

After breaking the school record for wins in a season twice in the past three seasons, the 2006 senior class of the VMI baseball team will be looking to continue that trend this season. However, while that is an admirable goal, it will be another goal that will be motivating the Keydets this season.

"We have one goal this season," says head coach Marlin Ikenberry. "To be playing on May 27 in Conway, S.C. for a Big South Championship."

To fulfill that goal, the team will rely on a lineup of veteran hitters and a young nucleus on the mound. A freshman class that includes ten pitchers will see a lot of action for the team this season, a corps that may determine much of the Keydets' success of this season.

Starting Pitching

The Keydets' lone returning weekend starter is certainly a good one to have back. Right-hander J.J. Hollenbeck returns for his senior season, looking to build on a last year's campaign that saw him set career highs in innings



J.J. Hollenbeck

pitched (91.2) and strikeouts (67) while tying career bests with four wins and 12 starts. After beginning the season as the team's Saturday starter, Hollenbeck moved up to starting on Fridays midway through the season. Down the stretch, he moved to the bullpen, making five relief appearances in the final two weeks of the season, throwing 13 consecutive scoreless innings and helping spur the team on their second six-game win streak of the year.

Slated as the team's second starter is sophomore southpaw Trey Barham. After serving as the team's primary mid-week starter in last season's final month, Barham entrenched himself as the team's

best option on Saturday's with a strong showing in the fall. After compiling a 2-1 record last season, Barham will be counted on to provide quality outings every weekend.

The battle for the team's third weekend and mid-week slots will most likely come down to finding reliability out of the team's corps of freshmen. Following strong fall outings, RHP Chris Henderson and RHP Michael Bowman are looking like the top options for those spots, though they can expect to be pushed by fellow rookies LHP John Phelps, RHP Kevin Crum, LHP Travis Smink and RHP Kevin Booth, as well as veterans LHP Richard Litwin and RHP John Goode.

"We have two very strong starters coming out of fall practice," said Ikenberry. "With J.J. & Trey, this will allow us to have a righty-lefty combo the first two games of the weekend. Our next two starters will probably be determined during non-conference play from several of our freshman arms. Many of the roles in our staff will evolve as the season progresses."

Relief Pitching

With the school's all-time saves and appearance leader and his setup man both graduating last season, this area may be the team's biggest question mark. But what the team's bullpen may lack in experience will hopefully be made up for in young talent, as the bullpen will gain the services of numerous talented freshmen.

In the fall season, junior Ian Casher and freshman Matt Edwards were impressive in closer's roles. They are expected to open the season as the team's top options at the end of the game, though the team's other freshmen mentioned above may slide into this role as well.

Among middle relievers, heading the class is the team's top returning reliever is junior righty Corey Bachman, who notched 20.1 innings of work in 13 games, totaling a 2.66 ERA. Bachman will again be slated to work when needed in the sixth and seventh innings, while Litwin and Goode are

possibilities there as well.

Other options in the pen are expected to include freshmen lefty Daniel Wood and junior righty Isaac Ostlund.

"As far as our relief corps goes, we don't have a lot of experience coming back," said Ikenberry. "We have many options. A big focus for us in the preseason and non-conference play will be putting our pitchers in roles that they feel comfortable in and can be successful with."

Catching

As anyone involved in collegiate baseball knows, having a pair of catchers for those long conference weekends is a big key to a team's success in the long term. The Keydets will go into the '06 season confident that they have a solid combination with senior Chase Buchanan and freshman Mike Roberts expected to share weekend catching duties.

Buchanan rose to the occasion last year when he took over the team's starting responsibilities over the team's final month. In that run, during which the Keydets clinched the fifth seed in the Big South Championship, Buchanan showed a penchant for coming up with the big hit when his team needed it most, as he accounted 12 RBI with his 13 hits, raising his batting average 150 points when runners were on base in his at bats versus when the bases were empty.

Roberts comes to the Institute with impressive credentials, as he was named the Central District Player of the Year following a season when he hit .382 while playing catcher and outfield. Following a standout fall season, Roberts will challenge Buchanan for playing time, as fellow freshman Chad Westmoreland will also figure in the mix behind the plate.

