

# CATAMOUNT COACHES AND STAFF

2004 WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL TEAM



Western Carolina head coach Kent Briggs (left) enters his third season at the helm of the Catamount program. Also, coordinators Geoff Collins (defense), Todd Varn (offense) and Matt Rhule (special teams) returns in tact for a second consecutive year.



# KENT BRIGGS

*(Western Carolina '79)*

*WCU Head Football Coach (3rd Season)*

Friday, January 4, 2002 was a very special day for many people. It was also a day Kent Briggs had long dreamed about. On that day, the 1979 Western Carolina graduate was introduced as the Catamounts' 11th head football coach.

"People who know me know that I'm a dreamer," Briggs said

when he took the podium. "And they know that the most important dream I've had is to be standing here (as WCU head football coach) today."

The scene on the Ramsey Center concourse — where the press conference took place — was one which will bridge Western's most successful time in its football history to what hopes to be a bright future for the Catamount faithful. Briggs, a former Catamount quarterback and assistant coach, addressed the media and fans overlooking the field which bears the name of his mentor, the legendary WCU head coach Bob Waters.

Listening to Briggs speak on that day — or any day since — leaves no doubt that returning to Western Carolina as head football coach was his ultimate destination. There is also no doubt that he loves Western and is passionate about making this program prominent across the nation.

In his two years as head coach, producing a 10-13 record, Briggs has made Western known as having an explosive, wide-open offense, attracting some of the top skill players in the region.

In 2003, the Catamounts led the SoCon in passing for a second consecutive year, averaging 239.75 yards per game. Quarterback Brian Gaither, who led the SoCon in passing and total offense, and receiver Lamont Seward, who ranked second in the SoCon in receptions and receiving yards, had one of the best seasons in WCU history as each ended their careers as among the top five in virtually every statistical category, respectively.

In 2002, Western Carolina also led the Southern Conference passing with a 243.5 average. It marked just the fifth time the Cats had led the league in passing, thanks quarterbacks Pat Cilento and Gaither each throwing for over 1,000 yards.

Ironically, Briggs was involved with the program in the only other four times Western paced the SoCon in

passing, three times as a quarterback (1977, '78 and '79) and once as an assistant coach (1982).

While Western's offense has made headlines over the past two years, the Catamount defense began to make a name for itself in 2003. After ranking 116th nationally in rushing defense in 2002, the Cats led the SoCon for the first time ever in the category, ranking 14th nationally facing teams in the run-happy SoCon. Also, the WCU special teams ranked among the national leader, specifically ranking fourth in net punting.

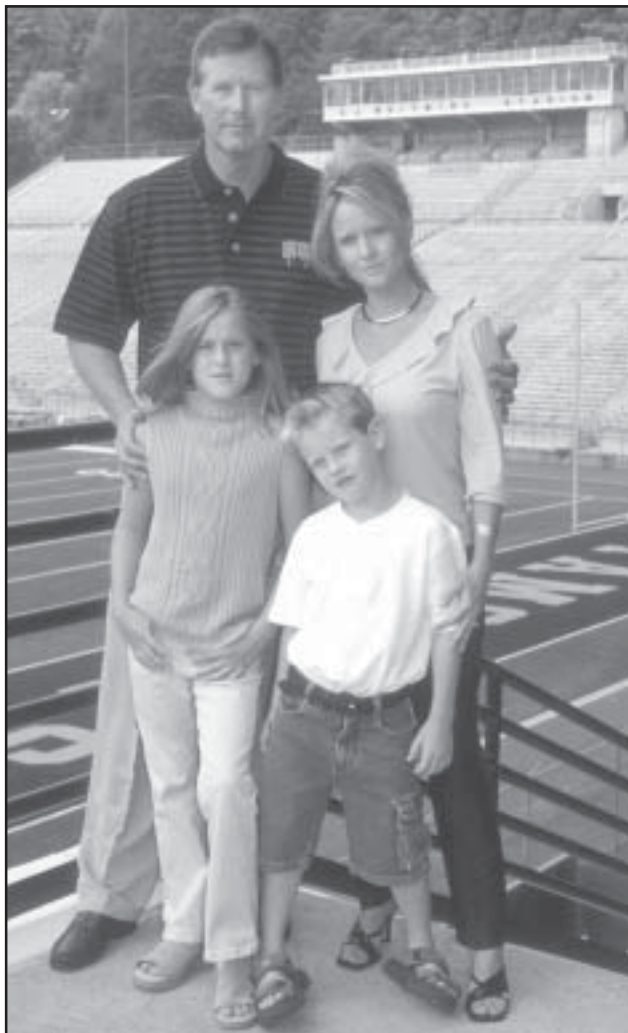
Another sign of success has been Western's presence on the All-Southern Conference teams in the past two years. In both 2002 and 2003, Western landed seven players on the all-conference teams. In 2003, five Catamounts were first team honorees (Jason Whaley, Lamont Seward, Todd Bargella, Nick McNeil and Michale Spicer), while Rod Dunlap and Brian Gaither were second team selections. In 2002, the Cats had four first team selections (Michael Banks, Spicer, Bargella and Ahmed Green), while Dunlap, Whaley and McNeil earned second team honors.

More individual honors have come Western's way over the past two years as Spicer became WCU's 26th All-American honoree in

2002 and he was invited to play in the prestigious Blue-Gray All-Star Classic. In 2003, Jason Whaley became one of Western's most decorated players in school history. A two-time All-SoCon pick, Whaley was named All-American for his play on the field and added first team Academic All-America honors for his work in the classroom as well. Also, Whaley was one of just 15 student-athletes from across the country - selected from NCAA Divisions I-A, I-AA, II, III and the NAIA - to be named to College Football's 2003 National Scholar-Athlete Class and receive an \$18,000 postgraduate scholarship from The National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame.

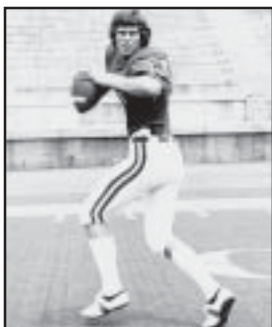
At season's end, Spicer, McNeil and Gaither each signed free agent contracts with the Buffalo Bills, Pittsburgh Steelers and Baltimore Ravens, respectively.

