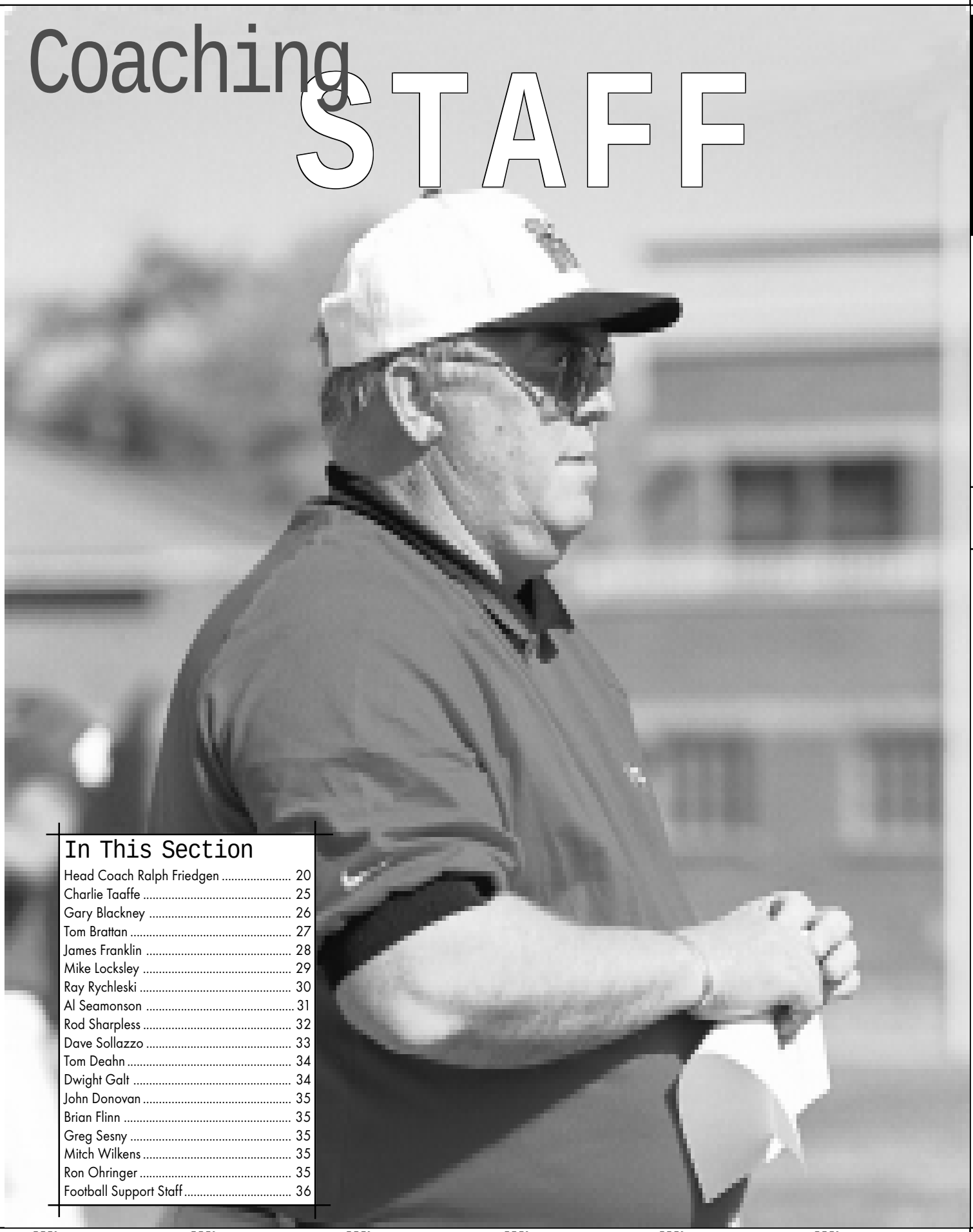
Coaching STAFF



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Head Coach
RALPH FRIEDGEN

(Maryland, '69)
First Season

They say you can't go home again. For the University of Maryland, no choice made more sense than to make sure that Ralph Friedgen did return home.

Friedgen, the architect of Georgia Tech's high-powered offense for nine of the past 14 years and the offensive coordinator for Bobby Ross at Maryland when the Terps won three consecutive ACC titles in the mid-'80s, returns to his alma mater as head football coach.

