

# 2008 VMI LACROSSE



VMI QUICK FACTS

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

Name of School . . . . . Virginia Military Institute  
 City/Zip . . . . . Lexington, Va./24450  
 Founded . . . . . 1839  
 Enrollment . . . . . 1,300  
 Nickname . . . . . "Keydets"  
 Mascot . . . . . Kangaroo  
 School Colors . . . . . Red, White, and Yellow  
 Affiliation . . . . . NCAA Division I  
 Conference . . . . . Metro Atlantic Athletic Conf. (MAAC)  
 Superintendent . . . . . Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III  
 Alma Mater/Yr. . . . . (VMI '62)  
 Athletics Director . . . . . Donny White  
 Alma Mater/Yr. . . . . (VMI '65)  
 Athletic Dept. Phone . . . . . (540) 464-7251

## TEAM INFORMATION:

**Head Coach** . . . . . **Jeff Shirk**  
 Alma Mater (Year) . . . . . Maryland ('01)  
 Record at VMI, Years . . . . . 2-12, 1 year  
 Overall Record, Years . . . . . Same  
 Email . . . . . shirkjl@vmi.edu  
 Phone . . . . . (540) 464-7512

**Assistant Coach** . . . . . **Chris Feifs**  
 Alma Mater (Year) . . . . . Maryland ('07)  
 Email . . . . . FeifsCA@vmi.edu  
 Phone . . . . . (540) 464-7789

**Assistant Coach** . . . . . **Nat St. Laurent**  
 Alma Mater (Year) . . . . . Keuka College ('04)  
 Email . . . . . stlaurentnr@vmi.edu  
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2007 Record . . . . . 2-12  
 MAAC Record/Finish . . . . . 1-7/Eighth  
 Starters Returning/Lost . . . . . 6/4  
 Letterwinners Returning/Lost . . . . . 28/14  
 Newcomers . . . . . 10

Program History . . . . . 25 Seasons  
 Overall Record . . . . . 127-188  
 Home Field . . . . . Foster Stadium (Natural Grass)  
 Capacity . . . . . 10,000

## SPORTS INFORMATION:

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## MEDIA GUIDE CREDITS:

The 2008 VMI Lacrosse media guide is a publication of the VMI Sports Information Office. Compiled, written & edited by Brad Salois, Assistant SID and Joel Balthaser, Consultant. Layout & cover design by Joel Balthaser. Special assistance by Wade Branner, Asst. AD/Media Relations and Christian Hoffman, Assistant SID. **Photography:** Chuck Steenburgh '86, Jeremy Ledbetter of Andre Studios, VMI Communications & Marketing, Luke Schwartz, and Brad Salois. **Printing:** Collinsville Printing - Martinsville, Va. The 2008 Virginia Military Institute lacrosse media guide was compiled for the benefit of all interested in learning detailed information regarding the Institute, coaches, staff, and student-athletes of the Keydet lacrosse program.

There are decisions made in every young man's life that make everlasting changes in how he is perceived by those around him and how he perceives himself. None can be more telling than what he pursues after high school. There are many fine colleges and universities from which to choose but none tells more of a young man's character and drive than VMI.

The Virginia Military Institute is one of the finest institutions of higher learning in the country that sets itself apart from other universities with its military element of discipline. VMI students not only graduate with a highly respected degree, but one that is highly sought after in the workforce because of its focus and training in the area of leadership. I have the distinct pleasure of working at a school that truly makes a positive impact on a young man's life.

I believe that VMI and all of its challenges are ideal for a college lacrosse player with a burning desire to be more than he once thought possible. The climate at VMI for lacrosse has never been better and the education is second-to-none.

It is clearly our objective to attract the top lacrosse players from the state of Virginia and across the country, but we look for even more in a young man. VMI lacrosse embraces the missions of the Institute and seeks to draw from the challenges a strength that we will carry on the field, helping lead us to victory.

Sincerely,



Jeff Shirk  
Head Lacrosse Coach

Go Keydets!



