

# All-Metro Football

## Undersized Johnson had big season

### YAHKEE JOHNSON

**School:** L.C. Bird **Year:** Senior

**Position:** Running back **Ht/Wt:** 5-7, 165

**The skinny:** Broke all sorts of rushing records at L.C. Bird, including most career yards (5,082), career touchdowns (82), yards in a game...

The strategy at L.C. Bird is no secret: The Skyhawks run the football. Whether it's first and 10 or third and long, odds are the ball will be placed in the running back's hands. Through the years, many good runners have come and gone from L.C. Bird. Two of them — Jason Snelling and Doug Chapman — have played in the NFL. Two more — John Taylor and Jason Vineyard — were named All-Metro players of the year. But the most recent back, Yahkee Johnson, may have been the most sensational of them all. He capped off two impressive seasons by being named the 2011 All-Metro player of the year. Bird coach David Bedwell says Johnson, a senior, is the best running back he's coached in his 12 years at the Chesterfield County school. "Not to take anything away from those other kids, but what he's done the past two seasons is just remarkable," Bedwell said. "He's got everything you want — except for the size." The story of Yahkee Johnson can't be told without mentioning his stature. At 5-foot-7, 160 pounds, he was one of the smallest players to take the field in the Central Region. No matter how talented a football player is, if he's small, there's a fear that he can't handle the rigors of college football, being slammed to the ground by 260-pound linebackers on every carry. Consequently, college recruiters are wary to take undersized players. So far, Johnson has four scholarship offers: Division II Shepherd and Concord, and Division I FCS Old Dominion and Delaware State. But he's waiting to see if any other higher-profile teams make a last



minute offer. If a college doesn't get the first player on its wish list, sometimes it extends an offer to its second choice. And Johnson hopes to be that guy. Bedwell does his best to advocate for Johnson, who could play running back, receiver or returner in college. "You're missing out," he tells recruiters. "He's not a kid who, physically, when you look at him, you wouldn't pick him to be on your football team. But when you pop in the tape and see how competitive he is and watch him in practice and watch him do all the things that he does ... they're missing out." And what he brings to a team extends beyond the field, Bedwell said. L.C. Bird has a group of special-needs students who wash the football team's uniforms. Johnson is the only member of the team who stops by to say hello and hang out with the kids. "It's his way of saying thanks," Bedwell said. Johnson doesn't view his size as something he lacks. Instead, he sees the elements that larger running backs don't have, such as elusiveness and speed. His size and

speed were the reason why defenders had so much trouble getting a clean hit on him. Even if they got him with one hand, Johnson would shuffle his feet, shift to one side and keep pushing until two or three tacklers closed in. Carrying the ball 30 or 40 times a night, he racked up tremendous numbers: 2,509 rushing yards and 37 rushing TDs (both school records). He also set the mark for rushing yards in a game with 302 yards, previously set by Snelling at 285. "It's amazing, man" to be compared to Jason Snelling, Johnson said. "Because he's in the NFL doing big things, and I'm just in high school."

### Past All-Metro Players of the Year

2010: Brendon Riddick, Hermitage

2009: Airek Green, Thomas Dale

2008: Adam Morgan, Dinwiddie

2007: Ju-Ju Clayton, Hermitage

2006: Russell Wilson, Collegiate

2005: Russell Wilson, Collegiate

2004: Victor Harris, Highland Springs

2003: Jerrett Brown, Hopewell

2002: John Taylor, L.C. Bird

2001: Tee Rogers, Varina

# Offense



**GERARD JOHNSON** School: Meadowbrook Year: Junior  
Position: QB Ht/Wt: 5-10, 180

**The skinny:** Threw for 1,299 yards, 16 TDs and three interceptions, leading Meadowbrook to a 9-1 record. He ran for 10 touchdowns and had the highest passer rating in the Metro area, 186.82.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Michael Vick."