This stop in College Park is Friedgen's fourth. The first was as a student and football player in the late '60s. The second came with his first coaching job when he served as a graduate assistant from 1969-72. His third stop at Maryland was as an offensive coordinator and offensive line coach under Ross from 1982-86. Now he is back, overlooking Byrd Stadium from the head coach's office.

Named the winner of the Frank Broyles Award as the top assistant coach in the country in 1999, Friedgen brings 32 years of coaching experience – including 21 as an offensive coordinator either in college or the NFL – with him in his return to College Park. From 1998-2000, he orchestrated a Georgia Tech offensive unit that averaged 36.7 points and 444 yards of total offense per game while posting a cumulative record of 27-8 (.771). The '99 Yellow Jackets, led by Heisman runner-up Joe Hamilton, finished No. 1 nationally in total offense (a school-record 509 yards per game) and ranked second nationally in scoring (40.7 points per game). Last season's Tech team ranked in the top 20 statistically in three major NCAA offensive categories, including scoring (33.8 ppg) and total offense (435.4 ypg).

The 54-year-old Friedgen *(pronounced FREE-jun)* owns the rare distinction of coordinating the offense for both a collegiate national champion and a Super Bowl team. A 1969 graduate of the University of Maryland, where he earned a degree in physical education, Friedgen launched his coaching career as a graduate assistant before heading off to a triumvirate of jobs including stints at The Citadel (1973-79), William & Mary (1980) and Murray State (1981). In '82, he returned to Maryland as offensive coordinator and offensive line coach under Ross, with Friedgen's tenure lasting until 1986. During that stretch, the Terps captured three consecutive ACC championships (1983-85) and played in four bowl games. All told, the Terrapins were 39-15-1 from 1982-86 and won two bowl games (the Sun Bowl in 1984 and the Cherry Bowl in 1985). It is the type of success Friedgen intends to re-instill in the current group of Terrapins.

"I think the football experience should be fun and what is fun to me is winning," said Friedgen. "Our goals will be to be a Top 20 team, year-in and year-out. I am looking forward to a lot of success here at Maryland."

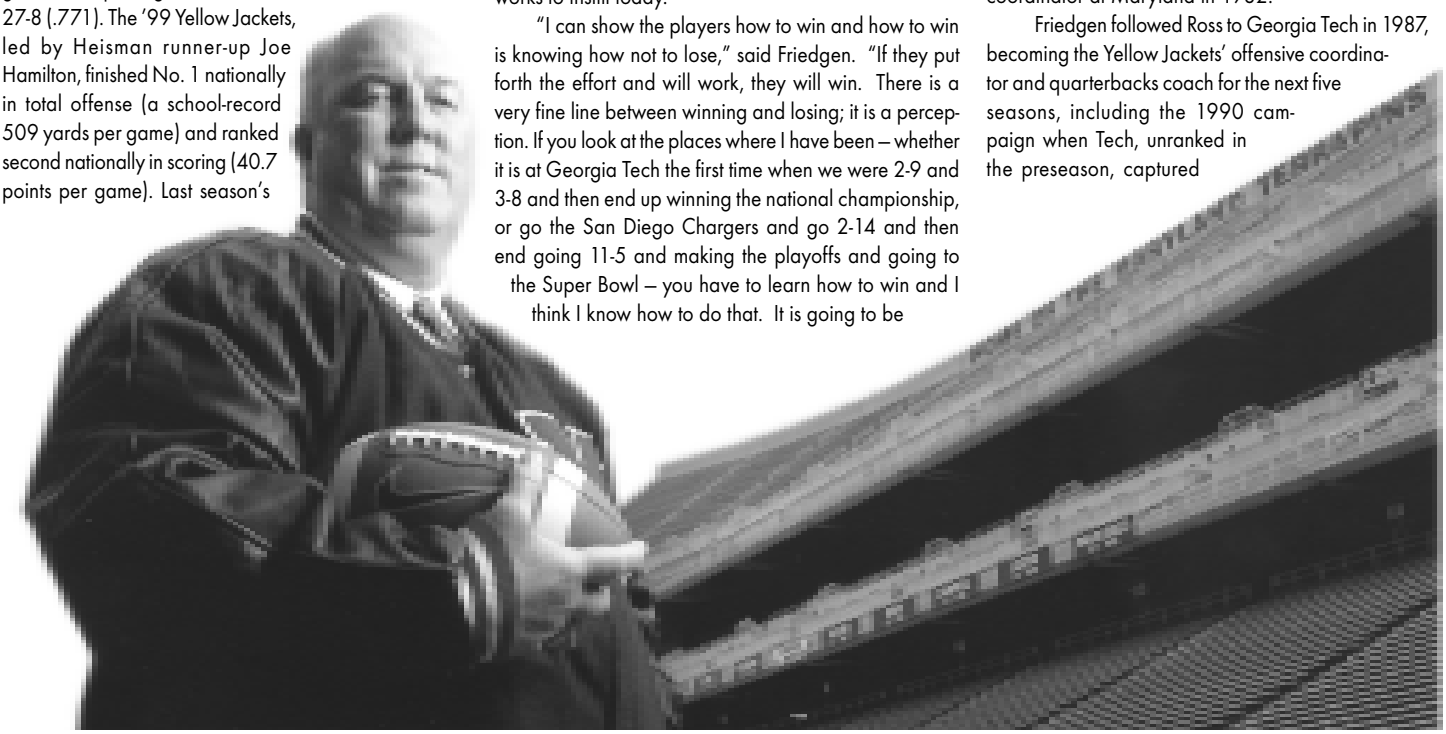
During his five-year stay at Maryland under Ross, Friedgen was, along with quarterbacks coach Joe Krivak, instrumental in the development of future pro quarterbacks Boomer Esiason, Frank Reich and Stan Gelbaugh, all of whom spent at least 10 seasons in the National Football League. Esiason played professionally from 1984-97, Reich from 1985-98 and Gelbaugh from 1986-95. These players flourished under Friedgen largely because they strode to meet his expectations, the same as those he works to instill today.

