



SPRING 2011

All-County :: Flag Football

Stories by Ryan Acquavita, Staff Writer // Note: Team selections are based on season performance and coaches' ballots.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR



SARAH DUSSAULT / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Takhari Jones

Miramar senior Pos.: Running back

Stats.: 24 touchdowns, 1,500 yards, 40 flag pulls

Season highlights: Jones helped lead the Patriots (14-2) to their second consecutive state semifinal appearance, despite playing with a badly injured ankle all season. In Miramar's state quarterfinal win over Fort Lauderdale, Jones scored all three of her team's touchdowns, including two on interception returns. "When Takhari gets the ball she's untouchable," Jones' teammate Jacqueline Futch said.

Athlete's quote: "This year I wanted to do more, because I'm a senior and it's my last year. I went out, played hard, played to the best of my ability and I played to win. I wasn't surprised [I was Player of the Year], because I put in the work and was committed to the game. I'm happy I got it...I've been banged up a lot this year, but as a captain I just pulled through, tried to win it all for the team."

FIRST TEAM



Andrea Abed
Cypress Bay senior

Comment: The three-year starting quarterback threw for 1,857 yards and 33 touchdowns.



Leandria Ates
Everglades senior

Comment: Passed for 49 touchdowns, scoring 313 total points of offense, and intercepted 12 passes on defense.



Karnisia Coleman
Fort Lauderdale junior

Comment: Passed for 2,500 yards with 27 touchdowns, leading the Flying L's to a state quarterfinal.



Lareisa Fulmore
Pompano Beach senior

Comment: Last season's Player of the Year passed for 2,500 yards, rushed for 500 yards, scored 29 touchdowns and intercepted 5 passes.



Jacqueline Futch
Miramar senior

Comment: Intercepted two passes in the Patriots state quarterfinal win over Fort Lauderdale.



Tomoriya Hamm
Fort Lauderdale senior

Comment: Caught two touchdowns and intercepted two passes in a state quarterfinal game against Miramar.



Jessi Lucarelli
Western senior

Comment: The four-year starter had 700 receiving yards and seven touchdowns.

SECOND TEAM

Synae Jones	Pompano Beach	Sr.	WR/LB
Shay Lewis	Western	Jr.	QB
Brittini Lilly	Monarch	Jr.	WR/DB
Ginia Octave	Blanche Ely	Sr.	LB
Shakira Walker	Plantation	Sr.	WR/DB
Shacree Webb	Taravella	Jr.	S/WR
Ashley Welly	Taravella	Sr.	QB/LB

HONORABLE MENTION

Blanche Ely: Yvenise Charles, Shani Dominivil, Victoria Graham; **Coral Glades:** Chelsie Kazanjian, Morgan Moceyunas, Samantha Wortman; **Cypress Bay:** Alexandra Abed, Nicole Ungar, Julie Woodard; **Douglas:** Thalie Charles-Cazeau, Staci Colbacchini, Alex Martin; **Everglades:** Jackie Collazo, Tayhara Garcia, Tiana Harvey; **Fort Lauderdale:** Destiny Green, Diamond Holmes; **Hollywood Hills:** Adebola Adeoba, Kelley Corsey, Sara Mendez; **Miramar:** Ranisha Cade, Breanna Morrison, Jane Nelson; **Monarch:** Justine Gordon, Katie Gutmann, Samantha Mendez; **North Broward Prep:** Cady Burke, Victoria Keise, Alexis Thornton; **Nova:** Sam Riggenbach; **Pembroke Pines Charter:** Courtney Hodges, Kendra Menard, Kaitlyn Vetter; **Piper:** Brittany Andrews, Linda Gomez, Michelle Johnson; **Plantation:** Rodneshia Thomas, Teketria Todd, Khashena Walker; **Pompano Beach:** Lakia Gray, Hannah Hamilton, Shelby Petik; **Taravella:** Meagan Doll, Dominique Moore, Carina Victoria; **Western:** Alexis Berger, Haley Smith, Jessica Thornton.

COACH OF THE YEAR



James Whitfield
Fort Lauderdale

Comment: Whitfield led the Flying L's to a 13-2 record and their first state tournament appearance since 2004. He ran a basic defense to open the game and was in charge of making all defensive adjustments during the game. His defensive unit didn't allow more than 12 points all season.



COURTESY OF DAVONE BESS FOUNDATION ON FACEBOOK

Dolphins' WR Davone Bess helped a village in Costa Rica prepare for the rainy season.

BESS

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grueling offseason training program for them.

It's also inspired Bess to spend the past two weeks in Costa Rica, where he's been swinging a machete chopping trees, digging 200 yards of drainage ditches, and laying tile for the people of Canitas as part of a Global Volunteers crusade.

Bess and about a dozen other volunteers have been helping the people of Canitas, a small northern town located in the Monteverde Region, prepare for the rainy season.

"I had an epiphany one night. With all I've been through on and off the field, God has put me in a position to be a difference-maker and to change lives," said Bess, who signed a three-year, \$9 million contract extension midway through last season.

"If I can help someone make a difference and impact someone's life, I want to do that to the best of my ability."

Bess is referring to his volunteer efforts, which didn't start with Canitas,

and won't stop there. He's referring to the Bess Route Foundation he started late last year with the goal of helping young people avoid some of the pitfalls that happened in his life, like his 21-month stay in a juvenile facility, which cost him his college scholarship to Oregon State before the University of Hawaii eventually gave him a second chance.

This spring, Bess put together a charity basketball game to help raise funds for the struggling sports programs in his hometown of Oakland, Calif., because "I wouldn't be here without sports."

