

# NORTHERN NASH HS ALUMNI WATCH CHLOE THE GREAT



TUSKEGEE'S CHLOE HARRINGTON CELEBRATES AFTER A BIG POINT  
**Harrington wraps up amazing career**

By CHANCE PUCKETT  
Correspondent

TUSKEGEE, ALA. -- It was yet another successful year for a former Northern Nash tennis phenom on the collegiate circuit, as Chloe Griffin-Harrington – now a Tuskegee University graduate – helped lead the Golden Tigers to a third straight Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC) championship.



“Our year was amazing,” reminisced the former Lady Knight, who was a key piece in Tuskegee not only winning a trio of league titles during her tenure, but this season helped the Golden Tigers finish at an unblemished 12-0 in SIAC action.

On top of that, Griffin-Harrington also expressed her excitement that for the first time in 25 years, her male counterparts claimed a conference championship as well.



TUSKEGEE'S CHLOE HARRINGTON FLASHES HER CHAMPIONSHIP RINGS

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TAR RIVER 10-UNDER SOFTBALL ALL-STARS ARE (BACK, L TO R) ASSISTANT COACHES ALEX LANGLEY AND TIMMY MILLS; (MIDDLE, L TO R) ASSISTANT COACH TENISHA RICHARDSON, PAISLEY TAYLOR, TAYLOR RICHARDSON, PEYTON MARSHALL, JAYDEN JENKINS, AUBRI MACKLIN, CHANDLER SYKES AND HEAD COACH BROOKE SYKES; (FRONT, L TO R) LONDYN WILLIAMS, ZOEY RICHARDSON, KINSLEY STRICKLAND, LYLIAN LANGLEY, REESE STRICKLAND, BAILEY OLSN AND TAYTUM MILLS. (Photo Submitted)

## All-Stars Steal The Show Tar River takes district softball crown in Wendell

From Staff Reports

WENDELL -- Nash County has become known for its ability to produce elite-level young softball players -- and that tradition doesn't seem to be disappearing anytime soon. The Tar River Youth Softball 10-Under All-Stars recently claimed the Tar Heel District 4

Championship, which was held in Wendell from June 25-27.

The tournament featured squads from Wendell, South Granville, Louisburg and Youngsville in addition to the Tar River contingent.

After securing shutout victories over

See STARS, Page 2B



ROCKY MOUNT NATIVE STEVIE BUCK HAS A NEW POSITION AT VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

## SUPERB STEVIE Buck relishes new position

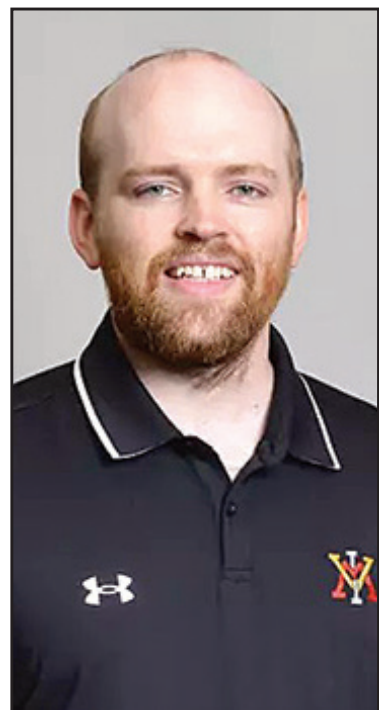
By CHANCE PUCKETT  
Correspondent

LEXINGTON, VA. -- It takes a special type of person to want to work in sports. In fact, more times than not, it requires a life-long passion and strong work ethic paired with an understanding of professionalism that comes with

the territory.

