

First Travolta

Then the Bunch

Technical Sports

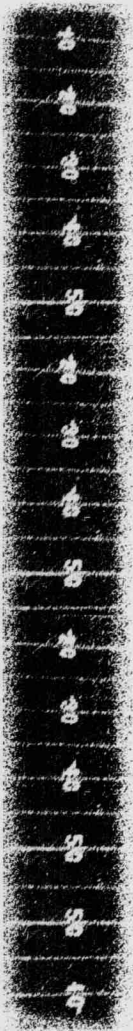
1996 FOOTBALL PREVIEW

September 1996



Is the Pack Back?

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About the cover

Center picture was taken by Assistant Photo editor Hide Terada. John Travolta from the movie "Pulp Fiction" is courtesy of Miramax. The wolf is thanks to Steven Egan and Andy Tucker. The Brady Bunch is courtesy of Paramount Pictures. Designed by Woody Wallace.

FROM THE EDITOR

If you haven't figured it out yet, it's about as subtle as a New York Taxi drivers body odor, the theme for this tab is—the comeback. John Travolta is the comeback kid. The Brady Bunch is the family that keeps coming back and George Clinton (back cover) has brought back P-Funk bigger and better than ever. Can the team comeback? Thanks to the photo guys, Matt Lail and Chris Rhodes, you can see why there's a case of hope. Better thank Dad this time, too.
—J.P. Giglio

Technician

North Carolina State University's
Student Newspaper Since 1920

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TEAM OUTLOOK

'Those who think they can'

■ Was the 1995 season the end of the world, or an asterisk?

J.P. Giglio

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What happened to N.C. State football?

It seems like yesterday the team was inches, make that a chain-link from the proverbial "next level." Following the 1995 Peach Bowl victory over Mississippi State, the Pack had finally, and finally is the word after seven straight bowl games and three second-place finishes in the ACC in five years, earned a spot in the hearts of the college football writers everywhere.

Sports Illustrated, The Sporting News, the Associated Press, you name the organization they had the Pack ranked in their pre-season Top 20.

An arrest here, a suspension there, a 70-point loss and a three-win season later, the apocalypse is apparently upon us. There is no ranking, not even an "other receiving votes" this fall.

To Coach Mike O'Cain, not April but August has been the cruelest month. The loss of two defense starters and another highly-touted freshman did not bode well for the not-so-depth chart.

On offense, the pessimist might say, "They won three games last year with the school's best quarterback of all time, what's going to happen this season?"

Maybe the question isn't "Where did it go wrong?" Maybe the faithful should take a step back and ask, "Was the '95 season merely and aberration on the tradition laid by Dick Sheridan or was it a harbinger of things to come?"

Only time will tell, if the latter is the case but the underdog position is hardly an unfamiliar one.

There is a quote in the brickyard on a plaque by a flagpole.

It reads:



In '96, Coach Mike O'Cain faces his most difficult challenge yet at N.C. State.

SALVADOR FARRAN III/STAFF

"It's not always the strongest nor the fastest, but those who think they can."

The plaque commemorates the 1983 national champions, but there is a hardly a more appropriate mantra for the football team this season.

"Those who think they can."

At this point, the membership on the list is probably confined to the 113 players, the seven coaches, a handful of Wolfpack Club members and of course, Frank Weedon.

Then all of the sudden, a victory of Georgia Tech tomorrow adds another group. A solid showing next Thursday night versus Florida State and all of the sudden, there's no room

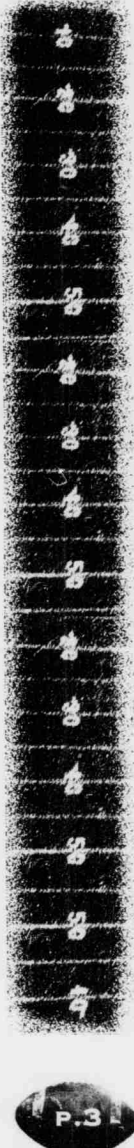
on the bandwagon.

So what has to be done to get the bandwagon rolling?

First and foremost, the team *must* regain the "Us vs. The World," attitude. Because, quite simply the love affair last season lasted as long as it took Danny Kanell to find Adrian Cooper in the endzone.

This can only come about with leaders. Somebody has to pick up the gauntlet thrown down upon Carl Reeves absence.

Judging by the amount of negativity surrounding the team's chances, the attitude adjustment shouldn't be a problem. The leadership, however, is



'Noles drive for five



SAVANNOCK EASTMAN III/STAFF

A swarming defense, as shown here against the Wolfpack, has been the key to Florida State's four consecutive league titles.

■ Here's the skinny on the ACC season.

By Michael Preston
Staff Writer

Is there a better way to celebrate 50 years of Atlantic Coast Conference Football than with a preview and prediction of the upcoming season?

The answer to that question would be a resounding "yes," but because of the outstanding restraining order, this is all you get.

1. Florida State Seminoles: Realistically, you know they could probably beat some Canadian Football League teams, and the New York Jets. Thad Busby takes over at the helm and has two decisions. Throw deep to E.G. Green and Andre Cooper or hand off to Warrick Dunn and Rock Preston.

Apparently, Bobby Bowden is more impressed with this year's defense than those of years past, which makes this team more frightening than spit.

2. Virginia Cavaliers: Fortunately the Wahoos have enough Barbers to

scalp most of the league (Insert laugh track here). Tiki Barber basically came from nowhere and is now probably the second best back in the league. On the other side of the ball, CB Ronde Barber has more career picks than "The Return of Superfly" (Again with the laugh track).

