

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? SCOTT MYERS

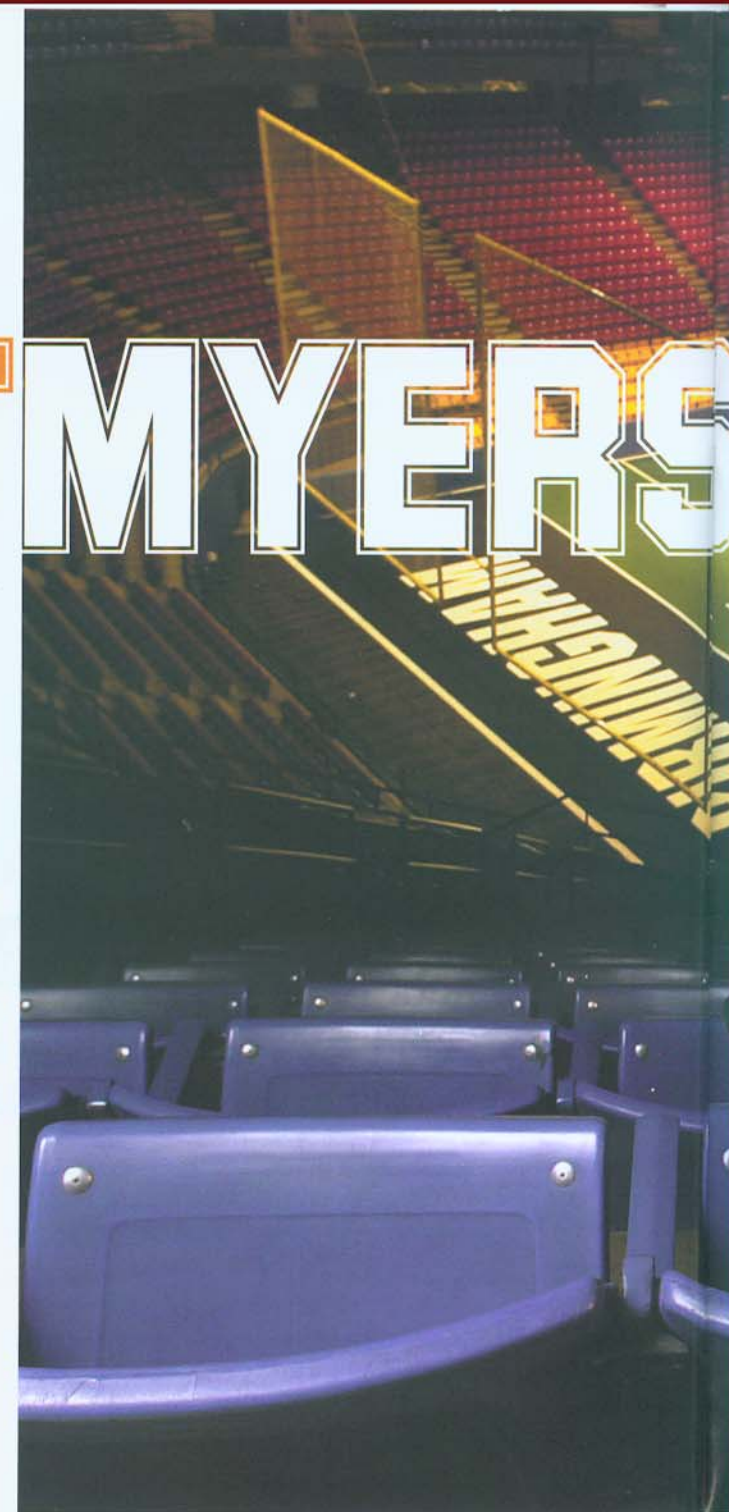
HEWITT-TRUSSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL
CLASS OF 1985

By Loyd McIntosh

Trussville area native and 1985 Hewitt-Trussville graduate Scott Myers went around the world before becoming one of the first locally produced owners of a professional sports franchise in the Magic City in modern memory. And when he says he went around the world, he literally means he went around the world. Myers became co-owner of the Birmingham Steeldogs of the Arena2 Football League this past January — a venture with his partner and Hueytown native Buddy King — less than a month after returning from a year hiatus ministering to homeless children in Costa Rica. But, before becoming a minor league sports tycoon and developing a ministry for Central America Street Children, Myers was a multi-sports high school athlete.