"For us to be able to have a pair of options at catcher like we do this year is a great luxury," said Ikenberry. "Roberts showed this fall that he has what it takes to be a Division I catcher, what we've been most impressed with is his arm in throwing out baserunners. And we expect Chase to pick up where he left off at the end of last season."

Corner Infield

The Keydets will return two of the Big South's top home run threats at the corner infield positions in senior third baseman Kelly Sweppenhiser and junior first baseman Robert Crumpler.

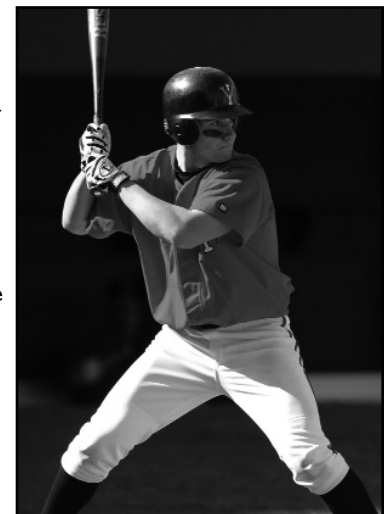
Sweppenhiser returns after putting together one of the top offensive seasons in the Big South, when he batted .370 with 18 doubles, 12 home runs and a slugging percentage of .640, each of which ranked him in the top four in the league standings.

The 2003 Freshman All-American will look to go out in style, as he currently ranks among the top ten in VMI history in hits (191), doubles (36), home runs (24) and RBI (108). Last season, Sweppenhiser tied a school record with 128 total bases and collected the second-most hits in a single season with 74.

Crumpler emerged last season as one of the team's biggest surprises, slugging ten home runs and ten doubles as the team's starting first baseman. He ranked second on the team with a .319 batting average while protecting Sweppenhiser in the lineup, forming one of the League's top 1-2 punches.

A pair of freshmen were signed to provide depth at first base, as Thomas Hayden and Eddie Van Es each bring impressive scholastic credentials to the program. Along with junior Jason Major, who could see time at DH, the Keydets have a number of options when Crumpler needs a day off

While a pair of Keydet starters in the outfield saw time at



Kelly Sweppenhiser

the hot corner during fall practice, freshman A.J. Yoder will be the team's primary option to backup Sweppenhiser. Yoder has taken balls at second, short and third and may see action at all three positions before his freshman campaign ends.

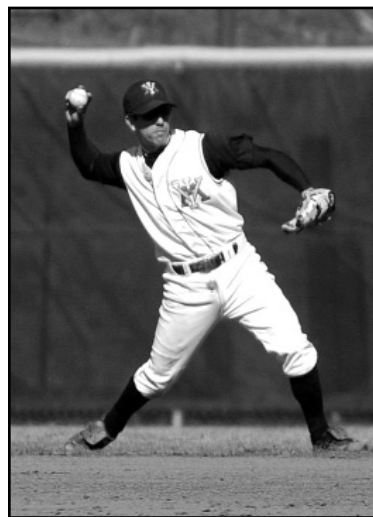
"With Sweppenhiser and Crumpler starting for us at the corners, we know that we have a solid base for both our lineup and infield defense," said Ikenberry. "We feel like we have some great freshmen who can step in when needed at first and third, but we're expecting see another great season out of two of the leaders of this team."

Middle Infield

Replacing a four-year starter is never easy, especially when that starter played shortstop, was named first team All-Conference, became a school recordholder and signed a professional contract with the Texas Rangers. But that is exactly what junior Chad Rice will look to do, as he will take over shortstop duties for Matt Smith, who ended his 2005 season playing for the Single A Clinton LumberKings.

Rice has started 52 games in his career, with a majority of those coming in his freshman season. Last year, he saw action in 25 contests, primarily at second base. However, standout summer and fall seasons have erased any doubt that Rice will be able to handle the everyday starting job at short.

Perhaps the team's most impressive freshman campaign last season came from second baseman Shane Geisslinger. After earning the starting nod at second on the team's third weekend of the season, Geisslinger started 39 contests, hitting .295 while collecting the second-highest on-base percentage on the team (.397). That, coupled with his eight stolen bases in nine attempts, has given the Keydet coaching staff the confidence to install Geisslinger as Smith's replacement as the team's leadoff man.



