



chasing legends

Ryan Powell tries to live up to a legacy as the new No. 22. John Desko replaces the legendary Roy Simmons Jr. as coach. It's the dawn of a new age in Syracuse men's lacrosse, but the goal remains the same: the quest for the seventh national championship

Syracuse junior Ryan Powell and legendary No. 22s (top, left to right) Charlie Lockwood, Casey Powell and Gary Gait.

Lock & RELOAD

■ BY SEAN P PATRICK BOWLEY

The question was asked of Josh Ruhle, one of the four captains of the 1999 Syracuse men's lacrosse team. Actually, it was more of a statement thrown at him that perked his ears.

"Yeah, I think I was reading something about that recently," Ruhle said with a quick smile. "It kinda enlightened me a little bit. I was like, 'Hmmm. Maybe we should take care of a little business this year.'"

The business Ruhle spoke of was a glaring tidbit concerning this season's Orangemen: none of the players, not one, has ever tasted the nectar of a national championship.

It has been nearly four years since the last lacrosse team from Syracuse got to revel in a victory lap after the final game of the season. It is a championship lap, the kind of lap that resembles more of a light jog and where the NCAA plaque is passed back and forth like the Stanley Cup as the victors show off their prize to a stadium filled with admirers.

There has been 16 consecutive Final Fours for Syracuse, nine title games and six national championships. But since 1995, when Casey Powell burst onto the lacrosse scene as a freshman and helped the Orangemen win their sixth national title, Syracuse hasn't even sniffed a shot at the title. One goal separated Syracuse and last season's title game. But Princeton won the semifinals in New Brunswick, N.J., 11-10, and advanced to win its third-consecutive title.

If the disappointments from the loss weren't enough, the roof caved in some more. Roy Simmons Jr., the coach of 28 years, retired.

"After 40 years of a great ride," Simmons announced after being carried off on the shoulders of his last team, "maybe



Brian Totin /Staff Photographer

Matt Cutia, one of the top-returning scorers from the 1998 season, will have his hands full of defenders in 1999.

the fire in the belly is not what it was. But the torch is ablaze, believe me. It's glowing. And I'm passing it onto a wonderful guy, John Desko."

It's Desko's show, now. He is a man who has been with Simmons since 1979-nine years after Simmons Jr. took over for his father, the late Roy Simmons. "I remember when he got the job," said Desko, who was 13-year old growing up around the West Genesee High program when Simmons took over for his father. "He said he went into the locker room and look down at his father's shoes and said they were pretty big shoes to fill. Well, he's got some pretty big shoes, too. I just hope to accomplish a fraction of what he had."

"He's been my right-hand man," Simmons said. "Everything I have, he has. So my boys are in good hands."



Brian Totin /Staff Photographer

Jason Denicker is one of the many midfielders Syracuse will employ this season.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Lacrosse USA All Americans

FIRST TEAM

Attack – Scott Hochstadt, Sr, Maryland
Attack – Greg McCavera, Sr, Georgetown
Attack – **Ryan Powell, Jr, Syracuse**
Midfield – Scott Diggs, Sr, Duke
Midfield – Mark Frye, Sr, Loyola
Midfield – A.J. Haugen, Jr, Johns Hopkins
Midfield – Josh Sims, Jr, Princeton
Defense – Ryan Curtis, Jr, Virginia
Defense – Rob Doerr, Sr, Johns Hopkins
Defense – John Harrington, Sr, Princeton
Goal – Brian Carcaterra, Sr, Johns Hopkins

SECOND TEAM

Attack – John Grant, Sr, Delaware
Attack – Gewas Schindler, Sr, Loyola
Attack – Lorne Smith, Sr, Princeton
Midfield – Cory Kahoun, Sr, Butler
Midfield – Mike Battista, Jr, Loyola
Midfield – Brian Zeller, Jr, Maryland
Defense – Steve Card, Jr, Duke
Defense – Chris Lamy, Sr, Maryland
Defense – Kurt Lunkenheimer, Sr, Princeton
Goal – Kevin Healy, Jr, Maryland

HONORABLE MENTION

ATTACK – John Golaszewski, Sr, Bucknell; Jared Frood, Jr, Duke; Spencer Steele, Jr, Fairfield; Dylan Schlott, Sr, Johns Hopkins; Tim O'Shea, Sr, Loyola; Chase Martin, Jr, North Carolina; Chris Dusseau, Sr, Notre Dame; Pete Janney, Jr, Pennsylvania; Keith Cromwell, So, Rutgers; **Matt Cutia, Sr, Syracuse**; Kevin Sturm, Sr, Towson; Chris Turner, Sr, UMBC; Drew McKnight, Jr, Virginia; Tucker Radebaugh, Sr, Virginia.