Plus, Virginia coach George Welsh will be at least responsible for two wins this season.

3. Clemson Tigers: The All-Police Blotter team is trying to forget about that embarrassing Gator Bowl loss to Syracuse by beating up whatever they can find. Antwan Wyatt, fresh off be suspended, transferred, but Tommy West is still pretty stocked.

And despite getting slapped by the Tar Heels last week, Raymond Priestner and Emory Smith form quite a backfield and Nealson Greene is still actually doing a pretty good impression of a quarterback. The defense will be led by CB Dexter McCleon and LB Anthony Simmons.

4. Maryland Terrapins: This is the Terps year (finally) to make it to a bowl game and finish with a respectable record in conference.

Coach Mark Duffner has finally scrapped the "Black Thunder" offense and the run-and-shoot. Brian Cummings led Maryland to a 4-0 start and was probably more capable a starter than Scott Milanovich. Solid ground game with Buddy Rogers, and more solid defense with LB Ratcliff Thomas and CB A.J. Johnson.

Plus, their schedule is more slack than the jaws of the studio audience at a Hee-Haw taping.

5. North Carolina: How's this for a Catch 22: The Heels are returning, 16 starters from a team that finished 4-4 in the ACC. Leon Johnson returns, as does four-fifths of his offensive line, but running the show at quarterback could be Oscar Davenport. The defense lost All-American Marcus Jones, but returns one of the top line-backing corps in the country.

6. N.C. State: Tremayne Stephens and Rod Brown should be able to will this team to enough conference wins to stay out of the cellar. The offensive and defensive fronts are the biggest concerns, as are non-conferences

THE QUARTERBACKS

Trio for Trinity Road

■ A young, inexperienced corps of quarterbacks steps into the high-pressure cockpit as the leaders of the Pack.

By Chris Rhodes
Staff Writer

The 1996 N.C. State football team will break with a tradition which spans back over 10 years. For the first time since the Tom Reed era of State football, the Pack is entering the season opener without an experienced front-runner for the starting quarterback job.

The void left by the departure of Terry Harvey is immense to say the least. Harvey holds N.C. State career records for yards passing, total offense, total offense per play, pass completions, pass attempts, and

touchdown passes.

The quest to find Harvey's heir apparent ended early this week as coach Mike O'Cain named Jose Laureano as the starting quarterback for the season-opening contest against Georgia Tech at Carter-Finley Stadium.

Laureano out-dued redshirt freshman Jamie Barnette and junior college transfer Colin Harris for the starting position.

Laureano, the only candidate with game experience played mainly in a back-up role to Terry Harvey last year. However, he did get a start in last year's Maryland game in which he rushed for one touchdown while completing 15 of 25 passes for 205 yards.

In '95 Laureano appeared in a total of six games, throwing for 355 yards and one touchdown, while rushing for a pair of touchdowns. Laureano feels that his 1995 experience will assist him in preparing for the upcoming season.

"It definitely will help," Laureano said. "It is real important to experience live action."

Laureano's emergence as the starting quarterback can be partially attributed to his new-found dedication to football. This has resulted in strengthening the team's faith in their new offensive leader.

"Jose has got the right attitude," middle linebacker Morocco Brown said. "He has gotten back on track, and seeing that, it gives everybody confidence when you see your leader at the helm doing that."

Laureano is hoping to recapture his high school form which lead him to be considered the No. 5 prep quarterback in the Southeast by Blue Chip Illustrated. In his senior season at Colonial High School in Orlando, Florida, Laureano passed for 1,850 yards with 11 touchdowns. In addition, he rushed for an additional 758 yards and 12 touchdowns.

Colin Harris joined the Pack after two seasons at Fort Scott Community College. At Fort Scott Harris threw for 2,357 yards and had 20 touchdowns over nine games in his sophomore season, numbers which ranked him fourth among junior college players nationally in total offense. Harris is continuing to adapt to State's offense system and will serve as the No. 3 quarterback heading into the Saturday's season opener.

Jamie Barnette, who has rapidly progressed in his ability to run the Pack offense through spring drills and into fall practice, will back-up Laureano against Georgia Tech. Even though Barnette does not possess game experience he has proven that he has a strong-arm and is a natural athlete, attributes which will serve the Pack well if his services are called upon.

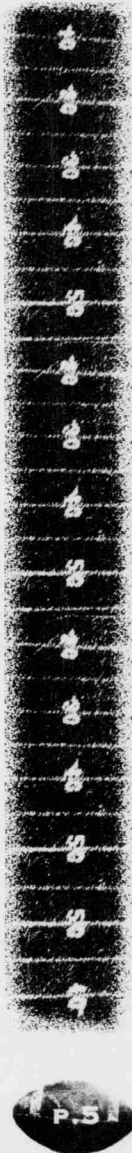
But it is Laureano has been thrust into the starting quarterback role, and the team is expecting him to take control of the offensive unit.

"Everybody is waiting for him to do something," Brown said. "We are waiting for him to step up, it will show when we start playing. If he gets the mental part down, everything will work out well."



(TOP LEFT) HEE TERADA (ABOVE) SALVADOR FARIAN III/STAFF

After a spirited battle between Jose Laureano (15), Colin Harris (10) and Jamie Barnette (4) in fall practice, Laureano will take over for Terry Harvey (top left) who finished as the school record holder in just about every passing stat possible.



OFFENSIVE LINE

New faces in the trenches

■ The offensive line has stellar running backs behind them but questions ahead.