Shane Geisslinger

"Shane and Chad will give us solid defense up the middle," said Ikenberry. "Our goals on defense will depend on how well we defend the middle of our field. Both Chad and Shane had great fall seasons and best of all, caught the baseball. A.J. will also see time at 2nd, shortstop and 3rd, giving us depth all around the infield."

Outfield

The Keydets will return three players with starting experience that accounted for 116 starts last season in senior B.T. Good, junior Jacoby Fields and sophomore Klint Reed. They are slated for starting spots in the outfield this season, with Fields expected to play left, Good in center and Reed in right.

Good started all 55 contests for the Keydets last season, with a vast majority of those coming in center. Good saw his batting average and power numbers dip last season, but set career highs with a .388 on-base percentage and 17 stolen bases in 20 attempts. The team's top basestealer the last two seasons, Good will be counted on as the team's everyday centerfielder.

Fields and Reed split time in leftfield last season, as Elliott Erbe joined Good and Sweppenhiser as the only Keydets to start every game. Reed will shift to right this season, replacing the graduated Erbe. The right-handed hitting sophomore is currently penciled in in the second slot in the batting order after displaying the ability to hit for both power (seven doubles and three home runs in 107 at bats) and average (.299 batting average and .398 on-base percentage) in limited time as a freshman.

The left-handed hitting Fields will help balance the Keydet lineup while

providing a good mix of power, speed and average, presumably in the second or fifth spot in the lineup.

Entering the season, one of the favorites to fill the team's designated hitter spot is sophomore Will Smith, who will push for playing time in right field as well. A power hitter, Smith should expect to see more time this season than the four starts he saw last season. Underclassmen options in the outfield come in sophomore Travis Mulkey and redshirt freshman speedster Andrew Haines.

"Our outfield will be anchored by senior B.T. Good in center and Jacoby Fields in left. Klint Reed and Will Smith will compete for the starting role in right field. Klint had a very good freshman year and Will Smith has the capabilities in all fields. Travis Mulkey and Andrew Haines will provide depth, while Mulkey will also see time as a reserve catcher. I feel very confident in our outfield options."

Coaching Staff

Forced to replace his entire coaching staff from the year before, Ikenberry chose to fill his roster with proven winners, as three coaches have joined the VMI staff following 2005 NCAA Regional appearances.

Ryan Mau comes to the Institute after helping Marist to both a regular season and tournament championship in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference before playing a pair of close games at the Baton Rouge, La. Regional. A record holder on the mound at the College of Charleston, Mau brings three seasons of professional playing experience in the Marlins organization and in independent ball to the Keydets' pitching staff.

Former All-American Joe Hastings joined Ikenberry's staff last summer following a trip to the Corvallis, Ore. Regional with the Virginia Cavaliers. A volunteer assistant in Charlottesville last season, Hastings helped guide the Cavs on an improbable run to the ACC Championship game before falling 5-4 to Georgia Tech, securing themselves a spot in the NCAA Tournament in the process. Hastings played for three seasons in the San Diego Padres' organization, topping out in Double A, playing for the Mobile BayBears in 2003. He will work primarily with the Keydet infield and hitters this season, in addition to his third base coaching duties in-game.

A four-year starter for UVA in rightfield, Matt Street has also joined the Keydet staff, coming on board as the team's volunteer assistant coach. Street left Charlottesville after playing in the second-most games in school history, seeing action in 219 contests while starting in 214. After successfully converting 55 of 70 career stolen base attempts, Street will work with the team's outfielders and baserunners while also coaching first base during games this season.