In addition to his on field success, Briggs and his staff are making an impact on the recruiting trail as well. In his first season he said, "I feel we brought in one of the best recruiting classes ever in WCU history." One year later, his statement was trumped as *SouthernPigskin.com* said, "With transfers from D1-A programs like Tennessee and South Carolina, it's easy to see why we tabbed Western Carolina as having the best Southern



# CATAMOUNT COACHES AND STAFF

2004 WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL TEAM



*Kent Briggs was a quarterback at Western from 1976-79. That span is the only time in WCU history the school has had four consecutive winning seasons. Western also led the SoCon in passing in 1977, 78 and 79.*

*Upon his graduation from WCU, Kent Briggs (far right) was an assistant on Bob Waters' staff for nine seasons, including the 1983 team that played for the NCAA I-AA championship and the '82 team that led the SoCon in passing.*



*On January 4, 2002, Kent Briggs was named WCU's 11th head football coach. At his press conference he said "the most important dream I've had is to be standing here (as WCU head football coach) today."*

*Western Carolina has led the SoCon in passing in each of Briggs' two seasons as the Cats' head coach. Also, in 2002, the WCU defense led the SoCon in rushing defense for the first time ever.*



## KENT BRIGGS' QUICK FACTS

**Head Coaching Record at WCU:** 10-13 (2 years)

**Career Head Coaching Record:** Same (5-6 in 2002 and 5-7 in 2003)

**Personal Data:** Born Sept. 22, 1957 in Asheville, N.C. Married to the former Lisa Thomas, who is from Asheville and is a Western Carolina graduate. The couple has two children; daughter Alexandra (12) and son Cody (9).

**Education:** Graduated from A.C. Reynolds High School in Asheville, N.C. in 1975. Received a Bachelor's degree in physical education from Western Carolina in 1979. Received a Master's degree from WCU in physical education in 1981.

**Playing Experience:** Was a four-year letterman at Western Carolina (1976-79), redshirting his first season (1975) in Cullowhee. Played quarterback at WCU from 1976-79, serving as a starter in 1976.

**Coaching Experience:** Spent nine seasons at Western Carolina (1980-88), serving as a graduate assistant (1980-81), defensive ends coach (1982-83), outside linebackers coach (1984-85) and defensive backs coach (1986-88). Spent the next 11 seasons as an assistant coach at North Carolina State, working with the defensive backs and linebackers during his tenure. Was the Wolfpack's co-defensive coordinator over his final four years (1996-99). Was defensive coordinator at Connecticut for the 2001 season before returning to Western Carolina as head coach in January of 2002.

**Facts Worth Knowing:** Western has only led the SoCon in passing six times and Briggs was either a player, assistant coach or head coach in each of those five time/ His four years as a player at Western (1976-79) is the only time in school history the Catamounts have had four consecutive winning seasons. Briggs was on the coaching staff at Western when the Cats reached the NCAA I-AA title game in 1983. The following year WCU was the top-ranked team in the nation prior to the season, finishing the year ranked 14th. In his 21 years at the collegiate level, Briggs has coached 17 players who have signed professional football contracts — 15 in the National Football League and two in the Canadian Football League. While at Western, Briggs coached All-SoCon performers Jeff Dean, Louis Cooper, Bernard Jones, Clyde Simmons, Fred Davis and Touissant Kennedy. As head coach, the Cats have put seven players on the All-SoCon teams in both 2002 and 2003. His 1998 N.C. State defense ended the season tied for second in the NCAA with 19 interceptions. In 1989, the N.C. State defense led the Atlantic Coast Conference by allowing just 167.8 passing yards per game. He helped the Wolfpack earn seven postseason berths. His wife, Lisa, is a Western Carolina graduate as well and teaches at the University.

Conference recruiting class in 2004."

Briggs returned to Cullowhee after one season as defensive coordinator and defensive backs coach at the University of Connecticut. Prior to his appointment with the Huskies, Briggs spent 11 seasons (1989-99) as an assistant coach at North Carolina State University, including four years (1996-99) as co-defensive coordinator. He started his tenure with the Wolfpack working with the defensive backs from 1989-90, a position he coached from 1994-99 as well, while coaching the outside linebackers from 1991-93.

His Wolfpack 1998 defense ranked among the nation's leaders in pass efficiency, while ending the season tied for second in the NCAA with 19 interceptions. In 1989, the N.C. State defense led the Atlantic Coast Conference by allowing just 167.8 passing yards per game. He helped the Wolfpack earn seven postseason berths, including the 1998 Micron PC Bowl, the 1991 and 1994 Peach Bowls, the 1993 Hall of Fame Bowl, the 1992 Gator Bowl, the 1990 All-American Bowl and the 1989 Copper Bowl. Also, N.C. State defeated Iowa in the 1990 Kickoff Classic and Texas in the 1999 Black Coaches Association Classic.

Briggs spent nine seasons (1980-88) as an assistant with the Catamounts under Coach Bob Waters. Upon earning his bachelor's degree in physical education in 1979 from Western, Briggs spent two seasons (1980-81) as a graduate assistant, working with the quarterbacks and wide receivers. During that time, he completed his master's degree in physical education. In 1982 Waters made Briggs a full-time assistant. He coached the defensive ends from 1982-83, the outside linebackers from 1984-85 and the defensive backs from 1986-88.

In 1983, Briggs helped the Catamounts have their best season in school history, posting a 11-3-1 record and reaching the NCAA I-AA championship game. Western opened the following season as the nation's top-ranked team before finishing 14th with an 8-3 mark.

In his 21 years at the collegiate level, Briggs has coached 14 players who have signed professional football contracts — 12 in the National Football League and two in the Canadian Football League. Among the WCU greats to move on to the NFL under Briggs' guidance include All-Americans Louis Cooper and Clyde Simmons.

The Asheville native and A.C. Reynolds High product played quarterback at WCU from 1976-79. Briggs started several games as a redshirt freshman in 1976, completing 25-of-40 passes for 353 yards



with four touchdowns and only one interception. He spent the 1977 and 1978 seasons as a backup to the SoCon's leading passer Mike Pusey. For his senior season, Briggs played in nine games, nearly matching his freshman year totals with 24 completions on 41 attempts for 270 yards and a touchdown. Briggs helped Western to a winning record each of his four years, which is the only time WCU has had four consecutive winning seasons.

Briggs, 46, is married to the former Lisa Thomas, who is a Western Carolina graduate. The couple have two children — daughter Alexandra (12) and son Cody (9).



