

Runnin' Bulldog Sports

Sports Talk Fall '97 Awards

Hello, and welcome to this edition of Sports Talk, a virtual chatroom for sports fans. I'm your host, Randy Capps.

It's exam week, and that means that this semester is finally coming to an end. It also means that it's time to dish out the "Talkies."

In case you didn't know, the Talkies are the awards that Pilot Sports gives away to honor the achievements of athletes, both on- and off-campus.

Oh, yeah -- it's fun too.

Game of the Year:

Well, on campus this is a tough call. I'm going to go with GWU's 66-6 rout of Tusculum on senior day.

It was the best overall performance in a record-setting season for the Runnin' Bulldog football team.

Off campus, I'm going with the Tennessee-Auburn game this past weekend. This game had a little of everything, and the courage and skill of Peyton Manning alone made this game memorable.

Player of the Year:

On campus, I can't decide, so I'm going to call it a tie. Kathy Smith and Clint Conner both had phenomenal seasons. Both players provided leadership and stability for their respective squads.

Outside of Boiling Springs, the Talkie goes to Tennessee quarterback Peyton Manning.

Manning threw for over 3,400 yards and 30 touchdowns, but that's not why he's my pick. He gets the nod because he's a college graduate and a fine role model -- a true class act.

Team of the Year:

I have to give the on-campus award to the Lady Bulldog volleyball team for the second year in a row.

Coach Angell Kirkpatrick's team won over 30 games this season and captured their first-ever conference title.

With a 58-17 mark over the past two seasons, can you say dynasty?

Off campus, I'm taking the Nebraska Cornhuskers. Scott Frost is the most underrated QB in America, and the team's multiple option offense is simply poetry in motion.

Coach of the Year:

It's another tie. Coach Steve Patton posted an 8-3 mark in his first season at the helm of the Runnin' Bulldog football program.

Patton is an excellent coach and a terrific human being. Hats off to the search committee that brought him here from North Greenville.

And no discussion of great coaches at GWU would be complete without mentioning Angell Kirkpatrick.

In her first two years as a head coach, Kirkpatrick has guided the Lady Bulldogs to a sterling 58-17 mark and a South Atlantic Conference championship.

With coaches like these, the potential for future success is boundless.

Off campus, this Talkie is awarded to Florida Marlins manager Jim Leyland. Leyland beautifully balanced one of the most high-priced and unstable rosters in the major leagues as the Marlins went on to win the World Series.

Hard Luck Award:

This is a no-brainer. No teams on campus have suffered more bad luck than the men and women's soccer teams.

Coach Tony Setzer, for the men, and Lennox Charles for the women, watched experienced players fall one-by-one to injuries this season.

The up side to this is that the freshmen for both squads gained plenty of valuable experience for future campaigns.

Off campus, this dubious distinction belongs to the Colorado Buffaloes. This team, picked by some to contend for the national title, struggled to a 5-6 season.

Senior QB John Hessler just couldn't find the magic of his previous years at the helm of the Buffalo attack, and as a result, it was a long year in Boulder.

Freshman of the Year:

On campus, this award goes to Linette Ramsuer. The Hickory, N.C., native shined in her first season as an outside hitter for the Lady Bulldog volleyball team.

Ramsuer was a vital part of one of the best offensive attacks in college volleyball.

Away from the Web, this honor goes to Jamal Lewis. Lewis is the yin to Peyton Manning's yang in the Tennessee offense. Lewis' running ability has provided some much needed balance to the Volunteer attack.

Making the Grade Award:

This award is for the blend of success on the field and in the classroom. After all, there is a reason that we're all here, isn't there? It's student athlete, not athlete student.

Now that I'm off my soapbox, this award goes to the GWU cross-country teams.

Coach Dick Wince has soiled squads in both men and women's cross country, and these groups get it done in the classroom as well as on the course.

Well, there you have it. The best of the best, both on-campus and off for this fall season.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Takiya Patrick for all of her help this semester, couldn't have done it without you, TP!

I'd also like to thank the coaches and players for their cooperation and help in putting the sports pages together.