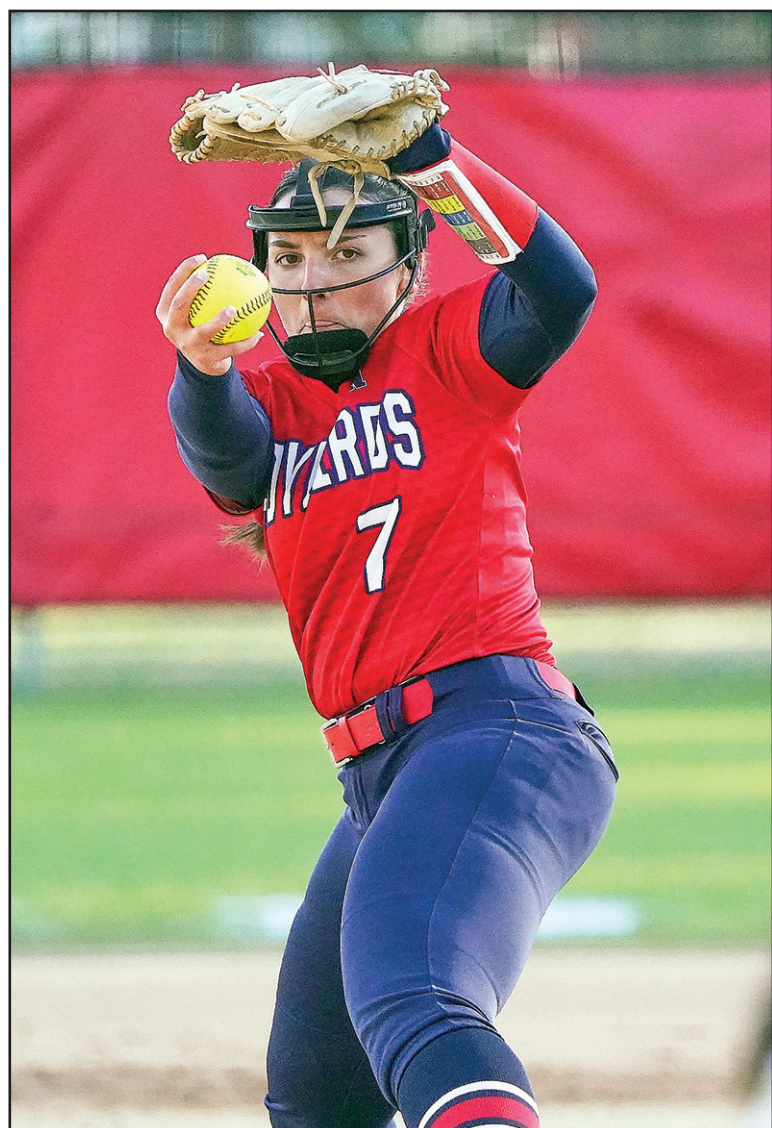
The hours are often long and the lifestyle is typically demanding, but there is certainly an exciting element of going to work at a ballfield or stadium every day.

That's been the life and career of Stevie Buck, a 2014



PROUD GRYPHON  
STEVIE BUCK

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## Southern Nash standouts claim postseason honors

From Staff Reports

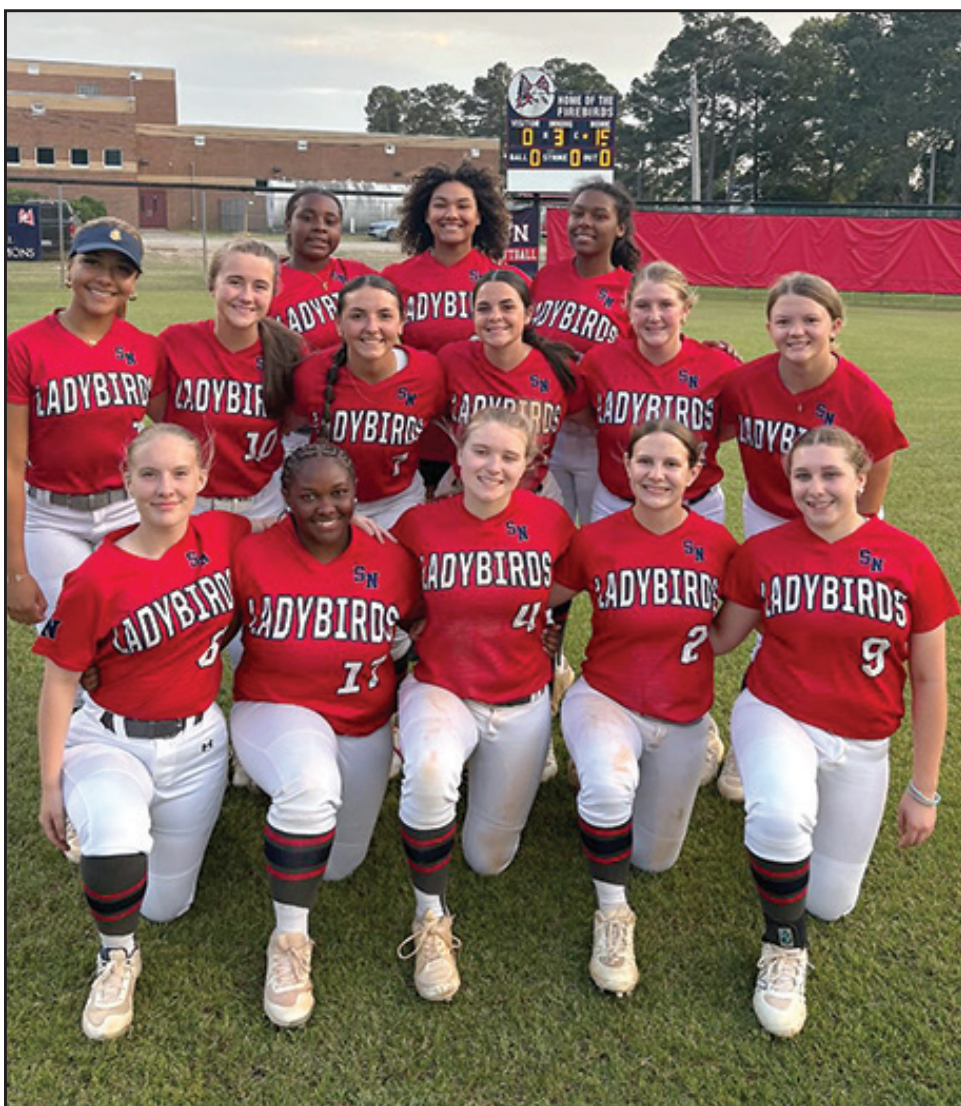
STANHOPE -- The North Carolina Softball Coaches Association's All-District and All-State Teams provide a perfect final footnote to Southern Nash High School's historic campaign.