**RAY BROWN** School: Powhatan Year: Senior  
Position: Running back Ht/Wt: 5-10, 180

**The skinny:** He rushed for 1,940 yards and 26 touchdowns, carrying the Indians to a Jefferson District title in their inaugural season.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "My grandfather (Cleveland Johnson) and my brother (Darnell Johnson)."



**JOHN THOMPSON** School: John Marshall Year: Junior  
Position: Running back Ht/Wt: 5-6, 170

**The skinny:** The elusive back went for 1,315 yards and 13 touchdowns. Was key to John Marshall's resurgence, as the Justices went 7-3, their best record since xxxx.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Chris Johnson. We have the same time of game."



**DERRICK GREEN** School: Hermitage Year: Junior  
Position: Running back Ht/Wt: 6-2, 215

**The skinny:** The main offensive weapon for the region champion, he rushed 1,493 yards and 19 touchdowns. The Colonial District player of the year, he has more than a dozen scholarship offers and is one of the most heavily recruited juniors in the area.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Eddie George. He was my idol growing

up."



**DRAKAR HARVELL** School: Dinwiddie Year: Senior  
Position: Wide receiver Ht/Wt: 6-0, 195

**The skinny:** A repeat first-team selection, Harvell led the region with 75 receptions for 840 yards and seven touchdowns. On defense, had 35 tackles (24 solo), two interceptions and a sack.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Michael Jackson."



**WILL MCCOMBS** School: Atlee Year: Senior

**Position:** Wide receiver **Ht/Wt:** 6-3, 175

**The skinny:** Snagged 58 receptions for 821 yards and eight touchdowns in Atlee's pass-heavy offense. His 82.1 receiving yards per game led the region. Helped Raiders reach Div. 5 region title game.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Randy Moss. Because he's a great player and I know he can teach me a lot."



**NIGEL WILLIAMS** School: Benedictine Year: Senior

**Position:** Tight end **Ht/Wt:** 6-4, 263

**The skinny:** An overpowering blocker who was used as an H-back, fullback and tight end in the running game. Had 13 receptions for 169 yards and two TDs. On defense, had 57 tackles (34 solo), eight sacks and 20.5 tackles for loss. Will play defensive line at Virginia Tech.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "My great grandfather."



**TRES HUMPHREY** School: Thomas Dale Year: Senior

**Position:** Center **Ht/Wt:** 6-0, 265

**The skinny:** The top blocker for Thomas Dale, which rushed for 2,033 yards this year. Helped the Knights win the Central District and a playoff berth.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "John Randle. He's an undersized lineman like me."



**AUGIE CONTE** School: Blessed Sacrament Huguenot Year: Senior

**Position:** Tackle **Ht/Wt:** 6-6, 270

**The skinny:** The large, dominant lineman cleared the way for the Knights' run-first offense, which carried the ball more than 2,300 yards this year. BSH running backs went to his side about 80 percent of the time. Had 49 tackles on defense. Plans to grayshirt before enrolling at Virginia Tech.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Art Donovan. He's a funny guy."



**COLE STOUT** School: Atlee Year: Senior

**Position:** Tackle **Ht/Wt:** 6-2, 265

**The skinny:** Given a 92 percent grade by his coaches and had 26 pancake blocks. On defense, had 70 solo tackles 20 assisted tackles and seven sacks.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Vince Lombardi. He was a pioneer of the NFL and my favorite coach."



**KEVIN JENNINGS** School: Hermitage Year: Senior

**Position:**Guard **Ht/Wt:** 6-3, 270

**The skinny:** A great trap blocker and a dominating physical lineman who helped clear space for Derrick Green. Played through a hurt ankle in the first round of the playoffs. Has scholarship offers from VMI and Norfolk State.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Michael Strahan. He's my favorite

football player of all time."



**OLIVER WRIGHT** School: L.C. Bird Year: Junior

**Position:** Guard **Ht/Wt:** 5-9, 255

**The skinny:** Led the Skyhawks with 42 pancake blocks and pushed defenders backward to make room for Yahkee Johnson.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "My dad."