### GEOFF COLLINS

*(WESTERN CAROLINA '94)*

*Assistant Coach/Defensive Coordinator/Defensive Backs*

#### GEOFF COLLINS' QUICK FACTS

**Born:** April 10, 1971 in Decatur, Ga.

**High School:** Rockdale County High (Conyers, Ga.)

**College:** Western Carolina, 1994 (B.S. in Sport Management)

**Spouse:** the former Jennifer Haynes (WCU '95)

**Playing Experience:** Linebacker and Defensive Back at Western (1989-92)

**Coaching Experience:** **Franklin (N.C.) High School** (1995, Assistant Coach/Defensive Backs and Wide Receivers); **Fordham** (1996, Assistant Coach/Outside Linebackers); **Albright** (1997-98, Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers and Secondary); **Georgia Tech** (1999-2000, Graduate Assistant/Defensive Backs and Linebackers); **Georgia Tech** (2001, Assistant Coach/Tight Ends); **Western Carolina** (2002-present, Defensive Coordinator/Defensive Backs).

Geoff Collins, like head coach Kent Briggs, returned to his alma mater WCU as defensive coordinator in 2002 after three seasons at Georgia Tech. In addition to his role as coordinator, Collins will coach the defensive backs.

In 2002, Collins helped Ahmed Green earn first team All-Southern Conference. In 2003, under Collins' direction, the Catamount defense emerged as one of the best in the nation. Despite playing two NCAA Division I teams and three of the I-AA top 15 rushing teams, Western led the SoCon in rushing defense for the first time since joining the league in 1976, while ranking 14th nationally. A further look inside the numbers show Western only allowed opponents to gain 2.65 yards per rush, which was the fourth-lowest total in the nation.

What makes that feat even more impressive is that the Catamount defense suffered three season-ending injuries to starting defensive backs, forcing players to play multiple positions and forcing true freshman defensive backs Mitchell Dukes and Ryan Nesby to contribute early and often.

He spent the 2001 season as the Yellow Jackets tight ends coach after two years (1999-2000) with the Rambling Wreck as a graduate assistant. This past season, Collins' first year as a full-time assistant coach, Georgia Tech tight end Russell Matvay had career highs with 22 receptions for 245 yards.

"Geoff has all the qualities I am looking for both as a person and as a coach," Briggs said. "He played and coached at Western Carolina and has worked his way to this position from the ground up. That process has prepared him for this step and his experiences will enhance our staff, our university and, most importantly, our players."

Before his tenure at Tech, Collins spent two years as the defensive coordinator and linebackers and secondary coach at Albright College in Reading, Pa. In 1997, the NCAA Division III program boasted the leading defense in its conference and ranked in the top 10 nationally in all defensive categories, while in 1998 the Lions' defense ranked among the top three in their league. In 1996, Collins served as an assistant coach at Fordham University, working with the outside linebackers while also serving as the junior varsity defensive coordinator.

He also spent one season (1995) as an assistant coach at Franklin (N.C.) High School while student teaching in the Macon County Public Schools.

Collins tallied 194 tackles as an outside linebacker and defensive back for the Catamounts from 1989-92. He was the team's fifth leading tackler as a junior with 68, while registering six tackles for losses. As a senior, he helped Western to a 7-4 record, logging 62 total hits and five tackles for losses. He began his coaching career as a student assistant on the Western Carolina staff in 1993, when the Catamounts were the preseason No. 1 team in NCAA Division I-AA.

A native of Conyers, Ga., who attended Rockdale County High School, Collins earned a bachelor's degree from Western Carolina in Sport Management and Exercise Science in 1994 and then completed the Education curriculum in 1995. He did postgraduate work in psychology at Fordham University and Georgia Tech.

He is married to the former Jennifer Haynes, who is also a Western Carolina graduate.



### TODD VARN

*(NORTH CAROLINA STATE '90)*

*ASSISTANT COACH/OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR/QUARTERBACKS*

Todd Varn, a successful running back while at North Carolina State during Kent Briggs' tenure as assistant coach with the Wolfpack, is in his third season at Western Carolina and his second as the Catamount offensive coordinator, a position he was promoted to prior to the 2003 season, while coaching the quarterbacks.

In his first year in running the offense, Varn kept Western's spots as one of the top passing offenses in the nation. For a second consecutive year, the Cats paced the Southern Conference in passing with an average of 239.75 yards per game.

Also, in his first year as quarterbacks coach, Varn helped signal-caller Brian Gaither have one of the best years in Catamount history. Not only did Gaither lead the SoCon in passing (226.4 ypg) and total offense (230.1 ypg), but he ranked 11th in the nation in completions (20.5 cpg) and 24th nationally in passing offense. Gaither was a SoCon Offensive Player of the Week once and SoCon Offensive Player of the Month for September. Later in the season, he would complete a WCU record 35 passes at Georgia Southern. For the year, Gaither completed 246 passes, a WCU regular-season record, for 2,717 yards, the third-best, single-season total in school history. Gaither's numbers were rewarded at season's end by being named to the All-SoCon team, marking the first time since 1994 (Chad Greene) had been such honored.

Varn has had similar success as a coordinator in his career, spending two seasons as architect of the Charleston Southern offense, where he was the quarterbacks and running backs coach. He helped the Buccaneers establish school records for wins in 2000 and 2001, while his 2001 offensive unit averaged 374.5 yards



### TODD VARN'S QUICK FACTS

**Born:** Jan. 30, 1968 in Orangeburg, S.C.

**High School:** Airport High (West Columbia, S.C.)

**College:** North Carolina State, 1990 (B.A. in Communications)

**Spouse:** the former Kris Herlog

**Children:** Twin Sons, Kody (4) and Jarrett (4)

**Playing Experience:** Running Back at North Carolina State (1986-89)

**Coaching Experience:** **North Carolina State** (1991, Student Assistant); **Laurence Manning (S.C.) Academy** (1993, Assistant Coach/Offensive Coord.); **Newberry** (1995, Assistant Coach/Running Backs); **Newberry** (1996, Assistant Coach/Linebackers); **VMI** (1997, Assistant Coach/Defensive Backs); **VMI** (1998, Assistant Coach/Linebackers and Special Teams); **Charleston Southern** (2000-01, Offensive Coord./Quarterbacks and Running Backs); **Western Carolina** (2002-present, Assistant Coach/Running Backs; 2003 Offensive Coord./Running Backs).

per game and set 13 school records. Quarterback Jake Sills and receiver Brad Moultrie were named second team NCAA I-AA All-Independent. Varn also served as the recruiting coordinator for the Bucs.