"I can show the players how to win and how to win is knowing how not to lose," said Friedgen. "If they put forth the effort and will work, they will win. There is a very fine line between winning and losing; it is a perception. If you look at the places where I have been – whether it is at Georgia Tech the first time when we were 2-9 and 3-8 and then end up winning the national championship, or go the San Diego Chargers and go 2-14 and then end going 11-5 and making the playoffs and going to the Super Bowl – you have to learn how to win and I think I know how to do that. It is going to be

hard work, though. (Student-athletes) have to work hard, practice hard, and be disciplined. (They) are going to have to do things that are right, not only on the field but off the field as well."

The Ross-Friedgen connection began in 1973, when Ross hired the former Maryland offensive lineman as defensive line coach at The Citadel. Friedgen spent seven seasons at The Citadel, the last three as offensive coordinator and offensive line coach. Friedgen then worked one season (1980) as offensive coordinator at William & Mary and one season (1981) as assistant head coach at Murray State before Ross tapped him to be his offensive coordinator at Maryland in 1982.

Friedgen followed Ross to Georgia Tech in 1987, becoming the Yellow Jackets' offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach for the next five seasons, including the 1990 campaign when Tech, unranked in the preseason, captured



The Friedgen family (from left): Ralph, Gloria, Katharine, Kristina and Kelley.

the national championship with an 11-0-1 record. The national title came just two years after the Jackets had posted back-to-back seasons of three wins or less. When Ross was named head coach of the San Diego Chargers in 1992, he tapped Friedgen to serve as running game coordinator for two seasons (1992-93) before elevating him to offensive coordinator in 1994, when the Chargers advanced to Super Bowl XXIX for the first time in franchise history. During his time with the Chargers, Friedgen helped a club that had not made the playoffs in a decade reach postseason play three times in five seasons.

Friedgen spent 20 seasons with Ross in coaching stops at The Citadel, Maryland, Georgia Tech and the San Diego Chargers.

Friedgen returned to Tech in 1997, where he served another successful stint as offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach, this time under current head coach George O'Leary.

Known for developing balanced offensive attacks with multiple looks, Tech was one of only two teams in the country in 1999 to average at least 200 yards rushing and 200 yards passing. Tech also accomplished the feat under Friedgen's guidance in 1990, '91 and '98. The 1999 team, with the diminutive Hamilton calling the signals at quarterback, set 59 school records, rewriting many marks established by the 1990 national championship team, which was led by another Friedgen pupil, signal-caller Shawn Jones (1989-92). Friedgen was a finalist for the Broyles Award as the nation's top assistant coach in 1998 when the Rambling Wreck set a then-school record with 50 touchdowns.