By **Chris Rhodes**
Staff Writer

Tom Dombalis.

Does this name ring a bell in the lobe of your brain which focuses on N.C. State football? If it doesn't, you may want to make a mental note of adding it to your list of players to watch this fall. Why you ask? The reason is simple, Dombalis will be the one returning offensive line starter for the Wolfpack this year. This gives Dombalis the unique honor of being the on-field leader and motivator for the entire offensive line.

After backing-up All-ACC performer Steve Keim in 1994, Dombalis worked on perfecting his individual technique and understanding the complex blocking schemes.

In 1995, Dombalis moved to tackle and started every game. Dombalis' dedicated work ethic has helped him to recover from multiple knee operations while still becoming one of the team's strongest individuals. This strength is evident in his ability to bench press 225 pounds 39 times.

Hopefully, Dombalis will be able to use his abilities to emerge as the leader of a young offensive line while becoming an All-ACC selection.

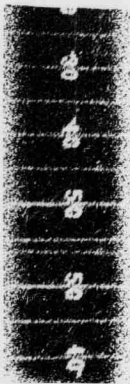
Junior Seamus Murphy will accom-

See TRENCHES, Page 14 ▶



Seamus Murphy (58) will start at center on the line which lost four starters from last year's team. Senior left tackle Tom Dombalis (not pictured) is the only returning starter. The rest of the line consists of underclassmen. Sophomore Alex Santos being the youngest.

SAVADOR FAIRAN III/STAFF



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An EOE, M/F/D/V

THE TARGETS

Better to receive than to give

■ Co-Captain Jimmy Grissett leads a receiving corps with experience.

By James Curle
Staff Writer

While some of the N.C. State offensive positions may be in question this year, the receivers should be quite solid. The Wolfpack returns senior co-captain Jimmy Grissett along with five other lettermen, including Greg Addis, Alvis Whitted, and Omarr Dixon.

As co-captain, Grissett (5-11, 188, Shallotte) is one of the strongest receivers on the Wolfpack club. He finished second on the team last year with a career-high 37 receptions for

570 yards, and led the team with six touchdown catches. He enters this season having caught at least one reception in the last 23 games, and hopes to continue that success this year.

Grissett steps into the role of captain with confidence.

"I feel like I have to work harder, but I like responsibility more," Grissett said.

But the receiving duties will not fall solely on Grissett's shoulders. This year's corps include Addis (6-1, 200, Anderson, S.C.), Whitted (6-1, 183, Hillsborough) and Dixon (6-0, 188, Raleigh).

For the first time in five years, a starting tight end returns. Junior Mark Thomas, (6-5, 235) had 10 catches last season for 103 yards, Jason



HEE TRADA/STAFF

Mark Thomas is the first starter returning at tight end in five years.

McGeorge will back up Thomas with Devon Smith switched to help out on defense.

Addis finished third in receiving on the Wolfpack last season with 34 catches for 433 yards and a touchdown. He will also share time with



See TARGETS, Page 14 ▶



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ROD BROWN

Speak softly, and deliver a big stick

■ Senior fullback Rod Brown is ready to rumble over any defense in his way.

By J.P. Giglio
Preview Editor

Rod Brown is a man of few words. When you roughly the size of a Range Rover, words aren't necessarily worth much. For Brown, his medium is the game. His message to the opposition is crystal clear. Linebacker in the way? No problem. Defensive back to run past? Get real. A simple "move it or lose it," caveat is not even necessary.

"I'm not a vocal leader, I don't like to yell," Brown said. "I like to go out and show how it's done, than talk about it."

Rod Brown is a 6-foot 246-pound block of granite. But even a rock feels pain.

Last year's disappointing 3-8 season stung enough without Brown having to worry about fumbling the ball.

"Tremayne and I worked hard on our ball-handling over the summer," Brown said. "We have to do things we did in the past—breaking tackles and holding on to the ball."

The Lithonia, Ga. native has amassed 1,197 yards, third best by a fullback at Brick U., 183 yards receiving and 10 touchdowns in his career. His best year was the 1994 season, as a sophomore he picked up 563 yards, including his two career 100-yard rushing games.

When Brown says he wants to get back to doing the things he used to do, these numbers are indicative of what he means. He also means enjoying coming out to the stadium again.

"I just expect the whole team to have fun," Brown said. "We didn't have a lot of fun losing games in the second half."

"We're just going to play to our capabilities, win or lose just have fun."

The fun was just beginning last

season when

83 yards on 15 carriers.

Trailing by a point, 21-20, Brown rattled off a 28-yard run inside the Wahoos 20. With fourth-and-a-chain-link, and 75 seconds to play, Coach Mike O'Cain elected to kick the field goal.

Brown's efforts on the drive seem to at least warrant a shot at the first down.

"I don't like to question the coach's call, but I wanted the ball," Brown said. "I felt I was hot after breaking the run. But coach's is coach and I'm a player."

Virginia proceeded to drive the length of the field and reverse a trend of heart-breaking losses to the Pack.

