

SPORTS

Jay Robinson: The man behind the uniforms

Ean Beatty
ARGUS STAFF

When most people think of equipment managers, the first image that usually pops up is the pimple-faced lame in high school that washed uniforms after failing to make the team.

Jay Robinson, Winston-Salem State's equipment manager, and his staff don't fit that mold.

Robinson and his staff are responsible for ensuring that each player has the proper equipment. The staff makes sure the equipment is fully functional, and they also make any needed alterations and repairs, including cleaning the equipment. After each practice and each game, a member of the staff collects all of the player's uniforms, then washes and dries them.

WSSU's home opener against North Carolina A&T was a game that generated a lot of attention. In preparation for the game, Robinson and his staff worked long hours, in order to ensure that the Rams looked their best as they marched out onto the field. Each helmet was sanitized, shined, and

decorated with a decal. Each jersey was sized and numbered to accommodate the specific player who was designated to wear it.

In the game of football there are various positions, each requiring different types of equipment. Robinson is responsible for doing inventory, identifying what the players need, ordering the equipment, and making sure his staff distributes the items to the various players. Equipment managers also provide gloves, visors, braces—knee, neck, ankle, and shoes. Each player is fitted for his helmet, shoulder pads, and provided with all other necessary padding.

Being Equipment Manager isn't the most glamorous job, but Robinson and the student volunteers take pride in what they do. The students, mostly sport management majors, are provided with the opportunity to gain experience related to their major, as well as contribute to the efforts of the team.

Robinson, a 2004 WSSU

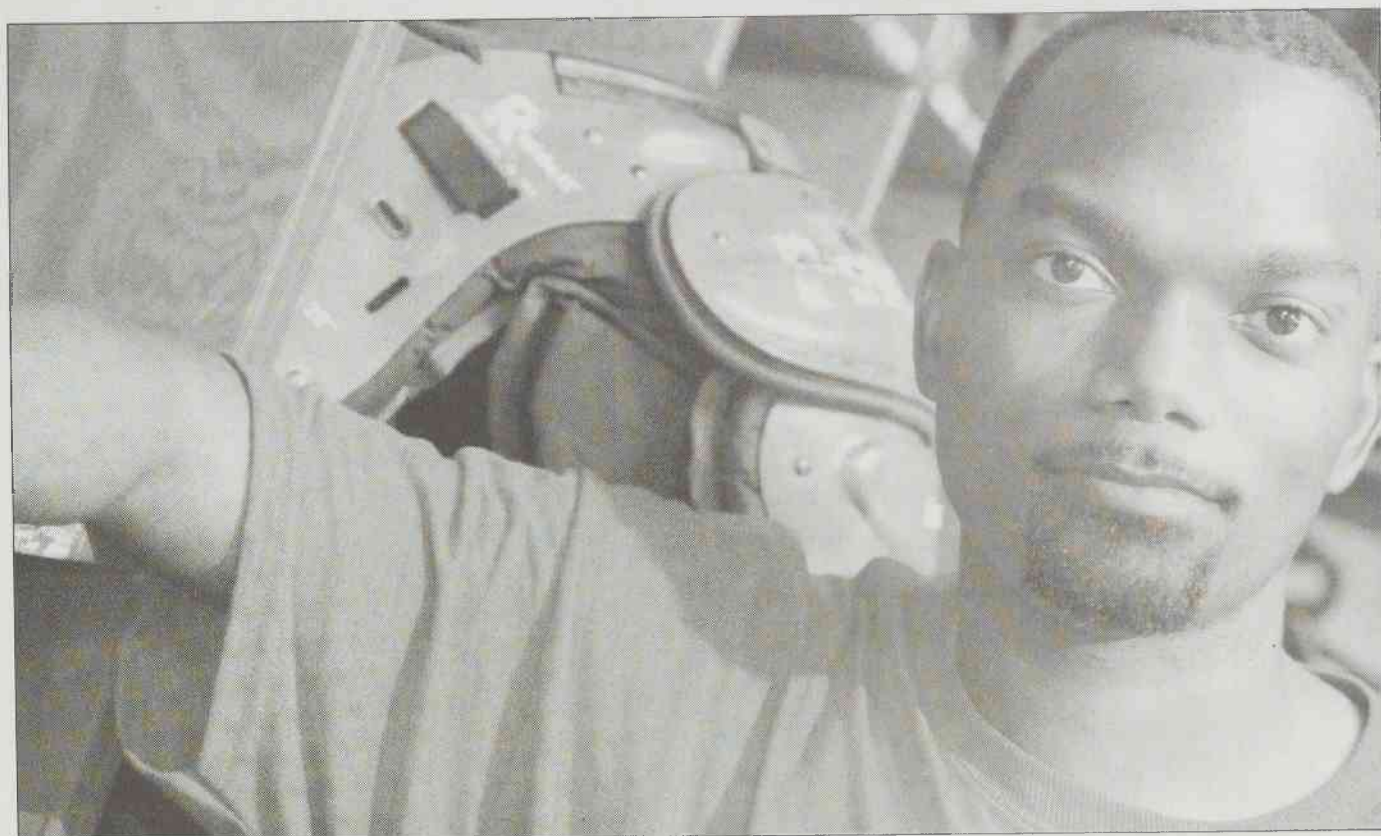


Photo by Garrett Garms

Jay Robinson, Winston-Salem State's equipment manger, keeps WSSU looking good on the field. The 2004 WSSU grad worked part-time for six years. The 2007-08 season is his first as a full-time member of WSSU Athletics.

