

Harper Davis Field Is Dedicated to A 'Millsaps Treasure'

Harper Davis, former head football coach and athletic director, was honored during Homecoming 2004 festivities in October with the renaming of Alumni Field in his honor.

More than 300 of his former players and friends joined Davis, B.A. 1947, and former assistant coach Tommy Ranager on the field for the ceremony. Davis, a member

of the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame, holds the record for the most wins in Millsaps football history and is also a member of the Mississippi State University Sports Hall of Fame. He is a 1989 inductee to the Millsaps Sports Hall of Fame. During the Captain's Dinner, a Homecoming event for former players, a video entitled *Harper Davis: A Millsaps Treasure* was shown.

According to Rick Cleveland, longtime sports columnist for the *Clarion-Ledger*, naming the field for Davis was a particu-

larly appropriate honor. "He fertilized it, watered it, mowed it, lined it, coached, and taught on it," Cleveland wrote. "He and Tommy Ranager were a two-man coaching staff and grounds crew. And that was enough because Millsaps won 138 games and lost only 79 from 1964 until 1988, when Davis stepped down."

"It's funny, we spent all that time keeping that grass just right and now they've got artificial turf," Davis told Cleveland. "But I can't tell you how honored I am. I have received a lot of awards and honors in life, but this is the highest honor I've ever received."



Former Coach Harper Davis at the dedication.

Davis spent 25 seasons at the helm of the Majors that included an undefeated 9-0 season in 1980. Davis led the Majors to their first NCAA Division III playoff appearance, a win against Colorado College, in 1975.

Following an All-Southeastern Conference career as a defensive back at Mississippi State University, Davis was selected by the Chicago Bears in the first round of the draft in 1950. Davis also played for the Green Bay Packers in 1951.

A native of Clarksdale, Davis is in his 36th season of coaching, currently serving as an assistant football coach at Jackson Academy.

—Brian Emory

Dessauer Smashes Records, Earning Regional Honors

Senior Carly Dessauer can add two-time South/Southeast All-Regional runner to her lengthy résumé as a cross-country runner at Millsaps College.

Dessauer placed 14th overall, up from her 24th place finish last season in the championship meet. She was named to the All-Regional Team for the second consecutive year. No other Millsaps runner has ever been named to the All-Region Team.

But Dessauer set a school record in the process. She now holds the school record in both the 5K and 6K distances.

Men's and women's soccer coaches Lee Johnson and Paul Van Hooydonk worked hard this off-season to recruit first year players ready for starting positions with the hope that they could carry the teams through a tough conference schedule.

Just the opposite was true for Head Coach Jaime Burns and the volleyball team. The Lady Majors had experience and leadership that showed itself in the season results with a flip-flop (11-20/20-11) in their overall record from 2003 to 2004.

(continued following insert)

(continued from page 18)

In Johnson's second season leading the Majors, his young team showed the same style of aggressive play in 2004 that their coach was known for in his four years as a Major.

A 1998 graduate, Johnson was named most valuable defensive player, as well as being named to the Southern Collegiate Athletics Conference all-conference first team as a senior.

Johnson, who took the women's soccer team at Pearl High School to three consecutive state championship games, winning one in 2002, hopes that lessons learned the hard way will pay off in a big way for next year's squad that will feature 5 seniors, 4 juniors, and 15 sophomores.

Van Hooydonk spent two seasons as head coach of the men's soccer program at Millsaps before taking over the reins of the women's program in 2004.

In one year of recruiting, Van Hooydonk brought in a nine-member freshman class that paid immediate dividends for the program.

Notching wins against Division II Delta State University, LeTourneau University, and Louisiana College should prove to be a good start for the future of the women's soccer program.

The Millsaps Lady Majors (20-11,

10-8) volleyball team closed the 2004 season in the SCAC tournament hosted by Millsaps in November, by going 4-1. The biggest of those wins came over the Centre College Colonels in five games. —B. E.

These Players Aren't Just Whistlin' Dixie

From Dixie State to a state in Dixie proved to be a good move for three football players who transferred from Dixie State College of Utah in St. George to Millsaps College. Their intention was not to come to Millsaps as a package deal, but Jay Buck, Joey Doxey, and J. J. Gilmore did exactly that.

Buck, a 26-year-old lineman from Emmett, Idaho, found his football career sidelined after exhausting his eligibility for playing Division I college football. "I found out I couldn't go to a Division I college around the time I returned from my two-year mission (for the Mormon church) to Toronto," said Buck, a 6-foot-6 315-pound offensive tackle for the Majors. "And about that same time I met Keith Majors," the Millsaps running backs coach.

Eager to carry on his football-playing career, Buck met with Majors on a recruiting trip during the summer of 2004, when

Majors visited Dixie State.

Although he claims he would have come alone to Mississippi, Buck called his Dixie State teammate, Doxey, to see if he was interested in playing for the Division III Millsaps College team.

Doxey, a 21-year-old defensive player, who red-shirted one season at the University of Utah and played one season at Dixie State, listened to the pitch from Majors and Buck and made the decision to attend Millsaps College.

Doxey stepped right in as the starting free safety for Millsaps in 2004. The 6-foot-2 200-pound sophomore had 44 tackles including one interception and eight pass breakups.

But Buck, the only one of the three-some to visit the Jackson campus, and Doxey weren't finished with recruiting their friends.

They made their pitch to Gilmore, 24, a 5-foot-10 190-pound running back/cornerback who had given up on football after injuries had kept him off the field for more than a year. Gilmore, who grew up on a Navajo reservation in Arizona, jumped at the chance to continue his studies at Millsaps while taking extra time to heal after surgery. Gilmore plans to return to the reservation after graduation to be a football coach.

As a 20-year-old, Gilmore spent his two-year mission working crops in the fields of Ghana, West Africa.

"Yeah, some of the guys were wondering why we decided to come to Millsaps College and they would ask a lot of questions at first," said Doxey. "But it's not like that anymore. I think I can speak for all three of us when I say we feel a part of this team and we feel accepted by our teammates."

"Their statistics and the way they've played really speak for themselves," said second-year Head Coach David Saunders. "But I think what really matters, with each of them, is the fact that they wanted to come to Millsaps College and receive a top-quality education." —B. E.



Sophomore left tackle Jay Buck, 77, opened holes on the offensive line for SCAC Offensive Player of the Year, Tyson Roy, 2. Buck, a left tackle, was named to the All-SCAC Offensive Second Team.