



Virginia

2001 Record: 5-7 (3-5 in the ACC)
Head Coach: Al Groh
 (31-47 overall, 5-7 at Virginia)

Home Field: Scott Stadium (61,500)

Returning Starters: 4 offense, 5 defense

Key Returnees: WR Billy McMullen, LB Angelo Crowell, FS Sherman Newby, CB Art Thomas, C Kevin Bailey

Key Losses: TE Chris Luzar, LB Byron Thweatt, DT Monsanto Pope, QB Bryson Spinner, RB Arlen Harris

Strengths: All four starters return to a deep, experienced defensive backfield headed by Newby and Jerton Evans.

McMullen heads a what could be a devastating receiving corps.

Weaknesses: A defensive line with three new starters, only one of whom has game experience, will put added pressure on the linebackers and defensive backs to produce.

Keys to Season: The quarterback controversy needs to be settled definitively and early for Virginia to get comfortable. If WR Michael McGrew continues to show improvement, it will open up the offense, especially for fellow wideout McMullen.

Key Game: Sept. 7 vs. South Carolina



Al Groh

UVa. Freshman Challenges Incumbent for Time at QB

By BEN COUCH
 Staff Writer

After a year of rebuilding, the Virginia football team is looking to settle in under second-year coach Al Groh.

Last year's 5-7 squad was mired in a transition year. With Groh fresh off a stint as head coach of the NFL's New York Jets, it took most of the year for the Cavaliers to find their bearings.

Virginia finished the season on a high note by defeating Penn State in its season finale, and the Cavs are looking to

keep that momentum rolling into the 2002 season.

Junior quarterback Matt Schaub was named starter in the off-season when Bryson Spinner transferred. His transfer seemed to end any existing quarterback controversy, but it hasn't lasted.

In UVa.'s first game, a 35-29 loss to Colorado State in the Jim Thorpe Classic, Schaub unexpectedly split duties with sophomore Marques Hagans.

Schaub completed 14 of 28 passes for 73 yards with a touchdown and an interception, while Hagans threw 13 passes,

completing 10 for 120 yards. Hagans also ran for 45 yards and a touchdown before fumbling at the one-yard line with minutes to go to win the game.

As for the rest of the offense, Virginia returns highly acclaimed senior wide receiver Billy McMullen and running backs Alvin Pearman and Wali Lundy.

On the defensive side of the ball, the Cavs are led by senior linebacker Angelo Crowell, a 2001 All-ACC selection.

"Angelo has all the qualities you want," Groh said. "He's got a high motor and a high intensity to be a very good player."

Maryland Out to Continue 2001 Success

By TIM CANDON
 Assistant Sports Editor

Despite the 56-23 thrashing by the Florida Gators in January's Orange Bowl, 2001-02 was still a tremendous season for Maryland football.

The Terps, under first-year head coach Ralph Friedgen, came out of nowhere to claim their first conference title since 1985 and earn a BCS bowl bid.

Friedgen, the 2001 consensus National Coach of the Year, said he is not sure if his team will be able to repeat the success of a year ago.

"Can we do that again? I don't know, Friedgen said. "We'll have to see. I think it would be a tremendous accomplishment. But we have a very young football team - we only have 11 seniors - so probably the odds are against us."

Even if the odds do favor the No. 21 Terps, they have several key positions on both offense and defense to fill.

"As an offensive unit, we are better because the understanding is improved from last year," Friedgen said. "We just have to get a quarterback where we need him."

Actually, Friedgen must figure out who's going to play quarterback before he decides where to use him.

Sophomore Chris Kelley was expected to take over for the graduated Shaun Hill, but he tore his ACL during spring practice, leaving the starting slot up for grabs.

Southpaw Scott McBrien is atop the depth chart but will be pressured to keep the job by transfer Orlando Evans. Last year, Evans completed 165 of 251 passes for 2,391 yards and 28 touchdowns at the City College of San Francisco.

Running back Bruce Perry, who ran for 1,242 yards and 10 touchdowns last year, returns to the backfield.

However, Friedgen must find a temporary replacement for the 2001 ACC

Offensive Player of the Year. Perry tore a groin muscle prior to a scrimmage Aug. 20 and is expected to be out for at least another three weeks.

"Bruce's injury is very unfortunate for us as a team," Friedgen said. "The good news is that he did not tear the tendon off of the bone, and it looks like he will be able to come back at some point this year."

Mario Merrills and Jason Crawford will likely share time during Perry's absence, Friedgen said.

On the other side of the ball, five starters return to a defense that surrendered ACC bests in rushing yards per game (90.6) and points per game allowed (19.7).

If the defense expects to stack up to last year's, it might have to do so without ACC Player of the Year E.J. Henderson, at least for the first part of the season. Henderson had back surgery early last spring, and his availability for the season opener will be a game-time decision.

"We are going to be very young on defense this year," Friedgen said. "E.J.'s

health will be important to us early, and it will be interesting to see what some of the newcomers can do to contribute. I think we will again have a good defense - we just have some questions that will need to be answered along the way."

The question that might need attention the most is the secondary, where only cornerback Curome Cox returns. Dominique Foxworth, who converted to a cornerback in 2001, is slated to start at the other corner.

"Our corners are solid and will get better as the season progresses," Friedgen said. "Dennard (Wilson) seems to be working out well at safety, and Madiou Williams is a heck of a football player who has the talent to play any spot in our defensive backfield."

The Terps open their season against Notre Dame in the Kickoff Classic Saturday at the Meadowlands in East Rutherford, N.J.



Maryland

2001 record: 10-2 (7-1 in the ACC)
Head Coach: Ralph Friedgen
 (10-2 overall, 10-2 at Maryland)

Home Field: Byrd Stadium (48,055)

Returning Starters: 8 offense, 5 defense

Key Returnees: LB E.J. Henderson, RB Bruce Perry, WR Latrez Harrison

Key Losses: QB Shaun Hill

Strengths: Friedgen is an offensive whiz, and with the entire offensive line returning, he should have success to that of 2001.


Weaknesses: Friedgen is good, but how good? He must fill two gaping holes on offense with projected starting QB Chris Kelly injured and reigning ACC Offensive Player of the Year Bruce Perry gone for four to eight weeks because of a groin muscle tear.

Keys to season: The Terps need to ride out the momentum of 2001. But they can't get too cocky because everyone will be gunning to dethrone the defending ACC champs.

Key Game: Sept. 14. vs Florida State.



Ralph Friedgen



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