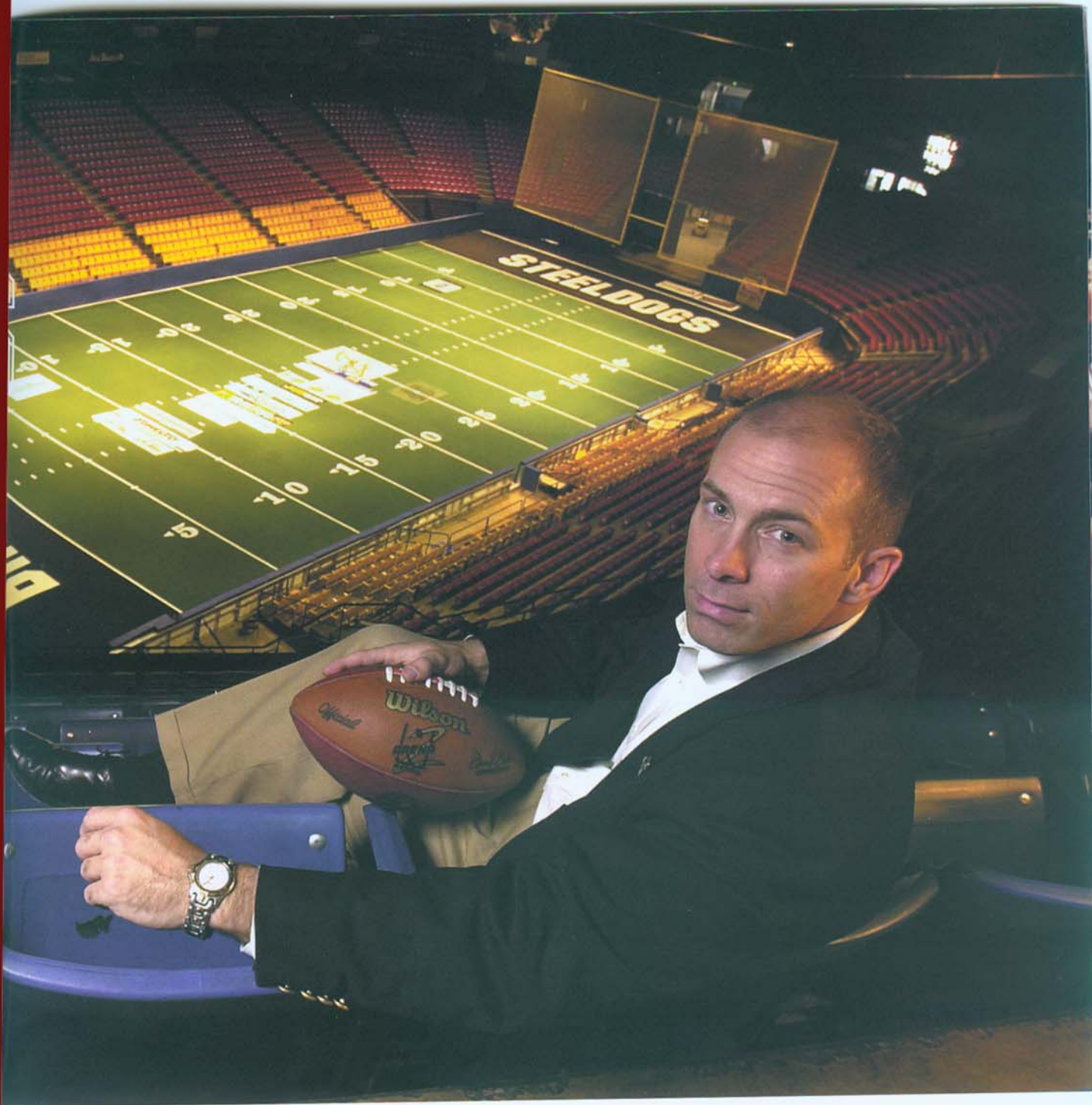
Myers played quarterback, defensive back and strong safety during his tenure with the Hewitt-Trussville Huskies in the mid 1980s. Myers was also a letterman on the basketball and baseball teams, but takes a certain amount of pride in the fact that he was a quarterback under head junior coach Jack Wood, who took over the program during Myers' junior season in 1983.