Prior to his time at Charleston Southern, Varn was at Virginia Military Institute for the 1997-98 seasons. In 1998, he was linebackers and special teams coach, where he helped Andre Curtis earn All-Southern Conference honors. The previous year, he was the Keydets' defensive backs coach.

A product of Airport High School in Columbia, S.C., Varn had stints at Newberry College, Laurence Manning Academy (Manning, S.C.) and North Carolina State. At Newberry, he was running backs coach in 1995 and linebackers coach in 1996. At Laurence Manning, he was the offensive coordinator for the 1993 season. Upon completing his eligibility at North Carolina State, he spent one year as a student assistant coach with the Wolfpack.

Varn received a Bachelor of Arts in communications from N.C. State in 1992. He was a four-year letterman (1986-89) as a running back with the Wolfpack and played in three bowl games. Varn ended his career with 83 career receptions, which was fifth on the school's all-time list at the time (now ranking 13th). He was recipient of the Michael J. Hardy Award from his alma mater for "displaying superior courage and performing consistently above ability." He was also N.C. State's Al Michaels Award for "placing the team

before himself." After his senior season, he had a free agent tryout with the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Varn is married to the former Kris Herlog. They are the parents of twin four-year-old sons Kody and Jarrett.



### MATT RHULE

*(PENN STATE '97)*

**ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR/LINEBACKERS**

### MATT RHULE'S QUICK FACTS

**Born:** January 31, 1975 in State College, Pa.

**High School:** State College High (State College, Pa.)

**College:** Penn State, 1997 (B.A. in Political Science)  
Buffalo, 2003 (M.A. in Educational Psychology)

**Spouse:** the former Julie Nibert

**Playing Experience:** Linebacker at Penn State (1994-97)

**Coaching Experience:** **Penn State** (1998, Volunteer Assistant); **Albright** (1998, Assistant Coach/Linebackers); **Buffalo** (1999, Assistant Defensive Line Coach); **Buffalo** (2000, Assistant Coach/Defensive Line); **UCLA** (2001, Assistant Defensive Line Coach); **Western Carolina** (2002-present, Assistant Coach/Special Teams Coordinator and Linebackers; 2003 Assistant Head Coach).

Matt Rhule enters his third season on the WCU staff, directing the linebackers and coordinating the special teams. Prior to the 2003 season, Rhule was promoted to assistant head coach, taking on added administrative duties and serving as a football office representative at functions in Coach Briggs' absence.

Already a solid player, Rhule helped linebacker Rod Dunlap move to the next level as he earned consensus All-Southern Conference honors in 2002 and 2003. Dunlap led the team in tackles both seasons and ranked among the SoCon top 10 in stops, tackles for losses and fumble recoveries for a second consecutive year. Dunlap finished 2003 with 20 TFLs and, after getting just seven TFLs prior to Rhule's arrival, Dunlap ended his career with 45 to finish fourth on the WCU all-time list.

Also, four of Western's top six tacklers in 2003 were linebackers, including Dunlap, Lamar Barnes, Jada Sullivan and James Conklin. The effort of those four, adding a combined for 37 TFLs, played a key role in WCU leading the SoCon in rushing defense for the first time ever.

This past year was also a big year for the WCU special teams, which Rhule coordinates. Western ranked fourth in the nation in net punting as Stanton Horne ranked 11th nationally with a 41.95 yards per punt average. Also, the Cats ranked second in the SoCon in kickoff coverage and third in kick returns. Both Xavier Godard and T. Alford ranked among the nation's top 65 in kick

returns.

Rhule came to Western after a season as assistant defensive line coach at UCLA. The 2001 Bruins led the Pac-10 in total defense, allowing 320.6 yards of total offense per game, and passing efficiency defense (102.1 rating). Also, that defensive line featured five All-Pac-10 performers, including the Pac-10's 2001 Morrison Trophy winner, which goes to the league's outstanding defensive lineman, Kenyon Coleman.

Prior to his stint at UCLA, Rhule was a defensive line coach at Buffalo for the 1999 and 2000 seasons. In 2000, the Bull's sack total went up from 12 to 27 over the previous year and the school won its first NCAA IA game in 31 years. Rhule began his coaching career as an assistant at Albright College, working with current WCU defensive coordinator Geoff Collins for the 1998 season.

Rhule is a 1997 Penn State graduate, receiving a B.A. in political science. He played four seasons (1993-97) with the Nittany Lions. During his sophomore campaign (1994), Penn State finished the season with a 12-0 record and was both Big Ten and Rose Bowl champions. Rhule was a three-time Penn State Scholar Athlete and earned Academic All-Big 10 honors in 1997. Upon his graduation, he spent the spring of 1998 as a volunteer assistant coach at Penn State. Among his duties included demonstrating drills and techniques on an linebacker instructional video for defensive coordinator Jerry Sandusky, whose coaching led Penn State to earn the reputation as "Linebacker U" for its tradition of excellence at the position.

Rhule completed his Master's degree from Buffalo in educational psychology in 2003. He is married to the former Julie Nibert.



# CATAMOUNT COACHES AND STAFF

2004 WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL TEAM



## SCOTT FRAZIER

*(GUILFORD '93)*  
**ASSISTANT COACH/  
RECRUITING COORDINATOR/  
RUNNING BACKS & TIGHT ENDS**

### SCOTT FRAZIER'S QUICK FACTS

**Born:** August 27, 1971 in Greensboro, N.C.

**High School:** Williams High (Burlington, N.C.)

**College:** Guilford, 1993 (B.S. in Biology)

Tulane, 1996 (M.S. in Cell and Molecular Biology)

**Spouse:** the former Amy Wilson

**Playing Experience:** Defensive Line at Guilford (1989)

**Coaching Experience:** Williams High, Burlington, N.C. (1991-93, Assistant Coach; 1999, Assistant Coach); Jesuit High, New Orleans, La. (1997-98, Assistant Coach); North Carolina (1996, Graduate Assistant/Defensive Line Assistant; 2001-03, Graduate Assistant/Offensive Line Assistant); Elon (2003, Assistant Coach/Recruiting Coordinator/Defensive Line); Western Carolina (2004-present, Assistant Coach/Recruiting Coordinator/Running Backs & Tight Ends).

