

W&M

TRIBE SPORTS

Back to Quarterback

R.J. Archer '10 Starts Calling the Signals

~ BEN KENNEDY '05

If he had his choice, senior quarterback R.J. Archer '10 would spend his time fishing during the offseason. In some ways, it's easier to find a Tribe wide receiver far downfield than to search for a fish deep underwater. But in other ways, it's easier to be the fisherman — there's a lot less studying to do.

"The [Tribe football] offense is fairly complicated — it's tough," says Archer. "You don't see a freshman quarterback come in and be ready to play right away. The offense has been the same way for a long time. Once you get a grasp of it, you never really forget it."

Archer is far from being a freshman anymore. Out of Albemarle High School near Charlottesville, Va., he set school records at quarterback for passing yards and touchdowns on the way to senior-year Commonwealth District Offensive Player of the Year honors. His first on-field action at William and Mary, though, was after he converted to wide receiver.

"In general, it was easy for me to go to receiver just because I'd been learning everything through the eyes of a quarterback," he says. "Everybody has to know the whole picture — that's a big thing that the coaches emphasize. The two years I was playing receiver, I looked at playing receiver through the eyes of a quarterback: If I were throwing the ball to myself, where would I want to see me open?"

Playing in 22 games, Archer ranked second in receptions each year as a wideout. Then, after NFL prospect Mike Potts '08 graduated, there was a depth problem at head coach Jimmye Laycock's '70 signature position: he needed someone to back up his new signal-caller, Jake Phillips '09. He asked Archer:

"He said, 'We need to have two quarterbacks going into the season that can both play and can both be starters at any given notice,'" says Archer. "Coach said, 'It's up to you, but it would be the best for the team if you backed Jake up, though there's no guarantees after that.'"



When I was younger, I wanted whatever got me on the field the fastest, but I always say ‘Whatever’s best for the team, I’ll do and that’s fine.’ That’s what it came down to.”

Phillips led the College’s 2008 campaign to a 7-4 record and to the brink of the playoffs — the Tribe even took the eventual national champions to overtime and nearly won. Archer switched positions *again* and spent the year reading opposing defenses, learning Laycock’s legendarily complex offensive schemes and stepping in at the end of games for some on-field experience. Midseason, Archer took the reins from an injured Phillips against Villanova and made sure the Tribe stayed in the game.

“Being voted captain was a big honor, but whether that happened or not, it doesn’t matter. Everybody’s going to look to the quarterback.”

“It’s hard to go from being on the field every play for two years to getting in a little bit in the fourth quarter,” Archer says. “It was tough but, all in all, I thought that was what I needed.”

Now, to improve on a promising 2008 sea-

son, the eyes of the Tribe faithful turn to the team’s new leader. His teammates do, too.

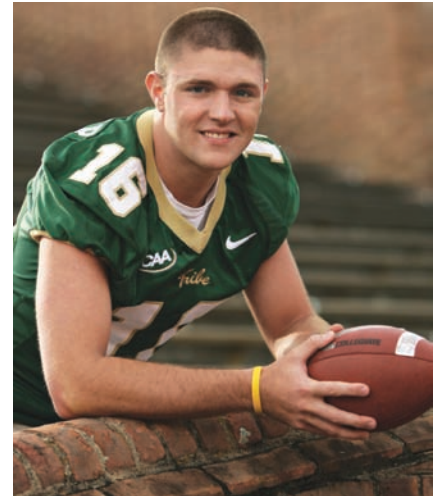
“Being voted captain was a big honor, but whether that happened or not, it doesn’t matter. Everybody’s going to look to the quarterback,” he says. “We have really good team chemistry right now — we’re not just getting along, but we have really good players to go along with that. If we can put all that together, we can have a very successful season.”

The pieces already fit together off the field. Archer, now at the top of the depth chart, is happy to join any of his teammates — whether for fun on a Saturday night or if they need guidance with football or school.

“Obviously on the field, when we’re throwing during the week, I try to help them as much as I can. I try to walk them through it a little bit,” he says. “Off the field, just helping guys

with whatever it is, like looking for classes to take, schoolwork or staying out of trouble. The young guys are good kids and they’re fine. Just being in that mentorship position takes a little added responsibility.”

Archer will take that responsibility to



Charlottesville on Sept. 5 to lead the Tribe against the University of Virginia (U.Va.) — the team he grew up watching with his dad, a U.Va. alumnus.