**MAURICE CANADY** School: Varina Year: Senior

**Position:** Utility **Ht/Wt:** 6-1, 175

**The skinny:** Switched from wide receiver to quarterback in the third game of the season. Threw for 812 yards, 13 TDs and four interceptions. Rushed for 1,005 yards and 14 touchdowns. Led the Blue Devils through a stretch where they scored 42 points or more in six straight games. Was named Capital District player of the year. Will attend Virginia.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Scarface (from the Al Pacino movie), because of his different views on life."

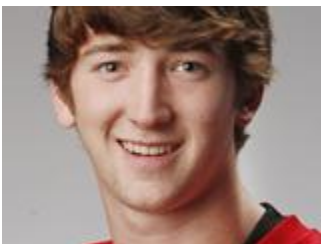


**SAM ROGERS** School: Hanover Year: Junior

**Position:** Utility **Ht/Wt:** 6-0, 205

**The skinny:** Started season at QB, rushed for 696 yards and 10 touchdowns and passed for 366 yards and three touchdowns. Missed two (????) games because of a dislocated elbow. Returned as a receiver and had 249 receiving yards and one TD.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:**"Tim Tebow."



**COLBY COOKE** School: Goochland Year: Senior

**Position:**Kicker **Ht/Wt:** 6-3, 195

**The skinny:** Kicked 17 field goals, tied for second most in VHSL history. Longest was 51 yards, which came in Div. 2 state championship game loss to Gretna. Had 32 touchbacks in 41 kickoffs and made 63 PATs. Will attend Vanderbilt on scholarship.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Michael Husted. He's been a long-time

kicking coach of mine."



**DEVIN WOODLEY** School: Meadowbrook Year: Senior

**Position:** Returner **Ht/Wt:** 5-9, 170

**The skinny:** Had three touchdowns on punt returns of 71, 72 and 85 yards. Averaged 21 yards per punt return. Also returned an interception 108 yards for a touchdown.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Beyonce. Because she's beautiful."

## Second team All-Metro Football - Offense

**Quarterbacks:** Malcolm Bell, Henrico, 6-1, 172, Sr.; Michael Birdsong, Matoaca, 6-5, 225, Sr.

**Running backs:** Tyvonte Loney, Meadowbrook, 5-10, 170, Sr.; Lawrence Jones, Hanover, 5-8, 180, Jr.; D.J. Reid, Thomas Dale, 6-1, 195, Jr.; Evan Hinkle, Deep Run, 5-11, 210, Jr.

**Wide receivers:** Davonne Johnson, King William, 5-7, 160, Sr.; Andrew Earley, Henrico, 6-1, 175, Sr.; Tim Thaniel, Clover Hill, 6-0, 180, Sr.; Charlie Meyer, Benedictine, 6-2, 205, Sr.

**Tight end:** Omar Howard, Midlothian, 6-1, 205, Sr.

**Line:** Jared Netto, Cosby, 6-0, 220, Sr.; Andre-Miles Redmond, Hermitage, 6-3, 265, Sr.; Darius Garcia, Manchester, 6-5, 275, Sr.; Lavonte Hights, Meadowbrook, 6-3, 270, Sr.; Jerry Gibson, L.C. Bird, 6-0, 265.

**Kicker:** Ricky Segers, Henrico, 5-11, 170, Sr.

## Honorable Mention All-Metro Football - Offense

**Quarterback:** Dane Forlines, Mills Godwin, Jr.; Quinton Taylor, Thomas Dale, Sr.

**Running backs:** P.T. Dixon, Varina, Jr.; C.J. Stancil, Cosby, Sr.; Jainard Lambert, Cosby, Sr.; Chris Bullock, CVHAA, Jr.; Jerome Wright, Highland Springs, Sr.; Dashon Bowen, Hopewell, Sr.

**Receivers:** Shaq Williams, Atlee, Sr.; Triston Wright, Hermitage, Sr.; Nelson Harris, James River, Sr.; Willie Stubblefield, Highland Springs, Sr.; Raymon Minor, Patrick Henry, Jr.; Tevin Johnson, Matoaca, Sr.; Brandon Brown, Matoaca, Jr.