MIDFIELD – Jed DeWick, Sr, Brown; Ben Focht, Sr, Butler; Pat Dutton, Sr, Cornell; Jim Bruder, Sr, Delaware; Doug Shanahan, So, Hofstra; Matt O'Kelly, Sr, Johns Hopkins; Todd Vizcarondo, Sr, Loyola; Justin Bowman, Sr, North Carolina; Greg Zytkowski, Jr, Ohio State; Jay Jalbert, Jr, Virginia.

DEFENSE – Marc Traverso, Sr, Delaware; Tim Knowles, Sr, Duke; Jeff Psaki, Jr, Harvard; Chad Donnelly, Jr, Navy; Todd Maher, Jr, North Carolina; Hamilton Pollard, Sr, Penn State; **Marshall Abrams, Jr, Syracuse**; Jason Quenzer, Sr, UMBC.

GOAL – Matt Enoch, Sr, Drexel; Brian Hole, Sr, Georgetown; Keith Cynar, Jr, Harvard; Andrew Hampson, Sr, UMBC; Joe Pilch, Sr, Yale.

Face-Off Lacrosse All Americans

FIRST TEAM

ATTACKMEN – Scott Hochstadt, Maryland; Greg McCavera, Georgetown; **Ryan Powell, Syracuse**; Tucker Radebaugh, Virginia; Lorne Smith, Princeton

MIDFIELDERS – Scott Diggs, Duke; Mark Frye, Loyola; A.J. Haugen, J.H.U.; Jay Jalbert, Virginia; Josh Sims, Princeton

DEFENSEMEN – Ryan Curtis, Virginia; Rob Doerr, J.H.U.; John Harrington, Princeton; Chris Lamy, Maryland; Kurt Lunkenheimer, Princeton

GOALIE – Brian Carcaterra, J.H.U.

SECOND TEAM

ATTACKMEN – **Matt Cutia, Syracuse**; Dan Denihan, J.H.U.; Drew McKnight, Virginia; Matt O'Shea, Loyola; Dylan Schlott, J.H.U.

MIDFIELDERS – Mike Battista, Loyola; Greg Hubschmann, Georgetown; Matt O'Kelly, J.H.U.; Todd Vizcaronda, Loyola; Brian Zeller, Maryland

DEFENSEMEN – Steve Card, Duke; Tim Knowles, Duke; Todd Maher, U.N.C.; Hamilton Pollard, Penn State; Jason Quenzer, U.M.B.C.

GOALIE – Kevin Healy, Maryland

FACE-OFF MIDDLE – Brian Haggerty, Maryland

THIRD TEAM

ATTACKMEN – Jared Frood, Duke; John Grant, Delaware; Chase Martin, U.N.C.; Gewas Shindler, Loyola; Kevin Sturm, Towson; Chris Turner, U.M.B.C.

MIDFIELDERS – Chris Berrier, Princeton; Justin Bowman, U.N.C.; Alex Mitchell, Hobart; Todd Paradise, Towson; Doug Shanahan, Hofstra; Rob Torti, Princeton

DEFENSEMEN – Casey Connor, Maryland; Chad Donnelly, Navy; Peter Ragosa, Virginia; **Josh Ruhle, Syracuse**

GOALIE – Brian Hole, Georgetown

HONORABLE MENTION

ATTACKMEN – Keith Cromwell, Rutgers; Spencer Ford, Towson; John Golaszewski, Bucknell; Pete Janney, Penn; Kevin Lavey, Delaware; Jeff Sonke, U. N. C.; Spencer Steele, Fairfield; Scott Urick, Georgetown

MIDFIELDERS – Steve Austin, Army; Jim Bruder, Delaware; Jeremy Carey, U. N. C.; **Josh Coffman, Syracuse**; Conor Denihan, J. H. U.; Jed Dewick, Brown; Pat Dutton, Cornell; Nick Hartofilis, Duke; Cory Kahoun, Butler; Dan Marohl, U.M.B.C.; Jay Negus, UMass; John O'Donnell, Duke

DEFENSEMEN – **Marshall Abrams, Syracuse**; Anderson Bell, Georgetown; John Ciliberto, Delaware; Austen Gardiner, Hobart; Jeff Psaki, Harvard; Brendan Shook, J. H. U.; Taro Yoshitome, Bucknell

GOALIES – Matt Breslin, Duke; Jim Brown, Loyola; Strider Dickson, Brown; Matt Enoch, Drexel; Andrew Hampson, U.M.B.C.; Mickey Jarboe, Navy; Kevin Keenan, Penn State; Joseph Pilch, Yale; Corey Pophan, Princeton; Matt Schroeder, Penn

Desko has been with Simmons for every title run. Simmons left his long-time assistant with the keys to a lacrosse Porsche-but it is one that lost Powell, 1998's national player of the year, and a team picked to finish a mere fourth this season.

