

Ft. Valley Men's and Women's Tracksters Impressive

Fort Valley State's men's and women's track team turned in some outstanding performances at the annual Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference track and field championship held in Albany, Georgia. The men's team finished in fifth place overall, while the women scored the most points ever in its history (81) in locking down the third place slot.

For the men, a whole season of hard work paid off for sprinter Tyrone Poole in the 100 and 200 meter dashes. Poole was edged by Alabama A & M's Wayne Watson in the 100 (10.55 to 10.70), finished second for the second consecutive year in that event. Later on in the day through, Poole rebounded to claim his second straight title in the 100, pulling away in the final 50 meters and holding off A&M's Karsten Edwards (21.08) to 21.14). Also in that process, Poole qualified for the NCAA Division II outdoor meet, surpassing the standard of 21.10 needed to get in.

"Tyrone has worked all season to crack that qualifying barrier," stated head coach Glen Turner. "It was a relief to get it out of the way at this point in time. Now he can concentrate on bettering his mark so he can get a reasonable seating when the invitations are sent out." Poole was happy about finally getting the qualifying standard, but was well aware that the season is not over year. "I'm glad that I was able to qualify for the nationals, but there is still work that needs to be done. I know that the better my time gets, the more competitive I'll be."

Poole was not the only male to walk with a trophy. Stacy Baker ran away with

honors as he won the 400 meter dash with a time of 48 seconds flat, edging out Albany State's Shelton Spencer (48.06). "I knew that I could turn in a pretty good performance if I ran a smart race", said Baker, who met the provisional standard for getting into the Division II meet. "Right now I have to better my time and see if I can get to Texas as well." Turner was also happy for Baker. "Stacy had the potential all season long to turn in a terrific time. Now he must concentrate and surpass the provisional standard with a time (at least 47.20) that will surely get him in." Other Wildcats placed well in the meet were Herman Williams, (5th in the Javelin), who threw a season best 143' - 9.5" and Brian Watson, who did well in the shot put (3rd at 46'-11.5"). Women's action at Hugh Mills Stadium was just as intense. Fort Valley's Monica Hudson established herself as a performer to watch in the future as she captured the title in the discus with a toss of 122'-3". Hudson, who is only a freshman, drew praise from Turner. "Monica should get better with each year she participates. Before her career is over at Fort Valley, she would have established herself as one of the better field event people in the history of the SIAC. With a little more effort, she could qualify for the nationals and break her own school record." Hudson also came away with a 3rd in the shot put (37'-1"). Versatile Latrelle Johnson placed 4th in the javelin at 90'-6.5". Earlier in the competition, Johnson participated for the first time in her career in the heptathlon, a grueling event. Johnson did quite well, fin-

ished third with 3817 points. "Latrelle is perhaps one of the more versatile athletes around," says Turner. "Depending on our personnel next season, she may be able to concentrate on that event and do even better." Middle and long distance running events proved to be a plus for the Lady Cats this year. Ksacia Hill won the 1500 meter (5:02.55), and finished 2nd in the 300 meter run to LeMyne-Owens' Toni Peterson. Peterson outkicked Hill in the final lap (11:11.11 to 11:15.52) to win the race Phyllis Pierce also had a good outing, finishing 3rd in the 300 (11:20.72) and winning the 5000 meter run (19:32.00). "Ksacia and Phyllis both turned in impressive outings," stated the Fort Valley coach. "Going into the meet, they both had an idea of what needed to be done in order for success to come their way. In the end, both of them ran smart races and came away with championships." Hill was also named the Most Outstanding Performer for the women, an award given to the athlete who scored the most points.

The meet in Albany was the end of the season for some schools, but not for Fort Valley. "We are going to take some of the top performers to the Spec Towns Relay held in Athens at UGA) and see if some more people can get qualified. Since the pressure of the SIAC meet is now off, a relaxed atmosphere should result in better times on the track." The Spec Towns meet will be held on May 1.

Women Finish In Second Place, Ramsey Named MVP and Martin Picks Up

Coach of the Year Kudos

Womens tennis ended the season on a high note for Fort Valley State as the Lady Wildcats finished in a second place tie with Savannah State. Nevertheless, tennis coach Curtis Martin picked up "Coach of the Year" honors.

