

Baseball

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Quick Facts

Location: Lexington, Va. 24450
Founded: 1839
Colors: Red (PMS 185), White, and Yellow (PMS 116)
Nickname: Keydets
Enrollment: 1,300
Superintendent: Gen. J.H. Binford Peay, III (VMI '62)
Athletic Director: Donny White (VMI '65)
Athletic Department Office Phone: (540) 464-7251
Conference / Affiliation: Big South / NCAA Division I
Home Field: Patchin Field
Capacity / Surface: 1,000 / Bermuda
Dimensions: LF-325 CF-390 RF-335 355 and 365 in the alleys
Head Coach: Marlin Ikenberry (VMI '95), First season
Record at VMI: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Assistant Coaches: Andrew Slater (Auburn '01), Third season
 Chris Booth (Thomas More '01), First season
 Matt Kirby (William & Mary '03), First season
Baseball Office Phone: (540) 464-7609
2003 Record: 24-28
2003 Conference Record / Place: 16-14 / 7th
Baseball SID: Ted Leshinski
Office Phone: (540) 464-7015
Office FAX: (540) 464-7583
E-mail: leshinskij@vmi.edu
Home Phone: (540) 463-7287
Lettermen Returning / Lost: 17 / 6
Pitchers Returning / Lost: 10 / 2
Starting Position Players Returning / Lost: 7 / 2

Top Returnees		(2003 stats)	
Elliott Erbe	Jr. RF	.302 avg.,	7 HR, 26 RBI
Matt Smith	Jr. SS	.244 avg.,	10 SB, 16 RBI
Jon Wade	Jr. 1B	.270 avg.,	4 HR, 27 RBI
Brandon Massenburg	So. CF	.263 avg.,	5 HR, 19 RBI
Kelly Sweppenhiser	So. 3B	.307 avg.,	3 HR, 26 RBI
Allan Wimmer	So. LF	.310 avg.,	4 HR, 28 RBI
Zach Kennedy	Sr. OF	.375 avg.,	8 AB's, 1 RBI

Top Returning Pitchers		(2003 stats)	
Matt Liffick	Sr. LHP	0-0, 6.92 ERA,	13.0 IP
Josh Owens	Sr. LHP	INJURED / DNP	
Duke Acors	Jr. RHP	6-5, 3.78 ERA,	88.0 IP
Jeff Demara	Jr. RHP	3-1, 3.66 ERA,	32.0 IP
J.J. Hollenbeck	Jr. RHP	1-4, 7.44 ERA,	32.2 IP
Richie Litwin	Jr. LHP	0-1, 9.53 ERA,	17.0 IP
Jimmy Thoms	Jr. RHP	3-6, 7.30 ERA,	53.0 IP
Tristen Covington	So. LHP	0-0, 7.33 ERA,	23.1 IP

Top Newcomers			
Mike Anton, LHP		Clarksville, Md. /	River Hill
Corey Bachman, RHP / INF		Dillsburg, Pa. /	Northern
Jacoby Fields, UT		Prince George, Va. /	Prince George
John Goode, RHP		Winchester, Va. /	James Wood
Chad Rice, INF		Brownsville, Pa. /	Brownsville
Sean Seawell, C		Spotsylvania, Va. /	Spotsylvania
Thane Smith, OF		Virginia Beach, Va. /	First Colonial
Brent Upham, INF		Orlando, Fla. /	Dr. Phillips
Josh Legg, OF		Newport News, Va. /	Heritage

Credits

The 2004 Virginia Military Institute Baseball Guide is a publication of the VMI Sports Information Office.

Writing, Editing and Layout by: Ted Leshinski, Assistant Sports Information Director.

Editorial Assistance by: Wade Branner, Sports Information Director, and Andy Krauss, Assistant Sports Information Director.

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Media Info

What you need to know before covering the Keydets...

The 2004 Virginia Military Institute Baseball guide has been produced to assist the media and VMI baseball fans and enthusiasts in following the 2004 Keydets.

Requests for additional information should be directed to the VMI Sports Information Office.

Interviews

Head Coach Marlin Ikenberry will be available for interviews following all home games. Players will also be available for interview at that time. Player interviews outside of postgame situations must be coordinated through the VMI Sports Information Office. Since cadets do not have phones in their rooms, it is virtually impossible to contact a player directly. However, we will be more than happy to track down any player you wish to speak to, and will let no obstacle prevent him from getting that player to respond to you - that same day, if possible.

Photographers

All photographers are asked to shoot from behind the fences behind home plate, and down the first and third base lines (shooting from the batting cage area by third base is allowed). Photographers may also shoot from the hillsides in the outfield, and down the first base line. Under no circumstances will photographers be allowed into the dugouts or onto the field during a game. We ask for your cooperation in this matter.

Press Facilities

For members of the media or visiting SIDs at VMI's Patchin Field, our facilities are limited but we promise to go out of our way to make you feel welcome at "The Patch." Statistics will be available prior to each game, and a complete box score and play-by-play will be available approximately 10 minutes after the conclusion of each game. Credentials are unnecessary at Patchin Field - as are tickets for that matter. A press box is in the future plans. For right now, the game operations staff can be found along the third base line. Media should feel free to sit anywhere within the confines of "The Patch," although a chair will always be reserved for you at the scorer's table, located behind home plate.