The Ladybirds, under the direction of Scott Collie, went 22-2 overall and claimed the

Big East Conference championship once again en route to reaching the fourth round of the state playoffs.

Five Southern Nash standouts were named to the prestigious NCSCA's District 3 Class 5-A Team -- Sarah Ewers, Noel Dobbins, Aliyah Croll, Hayden Baker and Paisley Baker.

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2026 SOUTHERN NASH SOFTBALL LADYBIRDS BIG EAST CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS (AGAIN)



ROCKY MOUNT'S STEVIE BUCK WORKED FOR UNION OMAHA WHEN THE FRANCHISE WON THE USL LEAGUE ONE TITLE



SNHS SOFTBALL STARS ALIYAH CROLL AND MAKAYLA WEEKS

**BIRDS**

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Ewers, a senior hurler, was selected as the District 3 Pitcher of the Year after posting a sterling 17-2 record. Ewers allowed just 11 earned runs in 88 innings of work, striking out a whopping 147 opposing batters.

Though she certainly could have competed on the collegiate level, Ewers has decided to attend North Carolina State University in Raleigh as a student-only.

The hits didn't stop there for the Ladybirds as the NCSCA also puts together an All-State squad -- and Southern Nash was well-represented on that prestigious list as usual.

Ewers was also selected to that group along with junior teammates Croll and Dobbins.

Croll developed into a team leader this spring as

a shortstop and catcher. She batted a whopping .522 and paced the Ladybirds in homers (five), triples (four), RBI (34), hits (36) and runs (42) -- in addition to being a sterling defender.

Dobbins, one of the most powerful sluggers in SNHS history, batted an unbelievable .651 with six homers and 29 RBI despite battling a knee injury the entire season.

That injury limited Dobbins to just 16 games, and she was unavailable to compete for the Ladybirds in the state softball-playoffs.

Dobbins has verbally committed to continue her softball career at Mercer University, a Division I school that is located in Macon, Georgia.

Croll, a multi-sport star and also a cheerleader at SNHS, has verbally com-

mitted to join the fast-pitch program at North Carolina A&T State University in nearby Greensboro.

Makayla Weeks, one of only three seniors on this year's roster (along with Ewers and Jessica Sessoms), has signed a letter-of-intent to play softball at Roberson Community College in Lumberton.

But the biggest off-season news from Ladybird Field came when the much-decorated Collie, who has coached SNHS' softball program for the past 10 illustrious years, announced his retirement from teaching and coaching.

Collie, who also coached golf and girls basketball as part of his tenure at SNHS, will undoubtedly go down as one of the most successful skippers in SN's all-sports history.

**STARS**

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Wendell (16-0) and Youngsville (5-0), the All-Stars met Youngsville in a rematch in the finals and delivered an impressive 11-1 triumph to wrap up the crown.

With the title, the All-Stars, coached by Brooke Sykes, earned the right to compete in the Tar Heel State Tournament, slated for July 16-19 in Laurinburg.

At that event, the All-Stars will look for a successful showing against some of the state's other top 10-Under softball squads.