"You come to Syracuse to win a national championship," Ruhle says. "And I can guarantee these guys are going to come out 110 percent every day to get that goal."

The seeds still remain.

ATTACK

"I don't think our goals have changed," Desko says. "Our goals at Syracuse University have always been the same: to win a national championship."

But to do that, Desko has to find a way to make up the 78 points of offense generated by Powell, considered to be one of the best lacrosse players ever. Potentially, Desko, has enough offense from Casey's brother, **Ryan Powell**, a third-team All-American in his own right, but a player expected to fill the vacuum left from his brother's graduation.

He'll no doubt be the man with a bulls-eye on his chest. "That's what I want," Ryan says. "I think I've earned it. When the game is on the line, I'd like the ball to be in my stick."

Powell says he dropped about 15 lbs. since last year, a byproduct of both the heavy expectations put on him and the heavy weights Casey makes him lift. The two still work out together when Casey gets time from the professional circuits.

Ryan, who has averaged just as many assists (53) as he does goals in his two years at Syracuse, says he would rather be more of a feeder than a scorer. He's got some good options. Behind the Powell brothers Captain **Matt Cutia** was Syracuse's third-leading scorer on the team (39 goals, 11 assists) after moving from midfield to run alongside the Powells. After playing most of his three years at Syracuse, Desko says Cutia has become ambidextrous and doesn't have a week side. Cutia came on strong at the end of last season, scoring 16 goals in SU's last-three games. **Devin Darcangelo**, though he began 1998 with a bang (nine goals in two games) he finished with just 20 goals for the season but is moving back to attack.

Some of the Orangemen admitted they might have leaned on Casey a bit too much. Now, Desko says, the offense should be more by committee. "We really want to stress more of the six-on-six than the individual," he says. The thought is this: take away the opponent's ability to double team.

"We're not going to ask Ryan to do all the things we asked Casey to do," Desko says. "With Cutia and him, you have as good a unit as we have out there and Devin Darcangelo, in the third spot, is a good finisher who's got some experience."

MIDFIELD

Depth, says Desko, is what has ailed the Syracuse midfield these past years, which is why both Powell brothers were counted on to fill in the gaps at both positions when needed, and so was Cutia. As this seasons approached, there seemed to be a lot more depth than usual at the position.

But Syracuse took a hit recently. **Michael Springer**, a freshman who appeared to be one of the impact midfielders is gone, suspended by the University



Brian Totin /Staff Photographer

Harvey Sakran (above) and the Syracuse defense will try to improve their nine goals-against average and try to become a dominant defense the Orangemen can hang a championship on.

along with defensemen **John Glatzel** and **Tom Nee** for their alleged role in the burglary of Manley Field House two weeks ago. Springer was supposed to have played zone-breaker, but the role will have to go to another. "Going into our first scrimmage we felt we had a lot of things in place," Desko said last week. "This kind of threw a monkey wrench in there when we had to do some substitutions with some guys we weren't use to going with."

Matt Caione, a long-haired product of Yorktown, N.Y., the same school that produced former Orangemen Rob Kavovit and Paul Carcaterra, is the top-returning scorer on the midfield, now that Ira Vanterpool is gone. Caione scored 12 points last season and could be the scorer Desko is looking for.

Regardless, the face of the 1999 midfield is, actually, two faces-it just looks like the same one. Twins **Chris** and **Jeff Cordisco**, who were both named captains, will start. Both played the role of substitute in the years following their transfer from Western Maryland after their freshman seasons but have no doubt been acquainted with their certain styles. "They're joined at the hip," says assistant coach Roy Simmons III. "They're together all the time."

Though neither have started, it won't exactly be Tweedle-Dee and Tweedle-Dum running the outskirts of the Syracuse offense, Simmons says. "The book is out on them that they're not much of a threat," he says. "But teams will find out in a hurry that these guys are major threats."

Senior **Jason Denicker** should be back as SU's primary faceoff man, he won 58 percent of faceoffs on a unit that won 41 more faceoffs than its opponents. Senior **Matt Alexander**, junior **Tim Byrnes** and sophomore **Brian Solriday** will all contribute to help Desko get the starters and depth he'll need for the group.