Radio Broadcast Lines

Visiting teams wishing to broadcast games from Patchin Field are asked to contact VMI Sports Information Director Wade Branner (540-464-7515) at least two weeks prior to the game. There are no covered radio booths, power, or phone lines preset for radio coverage, however, with sufficient notice, we can make temporary arrangements.

Big South Conference

Baseball statistics for the 10 Big South Conference schools are compiled throughout the season at the conference office in Charlotte, N.C. For up to date information, call Jason Corriher in the Big South office at (704) 341-7990. Updated information is also available through the fax-on-demand service, InfoConnection.

Finding Your Way to Patchin Field

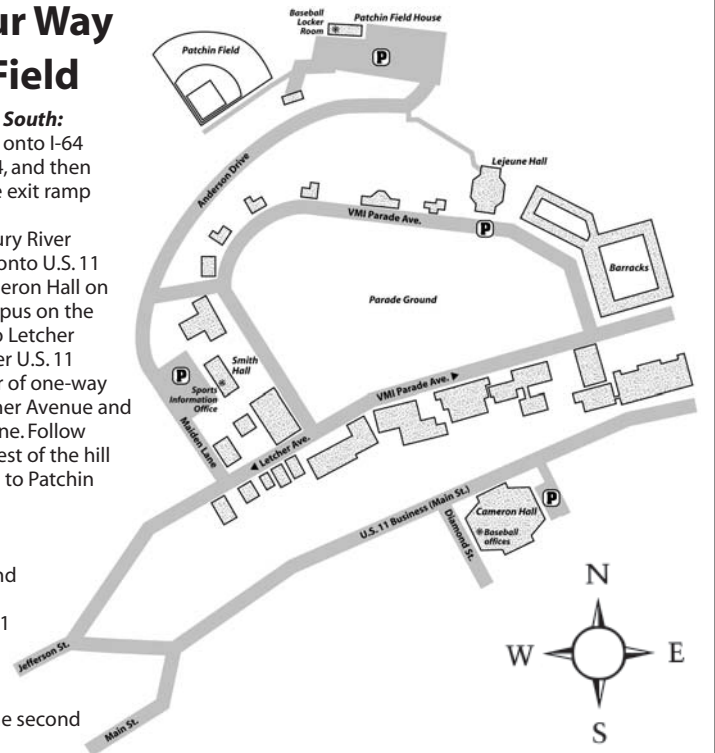
From the East, North, or South:

Follow I-81 to Exit 191 onto I-64 West. Take Exit 55 off I-64, and then turn left at the top of the exit ramp onto U.S. 11 South.

After crossing the Maury River Bridge, veer to the right onto U.S. 11 Business. Drive past Cameron Hall on the left and the VMI campus on the right, and turn right onto Letcher Avenue immediately after U.S. 11 Business splits into a pair of one-way streets. Proceed up Letcher Avenue and turn left onto Maiden Lane. Follow Maiden Lane over the crest of the hill and down the other side to Patchin Field.

From the West:

Take Exit 55 off I-64, and turn right at the top of the exit ramp onto U.S. 11 South. Follow U.S. 11 South to the Maury River Bridge, then follow the direction in the second paragraph above.



VMI Sports Information

Sports Information Director:

Wade Branner (VMI '83)

Asst. Sports Information Director:

Andy Krauss (Maryland '97)

Asst. Sports Information Director:

Ted Leshinski (SUNY Brockport '95)

Sports Information Office Phone:

(540) 464-7253

Sports Information FAX:

(540) 464-7583

Leshinski's Home Phone:

(540) 463-7287

Sports Web Site:

www.vmikeydets.com

Sports Information Mailing & Overnight Address:

Virginia Military Institute
Sports Information Office
116 Smith Hall
Lexington, VA 24450



Wade Branner



Andy Krauss



Ted Leshinski

KEYDETS ON THE WEB: Fans and media are encouraged to follow the team on the VMI athletic home page. Timely information on the baseball Keydets will be available to both media and fans alike. Included in the service will be schedules, rosters, stats and the latest notes on the team as well as access to live radio broadcasts. The VMI Keydets can be accessed on the world wide web at www.vmikeydets.com.

IT'S VMI, PLEASE: When referring to our athletic teams, it is requested that members of the media refer to this institution as "VMI" or "Virginia Military Institute", not "Virginia Military" or the cryptic "Va. Military." Any help in using the correct moniker would be greatly appreciated.

Travel Plans

Florida State (Jan. 31-Feb. 2)

Depart for Tallahassee, Fla. on Jan. 30. Depart for VMI immediately following the game on Feb. 2.

Road Headquarters:

Collegiate Village Inn - (Jan. 30-Feb. 2) - Ph. (850)-576-6121

Mercer (Feb. 6-8)

Depart for Macon, Ga. on Feb. 5. Depart for VMI immediately following the game on Feb. 8.

Road Headquarters:

LaQuinta Inn (Feb. 5-8) - Ph. (478) 475-0206

Stetson (Feb. 13-15)

Depart for DeLand, Fla. on Feb. 12. Depart for VMI immediately following the game on Feb. 15.

Road Headquarters

LaQuinta Inn / Winter Park (Feb. 12-15) - Ph. (407) 645-5600

Richmond (Feb. 25)

Day Trip - Richmond, Va.

Old Dominion (March 10)

Day Trip - Norfolk, Va.

Birmingham-Southern (March 19-21)

Depart for Birmingham, Ala. on March 18. Depart for VMI immediately following the game on March 21.