Scott Frazier joined the Western Carolina staff in the spring of 2004 after spending the 2003 season on the Elon Phoenix football staff, serving as the team's defensive line coach and recruiting coordinator. As he did at Elon, Frazier will serve as the recruiting coordinator for the Catamounts, while coaching the WCU running backs and tight ends.

Prior to his stint at Elon, he was a graduate assistant coach at the University of North Carolina for three years (2001-03), spending the 2001 and '02 seasons as the Tar Heels' assistant offensive line coach. He also served as a defensive graduate assistant for the Tar Heels in 1996. During his four years at UNC, the Tar Heels won the 1996 Gator Bowl and the 2001 Peach Bowl.

In addition to his college experience, Frazier spent six years coaching high school football in both North Carolina and Louisiana. His career began as an assistant at his alma mater, Williams High School, in Burlington, N.C., from 1991 to 1993. He spent the 1997 and 1998 seasons coaching the defensive line at Jesuit High School in New Orleans, during which time the Blue Jays won the District 9-5A championship in 1997 and advanced to the state semifinals both years. In 1999, Frazier returned to Williams to coach the defensive line. The Bulldogs posted a 15-1 record that year, capturing the North Carolina 3-A state championship.

Frazier received his B.S. degree in biology from Guilford College in 1993. He earned his master's degree in cell and molecular biology from Tulane University in 1996. He is married to the former Amy Wilson of Burlington, N.C.



## MYRON JACKSON

*(FLORIDA STATE '98)*  
**ASSISTANT COACH/  
DEFENSIVE LINE**

### MYRON JACKSON'S QUICK FACTS

**Born:** July 6, 1976 in Fort Pierce, Fla.

**High School:** Okeechobee High (Okeechobee, Fla.)

**College:** Florida State, 1998 (B.S. in Physical Education)

Florida State, 2001 (M.S. in Sport Administration)

**Spouse:** the former Sherley Laurin

**Playing Experience:** Tight End at Florida State (1995-98)

**Coaching Experience:** Tallahassee Thunder (2000, Assistant Coach/Offensive and Defensive Line); Connecticut (2001, Graduate Assistant/Tight Ends and Special Teams); Western Carolina (2002-present, Assistant Coach/Tight Ends; 2003 Assistant Coach Defensive Line).

Myron Jackson enters his third season as an assistant coach at Western Carolina.

After helping Todd Bargella earn first team All-Southern Conference as tight ends coach in 2002, Jackson moved to other side of the ball to coach the defensive line in 2003.

Under Jackson's direction, defensive ends Michale Spicer and Nick McNeil each earned first team All-Southern Conference honors. The two alone combined for 36 tackles for losses of 140 yards and 13 sacks. Spicer would go on to represent Western Carolina at the prestigious Blue-Gray All-Star Classic. He and McNeil would also sign three-year, free agent contracts with the Buffalo Bills and Pittsburgh Steelers, respectively. Also, Albert Reid established himself as a solid performer in 2003, posting 11 TFLs. The unit's performance helped Western rank 14th nationally and lead the SoCon in rushing defense.

Jackson came to Western Carolina after spending the 2001 season as a graduate assistant on the University of Connecticut staff with Coach Briggs. He worked as a tight ends and special teams assistant for the Huskies, while being responsible for opponent film breakdown and directing the defensive scout team.

Jackson, a 1998 All-Atlantic Coast Conference selection, spent the 2000 season as an offensive and defensive line coach with the Tallahassee Thunder of the Arena Football 2 League.

Jackson is a 1998 Florida State graduate with a Bachelor of Science in physical education with a specialty in sport management. In 2001, he received his Master's degree in sport administration. The Okeechobee, Fla., native was a four-letterman as a tight end for the Seminoles. Jackson played in four bowl games while at Florida State, including two which determined the national championship.

Jackson is married to the former Sherley Laurin.



## DONNIE KIRKPATRICK

*(LENOIR-RHYNE '82)*

**ASSISTANT COACH/WIDE RECEIVERS/NFL CONTACT**

Donnie Kirkpatrick joined the Western Carolina staff in the summer of 2003 and enters his second season as the Catamount wide receivers coach.

"I was very pleased to have a coach of this caliber and experience become part of our staff and football program," Briggs said. "I have known Donnie for several years, dating back to his time at Appalachian State in the early '80's, and have always been impressed with his work ethic, character, football knowledge and recruiting ability. He has a great offensive mind and will be an asset to our staff and wide receivers corps."

Kirkpatrick came to Western as one of the top offensive minds around. He brought that knowledge to Cullowhee and helped the Catamounts led the SoCon in passing in 2003 as three Catamount receivers (Lamont Seward, Michael Reeder and Xavier Godard) ranked among the SoCon top 10 in receptions. Seward simply had one of the best years in Catamount history as he hauled in 74 passes for 915 yards to earn first team All-SoCon honors. While ranking second in the league in both categories, Seward ranked 20th nationally in receptions and 44th in receiving yards, while Reeder ranked 52nd in receptions. With Seward's outstanding season, he ended his career among the WCU and SoCon top five in both receptions (190) and receiving yards (2,972).

Kirkpatrick came to Western after being head coach at Chattanooga from 2000-02. In addition to his role as head coach with the Mocs, Kirkpatrick served as offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach. Over his tenure, Chattanooga's offense annually ranked among the SoCon's best. This past season, UTC ranked second in the SoCon in passing (220.4 ypg), trailing only Western Carolina, while quarterback Ryan McCann was second in passing (209.9 ypg) and third in pass efficiency (131.6 rating). Also, wide receiver Jason Jones was a consensus All-SoCon pick, ranking third in receptions per game (4.75) and fourth in receiving yards (67.9).

The Granite Falls, N.C., native and 1982 Lenoir-Rhyne graduate produced a 10-24 record as head coach at Chattanooga. In 2001, the Mocs were forced to deal with the loss of seven starters due to career- and/or season-ending injuries, including two-time first team All-SoCon receiver Cos DeMatteo, running back Jason Ball and receiver/return specialist Kwento Ikwuezunma. Despite the setback, Chattanooga still finished third in passing with an average of 192.7 ypg. In the absence of Ball and DeMatteo, running back Charles McNeill was only 47 yards shy of becoming just the fifth back in UTC history to rush for 1,000 yards, while Jeremy Grier set a school record for freshmen with 36 receptions to lead the team.

