

Sports

A look at fall athletics

In the Trenches

Both on and off the field, Brett Beard is determined to produce winners. By NELSON BRYAN

AT SIX-FEET-FOUR-INCHES and 290 pounds, Brett Beard makes quite a first impression. There is inside him a healthy mixture of toughness and compassion. He played eight-and-a-half games last season with a broken foot—at nose tackle, recording 41 tackles with three for loss of yardage. He also reads to children in elementary schools and tutors inner-city youth.

The Commodores will count heavily on Beard's defensive line experience as they change from last season's 3-4 defense to a 4-3 defense. A tough, strong run-stopping specialist, his best game last season was against Alabama with nine tackles, a narrow 12-9 Alabama victory.

During the next game, a 28-22 home victory over the University of Richmond, Beard's foot was broken underneath a pile of players. Yet, he played on it for the remainder of the game. "I had x-rays after, and the doctors told me what was wrong. From there, I would just tape it up and practice. It's funny—it would bother me until I hurt it again in a game. When I finally hurt it again, I'd be good to go." He had surgery in the off-season and now is fully recovered for the 2002 season. A redshirt junior, he will graduate in May 2003 but will have one year of eligibility left in football. He is a human and organizational development major and will earn a master's in that field during his final year of eligibility.

With a new coaching staff now in place, Beard is excited about the 12-game schedule and Vandy's football future. "I think they've finally gotten a coaching staff that's fit for this program," he says. "They recruited well this year for the time they had, and there is a bright future ahead for Vanderbilt football. We lacked discipline, and these guys are bringing the discipline. I think in the end—if not this year, for sure next year—we're finally going to turn this thing around and win a bunch of games."

Beard's reputation at the University as a community volunteer is equally as respected as his football prowess. He was named by the athletics department as Vanderbilt's representative to the Southeastern Conference's Good Works Team.

Only one athlete from each of the 12 member schools is given that honor.

"He's one of our shining stars," says Kevin Colon, director of life skills with the athletics department. "He has a heart of gold. He spends time in elementary schools on read-me day and visits Children's Hospital."

The Edgehill Community Center, an inner-city center that schedules after-school activities for at-risk children, occupies much of Beard's non-football time. "The kids come over for tutoring after school. I help take care