Road Headquarters

Quality Inn on the Lake (18-21) - Ph. (205) 822-4350

Georgetown (April 6)

Day Trip - Washington, D.C.

William & Mary (April 14)

Day Trip - Williamsburg, Va.

UNC-Asheville (April 16-18)

Depart for Asheville, N.C. on April 15. Depart for VMI immediately following the game on April 18.

Road Headquarters:

Comfort Suites @ Biltmore Square Mall (April 15-18) - Ph. (828) 665-4000

Virginia Commonwealth (April 20)

Day Trip - Richmond, Va.

Virginia Tech (April 28)

Day Trip - Blacksburg, Va.

High Point (May 8-10)

Depart for High Point, N.C. on May 7. Depart for VMI immediately following the game on May 10.

Road Headquarters:

Radisson Hotel (May 7-10) - Ph. (336) 889-8888

Liberty (May 21-23)

Day Trip - Lynchburg, Va.

Big South Tournament (May 26-30)

Depart for Rock Hill, S.C. on May 26. Depart for VMI following conclusion of the tournament.

Road Headquarters:

TBA

Media List

Print Media

Baseball America

Allan Simpson / Jim Callis
 P.O. Box 2089
 Durham, NC 27702
 Phone: (919) 682-9635
 FAX: (919) 682-2880

Baseball Weekly

Dana Heiss
 1000 Wilson Blvd.
 Arlington, VA 22229-0020
 Phone: (703) 907-4495 or (800) 872-3410 ext. 4495
 FAX: (703) 558-4678 or 4677

Collegiate Baseball

Lou Pavlovich, Jr.
 P.O. Box 50566
 Tucson, AZ 85703
 Phone: (520) 623-4530
 FAX: (520) 624-5501

Roanoke Times

Mark Berman
 West Campbell Ave.
 Roanoke, VA 24010
 Phone: (540) 981-3221
 FAX: (540) 981-3392
 Also send releases to Doug Doughty

Richmond Times-Dispatch

John Packett
 333 East Grace Street
 Richmond, VA 23219
 Phone: (804) 649-6554
 FAX: (804) 775-8085

Lynchburg News & Advance

P.O. Box 10129
 Lynchburg, VA 24505
 Phone: (804) 385-5554
 FAX: (804) 385-5538

Newport News Daily Press

7505 Warwick Blvd.
 Newport News, VA 23607
 Phone: (757) 247-4630
 FAX: (757) 247-9420

Norfolk Virginian Pilot

150 West Brambleton Ave.
 Norfolk, VA 23501
 Phone: (757) 446-2366
 FAX: (757) 533-9004

Lexington News-Gazette

Chris Floyd
 20 West Nelson Street
 Lexington, VA 24450
 Phone: (540) 463-3113
 FAX: (540) 464-6397

Television

WDBJ-TV 7 (CBS)

Mike Stevens
 2807 Hershberger Road
 Roanoke, VA 24017
 Phone: (540) 985-3600
 FAX: (540) 343-7269

WSLS-TV 10 (NBC)

Justin Ditmore
 P.O. Box 2161
 Roanoke, VA 24009
 Phone: (540) 981-9126
 FAX: (540) 343-2059

WSET-TV 13 (ABC)

Dennis Carter
 P.O. Box 11588
 Lynchburg, VA 24506
 Phone: (434) 528-1313 ext. 137
 FAX: (434) 847-8800

Wire Service

Associated Press - Virginia Office

Hank Kutz
 Suite 1380
 700 East Main Street
 Richmond, VA 23219
 Phone: (804) 643-6646
 FAX: (804) 643-6223

Conference

Big South Conference

Jason Corriher
 6428 Bannington Dr., Ste. A
 Charlotte, N.C. 28226
 Phone: (704) 341-7990
 FAX: (704) 341-7991



Marlin Ikenberry

■ VMI '95 ■ FIRST SEASON

Marlin Ikenberry was officially named VMI's head baseball coach in July, 2003 - replacing Tom Slater who departed VMI to accept a coaching position at the University of Florida.

As top assistant and recruiting coordinator under Slater the past three years with VMI, Ikenberry has played a key role in the resurgence of the VMI baseball program that set a school record for victories in 2003.

"It's a dream come true to be head baseball coach at VMI," Ikenberry said. "I'm thankful for what Tommy Slater has done for VMI baseball. We have a nucleus of outstanding players plus a strong recruiting class coming in."

Last year's VMI baseball team became one of the top athletic stories of the 2002-03 sports season. The club set school records in overall wins (24) and posted a winning conference record for the first time since 1969.

As the team's top assistant and recruiting coordinator, Ikenberry played an enormous role in VMI's recent success. He was responsible for signing 19 players to letters of intent, including 2003 Southern Conference Freshman of the Year and Louisville Slugger freshman All-American Kelly Sweppenhiser and 2003 All-SoCon Tournament selection Jon Wade.

Ikenberry, 30, also served as VMI's pitching and catching coach last year and was instrumental in the staff's remarkable improvement in the 2003 season. Working closely with the Keydet pitchers and catchers, Ikenberry helped guide the pitching staff to an improvement of nearly two runs in team ERA from the previous season.

"We're very excited to have Marlin Ikenberry as our head baseball coach," VMI athletic director and former Keydets head baseball coach Donny White said. "He has all the ingredients to be a great head coach. His recruiting work has made a difference in the program and has certainly been instrumental to our success. He has the leadership and abilities to build on the program's recent performance and reach the goal of a conference championship."