Last season, Jeff DeMara rewrote the VMI relief pitching recordbook, capturing the school's career saves (13) and appearance marks (104), as well as the program's single-season appearance mark with 33. This season, he will join the team as a student assistant, helping to develop the team's hurlers to reach their full potential, as he did on the mound.

| | | | |
|---|------|------------------|----|
| 1 | 2 | S. Geisslinger | 2B |
| 2 | 3 | K. Reed | RF |
| 3 | 27 | K. Sweppenhiser | 3B |
| 4 | 36 | R. Crumpler | 1B |
| 5 | 21 | J. Fields | LF |
| 6 | 5/26 | Roberts/Buchanan | C |
| 7 | 4 | C. Rice | SS |
| 8 | 8 | W. Smith | DH |
| 9 | 1 | B.T. Good | CF |
| P | 18 | J.J. Hollenbeck | P |

| No. | Name | Pos. | B/T | HT | WT | CL | Hometown/Previous School |
|-----|--------------------|--------|-----|------|-----|-------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | B.T. Good | OF/IF | R/R | 5-10 | 175 | SR | Vienna, VA/James Madison |
| 2 | Shane Geisslinger | IF | R/R | 5-8 | 155 | SO | Midlothian, VA/Clover Hill |
| 3 | Klint Reed | OF | R/R | 5-9 | 155 | SO | Chesterfield, VA/L.C. Bird |
| 4 | Chad Rice | IF | R/R | 5-11 | 175 | JR | Grindstone, PA/Brownsville |
| 5 | Michael Roberts | C | R/R | 6-2 | 175 | FR | Prince George, VA/Prince George |
| 6 | Travis Mulkey | OF | R/R | 5-9 | 180 | SO | Newport News, VA/Denbigh |
| 7 | Chris Henderson | RHP | R/R | 5-11 | 170 | FR | Fredericksburg, VA/Colonial Forge |
| 8 | Trey Barham | LHP | L/L | 6-0 | 230 | SO | Portsmouth, VA/Greenbriar Chr. |
| 9 | Will Smith | OF | L/R | 6-2 | 185 | SO | Richmond, VA/Douglas Freeman |
| 10 | A.J. Yoder | IF | L/R | 5-10 | 160 | FR | Belleville, PA/Indian Valley |
| 11 | Andrew Haines | OF | L/R | 5-9 | 150 | SO/FR | Melfa, VA/Nandua |
| 12 | Ian Casher | RHP | R/R | 5-11 | 170 | JR | Cresson, PA/Penne Cambria |
| 13 | Daniel Wood | LHP | L/L | 6-2 | 175 | FR | Richmond, VA/Hermitage |
| 14 | Matt Edwards | RHP/DH | R/R | 5-11 | 180 | FR | Midlothian, VA/Midlothian |
| 16 | Kevin Booth | RHP | R/R | 6-1 | 170 | FR | Chesapeake, VA/Great Bridge |
| 17 | Michael Bowman | RHP | R/R | 6-1 | 170 | FR | Richmond, VA/Deep Run |
| 18 | JJ Hollenbeck | RHP | R/R | 5-10 | 205 | SR | Vienna, VA/James Madison |
| 20 | Richard Litwin | LHP | L/L | 5-10 | 190 | SR | Virginia Beach, VA/Ocean Lakes |
| 21 | Jacoby Fields | OF | L/R | 6-1 | 185 | JR | Prince George, VA/Prince George |
| 22 | John Phelps | LHP | L/L | 5-10 | 190 | FR | Chesapeake, VA/Deep Creek |
| 23 | Thomas Hayden | IB | R/R | 6-3 | 195 | FR | Bedford, VA/Staunton River |
| 24 | Michael Clements | RHP | R/R | 5-11 | 190 | SO/FR | Highland, MD/River Hill |
| 25 | Isaac Ostlund | RHP | R/R | 6-1 | 175 | JR | Dayton, VA/Turner-Ashby |
| 26 | Chase Buchanan | C | R/R | 5-11 | 200 | SR | Tazewell, VA/Tazewell |
| 27 | Kelly Sweppenhiser | 3B | R/R | 5-10 | 190 | SR | Herndon, PA/Line Mountain |
| 28 | Corey Bachman | RHP | R/R | 6-0 | 180 | JR | Dillsburg, PA/Northern |
| 29 | John Goode | RHP | R/R | 6-3 | 220 | JR | Winchester, VA/James Wood |
| 31 | Jason Major | DH | L/L | 6-0 | 180 | Jr. | Virginia Beach, VA/Bayside |
| 32 | Eddie Van Es | IB/OF | L/L | 5-10 | 175 | FR | Hampton, VA/Kecoughtan |
| 33 | Kevin Crum | RHP | R/R | 6-2 | 180 | FR | Fairfax, VA/Bishop O'Connell |
| 34 | Chad Westmoreland | C | R/R | 5-10 | 160 | FR | Surfside Beach, SC/Socastee |
| 35 | Travis Smink | LHP | L/L | 6-3 | 185 | FR | Herndon, PA/Line Mountain |
| 36 | Robert Crumpler | IB | R/R | 6-3 | 215 | JR | Suffolk, VA/Nansemond-Suffolk |
| 41 | Brian Sandridge | OF | R/R | 5-10 | 165 | FR* | Raphine, VA/Rockbridge County |
| - | Thane Smith | OF | L/R | 6-0 | 185 | JR* | Va Beach, VA/First Colonial |