The screenshot shows the VMI Keydets Lacrosse website. The main header features the VMI Keydet Club logo and the text "Athletic Foundation for the Virginia Military Institute". Below the header is a navigation menu with items like "FRONT PAGE", "HEADLINE NEWS", "WELCOME", "ABOUT VMI", "QUICK FACTS", "ATHLETIC HISTORY", "VMI.EDU", "ON POST", "ATHLETIC STAFF", "KEYDET CLUB", "FACILITIES", "CADET-ATHLETE SUPPORT", "VMI CONSTRUCTION", "PROSPECT QUESTIONNAIRE", "EVENT INFO", "TEAM SCHEDULES", "TICKETS", "DIRECTIONS TO VMI", "KEYDETS ON RADIO/TV", "ATHLETIC MARKETING & PROMOTIONS", "FANS' CORNER", and "FEEDBACK". The main content area highlights a "2006 Lacrosse Alumni Game Draws Big Crowd at Delaney Field" in Lexington, Va., and a "2007 Lacrosse Alumni Game on Friday at Delaney Field". A sidebar on the right lists "RELATED CONTENT" including "GAMES & EVENTS", "SCOREBOARD", "STATISTICS", "MEDIA GUIDES", and "2007 QUICK FACTS".

Log on to [vmikeydets.com](http://vmikeydets.com) to get all the latest news on the VMI Lacrosse team.

## JEFF SHIRK LACROSSE CAMPS

Jeff Shirk Lacrosse Camps are dedicated to helping young lacrosse players realize, develop, and achieve their goals. All campers, beginner and advanced, will be guided to reach their full potential in the game of lacrosse. Campers will benefit from the expert instruction of Jeff Shirk, college coaches from across the country, and some of the best college lacrosse players in the game today.

2008 Instructional Camp  
at Virginia Military Institute

Dates: June 14-17, 2008  
Age: Boys 7 - 18; Beginner to Advanced  
Cost: \$450-Overnight; \$350-Day

June 2008 Team Camp  
at Virginia Military Institute

This camp was designed for teams from all areas to compete against each other in a 10 vs. 10 full-field game format. Date and times for the 2008 camp will be available shortly.



[www.shirklacrosse.com](http://www.shirklacrosse.com)

P.O. Box 577 • Lexington, VA 24450 • (540) 908-2152 • [jeffshirk@shirklacrosse.com](mailto:jeffshirk@shirklacrosse.com)

"Helping Lacrosse Players Realize, Develop, and Achieve Their Goals"

# OFFICER COMMISSIONING



The 2008 VMI Lacrosse team has six seniors currently commissioning into the U.S. Military. Cadets MATT HARRISON, BRETT WHITSITT and MATT TURNER are set to receive commissions in the U.S. Navy while JOHN REGAN, DAVID JACOBS and PAT ZANELOTTI are each commissioning in the U.S. Army.



## Commissioning Overview:

The Virginia Military Institute offers ROTC programs for all four U.S. military branches. While four years of ROTC is a requirement for all cadets, accepting a commission in the armed forces is optional. The VMI Board of Visitors has set a goal of having 70 percent of VMI cadets take a commission by 2015. The VMI class of 2006 achieved a 50 percent commissioning rate.

VMI has graduated 265 General and Flag Officers, more than any other state military college in the United States, including the first five-star General of the Army, George Marshall. Six graduates have received the Medal of Honor, the highest award of the U.S. military.

### NAVY

Officer commissions are attainable in both the Navy and Marine Corps. The professional choices available to NROTC Midshipmen are extensive and varied in both the Navy and Marine Corps.

Upon successful completion of the program, Navy Option Midshipmen are commissioned as Unrestricted Line Officers. They may request service selection as a Surface Warfare Officer, a Submarine Officer, a Naval Aviator, a Special Warfare Officer (SEAL), or a Special Operations Officer (Diving/EOD). The Navy Nuclear Propulsion Training Program is another desirable option for those interested in surface or submarine duty.

Marine officers may serve with either ground or aviation forces. This can include duty, for example, as a Marine infantry, armor, artillery, communications, or engineer officer. A Marine aviator may choose to fly helicopters, fixed winged fighter/attack aircraft or multi-engine transportation aircraft.

