

RUSSELL HENDERSON

Russell Henderson was one of the preeminent Amherst County High School athletes of the early 1970s. His success in football fueled aspirations for someday competing in the NFL. Henderson became a multi-sport athlete at ACHS, participating in football, basketball, and golf. With Amherst Hall of Fame coaches Tom Berry and Ernie Guill honing his skills, by graduation, Henderson had acquired multiple honors.

He experienced early success in baseball, with Marshall Mays and Amherst Sports Hall of Famer Donnie Wood as coaches. Baseball achievements included being named an all-star and playing in several regional and state tournaments.

He found a solid niche in football at ACHS, as quarterback, defensive back, punt returner, punter, and kicker. Henderson led the Lancers to a state AA semi-final, and, in so doing, had proven himself to be destined for Division I. Attending the University of Virginia on scholarship, he concentrated on punting, gaining numerous honors in four years. Henderson was sometimes called upon to assume the duties of place-kicker. Against Wake Forest in 1977, he provided all his team's points, with his fourth field goal coming in the final minute of the game, to win 12-10. Such play was also pivotal in a close win over Virginia Tech in 1978.

Drafted by the Baltimore Colts, he appeared in pre-season games with creditable performances, but various factors, from nagging injuries to competition with veteran players, thwarted his efforts to make a regular-season NFL roster. Other experiences were with the Buccaneers and Cowboys. As a natural athlete, Russell Henderson's name continues to be on the leader boards of Central Virginia golf tournaments.

Russell Massie Henderson, Jr. – October 11, 1956

Career Highlights

- Youth Baseball – Pony League, Colt League, All-Star teams, state competitions
- ACHS: Football – All-Western District, quarterback (AAA 1972, 1973), All-Seminole, quarterback (AA, 1974); All-Western, punter (1973), All-Seminole, punter (1974); All-Region, quarterback (1972, 1973, 1974); All-Region, punter (1972, 1973, 1974); All-State, quarterback (1973, 2nd team; 1974, 1st team); All-State, punter (1972, 2nd team; 1973, 1st team; 1974, 1st team); District and Regional Championship, State Semi-finalist (1974)
- ACHS: Basketball – 4 years, co-captain (1973-74, 1974-75); Golf – All-Western (1973, 1975); All-Seminole (1975); All-Region (1974, 1975); All-State (honorable mention, 1975)
- University of Virginia: 4-year starter (1975 through 1978), All-ACC, 1st team (1977, 1978), Punting avg., 1st in ACC (1977), All-American selection (1975), "The Football News" (1978), Blue-Gray Game selection (1978), Hula Bowl selection (1979), UVA records held 30+ yrs – 11 punts over 60 yards (career), most punts (career), season punting avg. 45.9 yds (1976), career punting avg. (43.3 yds), 4 FGs in one game (1977)
- Professional Football: Drafted (1979), Baltimore Colts, 5th round; Tampa Bay Buccaneers (1980); Dallas Cowboys
- Golf: Lynchburg City Championship (3rd, 1979), Patrick Henry (2nd, 1980), and others

