

Local Athlete Inducted into College of William and Mary's Athletics Hall of Fame

Former Tribe Great Natalie Simpson (Neaton) (Brighton, Mich.) Part of Seven-Member Class

Williamsburg, Va. (April 14, 2008) – The College of William and Mary's Athletics Department will induct former All-American forward on the Tribe's women's soccer team, Natalie Simpson (Neaton) '97 to its Athletics Hall of Fame as part of a seven-member class in a ceremony-taking place at the Crowne Plaza on April 19th, 2008 in Williamsburg.

The former Natalie Neaton, a graduate of Detroit Country Day School and native of Brighton, Mich., will be inducted alongside Josh Beyer (football), Vaughn Hughes (soccer), Thomas Jasper (basketball), Jennifer Noble Smith (volleyball), Darren Sharper (football) and David Williams (gymnastics).

For more information on the event and/or ticket information, please contact Lisa Garwood (757.221.1599; llgarw@wm.edu), the College's Director of Athletics Special Events.

The following is a brief biographical sketch of the seven inductees:

Natalie Simpson (Neaton), Women's Soccer, 1992-1995

The former Natalie Neaton ranks as one of the College of William and Mary's greatest players in tradition-rich history of the Tribe's women's soccer program. A force from the moment she stepped on campus, Neaton joins a very elite group of players in the history of the women's collegiate game to earn four career All-American honors. Her storied career culminated with her earning National Player of the Year honors after a 1995 season that saw Neaton collect 19 goals and 14 assists for an amazing 52 points. As previously mentioned, she started her career by earning All-American honors as a freshman in 1992, setting the school's rookie scoring record with 19 goals. All she accomplished, as a follow-up to her sensational initial campaign, was to earn another All-American honor as a sophomore and be named as the Colonial Athletic Association's Player of the Year. While she was named the nation's outstanding player for her senior season, that honor could be traced to Neaton's break-out junior season which saw her named as a First-Team All-American and be named as a finalist for the Herman Award (soccer's equivalent of the Heisman Trophy).

Neaton still holds the College's records for most goals in a career (81), season (28 in 1994), match (four vs. ECU in 1995), assists in a match (four vs. ECU in 1995) as well as points in a season (63 in 1994).

Josh Beyer 1997, Football

Beyer graduated as a two-time all-American (1995 and 1996 seasons), including consensus honors in 1996. He was a three-year All-Yankee Conference honoree (from 1994-96), including first-team honors in 1995 and 1996. He was also a two time first team All-Virginia Honoree (VaSID), which includes all Division I programs in the state (UVa and Va. Tech) and a two time First Team All-ECAC selection.

He paved the way for the majority of the careers for three of the top four rushers in school history (Derek Fitzgerald – all-time leader, 1992-95; Troy Keen – third all-time, 1992-95; Alvin Porch – fourth all-time, 1994-97). He also was a key contributor to four of the school's top 10 single season rushing efforts (Fitzgerald, 1,223 yards, fourth in 1995 and 1,101 yards, ninth in 1993; Alvin Porch, 1,210 yards, fifth in 1996; Troy Keen, 1,175 yards, sixth in 1994).

Helped the team to its first of three conference championships (1996) and a NCAA quarterfinal appearance. The Tribe's offense averaged better than 400 yards a contest at 28 points a contest in his four-year career.

Vaughn Hughes, 1997, Men's Soccer

Graduated as, and remains, the school's all-time leading scorer with 131 career points, including 52 goals. Hughes is also the school's career leader in game-winning goals (21) and was selected as the team MVP for the 1996 campaign, which was one of the greatest single-seasons in Tribe history, as the squad record 20 wins, earned a CAA Championship and made an appearance in national quarterfinals.

Helped team to CAA Championships in each of his final three seasons (1994-96), as Tribe averaged 19 wins a season over same three-year span.

Earned All-American honors after the 1996 season (24 goals, 12 assists). Also was named as the CAA Player of the Year and the VaSID State Player of the Year. His 24 goals made him the NCAA's leading scorer for the season. To put this number into perspective, his 24 goals were just one less than the Tribe's entire team scored during the 1989 season that saw them post a 10-5-4 record.

For the most up-to-date Tribe sports information, go to www.TribeAthletics.com

Hughes is also the Tribe's all-time leading scorer in post-season history, as he has four career goals in the NCAA tournament.