Midshipmen are exposed to many aspects of the Naval service before they make their professional choice. The Naval Science academic program, trips to Navy and Marine Corps facilities, and summer training expose Midshipmen to many types of duty in both services.

Postgraduate educational opportunities are also available to the NROTC graduate in both military and civilian institutions. Normally, postgraduate programs are undertaken after an initial period of active duty, although there are a limited number of opportunities for very highly qualified candidates immediately upon graduation.

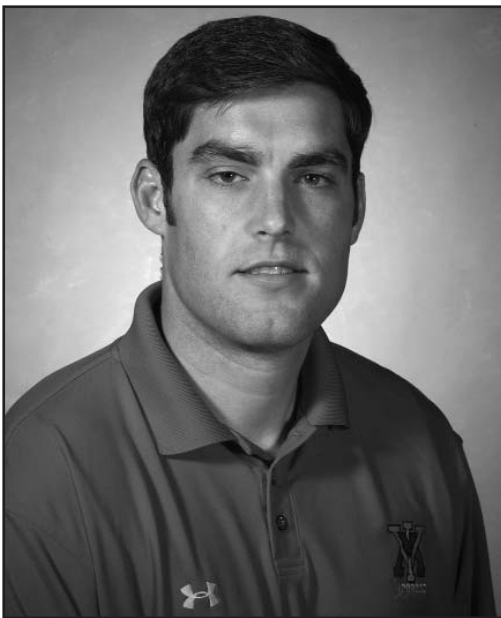
### ARMY

The mission of Army ROTC is to commission the future officer leadership of the U.S. Army and to motivate young people to be better citizens. Any cadet interested in developing leadership skills in a challenging environment will benefit from what Army ROTC has to offer, and there is no better Army ROTC unit than VMI's Marshall-New Market Battalion.

Those cadets who are committed to serving their country as an Army officer will find themselves well prepared by the top Army ROTC program in the nation. Those who wish to be successful in civilian life will find themselves equally well prepared by the best leadership program anywhere. Army ROTC is centered on leadership development, in both classroom and field environments, with individual feedback and counseling provided to each cadet.

In addition, Army ROTC sponsors a number of extracurricular cadet clubs and activities, including the Cadet Battery, Ranger Platoon, and the competitive Ranger Challenge.

Army ROTC is a demanding program that requires commitment from each cadet, but the rewards more than equal the effort. All cadets will benefit from a greater understanding of their country and its Army, and all will gain the confidence that comes with practical, demonstrated leadership ability. Those cadets who choose to serve, upon successful completion of the program and graduation from VMI, will commission as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army, Army Reserve, or Army National Guard.



## Jeff Shirk

• Head Lacrosse Coach - 2<sup>nd</sup> Season - Univ. of Maryland (2001)

While at Brown, Shirk was the team's defensive coordinator, while also working with the face-off unit and assisting with the recruiting efforts of the program. Prior to his position at Brown, Shirk spent the 2004-05 season with his alma mater, Maryland, as an assistant coach where he helped the team reach the NCAA Final Four and win an ACC Championship.

In the first head coaching role of his young career, Shirk took over the lacrosse program at the Naval Academy Preparatory School (NAPS) in the fall of 2001. He spent three seasons with the team, leading them to a 22-11 record, and was responsible for overseeing all aspects of the program. While at NAPS, Shirk also served as the Institution's Associate Director of Athletics, holding additional responsibilities that adapted him to the military environment.

In his playing days, he was a standout letterman in the Maryland Terrapins' defensive unit for four seasons under coaching legend Dick Edell from 1997 through the 2000 season. Throughout his career, he was known for his tough style of defense, and was even coined the "Nastiest Hitter" in the nation by the Baltimore Sun. Prior to the 2001 season, Shirk was also selected First Team Preseason All-American by Face-Off Magazine, as well as Third Team Preseason All-American by College Lacrosse USA.

In his four seasons at Maryland, the Terps reached the NCAA championship game twice (1997-98), and the quarterfinals in his senior season (2000). He graduated from Maryland in May 2001 with a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education.