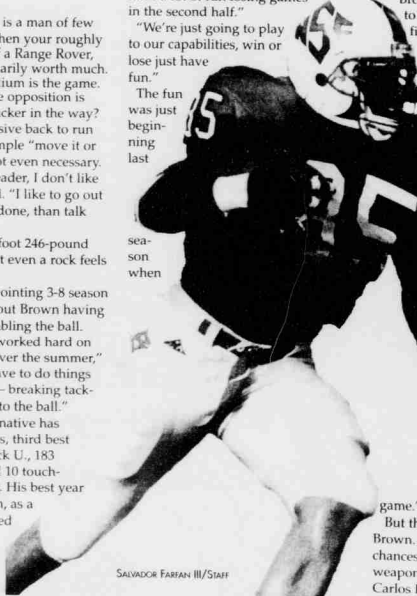
The Cavaliers ended up becoming the first ACC team to knock off Florida State and tied for the ACC title, while the Pack endured its worst season in a decade.

"Maybe we put all of our marbles in that one game, we just came up on the short end of the stick,"

Brown said. "It kind of drained us throughout the season that we lost that ball game."

But this is a distant memory to Brown. He down-played the teams chances to the press, but with a weaponry like Tremayne Stephens, Carlos King and Brown in the back-field maybe the big guy has something up his sleeve for his final season.

Just don't expect to hear about it from him. You'll just have to wait and see for yourself.



SALVADOR FARRAN III/STAFF

vital Stats

Height: 6'
Weight: 246
Year: Senior
Major: Sociology
Born: Feb. 28, 1974, Lithonia, Ga.

Virginia suddenly pulled the plug on third consecutive comeback victory by the Pack.

Trailing 20-7 at halftime, State rallied behind the arm of Terry Harvey and the legs of Rod Brown. Brown tallied

	Rushing				Receiving			
	G	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	C	Yds.	TD
1993	9	23	108	4.3	2	0	0	0
1994	11	105	563	5.4	5	16	121	0
1995	11	117	526	4.5	2	9	62	1
Totals	31	245	1,197	5.2	9	25	183	1

TREMAYNE STEPHENS

Stephens goes full speed ahead

■ This year, Tremayne will try to just simply be Tremayne.

By James M. Lail
Preview Assistant Editor

Sometimes it's hard to outdo yourself. Just ask Tremayne Stephens.

In his first career start in 1994, the Greer, S.C., native galloped over Wake Forest for 189 yards.

And in the eight games that followed, Stephens rushed for over 100 yards four more times, including 121 yards versus Florida State, on the way to earning second team All-ACC.

A lot was being expected out of Stephens last season. And despite not quite having the exceptional year like he had in '94, Stephens quietly continued his steady climb to the top of the State record books. But more importantly, he did his best to improve to help the Pack as a team.

Quite simply, opponents were on the lookout for him in '95. This season he's on the lookout for them.

"They're going to be keying in on me again but that's why I put on the extra pounds," Stephens said. "After all those hits it tends to take a little bit of a toll on you, but we've got the backups who can come in for a spell."

Stephens has already rushed for 1,640 yards in his two seasons in Raleigh, placing him eleventh in school totals. He needs just three, yes three yards to break into the top ten in front of Gary Downs of the Denver Broncos.

If Stephens continues to average the yards he has his first two seasons,

he'll easily climb into the top six of the rushing records, behind the likes of Ted Brown, Joe McIntosh, Anthony Barbour, Stan Fritts and Willie Burden. And he's just a junior.

Although the thought of being considered one of the great ones is appealing to him,

came to this program to win some ballgames, and last year I felt like I let the program down. I want to win and if some of those records happen to fall, so be it. I just want to get back to a bowl game."

With himself and veterans Rod Brown and Carlos King in the backfield, Stephens feels confident of what the State backs and the offense as a whole can accomplish.

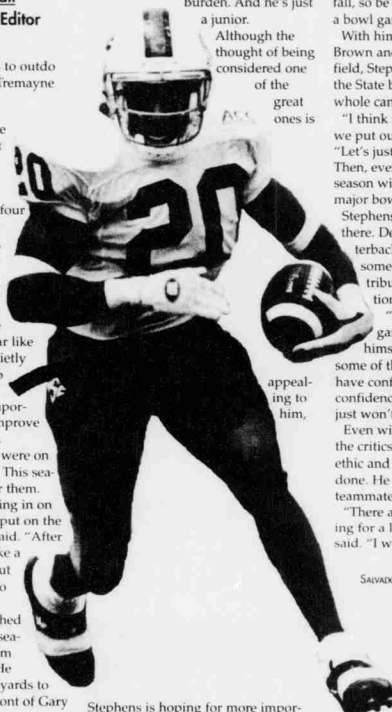
"I think we can accomplish anything we put our minds to," Stephens said. "Let's just win one game a week. Then, eventually, we'll go through the season without a loss with a shot at a major bowl."

Stephens' confidence does not end there. Despite inexperience at quarterback, he feels comfortable that someone will step-up and contribute effectively at the position.

"Maybe in the first few games we [Brown, King and himself] may have to take up some of that load," Stephens said. "I have confidence. You have to have confidence in the whole system, or it just won't work."

Even with the question marks and the critics, Stephens has the work ethic and mentality to get the job done. He hopes that it'll push his teammates and equal wins.

"There are a lot of young guys looking for a leader to step up," Stephens said. "I want to give that to them."



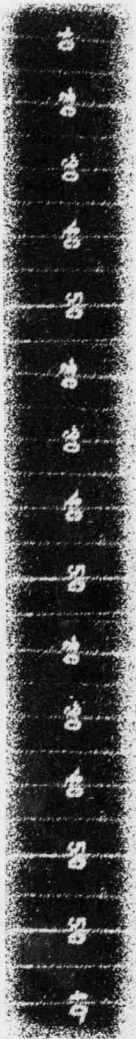
SALVADOR FARIAN III/STAFF

vital

Stats

	Rushing				Receiving			
	G	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	C	Yds.	TD
1994	9	125	791	6.3	3	6	71	0
Peach Bowl		21	105	5.0	1	1	9	0
1995	11	186	849	4.6	5	14	126	2
Totals	21	332	1,745	5.3	9	21	206	2

Height: 5'11"
Weight: 200
Year: Junior
Major: Undecided
Born: April 16, 1974, Greer, SC



DEFENSIVE LINE



Williams anchors the line

■ The D-line has the talent to turn things around in '96.

