

Vikes' Canadian Kicker 'Gonzo' looks forward to a winning senior season

By Reginald Worlds

Back in 1990 when James Gonzo left the familiar world of Saskatchewan Canada for the red clay of Eastern North Carolina, he was expecting his life to be different.

The heat for instance, took a little getting used to.

"I expected it to be hot but not that hot," he says. "I passed out a couple of times."

And then there were all the differences in values and lifestyles, which, Gonzo admits, he is still getting used to.

"I turn on the TV the other day and on one channel there was a story about the Rodney King trial and riots out in L.A.," he says. "The next channel was a report about the people taking hostage in prison, and the one after that was the violence in Waco, Texas."

A visit to New York City presented Gonzo, an ECSU junior with his first experience with panhandlers.

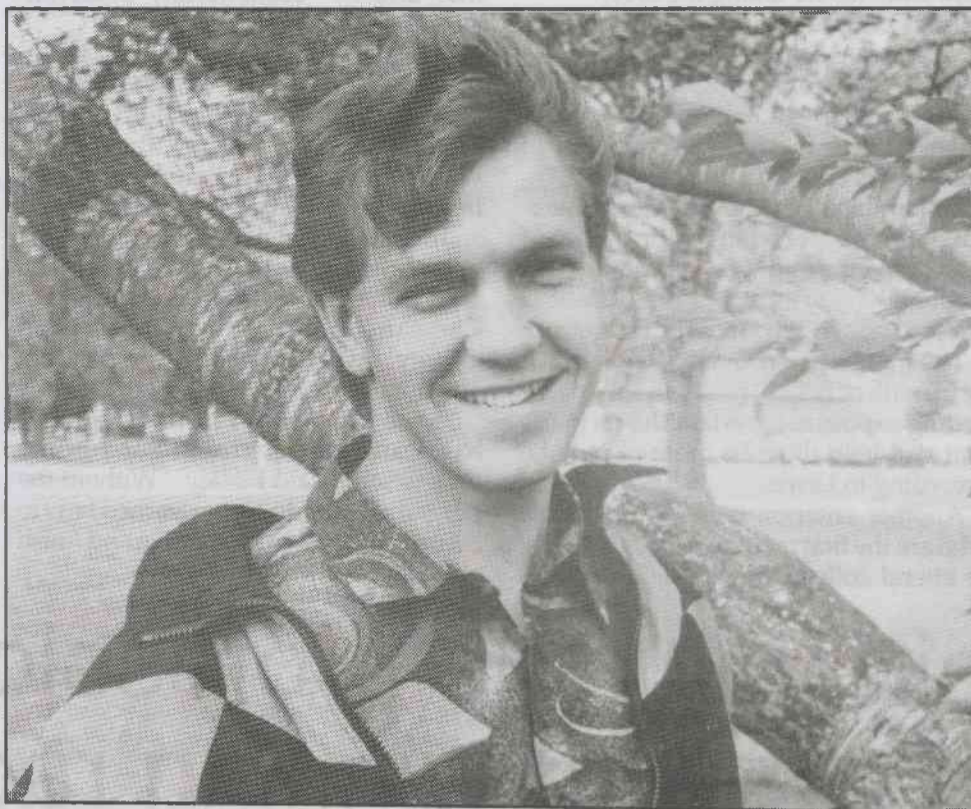
"I kept giving them money," he says. "It was hard for me to say now."

"Gonzo," as he is known on the team as well as on campus is the kicker and punter for ECSU's football team.

At ECSU, most of Gonzo's day is consumed by work. You can find him either in the library or in the computer lab or at Roebuck Stadium for spring football practice.

On a warm day in mid-April James Gonzo stretches on the hard ground and comments, "My attitude is just not the same as when I first arrived."

Three years ago when Gonzo was home in Saskatchewan, Canada he was kicking for a junior football team and very excited



James Gonzo, the kicker and punter for ECSU's football team, is a junior criminal justice major who hails from Saskatchewan, Canada. Gonzo believes his experiences in America will help prepare him for a career in politics—he hopes to be Prime Minister of Canada someday. He won All CIA Place Kicker in 1991. His most recent award was WRVS' "Viking Spirit Essay" Contest.

about coming to America to play college football.