Shirk is also the founder and director of the Jeff Shirk Lacrosse Camps, providing instructional camps to young lacrosse players throughout the year, and played in the National Lacrosse League for the Philadelphia Wings (2001), Washington Power

(2002) and the New York Saints (2003) while he began his coaching career.

Shirk, a Mountain Lakes, N.J. native, boasts an impressive background that has helped in leading the VMI lacrosse program, and he can also turn to his father for some professional advice. His dad, Gary Shirk, was a tight end in the NFL for over a decade, including seven years with the N.Y. Giants. He caught 130 passes for 1,640 career yards, and also held the team record for most receptions in a game (11) until 2006.

Shirk is married to the former Elizabeth Love, and the couple currently lives in Lexington with their daughter Emily and their yellow lab Maggie.



Coach Jeff Shirk begins his second year as the head lacrosse coach at VMI. The former University of Maryland midfielder was named the new head coach of the VMI men's lacrosse team in July 2006.

Shirk came to the Institute with an impressive background in lacrosse, having played at the collegiate and professional level for eight seasons, followed by six years of coaching experience.

"I couldn't be more excited for this opportunity to work at such an outstanding institution," said Shirk at the time of his hiring. "I was impressed with General Peay and Donny White's dedication to the Vision 2039 plan, the facility upgrades, the town, and I am very excited to be joining the VMI lacrosse family."

"Lacrosse is a great sport for VMI, and I am very happy that Jeff Shirk will lead our program," said VMI athletic director Donny White. "I am impressed with his background, both as a player and as a coach. I am confident that he will build and coach our team to be a contender for the MAAC championship."

Shirk, 29, who took over the reins of the program from 21-year head coach Doug Bartlett, came to VMI after serving the 2006 campaign as an assistant coach at Brown University in the Ivy League.

### Shirk Snapshot

- Received Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education (Maryland '01)
- Assistant Coach at Brown University (2005-06 season)
- Assistant Coach at the University of Maryland (2004-05 season)
- Head Coach - Naval Academy Preparatory School (2001-2004) - 22-11 record
- Four-year letterwinner at Maryland (1997-2001)
- Named College Lacrosse's "Nastiest Hitter" by the Baltimore Sun in 2001

### Shirk's Career Playing Stats (Maryland 1997-2000)

Year	GP/GS	Goals	Asst.	Pts.	Shots	GB	Face-offs	Win%
1997	16/0	1	0	1	2	17	7/17	41.2
1998	17/0	1	0	1	4	12	0/2	0.0
1999	14/3	1	2	3	1	19	0/1	0.0
2000	16/16	0	1	1	1	35	58/115	50.4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>63/19</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>65/135</b>	<b>48.1</b>



## Chris Feifs

• Assistant Coach - 1<sup>st</sup> Season - Univ. of Maryland (2007)

**"Chris embodies all of the character traits I believe are needed to be successful, and I am excited for him to pass those traits on as a coach at VMI."**

**-- Head Coach Jeff Shirk**

On July 2, 2007, Head Lacrosse Coach Jeff Shirk announced the addition of former Maryland Terrapins middle Chris Feifs to his staff as an assistant coach.

Feifs recently rounded out his playing career at Maryland where he served as co-captain of the 2007 team. "I am extremely excited to have Chris join the VMI lacrosse family," said Shirk. "I had the opportunity to coach him at both the Naval Academy Prep School (NAPS) and the University of Maryland, and he is a great addition to our program."

"I couldn't have asked for a better opportunity to work with Coach Shirk at such a highly respected institution," said Feifs. "I'm really looking forward to helping build this program and taking on the challenge of a coaching a Division 1 lacrosse program."

VMI lacrosse has a great deal of potential and I am motivated to help them reach that high standard of excellence."

"As a player Chris was tough, hard working, and led by example," commented Shirk. "As a person, he is well spoken, motivated, and passionate."

In addition, Feifs was drafted in the 2007 Major League Lacrosse Supplemental Draft. Taken by the Boston Cannons in the draft's third round, the former Terrapin became the first VMI player or coach drafted by an MLL team.

