

Clemson's Hairston raps about college life

Clemson redshirt freshman lineman Chris Hairston is already doing big things at Clemson.

He was named the most improved lineman during spring practices, while backing up All-American Barry Richardson. I didn't know that Hairston was the first Winston-Salem guy to sign with Clemson since Perry Tuttle (1978).

I also didn't know that Hairston was going to have such an early impact at Clemson. I remember when Hairston was a slim, tall kid trying to play basketball at Carl Russell. I also remember Hairston trying to retire from football before his junior year. Now, I am amazed when I watch big Hairston do his thing on the football field for Clemson.

say it's all about the speed. It's really not about the speed. They hit harder. They're a little tougher.

Anthony: No doubt. Do you remember the time you went into coach Wilkes' office and told him that you wanted to quit?

Chris: Yeah.
Anthony: He told you to just go put on your pads and get ready for practice. Do you remember that?

Chris: Yeah, I remember all that. I thought I was done with football. I was in the 11th grade. I didn't think that football was for me. I'm glad coach told me to get out of his office on that day. (Both laugh.) That was a crazy time. I don't know what I was thinking about.

Anthony: I still remember you playing basketball at



Photo by Mark Cramer

Clemson offensive lineman Chris Hairston (No. 61) looks for a down-field block during a James Davis run earlier this season.

One-on-One

with Anthony Hill

I was literally locked to his play during the first couple of plays of the Chick-Fil-A Bowl last week. He and I talked about the bowl loss to Auburn, next season's opener against Alabama and college life. We also discussed what coach Wilkes told him after he tried to quit the team before one practice.

Take a look at what else big Chris and I talked about on Monday evening.

Anthony: What's going on big Chris?

Chris: Nothing much. Nothing much.

Anthony: Hey, I saw you doing your thing last week. Kind of tell me how it felt to play in your first bowl game.

Chris: It was big, especially playing in the Georgia Dome. That was something special.

Anthony: Were you a little nervous before the game?

Chris: No, not really. I don't really get butterflies before playing football. It's the same football I've been playing since high school.

Anthony: I hear that. You guys played a tough game in the bowl. I hated that you all lost to Auburn.

Chris: Yeah. (Laughs.) I know you're from Alabama.

Anthony: No doubt. Did you notice the difference between playing an ACC team and one from the SEC?

Chris: I mean, I did. They

Carl Russell. Do you remember those days?

Chris: Yeah, I remember those days. I wish I could go back to those days sometimes.

Anthony: Now that you've got a year under your belt, have you started thinking about the next level?

Chris: I mean, I think about it. But I don't get caught up in it. If it happens, it happens. If it don't, then it don't. Just gonna let it be.

Anthony: How are the grades?

Chris: My grades are looking pretty good. It's a little harder than high school, but I'm getting the job done. My major is business management, with a minor in education. If I don't play football then I'd love to coach. I would like to coach at Carver. That would be my dream job.

Anthony: Let me ask you something else real quick. Do you feel like your old high school has been getting a bad rap?

Chris: Oh yeah. Carver is a great school. You have to make it what you get out of it. Maybe all the kids aren't motivated to learn. But Carver has some good teachers. And, there are some good students there. I guess we get the bad rap because we're the black school, I guess. I thought Carver was a great school.

Anthony: OK. Do you have a favorite teacher from high school?

Chris: I used to love to

hear coach (Danny) Piggott talk. Math was my favorite subject too.

Anthony: OK. Which team has been the toughest squad you've faced in college?

Chris: Probably Auburn. The toughest player was that defensive end at Wake, Jeremy Thompson. He's pretty good.

Anthony: Who's the best athletes you remember from Carver?

Chris: Probably Eric Brown and Ricky Johnson. I think about stuff they used to do. They're better than some of the guys we have at Clemson. They're just not big enough.

Anthony: Speaking of those two. What were your thoughts when you heard about the trouble they were in?

Chris: I didn't really know what to think about it. I hate it for them. I hope they



Hairston

can get through that.

Anthony: No doubt. (Smiles.) You guys start the season against those Crimson Tide (in the Georgia Dome) next year.

Chris: Yeah, I saw that on the internet.

Anthony: Get ready for an early L (loss).

Chris: Yeah, right. You

really think we're about to lose to Alabama? Ya'll lost to Louisiana-Monroe last year.

Anthony: It's like that, huh?

Chris: It's got to be like that.

Anthony: (Smiles.) OK. Who's going to win the Super Bowl?

Chris: I hope the Patriots win it. This is a perfect season, and you don't get to see that much.

Anthony: I'd like to see Jacksonville beat them this week. I think they might just do it too. (Pause) I always argue with guys about rivalries. How big is the Clemson and South Carolina rivalry with the players?

Chris: A lot of the players hang out with each other. It's more of a rivalry for the fans. It's not like the Alabama and Auburn rivalry. Ya'll act like ya'll got to shut the state down or something. Preachers can't preach on that day. Couples can't get married. It's

died in Winston-Salem in 1986.

Hot Stove Banquet activities will also include the Bill Slack Community Service Award, the awarding of the inaugural Winston-Salem / Forsyth County Baseball Scholarship and autograph tables with baseball players from the past and present. Doors open at 6 p.m. with the

crazy with that rivalry.

Anthony: I'm glad you recognize. (Smiles.) Let's conclude with free association.

Chris: OK.
Anthony: Uh, Queen (Angela Lambson, who's Chris' aunt and local coach).

Chris: That lady is crazy. I love her. I need to go see her.

Anthony: Winston-Salem.

Chris: I love the city. Tre-4. It's home.

Anthony: Aaron Bailey. (former Carl Russell Center director)

Chris: Good guy. He made the rec. available to us.

Anthony: Coach Wilkes.

Chris: Inspiration. He kept me going through football.

Anthony: Coach Bowden.

Chris: Good coach.

Anthony: Chris Hairston.

Chris: I don't know.

Anthony: (Smiles.) We'll leave it at that.

silent auction running from 6 until 7:30 p.m., at which time the main program will commence.

Tickets for this special event are open to the public and can be purchased by calling the Warhogs office at 336-759-2233. Individual seats are only \$35 and a table of eight is \$275.

HOF

the players on the team. He owned the team for 38 years and was the foundation for the team's existence. During his playing days, spent a season in the New York Giants farm system. When Hank Aaron played his first professional baseball game with the Indianapolis

Clowns in Winston-Salem, Petree played first base for the opposing team.

Jim Longborg played for the 1964 Winston-Salem Red Sox and was 6-2 during his stint with a 3.20 ERA and 61 strikeouts in 59 innings while pitching in eight games and helped lead the team to the 1964 Carolina League championship. Longborg compiled a

157-137 record with a 3.86 ERA over a 15 year Major League career with the Boston Red Sox, Milwaukee Brewers and Philadelphia Phillies and won the 1967 American League Cy Young Award with a 22-9 record and a 3.16 ERA and 246 strikeouts in 39 starts for Boston. He was also named to the all-star team. He is currently a dentist in

Massachusetts.

Eddie Yuhas went 10-12 with a 3.89 ERA with Winston-Salem in 1947. After a few more years in the minor leagues, he enjoyed a successful season in the major leagues with St. Louis going 12-2 with a 2.72 ERA in 195. His 12 wins to only two losses gave him the best winning percentage (.857) in baseball that season. Yuhas

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