DEFENSE

The first thing that everybody noticed about senior captain, walk-on and monster **John Ruhle** was that his hair had gone making him look more like a bull than the 6-foot-5, 230 pound defenseman he is. Is this more intimidation? "Naw," Ruhle says. "I just felt it was time for a different look."

The old adage about the 500-pound gorilla is apropos for Ruhle, who will team up with Onondogan defenseman **Marshall Abrams**, who has this thing for grabbing a groundball on the defensive side and speeding toward the opponent's goalie. There's a mentality there that, Ruhle says, was missing from SU defense's past. "I think, in past years, we might have been a little bit passive," Ruhle says. "This year we're looking to get a little more aggressive, playing a little more takeaway, maybe get some fast-breaks out of that, get it going the other way, score a lot of goals. And we're still looking to shrink down our goals-against average."

Last season, Syracuse's goals-against average drastically improved. The Orangemen went from allowing over 11 goals a game in 1997, to just over nine in 1998. Still, it fell apart, at times. Most notably while trying to compensate for the loss of former captain (and, incidentally, a walk-on) **Chris McCartan**. In Ruhle, Syracuse will have the kind of leadership only a determined walk-on (like McCartan) provided. It appeared the defense might have had enough bodies, as well. To fill McCartan's spot the Orangemen inserted Glatzel. He and Nee filled in admirably down the stretch, but because of the aforementioned suspensions, neither will be there for Syracuse.

Instead, Desko and the coaches will go to freshman **Solomon Bliss** is getting a lot of early praise. He'll team with **Devin Ocker** man, **Harvey Sakran**, **Brian Herloski** and **Joe Ceglia** to give Ruhle the defensive firepower he'd like to see.

1999 USILA
Preseason Coaches Poll

Rnk	Team	Pts.	1	2	3
1	Princeton	981	28	13	5
2	Johns Hopkins	893	10	8	9
3	Loyola	883	6	12	8
4	Syracuse	863	3	6	12
5	Virginia	843	1	2	4
6	Duke	782	1	2	4
7	Maryland	769	1	3	5
8	Georgetown	673	1		
9	North Carolina	571			
10	Hofstra	433			
11	UMBC	386			
12	Hobart	353			
13	Massachusetts	308			
14	Navy	303			
15	Brown	241			
16	Penn State	240			
17	Butler	231			
18	Towson	219			
19	Delaware	154			
20	Harvard	139			
21	Cornell	131			
22	Notre Dame	124			
23	Rutgers	102			
24	Army	92			
25	Penn	25			

Shadow BOXER

By snatching No. 22 from the shelf, Ryan Powell – already burdened with living up to his brother's legacy at Syracuse – will have to contend with other legends as well.



Brian Totin /Staff Photographer

Now that his brother, Casey, has graduated, Ryan Powell is Syracuse's marquee name with lacrosse's marquee number.

■ BY SEAN PATRICK BOWLEY

RYAN POWELL, the new No. 22, says the pressure is getting to him.

Yeah, that Ryan Powell—a man who has lived most of his recent life in the middle of a nuclear winter caused by the long, imposing shadow of his older brother's accomplishments, his older brother's stature and his older brother's reverence, says he's having trouble dealing with it all.

His brother, of course, is Casey Powell, a two-time player-of-the-year who opponents feared and fans adored. Casey was a lacrosse player so talented that Maryland coach Dick Edell once referred to him as, "the best lacrosse player in the world." The world. And now that Casey has graduated, the world falls onto Ryan Powell's shoulders as if he were mistaken for Atlas. The burden of leading a group of Orangemen who have never tasted the nectar of a national championship is on Ryan's hands.

"He's got some big shoes to fill," says Josh Ruhle, one of the four captains on the 1999 Syracuse men's lacrosse team. "But if anyone is capable of doing it, it's him."

But Ryan is a little hesitant. He says he's not the godly player that his brother proved to be during his four-year run as

Syracuse's resident gunslinger. "It's tough being compared to him," Ryan says. "He's a great lacrosse player." Casey is no longer here. All eyes are falling on Ryan. The world is starting to crush him well before any head-hunting defensemen have the chance.

The circumstance, however, is nothing new to Ryan. In fact, it is eerily similar to the day Casey packed his bags and headed south from the small town of Carthage to seek his fortunes in the lacrosse mecca that is Syracuse. Ryan, without his brother by his side, played for two more years at Carthage. He did well for himself, compiling 438 career points and had 69 goals and 68 assists in his senior year at Carthage. But even though he compiled quite a resume at Carthage, Casey still owned all of the school records and Ryan



Brian Totin /Staff Photographer

"He's got some big shoes to fill," senior captain Josh Ruhle says of Powell. "But if anyone is capable of doing it, it's him."

still felt haunted by his brother's specter. Four years later those same feelings are returning.