In his first season at Chattanooga, Kirkpatrick's "Air Raid" offense shattered nearly every passing record in school history. Highlights from that season include an upset of sixth-ranked Appalachian State (30-27), his quarterback leading the nation in passing yards and a receiver setting a school standard for season receptions. Although the Mocs were 5-6 in 2000, four of the five losses were by five points or less, including an overtime loss to nationally-ranked Furman.

In Kirkpatrick's system, quarterback Chris Sanders was a consensus first team pick in 2000, throwing for 335.5 ypg, and was a finalist for the Walter Payton Award, which goes to the NCAA I-AA Player of the Year. Also, Richmond Flowers and DeMatteo each earned first team All-SoCon honors, ranking one-two in both receptions and receiving yards in the league. Flowers tallied 86 receptions to set a UTC single-season record and led the SoCon with 7.82 receptions per game, while DeMatteo paced the league with his 97.1 receiving yards per game average.

Kirkpatrick was named the Mocs' 20th head football coach on Feb. 19, 2000. In addition to his previous experience and results, Kirkpatrick landed the head job thanks in part to a petition of support by the UTC football players. Prior to that, he spent two seasons on the Chattanooga football staff. In 1998, he was a volunteer assistant, working with the defensive backs, before being elevated to offensive coordinator in 1999. In his inaugural season as offensive coordinator, Chattanooga led the SoCon in passing and set single-season records

for most pass attempts (496), pass completions (300), passing yards (3,591) and touchdown passes (27).

Other stints for Kirkpatrick prior to Chattanooga include Louisville, Eastern Michigan, South Carolina and Appalachian State. While at Louisville (1995-97), he served as quarterbacks coach where he helped develop Marty Lowe and Chris Redman, who would go on to earn the Johnny Unitas Award as the nation's top quarterback. In 1997, the Cardinals ranked ninth in the nation in passing offense (298.36 ypg) and Redman ranked 15th in total offense (268.91 ypg). The Cardinals set team season records for pass attempts (276), completions (473) and passing yards (3,282).

Before his time in Louisville, Kirkpatrick worked two years (1993-95) as quarterbacks and receivers coach at Eastern Michigan where he helped develop professional players Stevie Clay, a receiver, and quarterback Charlie Batch. Kirkpatrick was quarterbacks coach for Sparky Woods at South Carolina from 1989-92. He tutored signal-callers Todd Ellis and Bobby Fuller. Ellis finished his career as the NCAA's seventh all-time passing leader.

Kirkpatrick began his coaching career at Appalachian State in 1986. He started out as a graduate assistant, earning his master's degree in Secondary Education in 1988, and worked with the defensive ends, running backs and quarterbacks from 1986-88. During his time in Boone, the Mountaineers won SoCon titles in 1986 and '87 and set a national single-season record by committing just 10 turnovers in '86.

A four-year football letterman at Lenoir-Rhyne, Kirkpatrick played three years at quarterback, where he set the school record for longest touchdown pass (89 yards versus Liberty), and one year as receiver, where he led the district in receptions (33), under head coaches Jack Huss and Henry van Zant. During his sophomore season, the team ranked 18th in the NAIA polls. Kirkpatrick also was a letterman in tennis for the Bears. He played as high as No. 3 singles and finished third in the conference championships at No. 3 doubles.

Kirkpatrick is a product of South Caldwell High School in Hudson, N.C., where he played quarterback for his father, Don Kirkpatrick. He led SCHS to the state championship final in his senior year. He is married to the former Misty McCreery of Lexington, N.C. The couple has two children, a daughter Molly (12) and a son Davis (9).

### DONNIE KIRKPATRICK'S QUICK FACTS

**Born:** October 24, 1959 in Hickory, N.C.

**High School:** South Caldwell High (Hudson, N.C.)

**College:** Lenoir-Rhyne, 1982 (B.A. in History)

**Spouse:** the former Misty McCreery of Lexington, N.C.

**Children:** Daughter Molly (12) and son Davis (9).

**Playing Experience:** Quarterback and wide receiver at Lenoir-Rhyne (1978-81).

**Coaching Experience:** **Appalachian State** (1986-88, Graduate Assistant Coach); **South Carolina** (1989-92, Assistant Coach/Quarterbacks); **Eastern Michigan** (1993-95, Assistant Coach/Quarterbacks & Receivers); **Louisville** (1995-97, Assistant Coach/Quarterbacks); **Chattanooga** (1998, Volunteer Assistant/ Defensive Backs); **Chattanooga** (1999, Offensive Coordinator); **Chattanooga** (2000-02, Head Coach); **Western Carolina** (2003-present, Assistant Coach/Wide Receivers).



# CATAMOUNT COACHES AND STAFF

2004 WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL TEAM



## DAVID NAPERT

*(TROY STATE '82)  
ASSISTANT COACH/  
OFFENSIVE LINE*

### DAVID NAPERT'S QUICK FACTS

**Born:** March 26, 1960 in Berlin, N.H.

**High School:** Rockledge High (Rockledge, Fla.)

**College:** Troy State, 1982 (B.S. in Physical Education and Biology)  
Valdosta State, 1986 (M.A. in Education)

**Spouse:** the former Jennifer Cooke.

**Children:** Daughter Claire (13); sons Nicholas (6) and Joseph (5).

**Playing Experience:** Defensive End/Outside Linebacker at Troy State (1980-83).

**Coaching Experience:** Rutherford HS, Panama City, Fla. (1983-85, Assistant Coach); Valdosta State (1986-91, Assistant Coach/Defensive Line, Strength Coordinator/Special Team Coordinator); East Tennessee State (1992-93, Assistant Coach/Defensive Line, Strength Coordinator); Southern Methodist (1997-98, Assistant Coach/Defensive Line, Strength and Conditioning); Rhea County HS, Evensville, Tenn. (1998, Head Coach); Chattanooga (1999, Assistant Coach/Offensive Line, Strength Coordinator); Chattanooga (2000-02, Assistant Head Coach/Offensive Line-2000, Linebackers-2001, Defensive Line-2002); Western Carolina (2003-present, Assistant Coach/Offensive Line).