“All the U.Va. fans wear a shirt and tie to the game; my dad has been doing that since he went to school,” says Archer. “He says he’s still going to wear a shirt and tie, but he’s going to be wearing a William and Mary tie.”

But that will be the only kind of tie the elder Archer wants.

“He hopes we beat ‘em 100-to-nothing.”

[GAMESTOWATCH]

It’s all or nothing this year for the Tribe. The Green and Gold will follow up 2008’s 7-4 season that featured a signature win over CAA North powerhouse New Hampshire. It will be a good year for football in the Commonwealth for the Tribe faithful as eight of 11 games take place in Virginia — home games against Central Connecticut (Sept. 12), Delaware (Sept. 26), Towson (Nov. 7) and New Hampshire (Nov. 14) alongside an away tilt at Norfolk State (Sept. 19) complement the marquee matchups below. For ticket information, visit www.tribeathletics.com or call 757.221.3340.

Sept. 5 @ Virginia

Seven U.Va. players left the Cavaliers before the 2008 season, which ended with a 5-7 record. Head coach Al Groh installed the spread offense in the offseason and will hope for some more of the 2007 late-game heroics that took them to 9-4 and the Gator Bowl. Any Football Bowl Subdivision school can give a team like the Tribe trouble thanks to superior depth at each position. But against a Cavs team looking to find its footing again, W&M just might have a chance. See page 27 for more on this weekend.



Oct. 24 vs. James Madison (Homecoming)

The series of matchups against the Dukes is told in two parts: the running game and defense. The passing offense had no trouble keeping up with JMU’s air attack last year, but the Dukes managed 317 rushing yards to W&M’s 76. Six different JMU players scored during the game and the Tribe struggled to contain their star quarterback Rodney Landers, who graduated this spring. W&M can score each time it advances into the red zone — only problem is, so can JMU. A win here would be the biggest in years. For more on Homecoming, visit www.wmalumni.com/?homecoming.



Nov. 21 @ Richmond

In a do-or-die match for an NCAA playoff spot, only one blocked field goal in overtime separated the Tribe from the eventual national-champion Spiders. Richmond, ranked No. 1 in the *Sporting News* preseason poll, will again be led by rising senior pre-season All-American quarterback Eric Ward, a ruthlessly efficient passer. Don’t count on being able to overcome sloppy play, though: the Tribe can’t commit seven turnovers and expect to come back like last year. For tailgate information, visit www.wmalumni.com.



[SPORTSBRIEFS]

Betsy Graney Breaks Women's Track Record, Qualifies for Nationals

At the ECAC Championships May 15-17,

Betsy Graney '11 was part of a phenomenal 3,000-meter steeplechase where each of the top five athletes improved on season-bests by at least 14 seconds, finishing fifth overall in a William and Mary-record 10:15.99 to earn All-East accolades.



Graney '11

Graney's time improves upon the school record set by **Ali Henderson '03** in her senior campaign and places her among the top 75 athletes in the world this season.

Ashley Williams '10 and **Carly Morse '10** rounded out the championships in the shot put, tying for 10th with identical puts of 44-3.25 (13.49 meters). As the CAA champion in the shot put, Williams competed at the NCAA East Regional in late May.

Gymnasts Finish Strong at USAG Collegiate National Finals

The William and Mary women's gymnastics team concluded its 2009 season on May 9, when three Tribe gymnasts competed in event finals at the USAG Collegiate Nationals in New Haven, Conn.

Karla Bercaw '11 earned first-team All-America honors on vault with a seventh-place finish (9.575), while **Kristin Milardo '12** placed 11th with a 9.225 to also earn first-team All-America distinction.

In addition to competing on vault, Milardo also earned All-America honors on floor with a 9.625 to finish 11th. **Jen Stack '10** registered an eighth-place finish on bars with a 9.625 to earn a spot on the All-America First Team.



Bercaw '11

NCAA Recognizes Six Tribe Athletic Teams

A report issued by the National Collegiate Athletic Association honored six William and Mary athletic squads as recipients of its public recognition award for 2008-09. This recognition requires an Academic Progress Report (APR) rating that finished within the top 10 percent of the national average for the sport.

In the four years since the NCAA began releasing APR rates, the College has had a total of 37 teams recognized for academic excellence. The Tribe teams recognized are football, men's and women's gymnastics, women's indoor and outdoor track and field, and women's volleyball.

The APR is based on academic eligibility, retention and graduation of student-athletes. A rate of 925, out of a highest possible score of 1,000, equates to an approximate graduation rate of 60 percent and will be used as the threshold for future program evaluations.