By James Curle
Staff Writer



PETER SCHWARTZ/STAFF
George Williams (95) hopes to corral his share of runners this year.

The N.C. State defensive line may have lost Darwin Walker, but it the return of George Williams and Brad Collins should be enough muscle and experience to get the job done.

At the tackle position, look for Williams (6-3, 293, Lakewood, N.C.) to become the premiere player. He led all of the Pack's down linemen last year in tackles with 66, placing him third on the defensive squad's total. His two sacks and 10 tackles behind the line of scrimmage last year are indicators of the potential Williams possesses.

Supporting Williams in the tackle positions will be senior Mark Lawrence (6-2, 238, Wayne, N.J.) and junior Lateef Patterson (6-4, 300, Atlantic City, N.J.). The Jersey Boys return this year as lettermen, adding much needed leadership to the front line. Lawrence posted his highest tackle total last year with 25, while Patterson, who appeared in eight games last season, racked up five

tackles. Look for sophomore Perry Cotten (6-2, 270, Moncure, N.C.) and freshman Jeff Kuh (6-4, 255, Chattanooga, T.N.) to compete for playing time as well.

Last season, the defensive end position was gutted by injuries to starters Jon Rissler and Brad Collins. Although Rissler won't be returning this season, junior Collins (6-6, 253, Raleigh, N.C.) has recovered from his hand injury and is eager to play. He played in eight games last year, recording 24 tackles and three sacks. Look for Collins, barring injury, to stand out at this position.

Backing up Collins at defensive end will be sophomore Clayton Simon (6-5, 246, Hickory, N.C.) and junior Tom Loughlin (6-6, 250, Quantico, V.A.). Simon planned on playing a key role last year's team, but a knee injury in game two forced him out for the season. He was granted a medical-hard-

See D-Line, Page 15 ▶

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LINEBACKERS

Melnik leaves void

■ The backers lose leader, but gain focus.

By James M. Lail
Assistant Preview Editor

It is said that hindsight is 20/20. But no matter what way one looks at it, 1995 was a dismal year for the N.C. State defense.

It was close to the bottom of the ACC bad. And with the loss of key defensive players, most critics are expecting more of the same in '96.

The defense knows it's gonna be tough to shoo away those demons from a season ago, but they feel they can do it.

"God does things for a reason," middle linebacker Morocco Brown said. "You can't question it. I think of it as a challenge to everybody else. We've got to stay focused."

Outside linebacker Kit Carpenter feels the same way.

"It's gonna take a group effort to get the job done," Carpenter said. "You can't have a drop off because you run so many people in and out."

Unfortunately for the Wolfpack, some of those people being moved in and out possibly are not ready for the pressure and workload. Brown agrees.

"We don't have a lot of older veterans," Brown said. "We still have the people to get the job done, but we're gonna throw some people to the fire who probably wouldn't play this year."

One of those players might be red-shirt freshman Tim Ramseur. With the loss of Ron Melnik due to nerve damage in his shoulder, the 6-foot-1, 214 pounds Ramseur may be called upon to show just why he was named the North Carolina defensive MVP in the 1994 Shrine Bowl. Ramseur led Shelby's Crest High School to a 15-0 record and a 4-A state championship his senior season.

STARTING

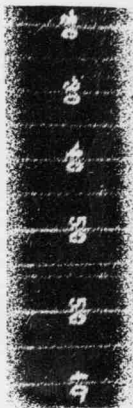
DEFENSE

position	name	yr.
DE 93	Brad Collins	R-Jr.
DT 91	Mark Lawrence	R-Sr.
DT 95	GEORGE WILLIAMS	JR.
DE 94	Kyle Blalock	R-Jr.
OLB 36	Bobbie Cotten	So.
MLB 48	MOROCCO BROWN	JR.
OLB 16	DUAN EVERETT	R-Jr.
CB 8	RODNEY REDD	R-SO.
CB 7	H. SHAMSID-DEEN	R-SO.
FS 32	Damon Wyche	R-Jr.
SS 3	KENNY HARRIS	SR.

But it may take experience and pure drive for the State linebacking corps to prove that last season was a fluke. And it begins with the veterans.

"I feel that I've got a lot of experience," Carpenter said. "But we're

See LBS, Page 15 ▶



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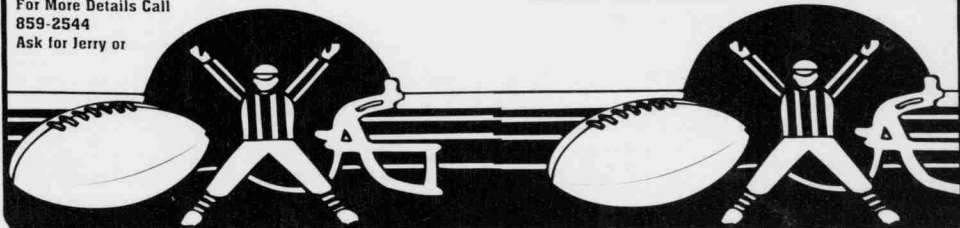
1 pound of Barbecue
Dozen Hushpuppies
Pint of Slaw
Pint of your choice of Vegetable

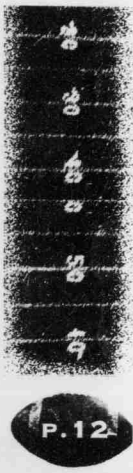
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Hello, from Hassan



SALVADOR FABIAN III/STAFF

Hassan Shamsid-Defense in your face.