David Napert (pronounced NAY-pair) joined the Catamount football staff in the February of 2003 and enters his second season the offensive line coach.

"I am extremely excited to have David join our staff," Briggs said. "He brings a tremendous amount of experience and knowledge to our program. His background in the Southern Conference truly benefits our program. His personality and coaching style will really fit well with the direction with which we want to take our offensive line."

Napert's unit helped Western Carolina lead the Southern Conference in passing in 2003. Led by All-American Jason Whaley, who was first team Academic All-America as well, Catamount offensive line only allowed 11 sacks in SoCon high 433 passing attempts on the season, which is just one sack every 40.36 attempts and tops in the SoCon. Overall, the WCU offensive line did not give up a sack in six of its 12 contests, including games versus North Carolina State, The Citadel, East Tennessee State, Furman, Chattanooga and Elon. Twice in 2003, Western had streaks of 121 consecutive pass attempts without allowing a sack. Those streaks are even more impressive considering two teams in the league, Wofford and Georgia Southern, did not even have 121 pass attempts for the entire season.

Napert spent the previous three seasons (2000-02) at Chattanooga, serving the final three seasons as assistant head coach. In 2002, he worked with the Moc's defensive line, while coaching the linebackers in 2001 and the offensive line in 1999 and 2000. Napert helped former Chattanooga linebacker Josh Cain become a two-time All-SoCon and All-American performer. He joined the UTC athletics staff in January 1999 as the strength and conditioning coach for all student-athletes.

Prior to his arrival in Chattanooga, Napert served as the head football coach at Rhea County High School in Evensville, Tenn., in 1998. He led his squad to a 6-5 record and the first round of the state playoffs.

Before taking over the football program at Rhea County, Napert served for one year as the strength coach and football defensive line coach at Southern Methodist University. He worked for five years at East Tennessee State as the strength coach and football offensive line coach and was the strength coordinator and defensive line coach at Valdosta State for six years. Each of his stints at Valdosta State, East Tennessee State and SMU was under current SMU head coach Mike Caven.

A native of Rockledge, Fla., Napert graduated from Troy State in 1982 with a degree in Physical Education and Biology. He earned a master's degree from Valdosta State in 1986.

Napert's wife, the former Jennifer Cooke, played basketball and was an assistant basketball coach at ETSU. The couple has three children, a daughter, Claire, 13, and two sons, Nicholas, 6, and Joseph, 5.



## CLAYTON WHITE

*(NORTH CAROLINA STATE '01)  
ASSISTANT COACH/  
CORNER BACKS*

### CLAYTON WHITE'S QUICK FACTS

**Born:** December 2, 1977 in Dunn, N.C.

**High School:** Triton High (Erwin, N.C.)

**College:** North Carolina State, 2001 (B.S. in Parks, Recreation and Tourism)

**Playing Experience:** Linebacker at North Carolina State (1997-2000). NFL Linebacker for the New York Giants (2001-02) and Tampa Bay Buccaneers (2002).

**Coaching Experience:** Sanderson HS, Raleigh, N.C. (2003, Assistant Coach); Western Carolina (2004-present, Assistant Coach/Corner Backs).

Clayton White, who was a linebacker at North Carolina State during Briggs' tenure as the Wolfpack defensive coordinator, joined the Catamount football staff in the spring of 2004 and will work with the WCU corner backs.

White came to Western after one year as the defensive backs coach at Sanderson High School in Raleigh. He began his coaching career after a stint as a player in the National Football League. White was a linebacker and special teams player for the New York Giants from 2001-02 and, after the 2002 season, he was a member of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

White was a standout performer for the Wolfpack from 1997-2000. Not only was he a team captain as a senior, but he ended his career fifth on the N.C. State all-time list with 33 tackles for losses and 10th on the school's career tackles list with 303. He also appears in the Wolfpack's record book for tallying 23 tackles in a game versus Ohio in 1998 (sixth-best), having 20 tackles in a game versus Texas in 1999 (ninth-best) and causing six fumbles in his career (sixth-best). White, a two-time Academic All-ACC selection, was the recipient of the N.C. State football team's Bob Warren Award in 2000, which goes to the player who displays integrity and sportsmanship. As a senior, he sealed the Wolfpack's 38-30 victory over Minnesota with an interception on the Gopher's last offensive possession in the 2000 Micronpc.com Bowl.

A native of Dunn, N.C., White earned first team All-State honors as a defensive back at Triton High School. He was also the 1996 North Carolina East-West All-Star Game MVP and played in the North Carolina-South Carolina Shrine Bowl.

White received his B.S. in parks, recreation and tourism with a concentration in sports management from North Carolina State in 2001.



**MITCH HALL**  
*(WESTERN CAROLINA '02)*  
**GRADUATE ASSISTANT COACH**

Mitch Hall enters his second season on Western's football staff as a graduate assistant. Hall, who works mainly with the defense, assists the staff in filming games and practices, as well as helping the staff in scouting opponents. He will additionally begin his first year in working the defensive ends this season.

Hall played linebacker with the Catamounts from 1999-2001. Hall played in all 22 WCU games over his last two seasons, starting four games at middle linebacker in his senior season.

A native of Rougemount, N.C., Hall registered 35 tackles in his senior season. He closed his senior year in fine fashion, starting the final three games of the season. In those contests, he recorded six tackles in wins over Chattanooga and VMI, while tallying a career-high eight stops, including two for losses, in the season finale versus Appalachian State. In addition to his contributions at linebacker, Hall was a fixture on the WCU special teams.

A graduate of North Durham High, Hall was a two-time all-conference and all-area pick, making 130 tackles in his senior season. He was also an all-conference pick in basketball and baseball.



**TOBIAS JACOBI**  
**HEAD STRENGTH AND  
CONDITIONING COORDINATOR**

Tobias Jacobi joined the Catamount staff in July of 2002 and enters his third season as the head strength and conditioning coordinator.

Over that time, in addition to his coaching duties, he oversaw the move into the newly expanded and renovated Jordan-Phillips Field House. Involved in the move was ordering the most modern weight training equipment for the WCU student-athletes.

This past year, under Jacobi's direction, Western Carolina seniors Michale Spicer and Sara Komosinski were each named

to the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) All-American team, recognizing their dedication to strength and conditioning.