Head Coach: #19 Marlin Ikenberry (VMI '95), Third season

Assistant Coaches:

#37 Ryan Mau (College of Charleston '01), First season

#38 Joe Hastings (East Carolina '01), First season

#30 Matt Street (Virginia '04), First season

Student Assistant: #15 Jeff DeMara

Managers: Josh Byerly, Kyle Easters

*-Will Redshirt in 2006 season

Pronunciation Guide

Geisslinger- GICE-ling-err

Barham- BARE-um

Jacoby- jah-CO-bee

Ostlund- OAST-lund

Sweppenhiser- SWEPP-en-hi-ser

Ikenberry- I-ken-berry

Mau- MAO (As in Maui)

Alphabetical Roster

| | | |
|----|--------------------|---------|
| 28 | Corey Bachman | .RHP |
| 8 | Trey Barham | .LHP |
| 16 | Kevin Booth | .RHP |
| 17 | Michael Bowman | .RHP |
| 26 | Chase Buchanan | .C |
| 12 | Ian Casher | .RHP |
| 24 | Michael Clements | .RHP |
| 33 | Kevin Crum | .RHP |
| 36 | Robert Crumpler | .IB |
| 14 | Matt Edwards | .RHP/DH |
| 21 | Jacoby Fields | .OF |
| 2 | Shane Geisslinger | .IF |
| 1 | B.T. Good | .OF/IF |
| 29 | John Goode | .RHP |
| 11 | Andrew Haines | .OF |
| 23 | Thomas Hayden | .IB |
| 7 | Chris Henderson | .RHP |
| 18 | JJ. Hollenbeck | .RHP |
| 20 | Richard Litwin | .LHP |
| 31 | Jason Major | .DH |
| 6 | Travis Mulkey | .OF |
| 25 | Isaac Ostlund | .RHP |
| 22 | John Phelps | .LHP |
| 3 | Klint Reed | .OF |
| 4 | Chad Rice | .IF |
| 5 | Michael Roberts | .C |
| 41 | Brian Sandridge | .RHP |
| 35 | Travis Smink | .LHP |
| -- | Thane Smith | .OF |
| 9 | Will Smith | .OF |
| 27 | Kelly Sweppenhiser | .3B |
| 32 | Eddie Van Es | .IB/OF |
| 34 | Chad Westmoreland | .C |
| 13 | Daniel Wood | .LHP |
| 10 | A.J. Yoder | .IF |

Keydets By Class

Seniors (5)

Buchanan, Good, Hollenbeck, Litwin, Sweppenhiser

Juniors (9)