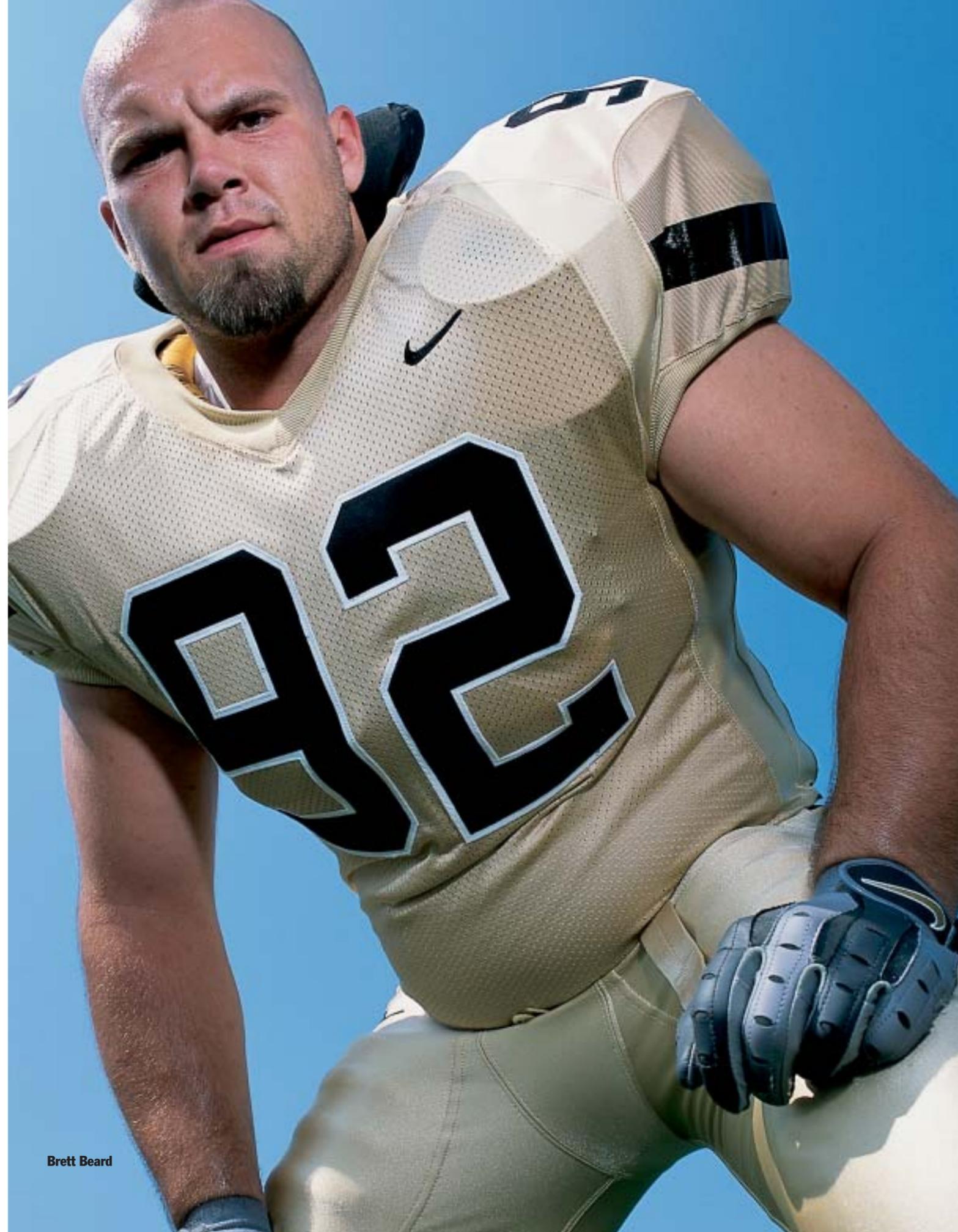
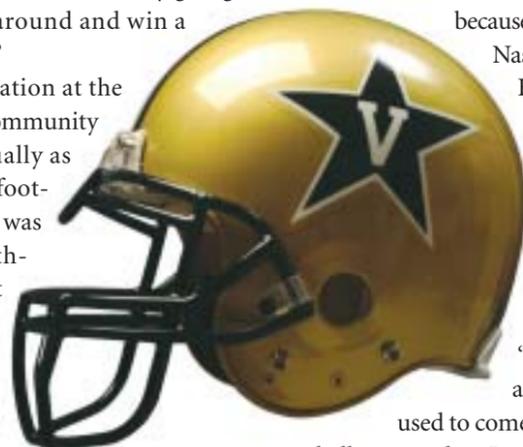
of the kids and sometimes tutor others." Another focus of his attention is Backfield in Motion, a nonprofit organization that offers inner-city kids a chance to play football. "Instead of having to pay money, they have to come for tutoring several hours during the week. I've also taken time to read books to elementary schools."

A resident of Birmingham, Ala., Beard decided to become a Commodore because of his familiarity with Nashville and Vanderbilt.

His parents both graduated from the same Nashville high school, and he has an older sister who lives here.

"This is where we always came during the summer," he says. "Everything revolved around Nashville, and I used to come to Vanderbilt basketball games when I was younger."

Life after Vanderbilt holds a lot of promise for Beard. He would like to pursue a professional football career if possible. Beyond that, he wants to be a coach. "I never really thought of coming here until I got the opportunity. I get to come up here, spend time with family, and my parents don't have to travel far. I get to play football in the SEC and, most important, I get a good education to fall back on if football is not in the future."