"I thought the competition was better in America and that life was going to be very exciting," he recalls.

And he got what he wanted his first year here—from his first sight of roaches in Butler Hall to travelling to Dallas, Texas to play Grambling University in the Cotton Bowl, where he scored ECSU's only points, a field goal in 67-3 loss.

Now Gonzo, a junior criminal justice major sees things in a different light.

"When I arrived, football was fun and classes were easier," he says. Although he made the honor roll, last semester was a disappointment. His numbers were down from the season before where he was the most efficient kicker in the league and named to the First Team All CIAA. The team had a less successful season, performing 3-6-1 after last year's 7-2 season.

"We had a lot of good players and were supposed to win more games than we did," Gonzo said.

In his spare time Gonzo lifts weights and practices kicking to get ready for his "senior season" "This is probably my last year of football and I want to go a winner," he says.

After graduation Gonzo says he wants to return home and go to law school. He also wants to kick professionally for the Canadian Football League.

This summer he will attend a summer camp for The Rough Riders, a Saskatchewan football team.

His ultimate career goal is to become the prime minister of Canada.

"It's a real prestigious and important position worth having," he says.

As Canada goes into the next century, the country is growing and starting to develop some of the problems of the U.S., according to Gonzo. These problems include crime, race relations, and immigration.

"I feel like my experience down here will help me handle problems like that," he says.

In his native Saskatchewan the most serious crime problem was skateboarding in mall and bikes being stolen.

"I hadn't heard about crack before I came here," he says.

Gonzo says the US has many acute problems with race relations.

"As far as race is concerned, everything boils down to whether a person is black or white," he says. However, where he is from a person is seen "for himself or herself."

Adds Gonzo, "Skin color doesn't matter to me."

Vikes miss big win by one game

By Jody Riddick

The ECSU baseball team has come up short of the big dance once again.

After losing the first game of the CIAA tournament by nine runs, the Vikings used their hot bats to win three games straight and advance into the losers' bracket. However, costly errors spoiled the Vikings' hopes of winning the CIAA baseball tournament.

The double-elimination tournament was held in Norfolk, Va from April 15-17 and won by the host team, Norfolk State University. Norfolk State has won the CIAA tournament 15 times in the past 20 years. Norfolk State slammed Bowie State 13-1 in the championship game.

In first round action, St. Augustine's defeated ECSU 13-4. The Falcons jumped out to a 4-0 lead in the first inning.

In second-round action, the Vikings went on a hot batting streak as they scored 10 runs in the first inning and went on to demolish the Tigers of St. Paul's College in five innings.

Senior Donell Albritton had a super game against the Tigers, going 4-for-4 with two home runs and seven RBIs. Freshman Robert Sutton had a grand-slam home run in the first inning. Ray Davenport was the winning pitcher for the Vikings.

The Vikings won their second five inning game by clobbering the Shaw University Bears 14-3. Donell Albritton hit a

tape-measure home run in the third inning to straight-away center field. Allen Mason went 2-for-3 with four RBIs.

In the Vikings fourth game, the bats were still hot with two rain delays and a suspension in the game as they were leading Virginia State 9-3.

The game was suspended Friday in the bottom of the sixth due to heavy rains; it resumed Saturday morning with the Vikings holding a 9-3 lead.

In the championship game of the losers' bracket the Vikings held a 4-1 lead in the bottom of the sixth inning before surrendering the lead and the game to Bowie State 5-4 in eight innings.

A throwing error by the third baseman and a dropped ball by the second baseman

allowed the Bulldogs to score two unearned runs in the sixth inning to tie the game at four.

Another costly error in the bottom of the eighth spoiled the Vikings' chance of facing Norfolk State in the Championship game.

Following the loss, some members of the baseball team were critical of coaching decisions made by Coach Cullen.

"I was very disappointed with how our season ended," said Donell Albritton, a first baseman. "It hurts to have a championship within your sight, then have it slip away due to poor coaching decisions, such as substituting a player who's out there doing his job well."

Another player said the team had the