"It's very much similar," Ryan says. "At first I didn't know how to react. I started questioning myself...and I think I'm doing some of that now."

If that's true, then why, oh why, does Ryan Powell personal-

ly add more stones to his already cumbersome load by taking Casey's number, 22, the digits that imply greatness at Syracuse University?

Ryan's decision to take the number was by fiat, not consen-

SEE POWELL, PAGE B8



Brian Totin /Staff Photographer

Powell, shown here last season wearing the No. 1 jersey he wore in his first two seasons, has joined an elite group by deciding to wear 22—Syracuse lacrosse's most revered jersey.

Ryan by the numbers...

	GP/GS	Shots	G	A	Pts.	GBs	Shot Pct.
1998	14/14	83	37	36	73	43	.446
1997	14/14	35	16	17	33	29	.457
Totals	28/28	118	53	43	106	72	.449

Career Highs

Goals— 5 (vs. Virginia in 1998 NCAA Quarterfinals)
Assists — 6 (vs. Georgetown, 1998)
Points — 8 (4 goals, 4 assists vs. Yale in Boca Raton Fla. 1998)

All-American Teams

1998— Third-Team All American, Attack
1997— Honorable Mention, Midfield

Legacy of a number?

By donning No. 22, Ryan Powell put himself on the short list of SU lacrosse legends. But just how weighty is the prospect of wearing 22? Here is a list of the most recent 22s in memory and their accomplishments.

	Pts.	All-American Teams				Titles	Player of the Year?
		1T	2T	3T	HM		
Casey Powell (1995-98) A/M	287 (1)	3	1	0	0	1	1997, 1998
Charlie Lockwood (1991-94) M	152 (19)	1	2	1	0	1	No
Gary Galt (1987-90) M	253 (5)	3	0	0	1	3	1988, 1989



Brian Totin/Staff Photographer

1999's marked man for opposing defenses will undoubtedly be Powell. The number and the name recognition will see to that.

Family Matters

John Desko may be taking over for a legendary coach, but as far as the Orangemen are concerned, he's family.

■ BY JASON WALDMAN

A Short List

Syracuse men's lacrosse coach John Desko is just the fourth coach in the school's history. Select company, especially when you look who has preceded him. Desko will be the first non-Simmons in 68 years to be the Orange head coach.

1916-30
Laurie Co x
120-38-14 .738
Four National Championships (USILA)
Considered the father of intercollegiate lacrosse.

1931-70
Roy Simmons
252-130-1 .659
As a young man, mistook a lacrosse stick for a crabbing net but was a quick learner and is now immortalized in the Syracuse community. Taught Jim Brown, considered one of the best lacrosse players of all time, how to play the game.

1971-1998
Roy Simmons Jr .
279-93-0 .750
Six National Championships (NCAA)
The man who brought Syracuse into the modern era with an artistic, swashbuckling offense that mirrored his talent for the fine arts and his motivational speeches. Made Syracuse the powerhouse it is today.

It was after a heartbreaking 11-10 loss to Princeton in the Final Four, Syracuse's 16th final four in a row. Roy Simmons, Jr., the man who had coached the Syracuse lacrosse team through 28 seasons and 6 national titles, gathered his players around. He told them that this was his last game as their head coach.

"I was surprised in a way," attacker Matt Cutia says, a season later, "but part of me wasn't surprised because we'd heard rumors the last two years. We knew he would do it within the next couple of years. We just thought he might try and hold on for one more championship."

Simmons then told them who would be replacing him. It was a guy who was standing right there in the huddle with them. A guy that everybody on that team knew almost, if not as well as Simmons.

It was at that moment that the torch was passed. The Simmons era had come to a close after 68 seasons and the Desko era had begun.

John Desko, who has been on the Syracuse coaching staff for 19 years as Simmons' top assistant, now takes over. To say that he has big shoes to fill is an understatement. Simmons won 290 games and had a .751 winning percentage over his 28 seasons.

But Desko was behind a lot of that success. He joined the staff in 1980 and helped get 229 of those wins. During Desko's time at Syracuse, the Orangemen have an astounding .842 winning percentage. He also has been a part of all six national titles and the string of 16 straight Final Four appearances. Because of that, the players really have a certain comfort level with Desko.

"There's not much of a difference at all (between Simmons and Desko)," Cutia said. "It's pretty much the same philosophy. It's not like we got a new coach. Coach Desko's been an assistant here for 19 years, so he know the methodology. He knows what this team's all about."