In women's action, Mona Ramsey was the lone Lady Cat to come away with a title in No. 6 singles play, defeating Clark-Atlanta's Jamilla Ivery 6-3, 6-3. "I'm very happy to end the season and my career, on such a high note," said the senior from Atlanta. "Winning the conference was good, but it was a fair and challenging experience. However the longer I played a match, the more my game suffered."

Mona was also proud of the fact that she has tasted success after playing the game for a short period of time. "This is only my third year playing tennis on the collegiate level, so I feel fortunate about doing so well."

Going into the season Ramsey felt she had to step up and take some sort of leadership role. "I feel proud that I was able to take my learning experiences on the tennis court and put them to good use. It helped me take the good along with the bad. Those facts along helped me to become a better leader for the team."

Mona feels that next year's team will be even better. "I wish the team the best luck next year. I know that they will be better because a lot of good players are coming back."

Mackey

But let's start from the beginning.

When Mackey graduated from Elizabeth City in 1965, he got a tryout with the Dallas Cowboys. Mackey has always been a big, agile fellow. Even today, he goes about 6-2, 210. Mackey was college buddies with Jethrow

Pew, who went on to become one of the Cowboys top defensive players ever. Mackey had never played football in high school or college, but he was big and he was friends with Pew and the Cowboys were interested in Pew. "Dallas thought they could make a football player out of me," Mackey said.

They did.

In 1965, Mackey played defensive back for Dallas. He was released, though, in the '66 preseason and wound up in New York, where he got his certification as a teacher and began to work in a local community center in the afternoons.

Eventually, Mackey said he got tired of the fast life and returned South, where he began coaching and studying for his

doctorate degree, which he got from Virginia Tech in 1987.

But a year earlier, in 1986, he'd stopped going to school. He'd gotten tired. He was so close but now he was going to quit.

"I had completed all my course work but I hadn't done my analysis or my dissertation," Mackey said. "But then Galvin Walker, a point guard on my '86 team, died in an auto accident right after the season. I was going to Seattle and when I got to the desk to check in there was a message there to call my wife.

Mrs. Mackey told the coach that Galvin Walker had been killed in an auto accident.

Galvin had gone to visit his grandmother in eastern North Carolina. She'd sent Galvin to the store and as he was driving around a curve, he hit a puddle of mud. It was a freakish thing. The car flipped over on top of him.

"Right there," Mackey said, "I decided to finish school for Galvin."

Later that same year came the cancer diagnosis. Even today, Mackey must visit his doctor semi-annually for a checkup. He's never had any chemotherapy. The doctors did remove a piece of colon in an operation, however. "I've been lucky," he said.

Lucky? In 1990, he went out one morning to ride his bike. Normal morning thing. "I got halfway down the driveway and I realized I couldn't push the pedal down and I didn't pay it much attention," Mackey said. "I took a shower and came to school. As the day passed, I noticed I was losing control of my body."

Ten (10) days later he was diagnosed with Gullian Barre. Today, because of its attacks, he walks with a slight limp. To treat the affliction after the diagnosis, doctors pumped the blood out of his body nine different times. "they separated the red cells from the plasma," Mackey said. "they pump it out of one arm and into the

other. The virus is in the plasma. It was kind of strange."

Yeah, Mackey sat on a table, connected to machine after machine, with all kinds of wires attached to him. He looked like Steve Austin in one of those "we have the technology, we can rebuild him" shows. But this was real life. Very real.

"You're on the table and they feed you hamburger, soda and cookies, all the stuff you shouldn't eat," he said. "when they take out the plasma, they take out the cholesterol and everything. It's an expensive way to clean out your system."

Mackey is a good sport about all of this. He realizes that he's been lucky. "I've been blessed," he says.

Getting sick made me think about what I should do with basketball," he said, "try to win at all costs or use it as a vehicle to push youngsters onto another level of positiveness. I chose to use it as a motivating force to help guys leave this place and survive."

Like him.

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