

RUCKER DISCUSSES SOPHOMORE SEASON



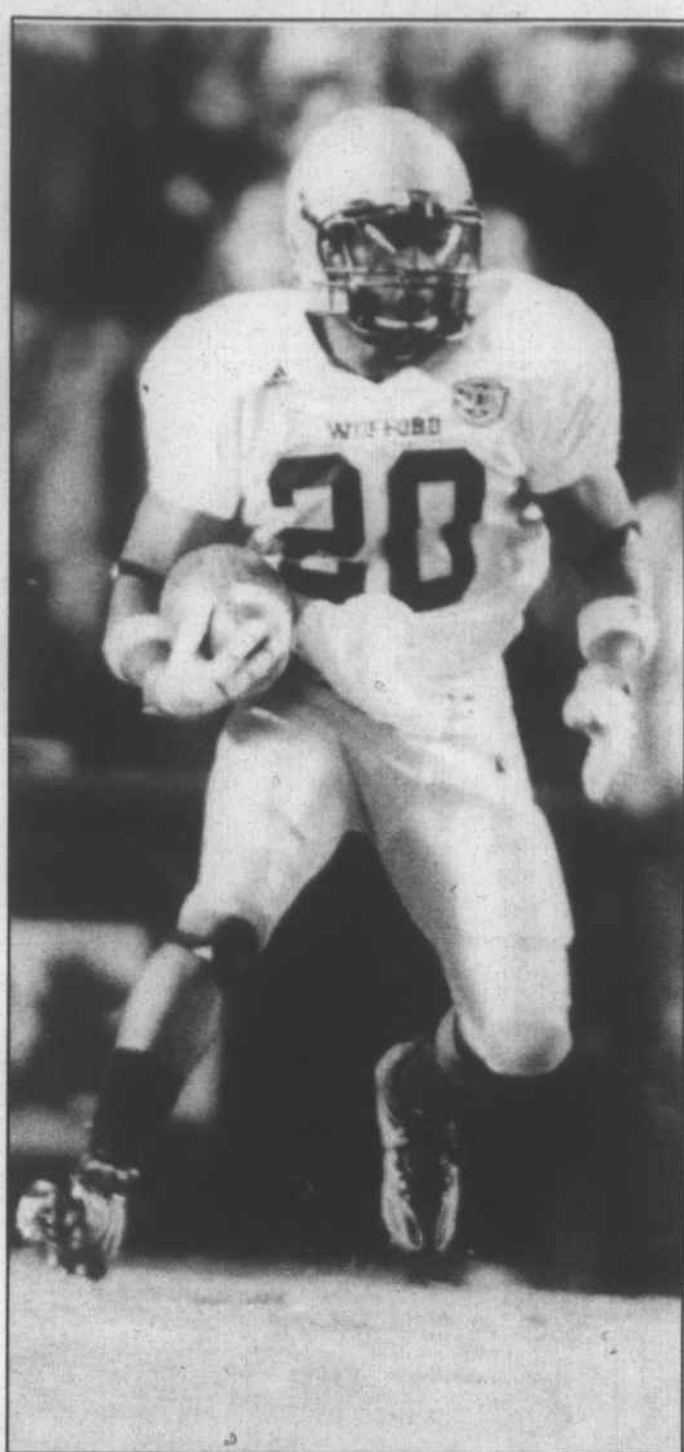
Rucker

I simply felt like doing an interview with Wofford's sophomore running back Mike Rucker to see how things have been going for him lately. That's my dude right there. I actually talk to him quite regularly. I thought this would be a good week to put a conversation on paper.

Rucker recorded his first 100 rushing game during a 42-14 victory over Western Carolina last Saturday. He's the fourth Terrier running back to record a 100-yard rushing game this season. Rucker and I talked about how well he's doing on the football field this season, as well as a few other things when I called him on Tuesday night.

Rucker and I also discussed the music on his phone, N.C. A&T hiring a new coach, North Forsyth and college girls. We also talked about Ruck's choice for president, Reggie Bush and his old high school friends.

Take a look at some of the things one of my favorite college players and I discussed earlier this week.



Wofford photo

Wofford sophomore running back Mike Rucker used to run touchdowns for North Forsyth.

Anthony: Mike Rucker, what's going on?

Mike: Nothin' man. I just got out of practice. You know I'm out here trying to do my thing, on the field and in the classroom.

Anthony: I hear that. (Smiles.) Hey, what's up with all that soft music on the ringback tone?

Mike: (Laughs.) Hey, man. I have to be considerate for when my grandparents call.

Anthony: (Smiles.) I'm just kidding. But you're right. I saw that you recorded your first career 100-yard rushing game over the weekend.

Mike: Yeah, man. It's about that time to step it up.

Anthony: What took you so long to get off?

