to Tech Bookstore? I don't know what Tech Bookstore's latest figures are, but I know that after five days of sales, we had outsold them 190 to 120. In any event, Locke White is looking like a smart guy for thinking outside the box and working with TechSideline.com. So far, we have helped him make 30% of the \$100,000 he hopes to get from the Vick products, and hopefully, we'll make a lot more for him.

You'll recall that during the 2000 football season, the Virginia Tech Licensing Department requested that all owners of web sites with the terms "hokie(s)" or "virginiatech" in their domain names change the names. Licensing made the request to protect their trademarks. Naturally, since TechSideline.com was called "HokieCentral.com" at the time, I received one of the letters. The change was to be made by November 15 ("Or else!" I imagine), and we complied, changing HokieCentral.com to TechSideline.com in November.

A number of people advocated that I should tell the Licensing Department to insert their request where the sun doesn't shine. As I explained at length at the time, I had neither the funds, the time, nor the inclination to get involved in a legal battle with the Licensing Department over a name change, because a name change, while inconvenient, didn't threaten the existence of the business. Sure, the country boy in me wanted to rattle, but I understood that it made the most sense just to comply and get on with life. I miss the old HokieCentral.com domain name, but I've grown to love TechSideline.com, which we know as TSL (besides, as one person told me recently, "TechSideline has personality. Everybody's doing central-this and central-that now").

Had I fought the request at the time, it would have engendered only ill will and bitterness, and Locke White never would have called us with this opportunity. Did this opportunity make us money? No, but it got us a lot of other things, and it strengthened the good working relationship we have always

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had with Virginia Tech Licensing. Hopefully, that will lead to other opportunities in the future, but whether it does or not, this go-round has definitely helped TSL's reputation within the Virginia Tech community and has advanced our cause.

I've rambled on long enough. See you next month.