A 1995 graduate of the Institute, Ikenberry returned to VMI in the summer of 2000 after spending three years at the college of William and Mary as an assistant coach and recruiting coordinator. While in Williamsburg, Ikenberry earned a reputation as one of the state's top recruiters and landed two high school All-Americans and freshman All-Americans.

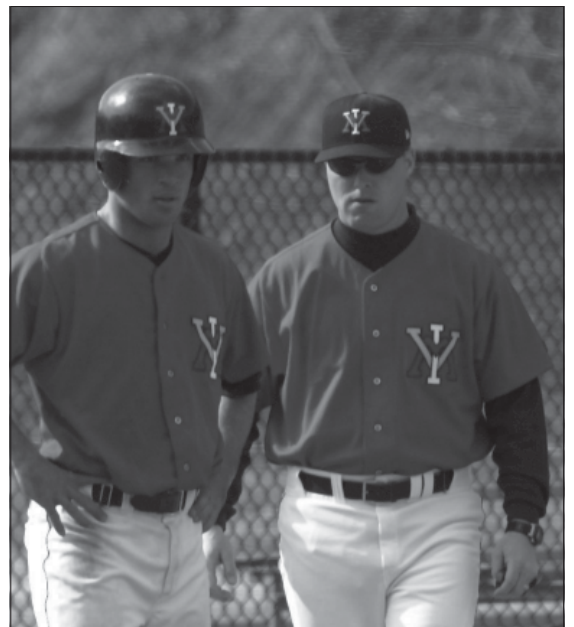
In 2000, the Tribe finished with a school record of 32 wins and placed third in the Colonial Athletic Association Tournament. The team also set a school record for best fielding percentage with a mark of .967. The next season, the William and Mary baseball team won the CAA Championship and earned a birth in the NCAA Regional Tournament.

In his coaching career, Ikenberry helped guide 17 players onto professional careers in baseball. Most recently, Ikenberry was instrumental in the development of pitchers Jeremy Harper, Phil Hendrix and catcher Andy Barden. All three Keydets graduated last year and were drafted by major league teams (see page 5).

As a student at VMI, Ikenberry was a four-year starter as catcher for the Keydets. During his playing career, he developed a reputation for his excellent defensive skills and his handling of the pitcher staff.

He played on VMI's 1993 squad that advanced to the Southern Conference Championship game and ranked third in the nation in defense. In 1994, he helped the Keydets in setting a then school record for wins along with a third place finish in the Southern Conference Tournament.

A native of Richmond, Va., Ikenberry is a graduate of Douglas Freeman High School. He married the former Shannon Marshall in August, 2000. The couple resides in Lexington.



Marlin Ikenberry played and coached for the Keydets before being named VMI's head coach for the 2004 season.

FORMER HEAD COACH TOM SLATER ON HIS SUCCESSOR - MARLIN IKENBERRY



The 2003 VMI baseball program produced a remarkable turnaround from the previous season. After winning just 10 of 51 games in '02, the Keydets posted a 24-28 overall record in '03, including their first winning conference record in 34 years (16-14).

As a result of VMI's success, last season's head coach Tom Slater was named the 2003 Southern Conference Coach of the Year and was, subsequently, hired to coach at the University of Florida (ranked 20th in Baseball America's preseason poll).

As Coach Slater's top assistant and recruiting coordinator over the last three seasons, Marlin Ikenberry was the obvious choice to succeed Slater as head coach of the VMI baseball team.

"Marlin did a phenomenal job leading our recruiting and was a major part of our turn around last year," former head coach Tom Slater said. "He has a tremendous work ethic and is a highly energetic recruiter. He was a tough competitor as a player and a coach. All of these factors, combined with his tremendous ability to relate well with the players, makes him an outstanding choice as head coach at VMI."

2003 Drafted Keydets

During his coaching career, Marlin Ikenberry has developed and helped guide 17 players onto professional careers in baseball. The most recent were 2003 VMI graduates Andy Barden, Jeremy Harper and Phil Hendrix. All three Keydets were coached by Ikenberry and were selected in the 2003 June amateur draft.



Andy Barden - Catcher
Atlanta Braves - 19th Round
Barden (Chesterfield, Va. / Manchester High) was the Keydets leader in hitting last season (.318). He started 41 games at either catcher or designated hitter and also lead the club in RBI's (30), slugging percentage (.520) and co-led the team in home runs (7).



Jeremy Harper - Pitcher
Toronto Blue Jays - 14th Round
Harper (Seneca Rocks, W.Va. / Pendleton), a right-hander who threw as hard as 94 mph, went 4-4 last year with a 4.07 ERA. He started 11 games with five more appearances out of the bullpen. He was third of the staff in strikeouts (70) and lead the Keydets in K's per 9 innings (7.12).

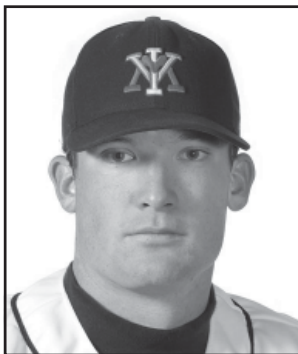


Phil Hendrix - Pitcher
Milwaukee Brewers - 35th Round
Hendrix (Richmond, Va. / West Iredell, N.C.) posted a 7-4 record with a 3.87 ERA in 2003. The right-hander lead the club with four complete games and set the VMI record for innings pitched in a season (97.2). Hendrix finished his career as the Institute's all-time leader in strikeouts (216) and innings pitched (306.2).