Brett Beard

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEIL BRAKE

Balcomb Named Women's Basketball Coach

MELANIE BALCOMB WAS NAMED VANDERBILT'S new head women's basketball coach last May. She coached the previous seven years at Xavier University in Cincinnati and was the winningest women's basketball coach in Xavier history. She recorded her best record in 2000-01 when the Musketeers went 31-3 and advanced to the NCAA Tournament's Elite Eight, defeating Tennessee in the Sweet 16. After the 2001 season, Balcomb was named "Coach of the Year" in the Atlantic 10 Conference.



Melanie Balcomb

"This is an ideal fit for me," Balcomb says. "I am excited to be coaching at a university that has high standards and high aspirations. Basketball is important to Vanderbilt, and its commitment is obvious. We will work very hard to continue this program's tradition of successfully competing at the highest level and doing so with integrity."

Balcomb compiled a record of 135-78 at Xavier while winning one Atlantic 10 Conference regular-season title and making three NCAA Tournament appearances. Her teams also won two Atlantic 10 Conference tournament championships and made one appearance in the WNIT.

In the last three years, Xavier had a 5-1 record versus the Southeastern Conference with victories over Vanderbilt, Kentucky (twice), Mississippi State and Tennessee. Vanderbilt also registered the lone victory, which came in Nashville last season.

She succeeds former women's coach Jim Foster, who accepted the head coaching position at Ohio State University, and Tom Collen, former head coach at Colorado State University, who resigned a day after being hired at Vanderbilt because of a perceived discrepancy in his résumé.

Tim Corbin Named Vanderbilt Baseball Coach

TIM CORBIN, AN ASSISTANT AND ASSOCIATE HEAD coach for the past nine years at Clemson University, was named Vanderbilt's new baseball coach following the retirement of Coach Roy Mewbourne.

Corbin helped craft the Tigers into a national power, winning more than 71 percent (434 wins, 172 losses) of all games. Clemson ranked

as the fifth-winningest program since 1993 with five top-10 finishes and top-25 national rankings every year.

Heading into the 2002 season, all eight of Corbin's recruiting classes gained top-25 recognition. *Baseball America* tabbed his 1999 recruiting class as number one in the nation and listed Clemson as one of the top five college

recruiting staffs in the country in 1997. *Baseball America* and the American Baseball Coaches Association named Corbin the "Assistant Coach of the Year" in 2000.

"I like the idea of selling Ivy League education with Southeastern Conference baseball," Corbin says. "I can see by the improvement in facilities that the University wants a quality baseball program."

Former Coach Roy Mewbourne retired at the end of the season after a 24-27 finish. During his 30-year career in collegiate baseball, he posted an overall record of 922-682-9 with a Vanderbilt record of 655-608-9.



Tim Corbin

Kylene Kownurko Wins SEC Steeplechase Championship

KYLENE KOWNURKO, A DISTANCE RUNNER with the Vanderbilt track team, won the SEC Steeplechase championship in May and, in the process, broke her own SEC steeplechase record. May was a big month for the senior from Newton, Pa., as she also graduated with a B.E. degree in biomedical engineering.



Kylene Kownurko

With the win she became the most recent Vanderbilt Southeastern Conference champion, following on the heels of former SEC and NCAA champion Ryan Tolbert, who won a national title in the 400-meter hurdles.

Sports Roundup

Basketball: Women Win SEC Tourney

The women's basketball team won the Southeastern Conference Tournament in Nashville for the first time since 1995, beating Louisiana State University 63-48. In what would turn out to be Coach Jim Foster's final season, the team logged a 30-7 record and advanced to the Elite Eight round of the NCAA Tournament. In the process, junior Chantelle Anderson was named to the AP's All-America team and senior Zuzi Klimesova was a first-team All-SEC player and named MVP of the SEC Tournament.



