

2008 PIGSKIN PREVIEW



GSD

Tigers, Simmons reay to run to title

By Jonathan Blaylock
Rome News-Tribune Sports Writer
JBlaylock@RN-T.com / 706-290-5256

The biggest hurdle the Georgia School for Deaf football team will face this year will be the first obstacle they come up against.



GSD coach Eric Whitworth's Tigers shared the national deaf 8-man football championship.

son, leaving the Tigers only a week to prepare for the differences between eight-man and 11-man football.

"That gives us a good month to prepare. We've set up the basic offense and defense," Whitworth said. "In eight-man, you can just tell your defensive end to crash in every play. At the most, they're two players away from the quarterback."

"If you keep doing that in 11-man, you'll get hurt. They've been picking it up. They remember the basics and what we've got to do."

The team of 23 players will have their work cut out against ASD. GSD hasn't defeated ASD since the two teams started playing every year beginning in 2001.

The Tigers' last win over ASD came in 1992 and the closest they've come to posting a win was last season when they lost 14-8. But if they're going to



File photo / Rome News-Tribune

GSD senior Timothy Simmons is considered one of the top deaf high school running backs in the nation.

defeat the Alabama school, this is the year to do it.

More than half of the team is comprised of seniors and one of them had a huge impact on the Tigers' success — Timothy Simmons.

Simmons earned a spot on the 2007 Rome News-Tribune All-Area team with 2,372 rushing yard. He also scored 41

touchdowns on the ground and had 472 yards and seven touchdowns through the air. In all, he totaled over 2,700 yards of offense.

"He's the man of the hour," Whitworth said. "Him and the other two senior captains."

Joining Simmons as senior captains are Davion Gilling and Edward Snipes. The other seniors on the team are Westley Blankenship, Brandon Stephens, Eric Williams, Charlie Chandler, Jonathan Roach, Jason Crosby, Jeremy Crosby, Kyle Taylor and Matthew Whitlock.

The team has set some high goals for themselves — as high as they can attain. Whitworth said he doesn't like to set goals too high, but the team is confident they can be better than last season.

In 2007, the Tigers finished

2008 SCHEDULE

Sept. 6	Ala. School for the Deaf
Sept. 13	Ohio School for the Deaf
Sept. 20	at N.C. School for the Deaf
Sept. 27	S.C. School for the Deaf
Oct. 4	N.C. School for the Deaf
Oct. 11	at Eastern N.C. School for the Deaf
Oct. 18	at Miss. School for the Deaf
Oct. 25	at S.C. School for the Deaf
Nov. 1	TBA

2008 ROSTER

7	Eric Welch	Jr.
8	Matthew Powers	So.
10	Jay Roberson	So.
12	Austin Royston	Fr.
14	Eric Williams	Sr.
20	Matthew Whitlock	Sr.
22	Jabril Moss	Jr.
30	Davion Gilling	Sr.
32	Edward Snipes	Sr.
34	Nestor Cacho	So.
40	Timothy Simmons	Sr.
42	Ryan Hall	Jr.
45	Brandon Stevens	Sr.
50	Charlie Chandler	Sr.
52	Jonathan Roach	Sr.
55	Dylan Stancil	Jr.
65	Westley Blankenship	Sr.
66	Jeremy Crosby	Sr.
75	Kyle Taylor	Sr.
77	Jason Crosby	Sr.
80	Argenis Beana	Jr.
81	Montrez West	Fr.
85	Javon Mason	Fr.

PLAYERS TO WATCH



Georgia School for the Deaf Tigers (from left) Davion Gilling, Timothy Simmons, Edward Snipes and Eric Williams.

7-1 and were co-national deaf champions along with Arkansas School for the Deaf and Minnesota School for the Deaf.

"They've said, 'We were 7-1 and last year and we're basically the same team. If we're not 7-1 or better, we're not doing our job,'" Whitworth said.

"If we can get by that 11-man game, we could have an outside chance of defending our national championship," he added. "Looking at the

schedule, if we get by Alabama, we should finish 8-0." Whitworth is glad to have such a successful team, but he may have his hands full next season.

"I've been telling everybody who asks me about the team that this year will make me look like I know what I'm doing," he said. "I don't want to over coach them. I can just stand there and look good. In the fall of 2009, I'll find out what kind of coach I am."

Set Them Ablaze, Devils!

Grand Wishes for the 2008 Season!

SHANNON PHARMACY

5855 New Calhoun Hwy Rome, GA 30161

Store Hours:
Mon-Fri 8:00am-6:00pm
Saturday 8:00-2:00pm
Delivery Available
Drive Thru Window: 706-295-4772

GOOD LUCK THIS SEASON

2008 Blue Devils Football Schedule

Aug. 29 Gordon Central
Sept. 5 Southeast Whitfield
Sept. 12 at Trion
Sept. 19 Armuchee
Sept. 26 at Adairsville
Oct. 4 Coosa (at Barron)
Oct. 10 Open
Oct. 17 at Temple
Oct. 24 at Rockmart
Oct. 31 Pepperell
Nov. 7 Region Playoff

\$40 Office Visit

- Sports Physicals
- DOT Physicals
- Minor Trauma
- Sports Physicals - \$25

MEDIQUICK
109 Redmond Rd. • Rome
Between Harbin Clinic & Redmond Hospital

Hours: Mon.-Fri. 8 am-6 pm *Se Habla Espanol (706) 232-6022*

Go Model Blue Devils!!

FLOYD Primary Care

Go Blue Devils!

Now Accepting New Patients

Jay Thomas, M.D.

Family Medicine

706.295.4476
5764 New Calhoun Highway, NE
Shannon, Georgia
www.floyd.org

Good Looks Model Blue Devils

McGowan Jones Pharmacy

Next To The Post Office In Shannon, GA
Now In Our 57th Year of Service
To The Shannon Community

Bobby Jones	MHS	GRAD	1955
Betty Jones	MHS	GRAD	1954
Lee Jones	MHS	GRAD	1981

706-295-2505

WOW Cafe & Wingery

Buy 1 Lunch Entree, Get One For..... **99¢**

With Purchase of Two Beverages

32 TV's... One at every booth! 17 sauces on the Best Wings in Town!

Mondays "Trivia Night"	Tuesdays "Bike Night"	Thursdays "Ladies Night"
----------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------------------------

11 am-11 pm Sit-down, Standing • 11 am-11 pm Pick-up, Delivery • 11 am-8 pm Bar • 2017 Georgia Hwy • Rome, Ga. • Shannon Blvd • Hwy 70 • 706-291-0100

www.wowga.com 706-291-0100

Coosa Valley Technical College

Fall Classes Begin September 30

Call or visit one of CVTC's Student Success Centers to register!

Floyd County Campus 706-802-5381	Gordon County Campus 706-624-1468	Polk County Campus 770-684-7349
-------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------------------

You and Alfa— a winning team.

Let's talk about working together to accomplish our goals. At Alfa, our team works hard to serve you and your family, whatever your insurance needs. Whether you need home and auto coverage, or life insurance, call our office today to learn more about how Alfa wants to be a part of your team, too.

Jim Childs
610 Shorter Ave.
Suite 21
Rome, GA 30165
706-291-7161

Let's talk about tomorrow.

ALFA INSURANCE
AUTO • HOME • LIFE • BUSINESS
www.alfainc.com