Friedgen, who also earned his master's degree from the University of Maryland, is the first Maryland alum since Bob Ward (1967-68) to serve as the Terps' head football coach. Friedgen originally came to Maryland as a quarterback in the mid-'60s and spent most of his career as an offensive lineman, lettering in 1968 and capturing Academic All-ACC honors the same season. He was a two-time winner of the George C. Cook Memorial Award (1968-69) for having the highest academic average on the football team.

"Coach Friedgen is an experienced and consistently successful football coach who also has a passion for Maryland," said Maryland athletic director Deborah A. Yow. "He understands the ACC, embraces Maryland's philosophy of the student-athlete and has a clear and compelling vision for returning Maryland to national prominence."

Because of his obvious ties to Maryland as a university and a state, Friedgen has stated implicitly that he wants to keep the area's best players at home.

"I think that has to be the main focus of our recruiting," said Friedgen. "We have to get the better players from the state. Not every player is meant to come to the University of Maryland, but a large portion of them should. I know a lot of coaches in this area and they know me from the last time I was here, and a lot of the coaches are former Maryland players and I think it is time the Maryland community unites. We have a Terrapin now as the head coach. The alumni, the fans, the former players; we all have to become a strong force. Part of that is going to be recruiting in the state and I am going to rely on those former players to get the better prep players to stay in state."

Friedgen's coaching roots run deep. His father, Ralph, Sr., was a high school coach for more than 30 years and masterminded, among other teams, the 1964 Westchester County (N.Y.) High School team that went undefeated and averaged 44 points per game running what was then an unusual multiple offense. It was an offense run by a 190-pound quarterback later recruited by Maryland named Ralph Friedgen, Jr.

Friedgen and his wife, the former Gloria Spina, have three daughters: Kelley, 23; Kristina, 14, and Katharine, 12. Gloria is currently serving as an adjunct professor at the University of Maryland.

Friedgen File

Fast Facts

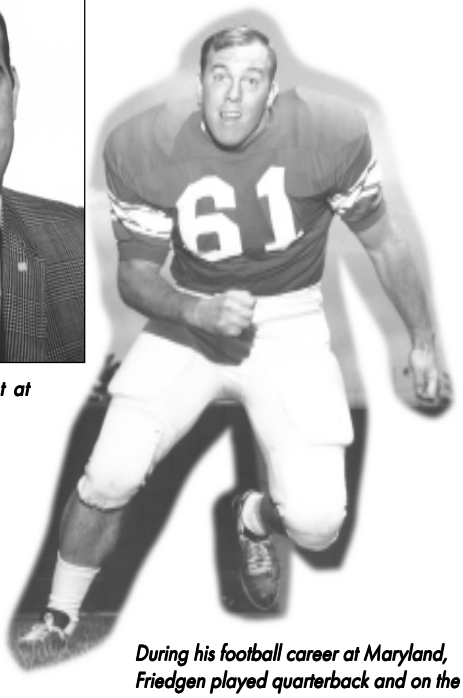
Full Name ..... Ralph Harry Friedgen
Pronunciation ..... FREE-jun
Date of Birth ..... April 4, 1947
Hometown ..... Harrison, N.Y.
Alma Mater ..... Maryland, '69
Family ..... Wife, Gloria; daughters, Kelley (23), Kristina (14), Katharine (12)
Playing Experience ..... Guard, one letter at Maryland (1968)
Years in Coaching (College) 32 (27)

Coaching Experience

Maryland
2001- ..... Head Coach
Georgia Tech
1997-2000 ..... Assistant Coach - Offensive Coordinator/Offensive Line
San Diego Chargers
1994-96 ..... Assistant Coach - Offensive Coordinator;
1992-93 ..... Assistant Coach - Running Game Coordinator/H-Backs/Tight Ends
Georgia Tech
1987-91 ..... Assistant Coach - Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks
Maryland
1982-86 ..... Assistant Coach - Offensive Coordinator/Offensive Line
Murray State
1981 ..... Assistant Head Coach
William & Mary
1980 ..... Assistant Coach - Offensive Coordinator
The Citadel
1977-79 ..... Assistant Coach - Offensive Coordinator
1973-76 ..... Assistant Coach - Defensive Line
Maryland
1969-72 ..... Graduate Assistant

FRIEDGEN THROUGH THE YEARS

Friedgen as a student at Maryland in 1968.