The transition period actually started before last season. Simmons slowly gave more responsibilities to Desko. That made the change of coaches that much easier to accept.

"It's been an interesting transition," Desko said. "I think a lot of people have really appreciated the transition. It's been a pretty smooth transition so far, because we're not



Steve Parker /SU Athletic Communications



Brian Totin /1995 file photograph

Above: For the first time in six decades, a Simmons is not the head man of the Syracuse Men's Lacrosse team. John Desko, however, will try to hold the program to it's highest standards.

Left: Roy Simmons Jr., a man endeared by his players, left the program last summer as one of the greatest lacrosse coaches in history.

SEE DESKO, PAGE B8



Steve Parker /SU Athletic Communications

After saving Syracuse in the semi-finals of the 1998 NCAA Lacrosse Tournament, sophomore goalie Robbie Mulligan will try to hone those skills for a 1999 title run.

Mouth's cage

Robbie Mulligan will have to be known more for his cagework than for his 'mouth' if Syracuse is going to be successful.

■ BY DAVE SCHOENHOL T

May 23, 1998 was supposed to be another ho-hum day in the goaltending career of redshirt freshman Orangemen goalie Rob Mulligan.

Forget that Syracuse Lacrosse was in another NCAA tournament gunning for a 16th straight Final Four. Disregard the fact that included in the attendance of 8,841 that day at Hofstra University was Robbie's mom and dad and countless other friends and family who had watched him star in the cages at nearby Farmingdale High School. The lacrosse gods just did not have this day planned to be Rob Mulligan's coming out party.

Or did they?

Bitter rivals Syracuse and Virginia were all set to tangle and Mulligan was most likely sit in the sweltering heat on sidelines and admire his broken thumb as fifth year senior and star goalie Jason Gebhardt attempted

to stop the Cavaliers. Mulligan had only seen action in half of the Orangemen's games last season, making the best of his opportunities with 14 saves. Not even a rookie coach, let alone a coaching legend like Roy Simmons, Jr., would throw a freshman into the most important game of the season, not even if the pope was in the stands cheering him on.

With 2:29 left in the second half and the Orangemen being doubled up by the Cavaliers 12-6, even the great Simmons was left groping for answers. Enter Mulligan, a 5-foot-10, 180 pound ball of fire waiting to be thrown. You could almost imagine the goalie thinking in his head like Rudy of Notre Dame, "Put me in coach, I can do it!"

Simmons put him in all right, and the rest is what dreams are made of. A save here, a save there, and a stick to the face of Cavalier All-American Jay Jalbert, an old high school friend, was enough to pump up Casey Powell and crew as SU powered through Virginia for one of the greatest comebacks in NCAA history. The final score, by the way, was 17-14 SU, with Mulligan recording nine saves and only allowing two goals in close to a half of action. Virginia scored none in the fourth quarter.

"It was definitely the biggest moment of my career because I had my family in the stands, and I was heavily recruited by Virginia too," Mulligan says. "Things just didn't rub in the right way, it was not a personal thing, but it felt real good to shut them down."

Flash forward to 1999 where Mulligan is now the man and SU's hopes for a steady backstop to lead them to a 17th-straight Final Four hinges on one superhuman per-

formance put together on one hot afternoon in May.

"There's obviously a lot of pressure on him because there have always been great goalies here," says SU star attackman Ryan Powell. "But I think he's gonna do a heck of a job. We're just going to have to take it one step at a time and slowly build his confidence."

What the Orangemen will lose in experience with not having Jason Gebhardt in the nets, they will gain in charisma with the always chatty Mulligan directing and shouting at his team. New Head Coach John Desko lamented at the fact that this will be the first year without experience in goal, but he likes what Mulligan has to offer.

"When you lose Gebhardt, you lose all that experience. He was a fifth year player and for a goalie you can usually correlate experience with ability, so I think that's one

SEE MULLIGAN, PAGE B8

robbie mulligan

POWELL

■ Continued from Page B5

sus, which was the tradition at Syracuse. Usually the best of the incoming freshmen gets the jersey. But that didn't mean everyone disagreed when the first hands to grab a hold of Syracuse's No. 22 jersey were the hands of another Powell. "If anyone was to get it," Ruhle says, "it should have been him. He's obviously very capable and deserving of wearing that number."

It didn't come as much of a surprise to Casey. "I kinda knew he wanted it," Casey explains just after Ryan first unveiled his new number at the Great Pumpkin Stickout in October, the culmination of what lax aficionados endearingly refer to as 'Fall Ball'. "I was kind of hoping he would."