A special thanks to Mark Wilson, GWU Sports Information Director, for all your help this fall.

I've never been turned down for an interview or a stat sheet, and as a result, the Garder-Webb athletic program is a pleasure to cover.

Well, that's it for this edition of Sports Talk. Good luck on your exams, Merry Christmas and we'll see you in January!

Pilot Sports College Polls

This is the best time of the year for college sports fans. It's the time when football and basketball overlap and compete for the hearts and minds of boosters everywhere.

We here at Pilot Sports are here to help. We've compiled the Pilot Sports Top Five polls in both football and basketball.

Let's start in the realm of college football.

Our poll looks a lot like the AP poll except for Washington St. at #5. There isn't an official tally for this poll (after all this is exam week) but the pollsters have met and it's how we feel.

Let's take a look at the bowl matchups that affect our top five.

In the Rose Bowl, Michigan will gun for their first national championship in over 40 years.

Their opposition will be the Washington St. Cougars, led by QB Ryan Leaf.

Leaf has rung up some gaudy numbers this year against sub-par competition.

Leaf will have his hands full trying to pass against Charles Woodson and the top-rated Wolverine defense. Two teams that will be rooting for Leaf and the Cougars

are Nebraska and Tennessee. I say Leaf gets it done, Washington State wins it 21-17.

The Cornhuskers and the Volunteers will hook up in the Federal Express Orange Bowl. If Michigan falls, then the winner can lay claim to the national title.

The Cornhuskers have run all over teams this season on their way to a perfect season and a Big 12 championship, but, like Washington St., they haven't really played anybody.

Tennessee, on the other hand, has played a brutal schedule. Heisman hopeful Peyton Manning and RB Jamal Lewis lead a powerful and balanced Volunteer attack.

I say my preseason predictions come true. Manning wins the Heisman and the Volunteers win the mythical national championship by knocking off the Huskers, 35-34.

Honorable mentions include Ohio State, Georgia, North Carolina, UCLA, Auburn, Texas A&M and the Syracuse Orangemen.

Now, let's look at college hoops.

Sitting on top of our Pilot Sports college basketball poll are Coach Mike Krzyzewski's Duke Blue Devils. This team is scary.

When swingman Ricky Price returns, the Blue Devils will go ten deep with some major league talent.

Trajan Langdon, Roshown McCloud,

and a host of others make up Coach K's deepest and most talented team ever. The only possible weakness of this squad is that it is extremely young and inexperienced. Coming in at number two are the North Carolina

Tarheels. I can't stand the Heels, but they are a very good team.

Jamison, Carter and Cota are the best triple threat in the ACC. This team will breeze to its customary 20 wins but beware. This team reminds me of a Wes

Leaf. Craven horror flick--absolutely no depth. This team will wear down at some point during the brutal ACC schedule.

At number three are the Arizona Wildcats. I know they took it on the chin from the Devils, but this team is still loaded.

Miles Simon and Mike Bibby make up the nation's finest backcourt, and you should never count out the defending national champions.

Holding down the four spot are the Kansas Jayhawks. Maryland spanked them, but don't be misled. Coach Roy Williams' crew is very good, and their All-American candidate Raef LaFrentz won't let them fall too far.

Coming in at the five hole are the Kentucky Wildcats. Rick Pitino may have headed to the pros, but the cupboard is far from bare for new coach Tubby Smith.

Wayne Turner and Jeff Sheppard are dynamite in the Wildcat backcourt, and the whole team, which still runs around ten-deep, plays tremendous defense. What else is new?

Honorable mentions go out to Xavier, Clemson, Utah, Purdue, Wake Forest, Michigan, Stanford and the North Carolina Wolfpack.

Disagree? Then send your votes to Campus Box 313 and let us know what you think!

College Football Top Five

1. Michigan Wolverines
2. Nebraska Cornhuskers
3. Tennessee Volunteers
4. Florida State Seminoles
5. Washington State Cougars

College Basketball Top Five

1. Duke Blue Devils
2. North Carolina Tarheels
3. Arizona Wildcats
4. Kansas Jayhawks
5. Kentucky Wildcats