■ Hassan Shamsid-Deen hopes to propel himself into the lore of Wolfpack cornerbacks.

By J.P. Giglio
Preview Editor

On October 21, 1995 Hassan Shamsid-Deen introduced himself to the world of ACC football. He didn't just politely shake hands and say hello, he screamed out at the top of the lungs, "Get ready 'cause here I come."

His performance against Duke at Wallace Wade Stadium was career for some cornerbacks. Not only did he score on a 69-yard fumble return, and record his first career interception but he also had career-high 11 tackles.

To top it off, the Wolfpack won the game, 41-38. Not bad as far as coming out parties go.

"That's how I like to play every game," Shamsid-Deen said. "But when I have my best game, it will be four interceptions."

So it seems the best is yet to come from Shamsid-Deen. Last season, he took over the starting slot at the field corner in the fifth game.

He finished seventh on the team with 59 tackles, including 43 solo, and two interceptions.

He will switch to the strong corner this year with the departure of Ricky Bell to the NFL. Shamsid-Deen knows the tradition of defensive backs at State. He hopes to follow in the footsteps of the seven who are currently on NFL rosters.

See HASSAN, Page 15 ▶



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Secondary has depth, talent

■ The defensive backfield returns three starters but loses Ricky Bell and James Walker.

By Jennifer Taylor
Staff Writer

With strong secondary leading players Kenny Harris, Damon Wychee and Hassan Shamsid-Deen the N.C. State defense was able to refine their talents over last year's crew which was hampered by injury.

The secondary team lost two starters in free safety James Walker—San Francisco and cornerback Ricky Bell—Pittsburg both NFL defections. But they are still running strong with eight lettermen.

Co-Captain Kenny Harris is the leader of the group.

"Some of my biggest qualities as leader are that I don't put myself on a pedestal, I get along with everybody and I'm real easy to relate to; that's the friendship part," he said.

"The respect comes from getting the job done when it's crunch time."

Harris began to show not only his

talent, but also his leadership abilities as far back as when he played football in high school. Northern Durham High School transformed him into one of the state's top players.

Through and through Harris has not succumbed injury, especially when it was most critical. During the Peach Bowl in 1994 he assisted in a crucial third and goal play that prevented Mississippi State from gaining another touchdown and ultimately lead to a State victory.

Wychee (5-11, 188), a redshirt-junior, who shared time with Harris in the Peach Bowl, has been running more long-distance sprints since last season to improve his speed and build his endurance. Wychee's mental preparation for a game expands over the entire week prior to game time.

"At the beginning of the week I relax and I focus on our next contenders," he said. "I study play packages and I listen to tips from the coaches about how to improve my game."

Another key player will be Shamsid-Deen, who started six games last sea-

See DBs, Page 15 ▶

SPECIAL TEAMS

The Specialists are back

■ All seven special teams starters return.

By K. Gaffney
Staff Writer

There is one area of the N.C. State football team that escaped the off-season changes—the special teams. All three kickers and kick-returns are back with a year of experience under their belt.

Leading the return for the Wolfpack is senior place kicker Mark Primanti. Primanti led State last year, hitting 11 of his 13 field goal attempts, including a season high 45-yard shot against ACC powerhouse Florida State. Primanti's kick was the longest by a Wolfpack kicker in over eight years. Coming into the season with a streak of seven successful attempts, Primanti could break the school record for most consecutive field goals, a mark which stands at 12.

The Pack will look to take advantage of return specialist Alvis Whitted's speed again this season. In the past two seasons, the junior has accumulated 985 yards in kickoff returns on the field, and has scared opponents with his blinding speed on the track as well. Whitted posted a times of 10.03 in the 100-meter and 20.03 in the 200-meter at the ACC track championships, while anchoring State's winning 400-meter relay team. Whitted is joined in the return spot by sophomore Torry Holt. In his



Co-Captain Kenny Harris (3) can help on special teams and defense.

freshman season, Holt returned 13 kickoffs for 274 yards.

Greg Addis will be pulling double duty for the Wolfpack. State's top punt returner in '95 has also occupied the position of holder for the past two seasons.

Addis led N.C. State with 12 punt retruns for 186 yards in the 1995 season. Addis also is the holder on extra points and field goals.

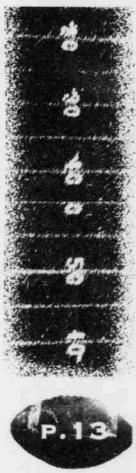
As a freshman, Jay Dukes handled almost every punt of the '95 season for the Pack, and looks to do the same this year. Named to the ACC All-Academic team last year, Dukes aver-

See Kicks, Page 14 ▶



SAVADOR FABIAN III/STAFF

Marc Primanti was the team's leading scorer last year with 60 points.



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Trenches

Continued from Page 6

pany Dombalis on the offensive line as the starting center. Murphy earned playing time as a true freshman and played in nine of the eleven games during the '95 season. During this time Murphy played behind the venerable Kenneth Redmond.

