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Pearce-Horton Complex nears completion

Furman University

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Hall of Fame welcomes four new members

FOOTBALL STANDOUT Jerome Felton ‘08, tennis stars James Cameron ‘03 and Mary Neil Hagood McKie ‘05, and longtime women’s tennis coach Debbie Southern will be inducted into Furman’s Athletic Hall of Fame October 5.

Felton, who earned All-Pro recognition in 2012 with the Minnesota Vikings of the National Football League, gained 2,652 yards rushing and scored 63 touchdowns in four seasons as Furman’s starting fullback, during which time the Paladins won a Southern Conference title and made three NCAA I-AA (FCS) playoff appearances. He holds numerous school records and was a three-time All-Southern Conference choice and an All-America selection.

Cameron was conference player of the year and male athlete of the year in 2003. With John Chesworth ‘03, he earned All-America honors after they advanced to the doubles quarterfinals of the 2002 NCAA tournament. A seven-time all-league selection, he received the Furman Academic Achievement Award in 2003.

During her four years at Furman McKie was twice the league’s player of the year and helped her squad to a 38-0 conference regular-season record. She holds the school record for most doubles wins with 75. She received the 2004 Southeast Region Arthur Ashe Sportmanship Award and was the league’s female athlete of the year in 2005.

With 435 victories during her 30-year Furman career, Southern has led her teams to nine NCAA tournament appearances, 16 conference tournament titles, and a winning streak of 100 straight conference matches from 1998 to 2010, the longest run of success in league history in any sport. She was inducted into the International Tennis Association Women’s Collegiate Tennis Hall of Fame in 2012 and the South Carolina Tennis Hall of Fame in 2004.

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DODGING THE UNENDING deluges and downpours that drowned the Greenville area over the summer, construction crews somehow made good progress on the expansion of the press tower at Paladin Stadium.

The actual “press level” for the Pearce-Horton Football Complex, as it has been named, was to be ready for the September 14 home opener against Presbyterian. In addition, an artificial Power-Blade Bolt surface, which replaced the original natural grass field, was installed over the summer and will support both football and Furman’s new lacrosse program, which opens varsity play in 2014.

The rest of the $12 million, 44,000-square-foot complex is expected to open later in the fall.

Greenville residents Sonny Horton ’52 and his wife, Keeter, provided the naming gift for the renovated facility, which now houses the football program as well as the university’s Heritage Hall, president’s box and special club seating, among other amenities. The name honors both Sonny’s and Keeter’s families.

Sonny Horton was an all-South Carolina running back during his playing days and is a member of the Furman Athletic Hall of Fame. He received the Southern Conference Service Award in 2006 and, with Keeter, was honored with Furman’s Bell Tower Award in 2008. Keeter’s father, Charlie Pearce, attended Furman and played football in the early 1920s.

“The new facility shows our fan base, alumni and recruits that we are serious about returning the Paladins to national prominence,” says Ken Petrus, associate athletic director for development. “This building could not have been realized without the generosity of devoted alumni such as the Hortons.”