Andrew Slater

- **THIRD YEAR**
- **AUBURN '01**

Andrew Slater enters his third season as a member of the VMI baseball coaching staff. Slater, a 2001 Auburn University graduate, came to VMI after serving as a student-assistant coach with the Tigers for the 2001 season. Slater primarily worked with Auburn's hitters and infielders.



"Andrew has been with us the past two years and has helped us in every facet of the program," head coach Marlin Ikenberry said. "He does a great job on the field with our hitters. Andrew will be handling the infielders and hitters and will run the offense."

Slater began his college playing career at the University of Richmond where he was the starting third baseman and also served as the starting placekicker

on the Spider football team.

Slater then transferred to Auburn where he spent his junior and senior seasons as both a leftfielder and designated hitter. Slater has been apart of four NCAA Regional Teams (1997, 1999, 2000, 2001) and slammed a dramatic game-winning home run for Richmond in their 1997 NCAA regional victory over St. John's.

Slater is a 1996 graduate of Collegiate High School (Richmond, Va.), where he was inducted into its Hall of Fame last year. Slater was a standout third baseman and pitcher, along with a star on his high school's basketball, football and soccer teams.

In 1996, Slater was selected as Player of the Year and chosen to the *Richmond Times Dispatch* All-Metro team in baseball. He was also chosen All-Metro in football and All-Prep League in baseball, football, basketball and soccer.

The brother of VMI's former head coach Tom Slater, Andrew will primarily work with VMI's hitters, infielders and serve as the program's recruiting coordinator.



Andrew Slater was promoted to top assistant coach and recruiting coordinator during the off season.

Chris Booth

- **FIRST YEAR**
- **THOMAS MORE COLLEGE '02**

Chris Booth begins his first season with the VMI baseball program. Booth will fill the role of pitching coach vacated this summer when Marlin Ikenberry was promoted to head coach.



Booth pitched for Thomas More College prior to becoming their pitching coach in 2002.

Last year, Booth served as the pitching coach for the University of Charleston and then for the Petersburg Generals of the Coastal Plain League.

"I'm real excited to have Chris," Ikenberry said. "He comes from a very good baseball background. He brings a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm to

our pitching staff."

A Cincinnati, Ohio native, Booth officially joined head coach Marlin Ikenberry's staff on August 25, 2003.

Matt Kirby

- **FIRST YEAR**
- **WILLIAM AND MARY '03**

Matt Kirby arrives at VMI this season as a volunteer assistant in the Keydet coaching staff. Kirby was both a catcher and right handed pitcher for the College of William and Mary from 1999-2003.



After graduation, Kirby remained with the Tribe as a student assistant working with their catchers, first basemen and outfielders.

Kirby will work with the outfielders, catchers and hitters for VMI. Keydet head coach Marlin Ikenberry was an assistant coach at William and Mary prior to his return to VMI as an assistant coach in 2000. He recruited and coached Kirby at William and Mary and

believes he will strengthen Keydet baseball.

"Matt is an extremely hard worker," Ikenberry said. "His energy as a young coach will help our program."