In his previous two seasons and during this year's spring practice, Murphy has proven that his physical capabilities are on par with his understanding of the offensive schemes. Murphy's exacting work ethic and

improved confidence should enable him to make an instant contribution to the line.

High expectations also accompany sophomore guard Alex Santos. Santos spent time in the trenches in five different games last fall. His freshman experience should enable Santos to enter the '96 season with additional level of confidence.

"I think he could be a great one," running back Rod Brown said. "His time will come, he just has to keep working hard."

Santos was rated the nation's No. 26 offensive tackle by Prep Football Report as a high school senior. Santos comes to the Pack after spending the '94 season at Hargrave Military

Academy in Virginia. While at Hargrave, Santos had a change of heart and reversed his football commitment from Michigan State to the Wolfpack.

Look for Santos to break through this year and move a step closer to reaching his overwhelming potential as an offensive guard.

In addition to the players highlighted, this season will provide an excellent opportunity for some of State's younger offensive linemen to step from relative obscurity to the limelight provided by Carter-Finley Stadium.

"I have confidence in the line," Brown said. "They are capable of doing the job the line did last year."

Backing up Daughtry will be redshirt freshman Andy Mallard, and Addis will also be ready to step in if needed. Coach Ken Pettus, a 10-year veteran at State with be taking over the special teams program this season.

Pettus will also be taking over some administrative duties this season, as well.

Comeback

Continued from Page 3

what turned last year into three-month vacation to the eighth concentric circle of Dante's inferno.

If the team has any chance of returning to a bowl game, Tremayne Stephens must play like Tremayne Stephens and Rod Brown must play like Rod Brown.

With a new quarterback and an inexperienced offensive line, the Stephens and Brown backfield will have to have the season of their lives. That's career year with a capital C.

Finally, forget what happened last year. If the players think it was only an aberration, there the ones who have the chance to prove it was.

Remember, it's "those who think they can."

Kicks

Continued from Page 13

aged 39.1 yards a punt in 47 attempts last season.

Against Florida State, Dukes pounded a season and career high 61 yard

punt, and combined five punts for an average of 47.2 yards on the day. Junior Jason Biggs will be fighting Dukes for time. Biggs combined to average 33.3 yards in three punts during the 1995 campaign.

Returning in the position of long snapper is linebacker and second-year starter Larry Daughtry.

ACC

Continued from Page 4

games with Alabama, East Carolina and at Purdue.

Tory Holt, Jimmy Grissett and Alvis Whitted need to come up huge the whole season for this year to go in the whole direction.

7. Georgia Tech: Recruited Quincy Carter, the Jackets quarterback of the future. Two months later, Quincy's signing a contract to play minor league baseball.

So, the Wreck goes into the season with C.J. Williams leading the way and without WR Derrick Steagall, who blew out his knee two days ago. And they have as many injuries as State does.

8. Wake Forest: Well, Jim Caldwell and company won't finish in last place this season. If they can get their Ford Festiva of an offense out of first gear and improve just enough on defense, they beat Duke and finish eighth.

You heard it here first.

9. Duke: When the Devils scheduled Northwestern after Florida State for 1996, they probably didn't think they'd be facing the ACC and Big 10 champions in consecutive weeks. It's stuff like this that will leave Fred Goldsmith shaking his head.

Duke returns three starters from last year's defense, one which gave up 30 points or more seven times. And, yes, that was last in the conference.

Targets

Continued from Page 7

special teams duties, having finished first in punt returns last year with 86 yards on 10 attempts.

Whitted is by far the fastest receiver on the Wolfpack club, having recorded sprints of 10.03 seconds in the 200-meter and 20.03 seconds in the 200-meter, leading the Wolfpack track team to the ACC title. An NCAA All-American in the 100-meter, his speed will make him a deep-threat, although he has caught just two passes in his career.

Dixon returns as one of the two senior receivers. Also a track All-American in the high jump, Dixon has yet to catch a pass for the State offense. He was '95 special-teams player of the year for State, however, leading the team with 16 special-teams tackles.

Having this kind of depth at the receiving position should help to take the heat off of some of the other struggling offensive positions and help to create more opportunities for the running backs.

"The defenses will be keying in on Tremayne (Stephens) and I, but we've got the receivers to get it done," fullback Rod Brown said.

Eager to turn around the embarrassment of last year, Grissett and the receivers are pumped up.

"I don't like to lose, and I have an attitude that if you work hard at whatever you do you can be a success at it," Grissett said. "So far, that philosophy has worked for me. I hope I can make a lot of positive plays for the team, too."



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Hassan

Continued from Page 12

"I wish I can be one of the best defensive backs coming out of this university," Shamsid-Deen said. "If I could be part of that bunch, it would be an honor to me."

The redshirt-sophomore has designs on this season to show that he belongs in the same sentence as Jesse Campbell, DeWayne Washington and Sebastian Savage.

However, Shamsid-Deen's idol didn't play at N.C. State but Florida State. Deion Sanders is the player Shamsid-Deen calls his "mentor." Unlike Primetime, he isn't going to be playing any offense.

"I've never played offense in my life," Shamsid-Deen said. "My brother played receiver so I had to try something else."

His brother, Muhammad, spent last season with the Seattle Seahawks and expects to join the Carolina Panthers this year as a free agent. He played collegiately at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga.

He doesn't have Sanders' speed, but nobody else in football does. Shamsid-Deen relies on the basic techniques to stay with receivers.

"I don't have blazing speed, but I have enough to get the job done," Shamsid-Deen said.

