

Two-time National Champion Also Gets Kicks Being In A Classroom

The pressure of kicking a game-winning field goal for the No. 1 team football in the nation is nothing compared to stepping in front of a classroom of young students for the first time, according to Grand Valley State University's record-setting placekicker David Hendrix.

Hendrix, who set an NCAA Division II record by kicking 25 field goals during the Lakers' second-consecutive national championship season, found himself in both situations during the academic school year.

"The first time I ever got in front of a classroom, I was scared to death," Hendrix said. "I found it sort of funny that I can kick a field goal in front of 10,000 people, but in classroom of 25 kids, I was scared to death.

"But I got comfortable working with kids



GVSU senior placekicker David Hendrix set an NCAA Division II record with 25 field goals for the national champion Lakers in 2003.

and they look up to me now. It's the same way with kicking. You get used to going out there and the pressure doesn't get to you as much."

Majoring in Earth Science and Secondary Education, Hendrix said he is looking forward to teaching and coaching.

"I can definitely bring all the qualities the coaches emphasize like perseverance and strength of character," Hendrix said. "I am a stickler on paying attention to detail and doing things right. That's what makes people great."

Hendrix, 24, is completing his student assisting portion of the education program at East Grand Rapids Middle School this spring. He is awaiting his student teaching placement for next fall.

As the placekicker for GVSU's back-to-back national championship teams that compiled an incredible 27-1 two-year record, Hendrix set an NCAA Division II single-season record with 25 field goals in 2003. He was 10-for-10 the year before.

"We went to the championship game three years in a row and won it twice," Hendrix said. "Words can't really explain how we all felt.

"There just aren't too many teams that have done something like that before."

Hendrix began kicking his way into the record books with three fields --including the game-winner in overtime -- in a 9-6 victory in GVSU's season-opener at Cal-Davis.

He also had a hand -- or foot -- in several other key victories, including field goals in a pair of key 10-3 victories over Saginaw Valley State and North Dakota. Against Saginaw Valley, GVSU avenged its only loss in two years. The victory over North Dakota avenged the Lakers' loss to the Fighting Sioux in the 2001 national

championship game.

"A couple of the games came down to it and were decided by a couple of points," Hendrix said. "My job was to kick field goals, and I was there for my team and wanted to help my team out any way I could.

"But it wasn't just me by any means. The defense had an unbelievable season and our offense was great too. I was just fortunate to kick as many field goals as I did."

As a result, Hendrix was selected to the American Football Coaches' Association All-American first team.

"I love kicking and loved being on the team," Hendrix said. "The coaches were great, the players were awesome and it was great to be part of the winning program that was fortunate enough to go on and win two national championships.

"I like seeing kids succeed. I like knowing I can make a difference with challenged kids and help them out and see them grow and get better."

Other members of the GVSU football team in education programs include Paul Cummings (physical education), Scott Greene (group studies history), Austin Malloy (history, secondary education), John Smith (physical education), Chris VanStrein (history, secondary education) and Matt Yoches (physical education).

"I'm in a couple of education classes with a couple teammates," Hendrix said. "They all love teaching too."



David Hendrix

Shinsky Inducts NFL Hall Of Famers For New Orphanage Project

John Shinsky is at it again. And this time, the School of Education's director of Leadership and Human Services has enlisted the help of some NFL Hall of Famers to provide some assistance.

Shinsky recently completed a four-year project updating and re-building an orphanage in the impoverished city of Metamoros, Mexico. That project -- known as the City of Children or Ciudad De Los Ninos -- was completed in 2003 and houses 100 children.

Now, the John and Cindy Shinsky Charitable Foundation has secured the land for a brand-new facility, which will be built adjacent to the City of Children project and will house an additional 140 children.

"This project is different in a couple of ways," Shinsky said. "First of all, the other project was built and designed based on supporting another orphanage, which was in very bad condition. We made it a better site.

"This one is a brand new site that will serve the whole city. It has no ties to the other orphanage."

Joining Shinsky in the venture are NFL Hall of Famers Joe DeLamielleure, Anthony Munoz and Elvin Bethea. DeLamielleure was an integral part of the Buffalo Bills' famed "Electric Company" offensive line that paved the way for record-breaking runs by O.J. Simpson. Bethea enjoyed a Hall of Fame career with the Houston Oilers and Munoz was an All-Pro offensive lineman with the Cincinnati Bengals.

"We're in the process of finalizing the land transfer and I just can't wait until we can start breaking ground," Shinsky said.



John Shinsky

Shinsky, who was raised in an orphanage until age 12, secured 17 acres of land for the new project through donations. He said the next goal is to raise an additional \$1 million that will be earmarked for construction.

"We already have building plans laid out and we're in the process of finalizing those with the costs figured in," Shinsky said. "It's going to be a facility to house orphans with dorms for orphans, an educational technology center, a medical component, a warehouse, dining hall, kitchen area and laundry area. We will use the remaining part for expansion, a garden area and a recreational area."

Shinsky's connection with DeLamielleure goes back to his days as a defensive lineman for the Michigan State University football team. Shinsky and DeLamielleure -- along with another Hall of Famer, Brad VanPelt -- started as sophomores at MSU. Shinsky was an Academic All-American at Michigan State.

"Those two went into the NFL, and I choose to get into education," Shinsky said.

And now they are putting their talents and resources back together to make life a little bit better for orphans.