2004 VMI NUMERICAL ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	B-T	HT.	WT.	CL.	HOMETOWN/PREVIOUS SCHOOL
1	B.T. Good	INF	R/R	5-10	175	So.	Vienna, Va. / James Madison
2	Jonathan Hadra	INF/OF	S/R	6-1	170	Sr.	Richmond, Va. / Atlee
3	Chris Brooks	OF	L/R	5-11	180	Jr.	Shepardstown, W.Va. / Jefferson
4	Chad Rice	INF	R/R	5-10	175	Fr.	Gridstone, Pa. / Brownsville
5	Matt Cage	C	R/R	5-9	195	Sr.	Richmond, Va. / Atlee
6	Elliott Erbe	OF	L/L	5-11	195	Jr.	Portsmouth, Va. / Western Branch
7	Brandon Massenburg	OF	R/R	5-8	170	So.	Prince George, Va. / Prince George
8	Brent Upham	INF	R/R	5-10	180	Fr.	Orlando, Fla. / Dr. Phillips
9	J.R. Royston	OF	R/R	6-2	200	Sr.	Stafford, Va. / Stafford
10	Matt Liffick	P	L/L	5-10	205	Sr.	Virginia Beach, Va. / Kempsville
11	Mike Anton	P	L/L	6-2	180	Fr.	Clarksville, Md. / River Hill
12	Richard Litwin	P	L/L	5-10	185	Jr.	Virginia Beach, Va. / Ocean Lakes
13	Josh Owens	P	L/L	5-9	185	Sr.	Sandston, Va. / Benedictine
14	Jimmy Thoms	P	R/R	6-1	183	Jr.	Newport News, Va. / Denbigh
15	Sean Seawell	C	R/R	5-11	175	Fr.	Spotsylvania, Va. / Spotsylvania
16	Matt Smith	SS	L/R	5-10	170	Jr.	Chesapeake, Va. / Great Bridge
17	Will Paulette	P	R/R	6-4	212	Jr.	Richmond, Va. / St. Christopher's
18	J.J. Hollenbeck	P	R/R	5-10	205	So.	Vienna, Va. / James Madison
20	Thane Smith	OF	L/R	5-11	170	Fr.	Virginia Beach, Va. / First Colonial
21	Jacoby Fields	INF/OF	L/R	6-1	180	Fr.	Prince George, Va. / Prince George
22	Duke Acors	P	R/R	6-2	190	Jr.	Richmond, Va. / Atlee
24	Jason Major	1B	L/L	6-1	205	So.	Virginia Beach, Va. / Bayside
25	Allan Wimmer	OF	L/R	6-3	195	So.	Vienna, Va. / James Madison
26	Chase Buchanan	C	R/R	5-11	200	R-Fr.	Tazewell, Va. / Tazewell
27	Kelly Sweppenhiser	INF	R/R	5-10	185	So.	Herndon, Pa. / Line Mountain
28	Corey Bachman	INF/P	R/R	6-0	170	Fr.	Dillsburg, Pa. / Northern
29	John Goode	P	R/R	6-3	180	Fr.	Winchester, Va. / James Wood
30	Mike Maleski	C	R/R	5-11	210	So.	Virginia Beach, Va. / First Colonial
31	Jon Wade	1B	R/R	5-11	200	Jr.	Marietta, Ga. / Harrison
32	Tristen Covington	P	R/R	6-0	175	So.	Virginia Beach, Va. / Salem
33	Zach Kennedy	OF	R/R	6-0	185	Sr.	Richmond, Va. / Freeman
34	Jeff DeMara	P	R/R	5-9	170	Jr.	Chesapeake, Va. / Great Bridge
35	Jonathan Wilson	P	R/R	6-2	200	R-Fr.	Natural Bridge, Va. / Rockbridge County
36	Josh Legg	OF/P	R/R	5-8	165	Fr.	Newport News, Va. / Heritage
37	Robert Crumpler	INF/P	R/R	6-3	170	Fr.	Suffolk, Va. / Nansemond Suffolk
39	Jon Baber	C	R/R	5-9	185	Jr.	Charlottesville, Va. / Western Albermarle
--	Ben Morris	2B	R/R	5-8	170	Fr.	Norfolk, Va. / Bridgewater
--	Matt Hudgins	C	L/R	6-3	208	So.	Virginia Beach, Va. / Kellam
--	Isaac Ostlund	P	R/R	6-2	175	Fr.	Harrisonburg, Va. / Turner Ashby
--	Ian Casher	P	R/R	5-10	170	Fr.	Cresson, Pa. / Penn Cambria

Alphabetical Roster

NO.	NAME	POS.
22	Duke Acors	P
11	Mike Anton	P
39	Jon Baber	OF/C
28	Corey Bachman	INF
3	Chris Brooks	OF
26	Chase Buchanan	C
5	Matt Cage	C
--	Ian Casher	P
32	Tristen Covington	P
37	Robert Crumpler	INF/P
34	Jeff DeMara	P
6	Elliott Erbe	OF
21	Jacoby Fields	INF/OF
1	B.T. Good	INF
29	John Goode	P
2	Jonathan Hadra	INF/OF
18	J.J. Hollenbeck	P
--	Matt Hudgins	C
33	Zach Kennedy	OF
36	Josh Legg	OF/P
10	Matt Liffick	P
12	Richard Litwin	P
24	Jason Major	1B
30	Mike Maleski	C
7	Brandon Massenburg	OF
--	Ben Morris	2B
--	Isaac Ostlund	P
13	Josh Owens	P
17	Will Paulette	P
4	Chad Rice	INF
9	J.R. Royston	OF
15	Sean Seawell	C
16	Matt Smith	SS
20	Thane Smith	OF
27	Kelly Sweppenhiser	INF
14	Jimmy Thoms	P
8	Brent Upham	INF
31	Jon Wade	1B
35	Jon Wilson	P
25	Allan Wimmer	OF

HEAD COACH: 19 Marlin Ikenberry (VMI '95), First season

ASSISTANT COACHES: 23 Andrew Slater (Auburn '01), Third season

Chris Booth (Thomas More College '01), First season

Matt Kirby (William and Mary '03), First season

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Jon HADRA	HAY-dra
Elliott ERBE	ER-bee
Jimmy THOMS	TOMS
John BABER	BAY-ber
Duke ACORS	ACRES
Brandon MASSENBURG	MASS-in-burg
J.J. HOLLENBACK	HALL-in-back
Kelly SWEPPENHISER	Swep-in-HI-zer
Mike MALESKI	Ma-LES-kee

BREAKDOWN BY CLASS

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A Continued Path To Success

After failing to record a winning conference record since 1969, the VMI baseball program turned it around in 2003 by posting a 16-14 mark in the Southern Conference. The team also won eight of its final 12 games, including two big conference tournament victories, to finish the season strong and enter the Big South Conference in 2004 looking to continue on its path to success.

After guiding the Keydets to an 14-win improvement in '03, head coach Tom Slater accepted a coaching position at the University of Florida. Before departing Lexington, Slater handed over the program's reigns to his top assistant, Marlin Ikenberry. The coaching transition leaves the Keydets poised to make a run towards the title in their new conference.

"We are coming off the best year in school history," VMI head baseball coach Marlin Ikenberry said. "Our guys have a special expectation about this season. We have a very competitive out of conference schedule that should prepare us for conference play in the Big South. To be the best we have to play the best."