During his football career at Maryland, Friedgen played quarterback and on the offensive line.

Friedgen returned to Maryland as an assistant coach in 1982, where he served through 1986.

Ralph Friedgen, winner of the 1999 Frank Broyles Award as the nation's top assistant coach, with the 2000 winner Mark Mangino of Oklahoma.

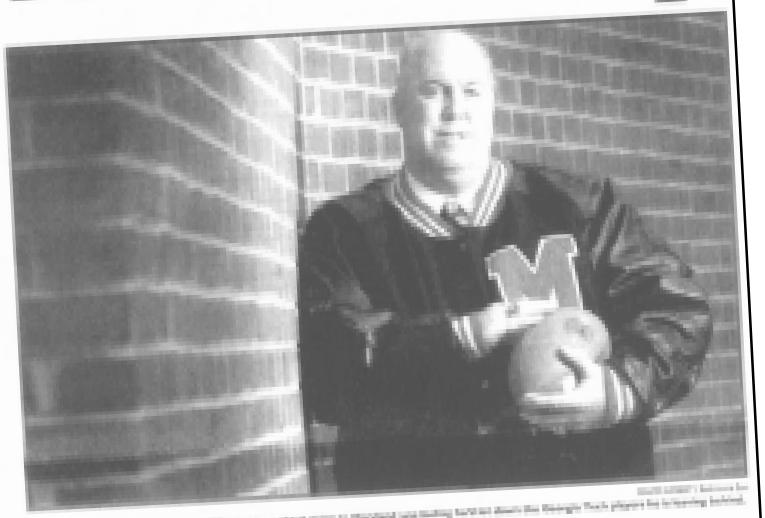
After stints at Georgia Tech and with the NFL's San Diego Chargers, Friedgen returned to his alma mater, as he was named head coach on Nov. 29, 2000.

Former Terp Jess Atkinson interviewing Friedgen after he was hired as Maryland's new coach.

Friedgen with the "Voice of the Terps" Johnny Holliday at the 2001 Spring Game.

FRIEDGEN IN THE NEWS

His own ship



College Park, Md.

Friedgen comes home as new coach of Terps

Alumnus says, 'Yes'; choice draws praise

Friedgen returns 'to unite' Maryland

Alumnus signs 6-year deal

Finally, at 53, he's the boss

"I remember my dad was really a great orator; he could really incite kids at halftime. ... I saw guys tear down lockers and go out and play football. I'd never seen my emotion like that."

Son still cradles father's handoff

MICHAEL WILBON

From Behind the Scenes To a Starring Role

Ralph Friedgen was the guy behind the curtain during the Bobby Ross years at Maryland. You had to look hard to find Friedgen, way, way in the background behind both Ross and Joe Krivak, the quarterback guru. Friedgen, though hardly anybody knew it, coordinated those offenses that made Maryland a nationally competitive team in the early and mid-1980s. He put together one great offensive line after another and pulled together so much of what made Maryland able to dazzle teams that included Miami and Tennessee.

Ross thought so much of Friedgen that when he left Maryland, he took his lieutenant with him first to Georgia Tech and then to the NFL's San Diego Chargers, where a national championship and Super Bowl appearance followed, respectively. Stan Humphries is about the only quarterback former Washington Redskins coach Joe Gibbs didn't do much with. But in San Diego, Humphries was Friedgen's pet project, and Humphries got the Chargers to the final Sunday of the season. When Ross moved on to coach the Detroit Lions, Friedgen opted to return to Georgia Tech. With his coordinating an offense flirting with greatness, Tech is once again a national contender.

Because Friedgen can throw around that resume, the Maryland job is probably his if he wants it. Talk about getting the last laugh. Three times the head coaching job was vacant at Maryland; and three times the

See WILBON, D2, Col. 4

Georgia Tech assistant Ralph Friedgen, 53, reportedly one of the highest-paid assistants in the country, was a graduate assistant at Maryland under Jerry Claiborne in 1972.