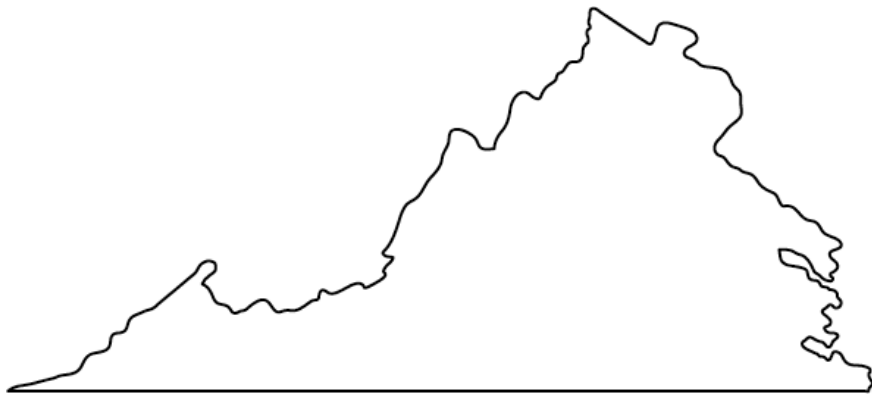
Bachman, Casher, Crumpler, Fields, Goode, Major, Ostlund, Rice, T. Smith

Sophomores (5)

Barham, Geisslinger, Mulkey, Reed, W. Smith

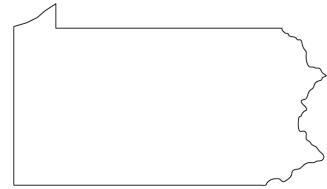
Freshmen (16)

Booth, Bowman, Clements, Crum, Edwards, Haines, Hayden, Henderson, Phelps, Roberts, Sandridge, Smink, Van Es, Westmoreland, Wood, Yoder



Virginia-27

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Trey Barham | B.T. Good | Isaac Ostlund |
| Kevin Booth | John Goode, Jr. | John Phelps |
| Michael Bowman | Andrew Haines | Klint Reed |
| Chase Buchanan | Thomas Hayden | Michael Roberts |
| Kevin Crum | Chris Henderson | Brian Sandridge |
| Robert Crumpler | J.J. Hollenbeck | Thane Smith |
| Matt Edwards | Richard Litwin | Will Smith |
| Jacoby Fields | Jason Major | Eddie Van Es |
| Shane Geisslinger | Travis Mulkey | Daniel Wood |



Pennsylvania-6

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Corey Bachman | Travis Smink |
| Ian Casher | Kelly Sweppenhiser |
| Chad Rice | A.J. Yoder |