His goal is to have an interception total equal his jersey number—7. He thinks he'll have plenty of opportunities to reach his goal.

"Most teams come after the best cornerback just to test him," Shamsid-Deen said. "To see what kind of skills he has, is he as good as every-body pumps him up to be."

"If I can make a couple of interceptions, then maybe they'll stop throwing my way, but I doubt it, they always come back."

Shamsid-Deen may have introduced himself with his play, but he likes to keep the smack talk to a minimum on the field.

"Some talk to me, but I just laugh at them," Shamsid-Deen. "I shut them up when I shut them down."

If he can do that, than five years from now they'll be talking about him.

D-Line

Continued from Page 10

ship ruling, however, and was given another year of eligibility. Loughlin has played a total of four games in his career, though all in a reserve role.

LBs

Continued from Page 11

gonna have to out-hustle a lot of people. As a unit, we're very cohesive. We've had to work together."

With Melnik's absence, Carpenter and Brown return as the most experienced linebackers on the squad.

Carpenter (5'10", 220 pounds) has added ten pounds since the end of last season, but coaches still believe that he could stand to get bigger. He started nine of last season's 11 games, recording 43 tackles, including nine against Baylor.

Brown (6'0", 236 pounds) returns as

the team's leading tackler after starting eight of 11 games last year. Brown tallied 92 tackles last season to go along with one quarterback sack. His highest tackle total was 11, which he posted three times versus Baylor, Wake Forest and North Carolina.

After Carpenter and Brown, sophomore Bobbie Cotten will be looked at for a possible starting position at outside linebacker.

Cotten (6'1", 241 pounds) started six games last season, recording 61 tackles, 47 of which were unassisted.

After Cotten, Duan Everett (6'0", 203 pounds) has the knack in the coaches' eyes to make the big play. Everett recorded five tackles on special teams in '95.

Despite the lack of depth at the linebacker position, Carpenter believes fans and critics alike will see a difference from last season.

"I think we can be as good as we want to be," Carpenter said. "People will see a big improvement from last year. If we are 100 percent healthy, then we can play with any and every offense."

To Brown, its more than just staying healthy and playing hard.

"I think the game is mostly in your head," Brown said. "You've got to find something higher [to play for]. If you get the mental part down, then everything will work out well."

DBs

Continued from Page 12

son.

"We're going to be strong," Shamsid-Deen said. "We have a lot of guy who are competing to start, so we have good depth."

Starting at the field corner will be redshirt-sophomore Rodney Redd (5-10, 171). The nickel package will feature juniors Mike Britt and Kevin Russell.

Redd believes this year's unit can continue the tradition of excellence in the defensive backfield.

"We have the talent and the tools,"

Redd said. "Barring injury, I think our package can do things."

The secondary has experience beyond their years. There are only three seniors listed on the three-deep chart.

At the beginning of fall practice, Coach Mike O'Cain commented on the state of the defense.

"We saw some definite improvement," O'Cain said. "Our returning players are getting healthy and we have redshirt-freshman who are ready to contribute."

With these and other players in the secondary, the Pack is insured for seasons to come. Several freshman were brought in this year including Lloyd Harrison, who was a member of the All-ACC 400-meter relay team.

With a depleted defensive line, the leadership of key players like Collins will be vital to the success of the team.

"We have to develop a sense of leadership that we lacked last year," Collins said. "We're running fewer people, but the defense is more focused now. We'll attack more than last year."

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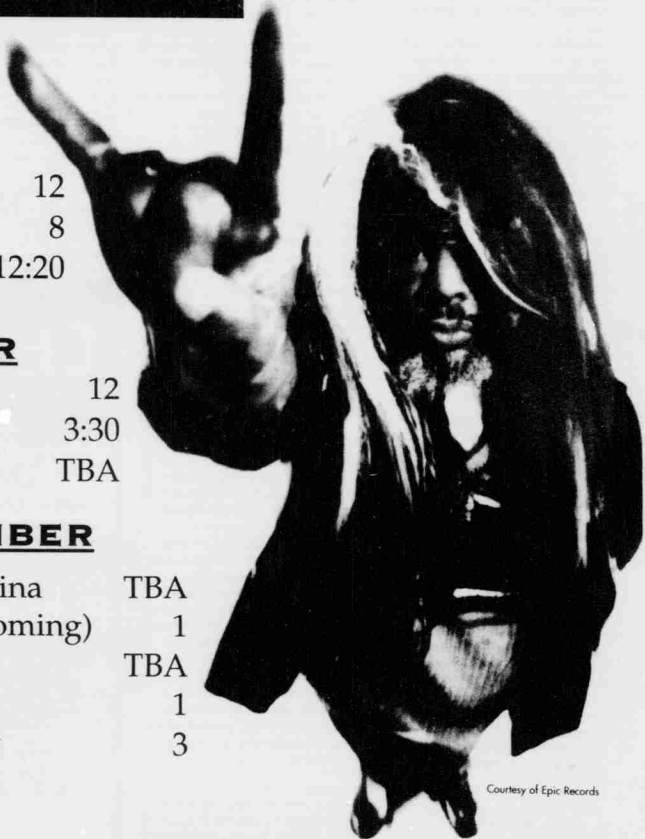
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5	at Maryland	12
12	Alabama*	3:30
19	at Virginia	TBA

NOVEMBER

2	at North Carolina	TBA
9	Duke (Homecoming)	1
16	at Clemson	TBA
23	Wake Forest	1
30	East Carolina#	3
	at Charlotte	

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