COACH IKENBERRY ON FALL PRACTICE

"This has been a very competitive fall. We have much more depth and talent in every facet. Our pitchers worked extremely hard to become a quality pitching staff. Our older players are more polished and our new ones are very talented. Our players, coaches and I are extremely excited about the work and accomplishments we had this fall."

INFIELD

Taking a look at the Keydets around the horn for 2004, **Jon Wade (Marietta, Ga. / Harrison)** will be the

featured first baseman. Playing in all 52 games last season (starting in 50), the junior has secured the spot after playing consistent baseball, both offensively and defensively. Also expected to see time at first this season will be senior **Jon Hadra (Richmond, Va. / Atlee)** and freshman **Jacoby Fields (Prince George, Va. / Prince George)**. Hadra is an experienced infielder who will also see time in the outfield. Fields is a left handed hitter who brings versatility to the team with both outstanding hitting and fielding skills.

Making the transition from shortstop to second base this season is **B.T. Good (Vienna, Va. / James Madison)**. Good's quickness and athleticism will make him a versatile player for the Keydets. Utility infielder **Brent Upham (Orlando, Fla. / Dr. Phillips)**, a polished and steady freshman, is expected to also see time at second base.

Over at shortstop, junior **Matt Smith (Chesapeake, Va. / Great Bridge)** will be the starter for the third straight year. After a terrific 2003 season, Smith is expected to be the backbone of the VMI infield. Freshman **Chad Rice (Gridstone, Pa. / Brownsville)** will also provide depth at the position.

2003 Freshman All-American **Kelly Sweppenhiser (Herndon, Pa. / Lion Mountain)** will reprise his role as the Keydets third baseman this year. An outstanding hitter during his rookie campaign, Sweppenhiser worked extremely hard in the off season to improve his defense. **Rice and Fields** will also see time at third base.

CATCHER

Coming out of fall practice with no clear cut favorite emerging as the starting catcher, freshman **Sean Seawell (Spotsylvania, Va. / Spotsylvania)** has already impressed

Coach Ikenberry to the point where he's the leading candidate to fill the job. Seawell is a polished catcher who does a great job behind the plate. Sophomores **Mike Maleski (Virginia Beach, Va. / First Colonial)**, **Chase Buchanan (Tazewell, Va. / Tazewell)**, and senior **Matt Cage (Richmond, Va. / Atlee)** will all compete with Seawell for the starting job while adding depth to the position.

OUTFIELD

A projected middle of the lineup hitter, sophomore **Allan Wimmer (Vienna, Va. / James Madison)** will be standing in leftfield opening day for VMI. Sophomore **Brandon Massenburg (Prince George, Va. / Prince George)**, an explosive athlete with an uncanny ability to get on base, will patrol center for the Keydets. A junior who has been a starter the last two seasons for the Keydets, **Elliott Erbe (Portsmouth, Va. / Western Branch)** will bring his experience and his consistent bat to rightfield. Adding additional depth in the outfield and the designated hitter



Sophomore Kelly Sweppenhiser was last season's Southern Conference Freshman of the Year.

spot will be senior **Zach Kennedy (Richmond, Va. / Freeman)**. Kennedy missed almost the entire 2003 season due to injury, but is healthy this year and will look to return to his pre-injury form. Freshman **Thane Smith (Virginia Beach, Va. / First Colonial)** will serve as a spot starter and a late inning defensive replacement in the outfield. Also competing for time in VMI's outfield is first base back-up **Hadra**, senior **J.R. Royston (Stafford, Va. / Stafford)**, and freshmen **Fields and Josh Legg (Newport News, Va. / Heritage)**.

PITCHING

For the third straight season, junior **Duke Acors (Richmond, Va. / Atlee)** will serve a vital role in the team's pitching rotation. 2003 was Acors' breakout season, finishing second on the club in both wins (six) and ERA (3.78). Acors also posted one of the top batting average against (.230) in the SoCon last year. Sophomore **J.J. Hollenbeck (Vienna, Va. / James Madison)** saw time last year in relief, but after a strong fall practice he's earned a spot in the rotation. Splitting time between starting and relieving last year, junior **Jimmy Thoms**



Junior Duke Acors will fill the number one spot in the pitching rotation this season

(Newport News, Va. / Denbigh) will also join the rotation full time after displaying much improvement during fall practice. A newcomer to the team with the potential to start some games on the hill this year, **Mike Anton (Clarksville, Md. / Riverhill)** led the fall practice squad in many pitching categories. A very talented lefthander, Anton is expected to contribute big things this year as a freshman.

Shutting the door on Keydet victories this season will be sophomore **Jeff DeMara (Chesapeake, Va. / Great Bridge)**. After leading VMI in saves (six) last year, DeMara, a top-notch competitor with a resilient arm, has earned the closer job. Sophomore **Tristen Covington (Virginia Beach, Va. / Salem)** has improved his velocity this fall and will primarily be used as a setup man.

Other middle relievers for the Keydets in '04 include sophomore **Will Paulette (Richmond, Va. / St. Christopher's)**, the most improved pitcher on the team, senior **Matt Liffick (Virginia Beach, Va. / Kempsville)**, junior **Rich Litwin (Virginia Beach, Va. / Ocean Lakes)**, returning from a back injury and looking to work his way into the starting rotation, and senior **Josh Owens (Sandston, Va. / Benedictine)** who led the team in wins two years ago but has also been hampered by injury. Freshmen **Corey Bachman (Dillsburg, Pa. / Dillsburg)** and **John Goode (Winchester, Va. / James Wood)** will see many innings as well.