Jacobi native came to Western Carolina after serving as the assistant strength coach at Elon University for one year. There, he directed the strength and conditioning for the football as well as men's and women's soccer teams. Prior to his stint at Elon, Jacobi was a graduate assistant strength and conditioning coach at both Cumberland (Tenn.) University and the University of North Carolina. At Cumberland, he was responsible for the football and volleyball strength programs. During his time at UNC, Jacobi assisted with football and was the strength coach for the women's lacrosse, diving and cheerleading teams.

Jacobi, who holds a B.S. in Physical Education from Cumberland University, has been certified as a strength and conditioning specialist by the National Strength and Conditioning Association. He is a member of the United States Weightlifting Association, the United States All-Around Weightlifting Association and the Collegiate Strength and Conditioning Coaches Association.

A four-year letterman in football at Cumberland, Jacobi helped Cumberland lead the NAIA in rushing on two occasions and finish the 1996 season ranked 16th in the national poll.

Jacobi, a native Riverdale, Ga., is married to the former April Banks.



**MYLES CHRISTIAN**  
**ASSISTANT STRENGTH AND  
CONDITIONING COORDINATOR**

Myles Christian, who became a full-time staff member in 2003, enters his third season as Western Carolina's assistant strength and conditioning coordinator.

Christian, a Cottondale, Ala., native, came to WCU after having served as a teacher and assistant softball coach at Holy Spirit High School in Tuscaloosa, Ala. He has also worked as a football and strength coach at Tuscaloosa Christian School and as a trainer at a fitness club in Tuscaloosa.

Christian is currently working on his master's in Education at Western Carolina. He completed his bachelor's degree at the University of Alabama in the spring of 2001. While there, Christian was a walk-on for the Crimson Tide football team, which played in the Outback Bowl, Music City Bowl and Orange Bowl during his time there. He also played on the 1999 Southeastern Conference Championship team.



# CATAMOUNT COACHES AND STAFF

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## ELEANOR LIEBERMAN

### FOOTBALL SECRETARY

Eleanor Lieberman is in her 11th year as the football office secretary. Overall, she is in her 15th year with the Catamount athletics department, spending five years (1993-97) as the department's general secretary/receptionist.

"Ms. Ellie," as she is most affectionately known, and her husband, Herman, have lived in Cullowhee for 29 years. They are the parents of two daughters—Julie, a WCU graduate who currently teaches in the Augusta, Ga., area and Jill, who received her master's degree from WCU and currently lives in Cullowhee. Ms. Ellie and Herman are the proud grandparents of David (2), son of their daughter Julie and her husband Chip.



## MIKE TAYLOR

### ATHLETICS EQUIPMENT MANAGER

Mike Taylor is in his fourth year of his second stint at Western Carolina, returning in the spring of 2001 after a five-year absence. The Raleigh, N.C., native was on WCU's staff for five seasons (1991-95) also serving as the athletics equipment manager.

A member of the national Athletic Equipment Managers Association, Taylor's numerous duties include purchasing, fitting, maintenance, administration and organization, management, professional relations and education, accountability, overseeing the laundry operation, coordinating field setup for games and practices and supervising the student assistant managers.

Taylor's ties to Western extend further. He was the football sideline reporter for the Catamount Sports Network, while working as store manager at Sylva's Four Seasons Sports. Taylor was also a student manager for four years, including one year (1990) as head student manager.

Between his time at Western, Taylor was the football equipment manager at Arizona State University from 1995-96.

## WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL PERSONNEL



**DR. JEFF DAVIS**  
WESTERN CAROLINA  
UNIVERSITY PHYSICIAN



**DR. CLIFFORD FAULL**  
CAROLINA WEST  
SPORTS MEDICINE



**DR. QUAYLE NESLEN**  
CAROLINA WEST  
SPORTS MEDICINE



**DR. PAUL PFLUEGER**  
CAROLINA WEST  
SPORTS MEDICINE



**DR. DARYL ROSENBAUM**  
CAROLINA WEST  
SPORTS MEDICINE



**CARLYLE SCHOMBERG**  
CAROLINA WEST  
SPORTS MEDICINE



**DR. LARRY SUPIK**  
CAROLINA WEST  
SPORTS MEDICINE



## CAROLINA WEST SPORTS MEDICINE CLINIC

Carolina West Sports Medicine is a collaborative effort between Western Carolina University, Sylva Orthopaedic Associates, PA, and WestCare Health System. The program incorporates physicians, physical therapists and athletic trainers and offers evaluation and treatment for injuries to athletes of all ages - from youths to weekend warriors - in Western North Carolina.

Clinics are held in the newly renovated and expanded WCU athletics training room of the Ramsey Center on Mondays, Thursday, and Saturdays from 8:30 am to Noon. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, the Carolina West Sports Medicine clinic is held in WestCare Medical Park of Sylva from 1-5 pm. Appointments may be made by calling the clinic at (828) 586-7934 or toll-free at (866) 283-3036.

The purpose of Carolina West Sports Medicine is to have sports medicine physicians evaluate injuries within 48 hours of initial contact, utilizing all necessary diagnostics. Based on the evaluation, appropriate steps are taken, which may include surgery, casting, bracing or rehabilitation. If rehabilitation is required, a physical therapist will be present at all clinics to begin and program and outline further steps to recovery.

Carolina West Sports Medicine also administers an outreach program, placing athletic trainers in area schools. This program is a much-needed and critical service, as many schools do not have such personnel available to evaluate and treat sports injuries on staff. Staff trainers are also available to cover community related athletic events.

"We see this as a real positive partnership with two organizations that have been providing service to us for a long time," said WCU Director of Athletics Jeff Compher. "This will allow our relationship to be an integral service for both student-athletes and the community. We are proud to be associated with this group that will ultimately benefit everyone involved."

Physicians staffing the clinics include orthopaedic surgeons Clifford Faull, M.D., Quayle Neslen, Jr. M.D., Paul Pflueger, M.D., and Lawrence W. Supik, M.D. of Sylva Orthopaedic Associates, PA; Daryl Rosenbaum, M.D., a primary care physician with sports medicine training, from The Center for Family Medicine in Franklin; and Richard Jones, M.D. Carlyle Schomberg is a licensed physical therapist and Director at Carolina West Sports Medicine. He returns to Sylva after three years in Birmingham, Ala., where he worked at Health South Sports Medicine, treating numerous high school, college and professional athletes.