Field Hockey Renovates Busch Field

The William and Mary field hockey program will play on a world-class surface starting next fall, as the Tribe renovates Busch Field this summer with AstroTurf 12™. The renovation of the 20-year-old facility includes a total revamp of the field, underlying pad and drainage systems to create a competition surface that ranks alongside those used at the U.S. National Training Centers in Virginia Beach, Va., Chula Vista, Calif., and that used at last year's Olympic Games.

The original pad and AstroTurf surface were torn out in late April. The sub-base was regraded and paved in porous asphalt. When the paving is completed, new AstroTurf 12 will be installed on top. A new drainage trench and a state-of-the-art watering system will also be installed. The system is fully automated and eco-friendly, drawing water from a brand-new well and the runoff will drain back into the same source. Additionally, the backstops and netting behind the goals will be replaced, and the fencing on the north side of the field will be replaced with new decorative fencing.

The College of William and Mary continues to embrace superiority in the field hockey program's success by selecting this Olympic-standard product. This past season, the NCAA Division I Field Hockey Final Four was played on

AstroTurf 12, and 13 of the 16 teams in the tournament play their home games on this surface.

Busch Field, which was built in 1988-89 thanks to a generous grant from the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Corp., officially opened in June 1989.

—W&M Sports Information



Members of the William and Mary field hockey team help renovate the turf at Busch Field, home to the team since 1989. The original surface was torn out in April.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SPORTS INFORMATION

Cornerback Derek Cox '09 Drafted in NFL's Third Round

Former William and Mary cornerback Derek Cox '09 of Winterville, N.C., was selected April 26 by the Jacksonville Jaguars in the third round of the NFL Draft.

Cox, a four-year starter for the College, was the 73rd overall player selected in the draft, and the second taken from the Football Championships Series (FCS). His placement in the third round makes him the second-highest drafted player in school history, as only former Tribe All-American safety Darren Sharper '97 was selected higher (in the second round by the Green Bay Packers in 1997).

Cox will seek to join Sharper (of the New Orleans Saints) and Mike Leach (of the Arizona Cardinals) as fellow William and Mary alumni on NFL active rosters.

The Jaguars traded a seventh-round pick in the 2009 draft and a second-round pick in the 2010 draft to select Cox, who graduated in May with a degree in marketing.

On the field, Cox was one of the league's premier cover corners, as he was a two-time All-Colonial Athletic Association (CAA) selection (as a junior and senior) and finished his senior season tied for fifth in the CAA with four interceptions — he returned a pair of those for touchdowns (at North Carolina State and vs. Northeastern). While opposing quarterbacks often elected to avoid throwing to his side of the field, Cox ranked 11th in the league with 0.82 passes defended per game. He also made a significant impact on special teams returning punts, averaging 16.4 yards per return with a pair of touchdowns (89 yards vs. Northeastern and 80 yards vs. Richmond). Cox finished his career with 172 tackles and nine interceptions.

Even more impressive, perhaps, was Cox's leadership off the field, as he was one of just four players in current Tribe Head Coach Jimmye Laycock's '70 three-decade tenure at the College to be selected as a captain for two terms. Cox was also elected as the Student Athletics Advisory Council President for the 2008-09 athletics year and was presented the 2008 Leadership Award by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

The Jaguars open the regular season at Indianapolis on Sept. 13.
—*W&M Sports Information*



Rookie cornerback Derek Cox '09 runs in practice with the Jacksonville Jaguars after his selection in the third round of the 2009 NFL Draft.

Young Alumni Charlottesville Weekend

William and Mary Game Day and Wine Country Tour
September 5-6, 2009

Join fellow young alumni for a William and Mary weekend in Charlottesville, Va. Start your weekend with a Tribe tailgate. Root for the Tribe as they "kick off" the 2009 football season against the Virginia Cavaliers. On Sunday, join the group for guided tours and wine tastings at three award-winning Virginia wineries. All of this for only \$125 per person.*

Saturday, September 5

Registration at English Inn
Tribe Tailgate
William & Mary vs. U.Va. football game

Sunday, September 6

Guided tours of three award-winning Virginia wineries (lunch included)

Register online at www.wmalumni.com/?travel
or contact Mary Meadows at 757.221.1165 or mimead@wm.edu

*Price does not include lodging. A block of rooms is reserved for a group rate of \$99/night (breakfast included). Optional Friday and Sunday night stays. To make your room reservation, visit www.englishinncharlottesville.com or call 434.971.9900.

Register online at www.wmalumni.com/?travel