In May 2007, Feifs received his Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Maryland. He posted a 3.5 GPA, and was a three-time member of the All-ACC Academic Honor Roll. Feifs has also spent the past four summer's as a camp instructor for several top lacrosse camps on the east coast.



**Top: Chris Feifs (L) talks with fellow assistant coach Nat St. Laurent (R)**

**Bottom: 2008 VMI Keydet Coaching Staff (L to R): Assistant Coach Chris Feifs, Head Coach Jeff Shirk, and Assistant Coach Nat St. Laurent**

### Feifs Snapshot

- Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice (Maryland '07)
- Three-time member of All-ACC Academic Honor Roll
- Named Assistant Coach at VMI on July 2, 2007
- Co-captain of 2007 Maryland Squad
- Team made Four Straight Trips to NCAA Tournament during playing career
- Durham, N.C. native

### Feifs' Career Playing Stats (Maryland 2004-2007)

Year	GP/GS	Goals	Asst.	Pts.	Shots	GB	Face-offs	Win%
1997	4/0	0	1	1	0	2	N/A	N/A
1998	10/0	2	0	2	7	2	N/A	N/A
1999	6/0	0	0	0	1	4	N/A	N/A
2000	15/14	15	4	19	52	12	0-0	0-0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>35/14</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>





## Nat St. Laurent

• Assistant Coach - 4<sup>th</sup> Season - Keuka College (2004)

"I am excited to work with Coach St. Laurent and use his enthusiasm, experience, and dedication as tools to help build this program into a consistent winner," said VMI head coach Jeff Shirk. "Coach St. Laurent will be an immeasurable asset to the future success of this program. His work ethic, knowledge of the game, and outstanding attitude made Nat the right fit for me, our program, and the Institute."

St. Laurent began his collegiate career at Lasell College in Newton, Mass., where he was named team captain as a freshman following a standout high school career at national power Carthage High School.

After one season at Lasell, he moved on to Jefferson Community College in Watertown, N.Y. At Jefferson, he was named Honorable Mention All-Region after leading the team in scoring as the Cannoneers made it to the national tournament.

St. Laurent transferred to Keuka College in upstate New York to wrap up his playing career, but injuries limited his playing time to only three games at Keuka. He graduated from Keuka in the Spring of 2004 with his degree in Elementary and Special Education.

St. Laurent has worked many summer camps, including the Jeff Shirk Lacrosse Camp at VMI, the Special Olympics, and many other camps across the country.

**His work ethic, knowledge of the game, and outstanding attitude made Nat the right fit for me, our program, and the Institute."**

*-- Head Coach Jeff Shirk*

St. Laurent came to Lexington after completing his degree, and worked as an Elementary Special Education Teacher at Enderly Heights Elementary in Buena Vista, Va. He also began work as an instructor in the 80th infantry division of the Army Reserve based out of Charlottesville, Va.

He and his wife, Cristin, reside in Buena Vista, Va.

Shortly after accepting the head coaching job at VMI in July 2006, Jeff Shirk quickly moved to keep Nat St. Laurent on the Keydet coaching staff.

Heading into his fourth season at the Institute, St. Laurent, a 2004 Keuka (NY) College graduate, continues to increase his role with the VMI lacrosse team. Nat assists in many aspects of the program, including the recruitment of new players.

In 2006, when St. Laurent did a great deal of work with the VMI offense, Nat's impact on the VMI offense was immediately felt by the program. In 2006, the Keydets ranked 21st nationally in man-up offense with an average of 0.328 man-up goals per game.

In 2005, the team ranked in the top three in nearly all offensive categories in the MAAC, including first in total points per game (16.29) and assists per game (6.14), as well as second in goals per game (10.14). Nationally, the Keydets ranked 19th overall in scoring and 11th in face-off win percentage.



### St. Laurent Snapshot

- Received Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education (Keuka '04)
- Honorable Mention All-Region at Jefferson Community College
- Team captain as freshman at Lasell College in Newton, Mass.
- Also an Instructor in the 80th infantry division of the Army Reserve
- Letterwinner at Carthage High School
- Born in Carthage, N.Y.