Roster members for the squad are as follows:

**Tar River  
10-Under  
Softball**

- All-Stars**
- Londyn Williams
  - Zoey Richardson
  - Kinsley Strickland
  - Lyllian Langley
  - Reese Strickland
  - Bailey Olson
  - Tatum Mills
  - Paisley Taylor
  - Taylor Richardson
  - Peyton Marshall
  - Jayden Jenkins
  - Aubri Macklin
  - Chandler Sykes
  - Head Coach Brooke Sykes
  - Assistant Coach Tenisha Richardson
  - Assistant Coach Timmy Mills
  - Assistant Coach Alex Langley

**STEVIE**

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Rocky Mount High School graduate who recently accepted a new role as the Director of Ticket Operations and Marketing at the Virginia Military Institute, having made his way to the Keydets athletic department after spending more than three years in the ticket office of the Omaha Storm Chaser, a Triple-A Minor League Baseball organization and Union Omaha, a USL League One soccer team.

"I've always been a big sports person," Buck said, who pointed to both his parents and upbringing as a large factor in opting for a career in the sports industry.

"Every Friday night I was either at a football field or in a basketball gym," remembered Buck of his childhood. "I don't know any other field I'd want to be in."

A former Gryphon soccer player, Buck earned a Bachelor's degree in Sport Management from East Tennessee State University (ETSU) in Johnson City, Tenn., later continuing his education with a Master's degree in the same field from an online program through the University of Central Arkansas.

"It's another step on the ladder," said Buck of his decision to pursue an advanced degree, one that he felt opened up more professional opportunities -- including his newest role with a NCAA Division I athletic department.

An interesting part of Buck's new role is that ETSU, his alma mater, competes in the same league as his new employer, VMI.

Most notably, the Keydets and Buccaneers will meet this football season in Lexington, squaring off on October 24

as part of each team's Southern Conference slate.

"It'll be weird," Buck remarked of the upcoming contest between the two conference foes, ones that first duelled on the gridiron in 1979. "But it'll be fun."

Buck made it clear, however, that his allegiances lie with the Keydets and his new employer, understanding that he has a job to do and that his role within the athletic department is what's most important.

In his newest chapter, Buck handles both external and internal duties in the ticketing and marketing departments, having spent most of his career in ticketing in some capacity. Now, he's gaining more experience and broadening his skillset while working to serve Keydet fans as well.

"I've never been an outgoing person, but that's gotten better as I've grown in the industry," Buck stated, skills he's putting to good use particularly when it comes to the marketing aspect of his job.

While he's just getting settled in at VMI ahead of the school's cross country, soccer, rifle and football programs beginning their fall campaigns, Buck is still focusing on big-picture goals that could even see him bring his talents back to his hometown if the opportunity were to present itself.

"I've always wanted to be an athletic director," he said -- emphasizing his longstanding passion for both high school athletics and Rocky Mount High School, a place he could one day see himself returning to.

"I love the Gryphons," Buck proudly said. "I always have and I always will."

**CHLOE**

continued from page 1B

"They're like our brothers," she said of the men's team. "Whatever we do, they do."

The Golden Tigers' women's squad finished its 2025-26 campaign at an impressive 17-10 mark, the year obviously headlined by the team's results in conference play.

Tuskegee blanked both Edward Waters University and Spring Hill College during the SIAC Tennis Championships, earning a pair of 4-0 victories en route to the league crown.

From there, the team was sent to the NCAA South Regional, where the team's season came to a close in a first-round loss to Embry-Riddle out of Florida.

Individually, Griffin-Harrington registered a 9-3 record on the court this spring, closing the year by delivering wins in nine of her final 10 appearances -- the lone exception being an unfinished result in which she won the first set.

A strong close to her senior campaign didn't come without its challenges though, as she



**CHLOE GRIFFIN-HARRINGTON**

spent the season in a knee brace and was rehabbing from an injury early in the season, something that hindered her early play.

"It was a mental game from that point," Griffin-Harrington remarked, stating that she already believes tennis is as much psychological as it is physical. Her early-season injury only reaffirmed that opinion.

Circumstances could've derailed her last hurrah, but the outgoing senior, one whose leadership qualities have long been admired -- even dating back to her time at Northern Nash High School -- ensured that

wouldn't be the case.

After all, did anyone really think that the first-ever freshman to be elected a captain of the university's women's tennis squad wouldn't set the perfect example?

That's the character that Griffin-Harrington has been showcasing long before making her NCAA Division II women's tennis debut.

A stellar student in addition to her athletic prowess, Griffin-Harrington is now set to continue her academic career at LSU Health Shreveport, a public university focused on health sciences education in north-west Louisiana.

A double-major at the undergraduate level in both Biology and Health Sciences, Griffin-Harrington will soon be working towards a PhD -- one which she hopes to use in effort of helping in the fight against Alzheimer's.

"It's something that hits close to home for" Griffin-Harrington remarked.

"And I want to do what I can to help."