graduate, paid his dues before being promoted to full-time duty this year.

"He is deserving of the position, he stuck it out with us for six years on a part-time basis and I'm glad that

we can reward him with this full time position, a much needed position for all of your athletes," said football head coach Kermit Blount in a press release.

Robinson pays a great

deal of attention to detail. He designs the team jerseys and ensures that the hue of the color (the red, for example) is the specific shade that he requested.

"As long as we're doing

our job right, very few people notice us; but the minute we mess up, everybody will notice," Robinson said. "Just imagine if the team came out wearing pink pants!"

Varsity soccer still a long kick away at WSSU, for now

Steven J. Gaither
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Across the globe, soccer is perhaps the most universally popular sport. However, in the United States, it has taken longer for the craze to reach the mainstream.

For example, Winston-Salem State has 14 men's and women's varsity athletic teams, yet soccer is not one of them.

WSSU Director of Athletics, Dr. Chico Caldwell, said that he does not see the Rams fielding a varsity soccer team for some time. Caldwell said that although there have been discussions about starting a team, there are

several factors that would prohibit the athletic department from adding one in the near future.

"We base our teams on conference in affiliation," Caldwell said. "The MEAC doesn't sponsor soccer as a sport."

Caldwell also said that there just isn't enough space for the facilities the team would require.

"The first thing is where would you put it," he said. "Space is an issue."

Caldwell also said the funds for a soccer team aren't there as of yet.

"We've just added five sports in the last two years. I don't believe in sponsoring sports we can-

not fund."

Despite the fact that there are no plans for a varsity team in the near future, there is a group of soccer fanatics on campus that have banded together to form a club soccer team.

Nick Roman, a senior physical education major from Charlotte, is the vice president of WSSU's soccer club. The club, which has about 20 members, played two games last year against Elon and Wake Forest.

"This year we're trying to get a more structured team," Roman said. "Last year was our first year and it was kind of trial and

error."

Club teams play during the same season as NCAA recognized teams do, Roman said. Players at schools with both teams join club teams instead of varsity teams for a variety of reasons.

"Some people don't make the collegiate team, some people's four years on the collegiate team are up and they're still in school. The talent pool is really a lot better than some people think."

"Our main goal is to get a good structured team that can move from year to year smoothly."

Roman said he and the members of his club realize



Although varsity soccer is not the athletic departments plans, WSSU's soccer club is growing steadily.

that their ultimate goal of putting together a collegiate team will be a long, uphill battle.

"That's a big step for the

university to take that step," Roman said. "But I think if the team keeps growing that hopefully will happen."

"Classic" chance

Tiffany Hardy
ARGUS STAFF

On Oct. 6, Winston-Salem State will compete against Florida A&M in the Coca-Cola Circle City Classic. The Office of Student Activities is offering students the chance to participate in the festivities.

Activities will last through October 6, culminating in the game between the Rams and the Rattlers.

Activities such as a Praise and Worship service, an HBCU scholarship opportunity network, a pep rally, fall fest, battle of the bands and the Worlds Largest College Party will be just a few of the many events that will be going on throughout the Classic.

WSSU will take two 57-passenger buses to Indianapolis, Indiana to give students a chance to experience the cultural and educational excellence that the Circle City Classic offers.

"I'm glad that WSSU is a part of it. I've been involved in the Classic for



Photo by Garrett Garms

Senior members of WSSU's football pose together at the Rams media day.

many years. It's really nice to have this experience for our students," said Dale Williams, director of Student Activities.

This trip is offered in a package deal. For \$150 students will receive tickets to the football game, the step show in which the Beta Iota chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. will showcase its talents, and the Classic parade. The \$150

will also secure a seat on the bus and a hotel room that will be shared with three other students. The school also gives each student \$35 to cover the expense of food.

"This is my first time going to the Circle City Classic," said Kelli Martin, senior. "I am really excited to go; I hope that the school continues to offer trips like this one."

"I think that it's a great opportunity for the school as well as the football team to get recognition in the Classic and to play a quality opponent like Florida A&M," said Corey Stewart, strong safety for the Rams.

For more information on the Coca-Cola Circle City Classic visit the WSSU website or www.circlecityclassic.com.

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