At first, Ryan was a little tenta-

tive about asking his brother for the number. Casey's silk jersey marked with the legendary No. 22 was back on the shelf after his college career came to a close after Syracuse's 14-13 loss to Princeton in the semifinals of the NCAA Tournament. But Casey made sure it wouldn't be for long. Before any freshman could even take his first breath on campus, the number was spoken for. Casey told his brother he wanted him to have it. And so, the younger Powell had dibs.

"We were in a little bit of dilemma there," Syracuse lacrosse coach John Desko says. "We normally picked out a freshman and just taken that No. 22 and thrown it at him. At the beginning of the year we were asking the kids about numbers and we were contemplating number 22 when number one, Ryan, ran over and picked up number 22, put down his number one and put on 22.

"It was kind of a relief because with all of these freshmen it was going to be a hard decision on who to throw that No. 22 jersey on and Ryan took the pressure off us, for now."

Instead, Ryan put all the pressure squarely on himself. There were, of course, some selfish reasons. "I didn't want anybody else to have it," he says with a smile. "And my little brother (Mike Powell, now a junior at Carthage and considered to be the best of all three) is coming up. I'm not sure he'll pick Syracuse but it would be nice to keep the number in the family for 10 years. We're shooting for that."

But the foremost reason is that the number is a motivational tool better than any drivel motivational speaker Tony Robbins could cook up for the junior. The expectations from fans and opponents who see Ryan trot onto a field wearing 22

will no doubt expect some extra magic.

"I think the pressure would still be there, whether I wore the number or not," Ryan says. "Casey knows I'm dealing with a lot of pressure. Because of all the questions...like the ones you're asking me right now, are all focused towards me being compared to him. And that's what I'm having trouble with. I just want to go out there and be my own person and try not to think about all the pressure. But it's always going to be there."

But even Casey is prone to prod Ryan about his newfound responsibilities. Not one of the current Orangemen have ever been on a national championship team. And that's something Casey never lets Ryan forget. Casey, remember, was on the last Syracuse team to win it all. That was in 1995.

"He's quick to rub it in," Ryan

says. "We'll talk about the season, he'll take me out to dinner. He's trying to motivate me to get this team to win one. He'll point to his ring. He'll wear it around and point at it and say: 'Don't you wish you had one of these?'"

Of course, he does. But then, he defies all the pressure and one-ups his brother. "I'm gonna get two," he says.

Then Ryan Powell, the new No. 22, thinks about all the pressure he felt so worried about. Apparently, it is gone for now. "I guess I'm getting a little more comfortable with it," he says. "I think I'm always going to be Casey's little brother. But I'm ready to take on the responsibility. When the game is on the line, I'm hoping the ball will be in my stick. I'm looking forward to that."

Spoken like a true 22.

DESKO

■ Continued from Page B6

changing a whole lot. As far as being the coach is concerned, it's been pretty easy so far."

Another part of what has made the transition from Simmons to Desko so easy is that there is still a Simmons on the sideline. It's Roy Simmons, III, the son of the former head coach.

"Coach Simmons decided to retire, so we brought in another Coach Simmons," Desko said. "We're really excited about Roy III being here. He's handling the defense right now."

Simmons III returns to Syracuse after being gone for seven years. He had been the lacrosse head coach and a guidance counselor at Baldwinsville High School since 1995. Simmons III said that he loved his job at Baldwinsville, but he felt drawn to the tradition.

"It was a tough decision. I was a guidance counselor in a great school district. I felt very comfortable with the job I was doing there," he said. "But my Dad warned me about a year ahead of time. He said that I was going to have to make a decision pretty soon as to whether I wanted to apply for this job or not. I thought about it long

and hard and thought about the tradition. I loved working here and loved the program. It was a very hard decision, but it was the right decision."

As for coming back to Syracuse with somebody new on the sidelines, Simmons III said that the only real adjustment anyone will have to make is Desko's sideline demeanor. Desko is known for blowing up at players and officials during the game.

"My father was always kind of the quiet good guy, and John was always the very animated, loud bad guy," Simmons III said. "He really can't do that now. He's made a nice transition himself from being that guy who gets in people's faces to get them going to being responsible and being calm on the sidelines and keeping things on an even keel."

And don't think that Simmons, Jr. has totally vanished from the Orangemen lacrosse scene. He has remained a visible icon to the Syracuse coaches, players, and fans.

"The old coach is going to be around quite a bit," his son said. "He comes to the office a couple times a week. He's always asking questions about how things are going on the field, so I'm sure when you show up here on Saturdays, you're going to see him. He'll prob-

ably hide up in the press box, but he'll definitely be here."