Anderson

Anderson

Golf: Teams Make NCAA Championships

Both Vanderbilt's men and women's golf teams were represented in this year's NCAA Championship Tournament. Vanderbilt junior Brandt Snedeker, of Nashville, tied for 23rd place with a score of even par at the NCAA Division I Men's Golf Championship.

The women's team made their first trip to the NCAA Championships and had their best-

ever finish in the SEC Championships. The season also brought significant individual honors. Junior Nicki Cutler of Englewood, Colo., was named an honorable mention All-American at season's end. She also was a second-team All-SEC selection along with senior Meredith Ward of Crystal Lake, Ill. Sophomore Courtney Wood of Brentwood, Tenn., earned an SEC honorable mention.

Tennis: Three Named All-Americans

Three Vanderbilt Commodore tennis players were named All-Americans by the Intercollegiate Tennis Association. Junior Sarah Riske of McMurray, Pa., and sophomore Aleke Tsoubanos of Chesterfield, Mo., earned women's All-American honors, while sophomore Bobby Reynolds of Acworth, Ga., earned men's All-American honors.

Riske and Tsoubanos

Riske earned All-American status in both singles and doubles for the 2002 season and was one of only 12 women's players nationally to earn both accolades. She finished the season with a 23-9 singles record at the number one position and a number 14 national



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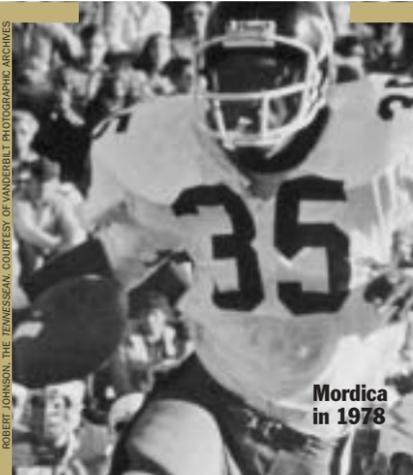
ranking. She teamed with Tsoubanos at number-one doubles, and the duo posted a 25-6 record and advanced to the quarterfinals of the NCAA Doubles, finishing the season with a number six national ranking. The All-American honors were the first of their careers for both Riske and Tsoubanos. They are the third and fourth Vanderbilt women's tennis players to earn All-American status.

Reynolds earned All-American honors for singles play and was only the second Vanderbilt men's tennis player to become an All-American. He posted a 30-13 record while playing at No. 1 singles last season. He finished the year ranked number 15 in the nation. All three players return next season.

Football: VU-UT Game at Nashville's NFL Coliseum

The 2002 Vanderbilt-Tennessee football game, scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 23, will be played in Nashville's professional football coliseum (formerly known as Adelphia Coliseum). It marks the second time for Vanderbilt to host the Volunteers in the downtown Nashville home of the Tennessee Titans. On Nov. 25, 2000, the teams staged a classic game, with the Volunteers withstanding a furious Commodore rally to prevail 28-26. The game, played before a capacity crowd of 68,360, featured the largest home audience ever to see a Vanderbilt game.

For more information, call the Vanderbilt Athletic Box Office at 615/322-GOLD or 1-877-44-VANDY.



Mordica in 1978

{Where Are They Now?}

Frank Mordica, BS'81, one of Vanderbilt's all-time great running backs, continues to make great strides with the U. S. Navy. During his Vanderbilt football career, he set two school records that stand today. He ranks number one in single game rushing yardage with 321 against the Air Force Academy on Nov. 18, 1978, and still claims the career rushing yardage record with 2,362. Mordica is now a senior chief and currently assigned to the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *USS Theodore Roosevelt* in Norfolk, Va., attached to the medical department, in charge of keeping 5,000 sailors and marines "fit to fight."



Courtney Wood and Sarah Jacobs placed first and second, respectively, in the 2002 Tennessee Women's State Open Championship.