**Line:** Marcus Smith, Highland Springs, Sr.; Josh Hutto, Hanover, Jr.; Ronald Cunningham, Dinwiddie, Jr.; Dalton Lee, Thomas Dale, Sr. Dejuan White, John Marshall, Sr.; Marius Young, Hermitage, So.; Russell Munn, Lee-Davis, Jr.; Travis Barglof, Prince George, Sr.; William Jennings, John Marshall, Sr.

**Kickers:** John Stiebel, Hermitage, Jr.; Anthony Prevost, Thomas Dale, Sr., Cameron McCarthy, Clover Hill, Sr.

# Defense



**TYRELL CHAVIS** School: Varina Year: Senior

**Position:** Defensive line **Ht/Wt:** 6-4, 280

**The skinny:** One of the most dominating two-way players in the region, he had 39 solo tackles, 40 assisted, 12 sacks, 21 for loss and caused seven fumbles. He totaled a team-best 104 yards for loss over the course of the season. Was the Capital District co-player of the year. Will enroll at Virginia.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Kevin Hart."



**RAYNARD REVELS** School: Hermitage Year: Senior

**Position:** Defensive line **Ht/Wt:** 6-1, 220

**The skinny:** A three year starter for the Panthers' defense, he had 90 tackles, including 17 for loss, and 11 sacks. He holds the school's career record for sacks with 33.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Jennifer Lopez."



**TOREY PETTIS** School: L.C. Bird Year: Senior

**Position:** Defensive line **Ht/Wt:** 6-0, 220

**The skinny:** Had 34 solo tackles, 17 assisted, 11 for loss and six sacks. He caused one fumble and recovered another.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Ray Lewis."



**TYVAUGHN KIRBY-JOHNSON** School: L.C. Bird Year: Senior

**Position:** Defensive line **Ht/Wt:** 6-1, 210

**The skinny:** Had 29 solo tackles, 14 assisted tackles and 11 sacks. Recovered three fumbles and scored two touchdowns on defense.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Meagan Good."



**MIKE WITCHER** School: Hermitage Year: Senior

**Position:** Defensive line **Ht/Wt:** 6-3, 290

**The skinny:** Had 85 tackles, six for loss, four sacks and caused one fumble. His coach, Patrick Kane, said he can't be run blocked one on one. Witcher has a scholarship offer from Norfolk State.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Warren Sapp. So we can have an eating contest."



**DEON CLARKE** School: L.C. Bird Year: Senior

**Position:** Linebacker **Ht/Wt:** 6-2, 205

**The skinny:** A four-year starter on defense, he picked up 65 solo tackles, 35 assisted tackles and 19 tackles for loss. Was named Dominion District player of the year and is a repeat first-team All-Metro pick. Will attend Virginia Tech.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "My mom."



**SALVADOR ACOSTA** School: Hermitage Year: Senior

**Position:** Linebacker **Ht/Wt:** 5-10, 170

**The skinny:** Had 83 tackles, eight tackles for loss, two interceptions and four blocked punts, including a crucial blocked punt against L.C. Bird in the Div. 6 championship game. He holds the school's career record for blocked punts with 11. The region defensive player of the year, he was at the center of a first-string defense that allowed 17 points in 13 games.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "My mother."



**JESS MCLAUGHLIN** School: Goochland Year: Senior

**Position:** Linebacker **Ht/Wt:** 6-0, 190

**The skinny:** The James River District and Region B player of the year, he had 117 total tackles, including 21 for loss. He blocked three kicks, recovered four fumbles and forced six.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Jesus."



**D'VONTA DERRICOTT** School: Hermitage Year: Senior

**Position:** Linebacker **Ht/Wt:** 6-1, 210

**The skinny:** With strong sideline-to-sideline speed, he racked up 104 tackles, eight for loss, two sacks and one caused fumble. Has a scholarship offer from JMU.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Bernie Mac."