In the years following Myers' senior year, many great and popular athletes have played quarterback at Hewitt for Wood, including Mike Mordecai, an infielder with the Montreal Expos,



Jason Standridge, a first round draft pick for the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, former University of Alabama quarterback Jay Barker, who won a national championship with the Crimson Tide in 1992, and this year's Mr. Football and Auburn University recruit Brandon Cox.

Myers has been doing a fair amount of public speaking about his trip to Costa Rica and his ownership of the Steeldogs since his return, almost always bringing up his role in the great Hewitt-Trussville quarterback legacy.



"Hewitt has had so many great quarterbacks through the years that when I speak in public, I always say that I went to Hewitt-Trussville and played quarterback," Myers said. "Most people realize the talent that has played quarterback there. I always say 'all these great quarterbacks and great athletes and not one of these guys broke any of my quarterback records. Of course I didn't set any quarterback records, either.' That usually gets a laugh."

After high school, Myers played college football at Samford University in Birmingham for two full seasons before

hanging up his cleats to focus on his academics. He graduated from Samford with a degree in business in 1989 and landed a position in international sales with Amerex Corporation in Trussville.

After leaving Amerex, Myers spent almost a decade making a name for himself in the Birmingham sports scene. Myers worked in marketing for the Birmingham Bulls of the East Coast Hockey League until the time of that franchise's sale and eventual move to New Jersey. He was also involved in marketing for the Birmingham Fire of the World League of American Football from

1991-1992. It was during this time that he first met Buddy King and the idea of bringing Arena League Football was first germinated.

During the Fire's second and final season, the team went to play the Orlando Thunder. While in central Florida, Myers and King took in their first Arena Football League game between the Orlando Predators and the Tampa Bay Storm.

"We weren't sure what to expect because we had never seen Arena Football before, but we get to the arena and the place is packed and the people are going crazy and it's tons of fun," Myers said. "We look at each other and say to each other this would be great in Birmingham."

Several years later, the pair attempted to bring an expansion team to Birmingham, but the deal fell through in the 11th hour, forcing another dream to be put on hold.

"We had the money put together, but at the last minute, the money didn't come through and we lost the team. However, we were always interested in this idea and always felt that it could work in Birmingham," Myers said.

As his tenure with the Bulls was nearing an end, Myers felt the time was right to begin his street child ministry, something he had been praying about and seeking guidance for almost a decade.

"I always said 'one day I'd like to go back and do something about it,'" Myers said. "I said that for 10 years and then last year I finally had the opportunity to get away for a year and went to Costa Rica and spent a year working with street children in the city of San Jose."

A street child, according to Myers, is a child who lives on the street 24 hours a day, seven days a week. At the point Myers began his ministry, there were over 200 children living on the streets of San Jose, many of whom were native Nicaraguans. Extreme poverty and porous borders have led to an influx of immigration into Costa Rica from surrounding countries. While Costa Rica enjoys a fairly stable economy and political environment, compared to other Latin American

nations, the country's infrastructure has been overwhelmed and unable to handle the problem alone. Even though Costa Rica has a smaller number of street children than other Central American countries, Myers found a void in people and agencies providing assistance to the Costa Rican government and its escalating homeless child problem.

Myers worked in Costa Rica with a ministry organization called Mission to the World, which sets up street child ministries in Latin America. Myers flew to Costa Rica in December 2000 to help organize Mission to the World's Costa Rican street child ministry with the plan to return to Birmingham after one year.

"I basically went down there by myself and started the ministry for Costa Rica and have been working on a model for them to do ministry in other Latin American cities," Myers said. "We do events for them and I would work with a couple of the agencies that are already in place and find out what programs were effective and try to help them be more effective."

During Myers' time in Costa Rica, King flew in for visit, and the two began discussions to purchase the Steeldogs. This time their efforts were successful as Myers and King financed the purchase themselves, officially buying the team in early January. They also became the first Birmingham area natives to own a sports franchise in several decades, a fact Myers says he believes will help them as they work to make the Steeldogs "Birmingham's Hometown Team."

"I know this market and Buddy knows this market. We're from here," Myers said. "We're going to have a fun, entertaining product that people are going to be proud to be associated with."

"We essentially have two goals," Myers added. "We want to lead the league in attendance and we want to win the AF2 championship. There's nothing that states right now that we can't do either one of those."

"We want to lead the league in attendance and we want to win the AF2 championship. There's nothing that states right now that we can't do either one of those."