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING ABOUT FRIEDGEN

"I am delighted. Maryland is getting a great football coach and a great man. Ralph Friedgen was one of the finest assistants a head coach could ask for. He's been deserving of this opportunity for a long time. He has a great football mind and a great understanding of the game on both sides of the ball. He is an outstanding recruiter who has been able to recruit anywhere. There is no element of what a head coach needs that Ralph Friedgen doesn't have. He'll be an outstanding head coach in the ACC."

–Bobby Ross
Former NFL and College Head Coach

"Ralph Friedgen is very much a total football coach. Ralph has a great feel for the game, defense as well as offense, and also a great feel for players. He commands respect, and they respond."

–George O'Leary
Georgia Tech Head Coach

"I think Ralph Friedgen is a great hire for Maryland. I could see this program going back to the days of Bobby Ross when the University of Maryland was thought of not just as a potential ACC champion – which they were three times under Ross – but a team that can get back into the national scope and have an impact. Being raised in the Baltimore area, I am real excited about what the Terrapins' future looks like now with Ralph Friedgen."

–Mel Kiper, Jr.
ESPN Football Analyst

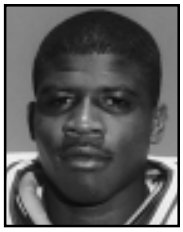
"In my mind, Maryland football is back with the hiring of Ralph Friedgen as the new head coach. I am elated with his hiring. Ralph took great care of me as the offensive line coach when I played quarterback at Maryland. He comes with a wealth of knowledge, not only in the college and pro games, but also in the inner workings of the ACC and the University of Maryland, which will help propel this football program back to its lofty status of years past. Ralph will also have the full support of former Terrapin football players because we truly appreciate one of our own."

–Boomer Esiason
Former Maryland QB ('81-83), NFL Veteran ('84-97) and Football Analyst

"Coach Friedgen is a quality coach with a proven track record...Among offensive minds in the college or pro game, without a doubt, he is among the best. I think he is the perfect fit at Maryland because of his knowledge of the school, of the ACC and of the conference's recruiting area. From my personal experience with him, I can tell you that he is going to do what it takes to win and will not take no for an answer when it comes to making Maryland a winner."

–Frank Reich
Former Maryland QB ('83-84) Under Friedgen and NFL Veteran ('85-98)

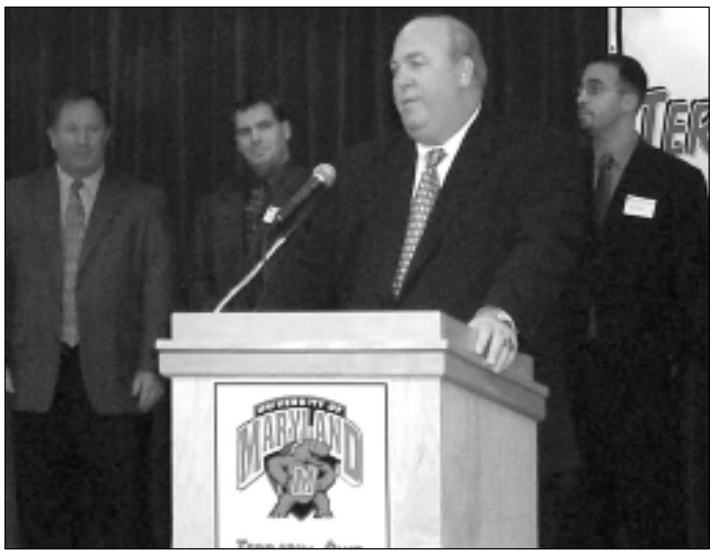
"He's a mastermind. He understands everything the other team is trying to do. He knows what they might do and how they might change. Also, he constantly studies (his) team's tendencies and is prepared for all situations at all times."



–Joe Hamilton
Former Georgia Tech QB Under Friedgen and Heisman Trophy Runner-Up ('99)

"Ralph Friedgen was the guy behind the curtain during the Bobby Ross era at Maryland ... Friedgen, though hardly anybody knew it, coordinated those offenses that made Maryland a nationally competitive team in the early and mid-1980s. He put together one great offensive line after another and pulled together so much of what made Maryland able to dazzle (its opponents)."

–Michael Wilbon
Washington Post Columnist



Friedgen addresses Terrapin Club members at a recent function.