Mike: We run that triple option offense. Other teams are aware of the talent that we have in the backfield. They try to take the pitch away from the halfback. Mostly, it's been the quarterback that's been doing a lot of scoring and breaking the long runs. So has the fullback.

Anthony: I see that. I'm just glad you got your old number back. That number 20 looks nice on you.

Mike: Yeah, it does. I had number 46 my freshman year. The starting running back already had number 20.

Anthony: You're still doing your thing on the kickoff return. What are you, third in the conference now?

Mike: Oh yeah. I'm third right now. I'm working to get back at first, though. I'm trying to work that out this week. The next two weeks will be the biggest games of our season by far.

Anthony: I know you've got Elon this week. Who do you play after that?

Mike: We got App the next week. App is number two, Elon is number three. And, we're at number four. We lost a bunch of key players, and we're real young right now. No one expected us to be any good this year. But we have great coaches, and we continue to get better.

Anthony: What's your record right now?

Mike: We're 5-1. We lost to South Carolina. That was like, 23-13.

Anthony: That looks like a tough loss. Speaking of tough losses. Your old school, North Forsyth, has been having a tough time getting wins since you left.

Mike: Yeah, I see that. They've just got to continue to work hard. We had some real good athletes in my class. I wish those boys, as well as their coaching staff, the best of luck.

Anthony: No doubt. Your boys at North Carolina A&T got a new head coach this week.

Mike: They did?

Anthony: Yeah.

Mike: Oh, I'm happy for them. I went to the Central game, and I saw some of the stuff that went on.

Anthony: Like what?

Mike: At one point they were down by one point and doing pretty well on offense. I felt they should've gone for two. So did quite a few fans. They probably wouldn't have been in the predicament they were in at the end of the game.

Anthony: How's my boy, Quez (Jacquez Canty)?

Mike: He's doing pretty good at Central. He's started a couple games for them. He gets a lot of playing time when he doesn't start. He's an athlete. He'll do his thing if you put him in a situation.

Anthony: No doubt. What else has been going on with you?

Mike: Not too much. Football keeps you busy all day. When I'm not involved with football and school I am chilling with the boys — playing the game or something. We try to go out to eat at least once a week too.

Anthony: That's cool. Have you been watching any of the other college teams on television?

Mike: We're always looking at Gameday. We wake up in the morning and watch ESPN. I like USC, man. I'm a fan of Joe McKnight. I was hurt when they lost to Oregon State.

Anthony: (Smiles.) My Crimson Tide aren't doing too bad this year.

Mike: (Laughs.) Yeah, they're doing really good. My roommate is a Tide fan. So, I pull for them when I see them play.

Anthony: That's what's up. Which NFL team do you go with?

Mike: I had to switch. I was a Steelers fan at the start of the season because that's where my cousin played. They let him go, and he got picked up by Kansas City now.

Anthony: Boy, your Sundays are long if you're cheering for the Chiefs. (Both laugh.) I saw your boy, Reggie Bush, get hurt on Sunday. I was at the Panther game.

Mike: Yeah. That is my boy. I hated to see that. Enoch and Serg give me a hard time about cheering for him. They say he's not a real running back. They just want to hate.

Anthony: (Smiles.) What's your favorite show right now?

Mike: I watch a little bit of everything. But you know I keep it on SportsCenter.

Anthony: No doubt. Who is your choice to be our next president?

Mike: Obama.

Anthony: All right. What do you miss the most about being in Winston-Salem?

Mike: My family and being with the boys in high school. I miss every Thursday and Friday. Thursday, me and the boys would go to Wild Wings before a JV game. Even though we didn't have the best seasons, I still miss the Friday night lights.

Anthony: Don't we all. Have you found a girlfriend yet?

Mike: Nah, man. I'm still chilling. I'm still chilling. I'm trying to stay focused right now.

Anthony: That's what's up. Let's finish with free association.

Mike: All right.

Anthony: Mike Rucker.
Mike: Future all-conference running back.

Anthony: Maurice Jones-Drew (Jacksonville Jaguar RB).

Mike: Um, like a little bowling ball.

Anthony: Carolina Panthers.

Mike: Good team. They have a shot this year.

Anthony: North Forsyth.

Mike: Best four years of

my life.

Anthony: Ced Hickman. (Former North RB)

Mike: Um, that's my boy. Great athlete.

Anthony: Best athlete to come out of North.

Mike: (Both laugh.)

Anthony: Mike Rucker.

Anthony: (Smiles.) Best athlete to come out of

Winston-Salem.

Mike: Gotta go with O.C. Wardlow on that one.

Anthony: OK. We're done. Good luck to you this season, man.

Mike: 'Preciate that. You need to check out that App. State game on ESPN 2 on Halloween night.

Anthony: (Smiles.) I'm gonna have to do that.

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