He's also spoken at schools in the community he grew up in, sharing his life story. This upcoming season his goal is to speak at a South Florida school every week, and have the Bess Route Foundation sponsor and mentor college-bound students.

"If I inspire one life, that's enough," Bess said. "And often times these kids inspire me."

For instance, the children in Canitas, whom Bess brought soccer and football supplies courtesy of his sponsorship with adidas, has helped him

pick up more Spanish than he learned taking classes in high school, and living in South Florida the past three years. He plans to work on becoming more fluent.

The manual labor he's been doing has also helped him stay fit during the NFL lockout.

"We've all been doing an incredible amount of physical labor, and Davone and the guys have been leading the way," said Cathy Cunningham, an Arizona native who befriended Bess on the missionary trip. "They've been chopping down trees, digging the drainage ditches and all kinds of stuff. Davone hasn't been a celebrity. He's not on vacation. He's been one of the hardest workers."

Those who know Bess can't be surprised. And they also should know this is just the beginning.

"Once I set my mind to something I go hard at it. With my story and what I've been through, I'm able to give back and give kids a message about who I am and what I overcame," Bess said. "If I can do it, you can do it, too. If I can make a difference, so can you."

OWENS

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sledgehammer of justice.

The NCAA doesn't tolerate lying and deception.

Apparently, Ohio State's administrators did. Even worse, they threw the coach under the bus afterwards.

That is reason enough for Urban Meyer to keep his cushy ESPN seat.

More troubling than Tressel's lying is the hypocritical support on the part of Ohio State President Gordon Gee and Athletic Director Gene Smith.

Tressel was proven to have knowingly provided false information to the NCAA and kept his superiors in the dark about his players' rules violations. He later coerced those players into returning for another season in exchange for negotiating their eligibility for the Sugar Bowl.

Even though Tressel had complete disregard for

breaking the rules, Gee and Smith said firing him was never a consideration. Smith said he "implicitly" trusted Tressel. Gee even went as far to say, "I'm just hoping the coach doesn't dismiss me."

Was that an admonishment or an endorsement?

In the grand scheme of things, it shouldn't be a rules violation for players to sell their hard-earned rings or gear, as several Ohio State players are accused of doing. It's their property after all.

But until the NCAA's rules are revamped, the guidelines must be followed.

When university leaders such as Gee and Smith take gray-area stances on black and white issues, they empower coaches to make decisions based solely on their own best interests, not the university's.

Gee and Smith encouraged Tressel to have free rein over the program. They slapped him on the wrist with a two-game

suspension, later increased to five at Tressel's request, after his indiscretions were made public. They all but promised to keep him on board and then, just a few months later, allegedly forced him into a resignation.

Columbus Dispatch reporter Tim May said on ESPN's "First Take" on Monday that Tressel had no intentions of resigning. Clearly, there is more to this story and I'm sure we'll hear more as the days unfold.

Ohio State's program is going to take a hit from the NCAA, but it will rebuild.

The person tasked with that assignment needs a heart for integrity, a mind for football and a strong back to withstand the hypocritical administrators.

Meyer could probably have the job if he wants it. But why would he?

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Read Shannon J. Owens' Sentinel Sports Now blog at OrlandoSentinel.com/sentinelssportsnow

BARBER

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"I walk on campus with this and everyone knows I'm here for business," he says with a grin.

Rivera's collection of dome designs — some requested, some his own ideas — is extravagant: a jack-o'-lantern and a spider web for former UM cornerback Ryan Hill; Sebastian the Ibis for Futch; the Mortal Kombat dragon logo, Bullet Bill from Super Mario Bros., and Casper the Friendly Ghost for students; and the now famous "U Swag" he engraved into quarterback Jacory Harris' hair.

The wilder, the better. Thursdays during the season, after players finish walk-through, they head to the sixth floor of Mahoney Hall for an appointment with Canes Barber, who charges them \$10 for a cut, \$5 for minor touch-ups.

Mondays belong to the baseball team, Wednesdays are for students, and basketball players fit in here and there. But Thursdays are

strictly reserved for football players because the next day they're either flying out for that week's game or heading to the team hotel before a home game.

"You can't go a week without getting a haircut by Steve on that Thursday," Hill said. "That's just a part of being at UM."

Rivera, who does landscaping for Miami-Dade County as his main job [as you might expect, he's creative in his trimming of hedges], usually arrives at Mahoney around 4 p.m. toting his aluminum briefcase. He can reasonably fit in 25 to 30 haircuts in eight or nine hours.

Some players get traditional cuts. Offensive linemen Seantrel Henderson and Brandon Washington, who both sport dreadlocks, simply get their hairline edged. Players who want creative designs usually wait until later in the night because their cuts will take longer.

Futch said he was nervous before he got Sebastian the Ibis on the side of his head as a freshman.

"I had never seen any-

body draw [Ibis] that good," Futch said. "When he did it, I was like, 'This is fantastic! It's perfect. It looks just like him.'"

This fall, "I might go out with a bang," Futch said of designs for his senior season. "I might just put a whole football field on [my head] or put a picture of me in my position stance — do something ridiculous, something crazy."

While he has cut himself into the culture of Hurricanes football, Rivera's relationship with the players extends beyond clippers.

"He's definitely part of the team," James said.

It's an honor that Rivera cherishes.

"It amazes me because never would I have thought when I was growing up that I'd be a part of their team, cutting their hair and having great relationships with the players," said Rivera, a former receiver at Miami Palmetto High.

"When I was a kid, I used to look up to the players and always wanted to go out of my way to try to meet them. Now I'm their barber. That's crazy to me."