Thomas Jasper, 1971, Basketball

Jasper had a short, but brilliant career for the College's basketball squad. In just two seasons on campus, Jasper scored 982 points in just 54 career games. His average of 18.2 pts/game ranks him fifth all-time in Tribe history.

After a junior season that saw him average 17.1 points and 7.9 rebounds was named as the team's co-captain for his senior year (1971). That season saw Jasper lead the team in scoring (19.2), rebounding (8.6) and field goal percentage (.426).

Jasper's stellar and consistent play helped the squad to a solid 7-3 league mark. For his efforts, Jasper was named as the Co-Southern Player of the Year and earned First-Team All-Southern Conference honors. He is one of only two Tribe players to have earned the SoCon Player of the Year honor (with the other being Jeff Cohen in 1961). He finished his season by earning First-Team All-Southern Conference All-Tournament Team honors in helping the College to a first-round win over VMI.

Jasper transferred into College from Frederick College (Portsmouth, VA). He played an leading role in helping Frederick College to the Small College National title in his sophomore season.

He ended his Tribe career with an average of 18.2 pts/gm; 8.2 rebounds game (444) and had a career field goal percentage of .414.

Jennifer Noble (Smith), 1986-1990, Women's Volleyball

Jennifer was a member of four-straight CAA Championship squads in her time at the College. She captained the team in her senior season (1989) and helped unit fashion a 25-3 record. She was named as the CAA's Player of the Year for her efforts during the successful 1989 campaign, which also saw the College make its second consecutive visit to the National Invitational Volleyball Championships.

Jennifer ended her playing career with school records in setting percentage (.444) and single season assists (1,142). She also holds the school's record for assists in five-game match (84) and assists in four-game match (81).

But, perhaps the highest accolade she could have received was when long-time William and Mary Head Volleyball Coach Debbie Hill named her as one of the top five players ever to matriculate from her program

Darren Sharper, 1997, Football

A three-year starter and four-time letter winner (1993-96), Sharper was a two-time Division I-AA All-America selection as well as three-time first-team All-Yankee Conference pick. H played in 40 career games, with 37 starts and intercepted 24 passes during his collegiate career, the top figure in school history.

He graduated as the FCS series all-time leader in career interception return yards (486) and finished with 296 total tackles and 44 passes breakups.

Sharper averaged 10.2 yards per return over a three-year period and graduated as the Tribe's career punt return yardage leader (1,027 yards).

He was a First-Team I-AA All-America selection as a senior, when he also earned Yankee Conference Defensive Player of the Year honor and was a first-team East Coast Athletic Conference (ECAC) and All-Virginia pick. Led the conference, and tied for top honors nationally among I-AA players, with 10 interceptions. His 228 interception return yards that season were the highest in I-AA and he made a career-best 116 total tackles. He also set the school record for single-season punt-return yards (500).

Sharper also earned first-team All-America and All-Yankee Conference honors as a junior, as he led the conference and was tied for eighth nationally with seven interceptions. He received honorable mention All-America honors and was a first-team All-Yankee Conference choice as a sophomore, once again tying for the conference lead (and was ranked 12th nationally) with seven interceptions.

After graduation, the Green Bay Packers made him its second round pick of the 1997 draft and currently is a starting safety for the Minnesota Vikings. He is a three-time NFL Pro-Bowl selection and his 51 career interceptions make him the league's active leader.

David Williams, 1992, Men's Gymnastics

Williams was a standout on the pommel horse for the College and became the school's first Nissen-Emery Award finalist (given annually to the nation's top gymnast). His mark of 9.85 on the pommel horse remains tied for the top spot on the school's all-time listings. He ended his career as a four-time All-East performer on the pommel, including two first-place finishes (1990-1992). He was a multiple-time qualifier for the NAAs, having to first advance through regional competitions.

A true student-athlete, Williams was a member of two Tribe teams that earned USAG National Academic Team Championships (1991-92). He went onto medical school at Johns Hopkins and currently practicing pediatric critical care in Greensboro, NC.

Though he didn't make all-American status, his head coach, Cliff Gauthier made the comment that "Dave's efforts in being named as our first Nissen-Emery finalist set the table for the generations of gymnasts to follow him to the College. He was one of our first to gain national recognition and played a large role in helping our program move forward."