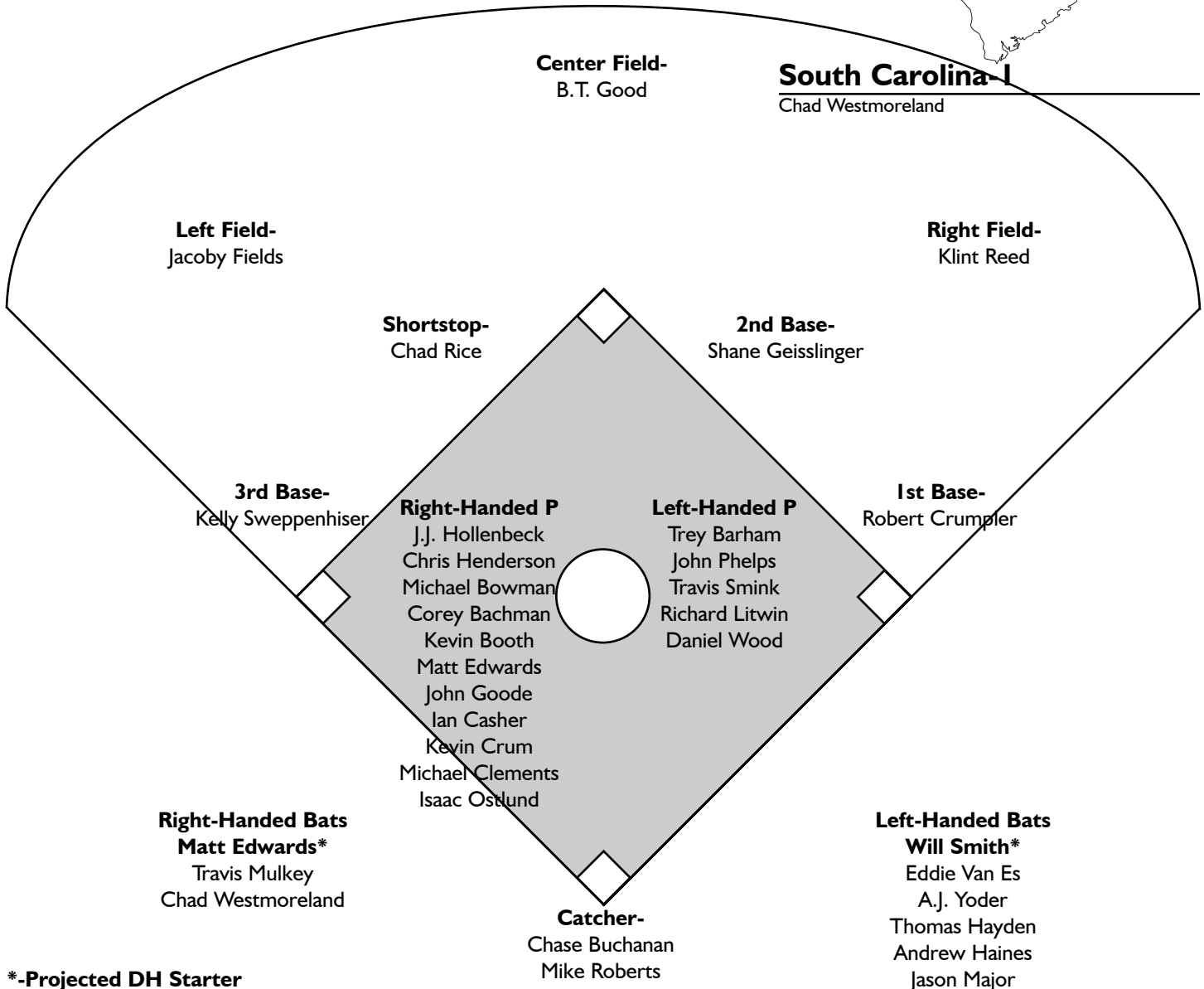
Maryland-1

- Michael Clements



South Carolina-1

- Chad Westmoreland



*-Projected DH Starter

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#1 B.T. Good
Senior, OF, R/R



#2 Shane Geisslinger
Sophomore, 2B, R/R



#3 Klint Reed
Sophomore, OF, R/R



#4 Chad Rice
Junior, SS, R/R



#5 Michael Roberts
Freshman, C, R/R



#6 Travis Mulkey
Sophomore, OF, R/R



#7 Chris Henderson
Freshman, RHP



#8 Trey Barham
Sophomore, LHP



#9 Will Smith
Sophomore, OF, L/R



#10 A.J. Yoder
Freshman, IF, L/R



#11 Andrew Haines
R-Freshman, OF, L/R



#12 Ian Casher
Junior, RHP



#13 Daniel Wood
Freshman, LHP



#14 Matt Edwards
Freshman, RHP/DH, R/R



#16 Kevin Booth
Freshman, RHP



#17 Michael Bowman
Freshman, RHP



#18 J.J. Hollenbeck
Senior, RHP



#20 Richard Litwin
Senior, LHP



#21 Jacoby Fields
Junior, OF, L/R



#22 John Phelps
Freshman, LHP



#23 Thomas Hayden
Freshman, 1B, R/R



#24 Michael Clements
R-Freshman, RHP



#25 Isaac Ostlund
Junior, RHP



#26 Chase Buchanan
Senior, C, R/R



#27 Kelly Sweppenhiser
Senior, 3B, R/R



#28 Corey Bachman
Junior, RHP



#29 John Goode
Junior, RHP



#31 Jason Major
Junior, DH, L/L



#32 Eddie Van Es
Freshman, 1B/OF, L/L



#33 Kevin Crum
Freshman, RHP



#34 Chad Westmoreland
Freshman, C, R/R



#35 Travis Smink
Freshman, LHP



#36 Robert Crumpler
Junior, 1B, R/R



#41 Brian Sandridge
Freshman, OF, R/R



Thane Smith
Junior, OF, L/R



#19 Marlin Ikenberry
Head Coach



#37 Ryan Mau
Assistant Coach



#38 Joe Hastings
Assistant Coach



#30 Matt Street
Assistant Coach



#15 Jeff DeMara
Student Assistant