2004 SCHEDULE

For the second straight year, the Keydets open the season on the road against Florida State. The Seminoles are once again a *Baseball America* preseason top 25 team (ranked 22nd).

Overall, VMI will face four teams ranked in the top 50 by *Baseball America*. Aside from FSU, the Keydets play Stetson (ranked 49th), Richmond (ranked 44nd) and Coastal Carolina (ranked 33rd).

The Keydets moved from the Southern Conference to the Big South this season, and will now see a new set of teams regularly on their schedule.

Including the 33rd-ranked Chanticleers (last year's Big South Tournament Champs), VMI's new conference foes are Birmingham-Southern, Radford, UNC-Asheville, Winthrop (the conference's regular season winner), High Point and Liberty.

In-state rivals on the schedule this season include the University of Richmond (Richmond, Va.), Norfolk State (Norfolk, Va.), Old Dominion (Norfolk, Va.), William & Mary (Williamsburg, Va.), Radford (Radford, Va.), Virginia Commonwealth (Richmond, Va.), Virginia Tech (Blacksburg, Va.) and Liberty (Lynchburg, Va.).



Patrolling centerfield for VMI will be sophomore Brandon Massenburg for the second straight year.

Positional Breakdown

First base - Jon Wade, Jon Hadra, Jacoby Fields

Second base - BT Good, Brent Upham

Shortstop - Matt Smith, Chad Rice

Third base - Kelly Sweppenhiser, Jacoby Fields

Outfield - Allan Wimmer, Brandon Massenburg, Elliot Erbe, Zach Kennedy, Thane Smith, Chris Brooks, Josh Legg

Catcher - Sean Seawell, Mike Maleski, Chase Buchanan, Matt Cage

Starting pitchers - Duke Acors, J.J. Hollenbeck, Jimmy Thoms, Mike Anton

Relievers - Tristen Covington, Will Paulette, Rich Litwin, Josh Owens, Matt Liffick, Corey Bachman

Closer - Jeff DeMara, John Goode

22 Duke Acors



- PITCHER
- JUNIOR
- 6-2 ■ 190 lbs.
- RICHMOND, VA. / ATLEE
- BATS RIGHT ■ THROWS RIGHT

Projected ace of the pitching staff... Routinely throws in the upper 80's and low 90's.

2003 Summer: Pitched for the Harwich Mariners of the Cape Cod League.

2003: Second on the team in wins (six), strikeouts (74) and innings pitched (88.0). Lead the SoCon in batting average against (.230). Lowered ERA by 2.67 runs from 2002 to 2003.

2002 Summer: Pitched for the Durham Americans of the Coastal Plain League.

2002: Led all Keydet pitchers in games started (15) ... Picked up first career win with in a 10-0 win over Coppin State (Feb. 15) ... Earned a complete game shutout during a 13-0 victory over Howard (Feb. 23).

High School: Posted a 6-2 record and 1.70 ERA while striking out 68 batters in 45 innings of work and allowing only 29 hits in 2000 for Atlee High School ... Acors pitched for the Silver Medal winning Central Team in the 2000 Commonwealth Games and also participated in the 2000 Team One Regional Showcase.

Personal: Son of Gene and Becky Acors ... His brother Bo, is a pitcher in the Seattle Mariners' organization ... A huge fan of the Baltimore Orioles...Majoring in economics and business ... Full name is Matthew Philip Acors.

Acors' Career Numbers

Year	G/GS	CG	W	L	SV	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	ERA
2002	16/15	2	2	11	0	68.1	101	74	49	29	48	6.45
2003	15/14	1	6	5	0	88.0	74	44	37	39	74	3.78
Total	31/29	3	8	16	0	156.1	175	118	86	68	122	4.95

11 Mike Anton



- PITCHER
- FRESHMAN
- 6-2 ■ 180 lbs.
- CLARKSVILLE, MD. / RIVER HILL
- BATS LEFT ■ THROWS LEFT

Could see time in the starting rotation...Led the fall practice squad in many pitching categories.

High School: Three-year letterman... A Maryland State Scholar Athlete...Struck out 15 batters in a six inning-stretch...Went 5-1 his senior year.

Personal: Son of Bill and Sue Anton.. Full name is Michael David Anton ..Majoring in civil engineering.

39 Jon Baber



- CATCHER/OUTFIELDER
- JUNIOR
- 5-9 ■ 185 lbs.
- CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA. / WESTERN ALBERMARLE
- BATS RIGHT ■ THROWS RIGHT

High School: Starting catcher at Western Albermarle High School. **Personal:** Son of Jack and Debbie Baber ... Full name is John Matthew Baber...Majoring in economics and business .

Baber's Career Numbers

Year	G/GS	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SB	BB	K	BA
2003	2/0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000
Totals	2/0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000

28 Corey Bachman



- PITCHER / INFIELDER
- FRESHMAN
- 6-0 ■ 170lbs.
- DILLSBURG, PA. / NORTHERN
- BATS RIGHT ■ THROWS RIGHT

High School: Starting shortstop and team's No. 1 starting pitcher...American Legion League MVP...Played shortstop in the All-East (Pa.) Game with Keydet third baseman Kelly Sweppenhiser.

Personal: Son of David and Patricia Bachman ... Full name is Corey James Bachman...Majoring in economics and business .



Jon Wade will be the Keydets starting first baseman this year.