One of Simmons, Jr.'s greatest talents was his ability to come up with just the right thing to say to his players before he took the field.

"Your expectations are that he'll always have that comment or that quote for the guys," Simmons III said. "He had the gift for really getting people fired up before games and practices."

Desko said that that's what he will miss the most.

"I always miss the coach and his words of wisdom," he said. "But we got him in to talk to the team before the (Army) game, which was very good. We enjoyed that very much."

Asked what the legendary coach told his players, Desko laughed and said, "He just reminded them of what it meant to be a Syracuse lacrosse player and the tradition behind that."

That tradition appears to be in good hands. With an old coach offering his wise advice at every obstacle, a new coach that has helped to shape this program into a national powerhouse, and an assistant who has orange in his blood, it's no wonder most people believe that the Syracuse lacrosse team won't really miss a beat.

Or a Final Four, for that matter.

MULLIGAN

■ Continued from Page B7

thing we haven't had," Desko says. "Mulligan, though was our relief pitcher type-of-guy. He would go for a half, like the terrific game he had against Virginia, and fire up the team. Now, instead of being the relief pitcher he is the starter and he's done well in that role so far."

Mulligan will not have to do it all himself. SU has a balanced attack this year whose most focal point could be the defensemen in front of him.

"I think the defense has the ability and could be the leader of the team in terms of setting the tone," says mammoth senior co-captain and defenseman Josh Ruhle, who, along with junior Marshall Abrams, will patrol the grounds in front of Mulligan.

Add to the defense a strong midfield that includes the Cordisco twins, Jeff and Chris who have earned captains honors this year, plus an attack that features co captain and senior Matt Cutia and Powell, the Orangemen look to have reloaded quite nicely for the 1999 season.

Mulligan, however, won't likely cower in the background of all these established players. In fact, he might just be the most noticeable of the group.

Mulligan plays a different style than the notoriously low-key Gebhardt. Mulligan makes the game go his way. If anything is going to go wrong or right, Mulligan wants something to do with it-or say about it.

"I think that Rob has the ability to change a game

around just because he's so vocal and has just so much enthusiasm in goal," Powell says. "When he's screaming and hollering whether they're bad things or good, its only going to light a fire under our butts and make us work harder."

Mulligan will also have the job of training backup goalies Jason Golub and Bob Rust as Gebhardt has done with him. Ruhle feels confident that if Mulligan were to go down, Golub and Rust are capable relievers.

"If Robbie has an off day or something, which most likely won't happen, hopefully, then Bob and Jason are capable of coming in and making key saves," says Ruhle.

For now though, all intentions are that a redshirt sophomore, who has not ever ran the cage for more than 30 minutes in a game, will lead them through a 13 game season unscathed and charge into the Final Four with the same intensity that SU had last year.

To get through a grueling season with such high expectations, Mulligan will hope to capitalize on the experience and tutelage he got from the levelheaded Gebhardt.

"Gebby told me to be confident in there, above anything else," Mulligan says. "Don't think that it's always your fault, he would tell me. You could let up a soft goal, but be ready because the next save you make could be the biggest save of the game, or the season. If you let one in, big deal. If you have a bad day, just pick your head up and keep going after it, that's the way things should be."

1999 MEN'S LACROSSE SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY

13 (Sat.)	vs Army* (Scrimmage)	3:00 pm
20 (Sat.)	at Navy (Scrimmage)	TBA

MARCH

1 (Mon.)	RUTGERS	7:00 pm
6 (Sat.)	VIRGINIA*	3:00 pm
13 (Sat.)	vs. Yale (Boca Raton, FL)	1:00 pm
20 (Sat.)	at Johns Hopkins	3:00 pm
28 (Sun.)	at Towson State	1:00 pm

APRIL

3 (Sat.)	BROWN	1:30 pm
10 (Sat.)	at Loyola (MD)	1:00 pm

3 (Tues.)	CORNELL	7:00 pm
24 (Sat.)	PENNSYLVANIA	1:30 pm
25 (Sun.)	PRINCETON	1:00 pm
30 (Fri.)	at Massachusetts	7:30 pm

MAY

4 (Tues.)	at Hobart	4:30 pm
8 (Sat.)	at Georgetown	1:00 pm
15 (Sat.)	NCAA Tournament First Round	
22 & 23	NCAA Tournament Quarterfinals	
29 & 31	NCAA Finals at College Park, MD	

Home games in CAPS
* Double-header with SU Women's Lacrosse

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