**MARCUS LOGAN-BAKER** School: Highland Springs Year: Junior

**Position:** Linebacker **Ht/Wt:** 5-11, 200

**The skinny:** Had 86 total tackles with eight for loss and six sacks. Forced three fumbles and recovered five. Was named Capital District co-player of the year.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "D'Ashawn Lewis," Highland Springs football player who passed away this year.



**JOEL CALEB** School: Clover Hill Year: Senior

**Position:** Defensive back **Ht/Wt:** 6-3, 205

**The skinny:** One of the most highly recruited players in the state and is currently uncommitted. Played six different positions. As a quarterback, he rushed for 747 yards and 12 touchdowns and threw for 846 yards and seven touchdowns. Will play in the U.S. Army All-American bowl. Coach Sean O'Hare says he'll be remembered as the best player Clover

Hill ever had.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Martin Lawrence. He's someone I think I'd find very humorous."



**DESMOND FRYE** School: Thomas Dale Year: Senior

**Position:** Defensive back **Ht/Wt:** 6-2, 170

**The skinny:** Had 46 tackles, 45 assisted and three interceptions. As a wide receiver, he caught 16 passes for 420 yards. Was the Central District's defensive player of the year. Will attend Virginia Tech.

leader."

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:**"Obama. He's inspirational and a



**MARTIN SMITH** School: Highland Springs Year: Senior

**Position:** Defensive back **Ht/Wt:** 5-8, 170

**The skinny:** Had 48 total tackles and returned four punts for a total of 99 yards.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "D'Ashawn Lewis."



**BRIAN BROWN** School: Hermitage Year: Junior

**Position:** Defensive back **Ht/Wt:** 6-2, 185

**The skinny:** With great range and big-hit ability, he had four interceptions and 20 tackles as a free safety. At receiver, he caught 22 passes for 517 yards and five touchdowns. Kane called him the best free safety he's ever coached.

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "LeBron James."



**THOMAS MEADOWS** School: Goochland Year: Senior

**Position:** Punter **Ht/Wt:** 6-1, 175

**The skinny:** Goochland allowed only 14 yards worth of punt returns all season because of the hang time on his kicks. Punted 26 times with an average of 41 yards per punt. A repeat All-Metro selection, he's headed to Purdue on scholarship.

punter who ever lived."

**If he could have dinner with anyone dead or alive:** "Ray Guy. He was probably the best

## **Second team All-Metro Football - Defense**

**Line:** Marcus Beckwith, Meadowbrook; Anthony Moore, Highland Springs; Nile Liverpool, Hermitage; Peyton Gryder, Clover Hill; Jack English, St. Christopher's.

**Linebackers:** Holland Fisher, Clover Hill; Connor Wingo-Reeves, Monacan; Javon Booth, Manchester; Larry Spears, Varina; Darius Spruill, Thomas Dale.

**Defensive backs:** Xavier Crocker, Hanover; Damian Jones, Hermitage; Tim Harris, Varina; Coleman DeHoff, Cosby; Zakell Johnson, Goochland.

**Punter:** Joseph Pulisic, Atlee.

## **Honorable Mention All-Metro Football - Defense**

**Line:** Thomas Morrisette, Mills Godwin, Sr.; Deante Monroe, Dinwiddie, Sr.; Tyler Powell, Cosby, So.; Matthew Haller, Goochland, Sr.; Patrick Sorey, Hanover, Sr.; Marshall Lee Munding, John Marshall, Sr.; Javion Ward, Meadowbrook, Sr.; Kaash McElroy, Midlothian; Robert de Wolff, Trinity Episcopal, Sr.

**Linebackers:** Sadarius Williams, Dinwiddie, So.; T.J. Dobrucky, Blessed Sacrament Huguenot, James Wall, John Marshall, Sr.; Jake Marten, Manchester, Sr.;

**Defensive backs:** Rahland Gordon, Hermitage; Dashaun Amos, Manchester, Sr.; Tyrell Eaton, Lee-Davis, Sr.; Jevontee Dortch, L.C. Bird; Lorenzo Fields, Thomas Dale, Sr.