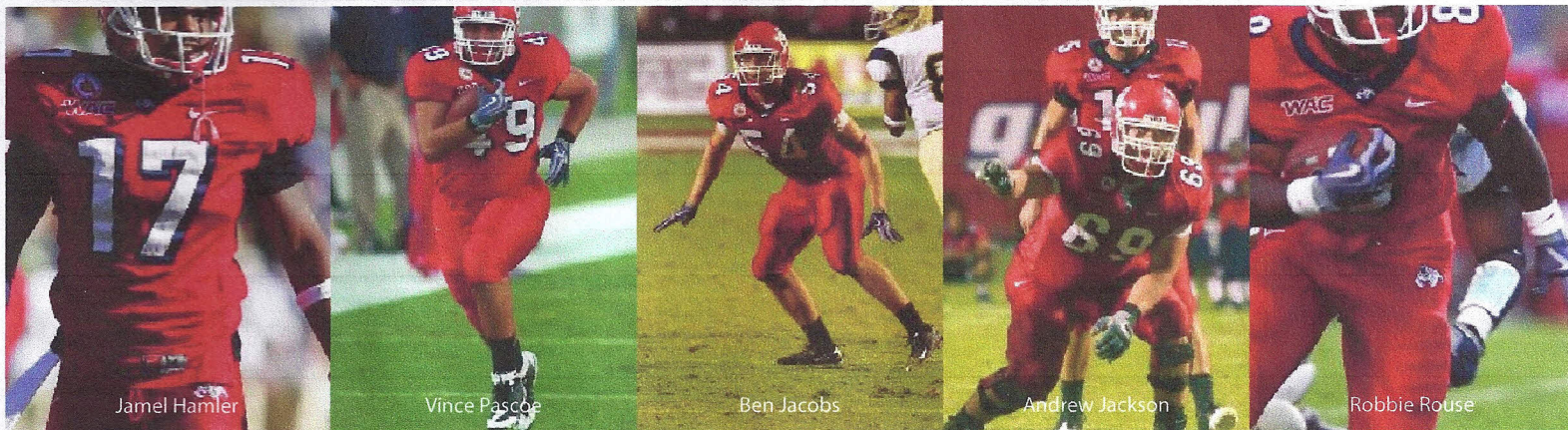


FRESNO STATE BULLDOGS



By Kimberly Horg-Webb

The Bulldogs Football has a mascot that is similar with their reputation; aggressive, rigorous and hard-nosed. Fresno State has 102 players at the start of fall camp. The team is nationally recognized for its many accomplishments and is locally admired by all. Whether it is on or off the field the players continue to achieve their goals and add to its academic trophy case. During fall, three Bulldogs received academic honors when the College Sports Information Directors of America announced the Academic All-District teams. Andrew Jackson, Ben Jacobs and Vince Pascoe were selected and are now eligible for consideration for the Academic All-America team. Fresno State's three honorees on the All-District team were the second most of any school.

To be eligible, a student must be a varsity starter or key reserve, maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.30 on a scale of 4.00, have reached sophomore athletic and academic standings at their current school and be nominated by the sports information director. Jackson, a three-year starter at offensive guard, earned his degree in Business Administration and is now enrolled in the graduate program for Sports Administration. He was selected first-team All-WAC last season and honorable mention All-America. Jacobs starts every game in his career (46) and ranks fourth all-time in career tackles at Fresno State with 338. He was a first-team All-WAC pick last season and is also enrolled in graduate school. And Pascoe is a third-year starter at tight end who has maintained a perfect 4.0 GPA in Mechanical Engineering.

Head coach Pat Hill is committed to not only winning on the field but the principles he established over a decade ago which include recruiting Valley high school players and setting an "Academic Game Plan" that sees student-athletes through to graduation. "Over 14 years we've had a lot players get academic awards and we are very proud of that," Hill said. "We are proud to have to some outstanding people who've

come here and made a commitment to do things the right way." Hill is recognized as an elite coach. He has been selected to coach in college all-star games twice in the last five years. After 14 years of being head coach, the Bulldogs are recognized on and off the field for not only academic achievement but its success in wins and bowl games appearances as well as character. "Being a head coach is a great responsibility," he said. "We have a lot of players who have chosen to be a part of a program that is successful on the field and in the classroom. They know when they come here they will be able to leave here and manage their own lives." Hill takes great pride in being the head coach at Fresno State. For one, he loves the community; he considers it, his home and is where he wanted to raise his family. He is also thankful that he lives in a town that supports Fresno State and the football program. It is averaging over 38,000 fans per game at home. "That's a great testament to the community and how much they love college football," he said. It is gratifying for Hill when the players receive national awards as well. It speaks volumes for the program because of the national respect the team receives.

The fall season was eventful, whether it was Colin Kaepernick who set a school record with two rushing touchdowns in a game or Robbie Rouse who rushed for 286 on 43 carries, both career highs. It was the second-most by a Bulldog since 2006. Rouse had a 60-yard run, the longest of his career and had a 51-yard touchdown later in the same game. Receiver Jamel Hamler was an honorable mention selection for national receiver of the week in November. He had eight receptions for 118 yards and three touchdowns (6, 10, 33 yards). It was the first time a Bulldog caught three touchdowns in a game since 2007. Hamler leads the team and ranks fourth in the WAC with five touchdown receptions.

"We have a very young team," Hill said. "I think we have a great nucleus to be a very good team in the future."