

## Fantastic Fenroy

One of nation's leading rushers takes accolades in stride • by *Bruce Brown*

**F**ORGET THE THOUSANDS OF YARDS, dozens of touchdowns, rewritten record book and bruised defenders he'll leave in his wake.

Tyrell Fenroy knows what he wants



people to remember about his career with Louisiana's Ragin' Cajun football program. "When I'm done," Fenroy said, "I want people to say that I came out every day and gave everything I had, on and off the field."

The shattered records? They're evidence of being the most prolific yardage machine in UL history, as well as in the Sun Belt Conference.

During UL Lafayette's 49-20 Homecoming win over Florida International University, Fenroy became only the seventh player in NCAA history to record four consecutive 1,000-yard seasons. His total yardage for the 2008 season was 1,051 at the end of that victory – with four regular season games remaining – and increased his own new career record total to 4,322. Fenroy had raced past Brian Mitchell's previous mark of 3,335 early this fall.

In the Cajuns' Homecoming game, Fenroy also collected three rushing touchdowns, for a total of 44 in his career. That's a Sun Belt Conference career rushing touchdown record. He needs only four more rushing touchdowns to break Mitchell's school record.

So, what about all the numbers?

"I look at it every now and then," said Fenroy. "They tell me what I've done, I look, and then I prepare for the next game. I'll look at them all after the season's over."

It's clearly not the numbers that drive Fenroy, although he is proud of the ever-growing totals.

"What drives me is to see my teammates play hard," he said. "That gives me motivation, and to see our running back group get better and want to win. If I see 90 guys playing with heart, why not step on board and do the same thing?"

Running backs coach Brian Jenkins said Fenroy doesn't separate himself from others. "He doesn't have the mindset of 'I'm the guy.' He doesn't like the limelight. He's the same old Tyrell he was when he got here

Tyrell Fenroy is one of only seven players in NCAA history to record four consecutive 1,000-yard seasons.

DOUG BUGAS



Senior Tyrell Fenroy is majoring in criminal justice, but it's likely that he'll be selected in the NFL draft.

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**TYRELL FENROY**

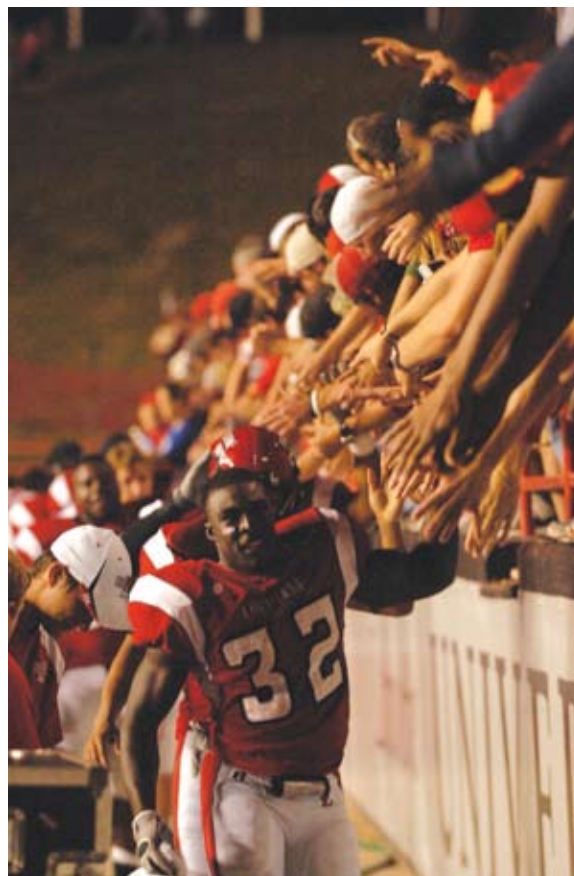
four years ago. That’s why his teammates respect him so. He walks around like he’s just a common guy.”

Offensive lineman Ian Burks said teammates “take a lot of pride in all the numbers Tyrell puts up. He doesn’t say much, but he gets fired up after a big run. And, that gets everybody else fired up.”

When Fenroy scored the winning touchdown in a thrilling 28-23 comeback win over Arkansas State on Oct. 18, it was clear how the team feeds off his energy.

“You get the same thing at practice every day from Tyrell,” head coach Rickey Bustle said. “He goes 100 mph in a game and in practice. You know what you’re getting every day.”

What the Cajuns and their fans are



Fans congratulate the Ragin’ Cajuns’ top rusher.

getting is a player grounded in solid principles from parents Melvin and Ann Fenroy back home in LaPlace, La., a player who became known as the T-Train at St. Charles Catholic but somehow maintained his equilibrium despite the adulation.

“It’s hard for any teenager to have that kind of hype and those fans,” Fenroy said. “It was a little bit hard. But I had a solid background at home. My parents stayed on me.

“I was always taught to be respectful to my elders, and to handle my business – not run the streets but be inside, doing my homework.”

St. Charles Catholic coach Frank Monica talks of Fenroy’s humility. “That’s the first thing that comes to mind. He was raised correctly. He’s very quiet – socially introverted, actually. But he’s extroverted on the field, in that he throws his body around out there. He has started to come out of his shell a little bit with the college experience.”

Monica said Fenroy’s dad still goes to St. Charles Catholic’s Quarterback Club every Tuesday. “We get him up in front of the crowd, and he keeps us informed of how Tyrell is doing. That’s how we’ve been able to stay in touch with him. The whole (coaching) staff is going up there to see him play in a couple of weeks. We want to see him play before he graduates.”

Fenroy was lightly recruited as a senior, which baffled Monica and delighted Bustle.

“We always felt good about him,” Bustle said. “He’s been such a joy. He started from Day One, and all of a sudden you started seeing special things from him, and saw how he works to be a better player. He’s a more complete player today because he works so hard.”

Monica said Fenroy plays with a little chip on his shoulder. “We were trying to sell him to the big programs, but they weren’t interested. They thought he wasn’t quick enough, but

they didn't realize how explosive he is. They questioned his height. He only had one legitimate offer, and that was from UL. Even though he ran for 5,200 yards and scored 72 touchdowns in high school, that wasn't enough."

Without a trace of bitterness in his voice, Fenroy said he wasn't surprised that more schools didn't try to recruit him. "We were a Class 3A school, and there was a 5A school down the road. They had me rated too small. But I love it. It gives me motivation. A lot of people were not counting on me to succeed."

So that chip on the shoulder is there, under the surface, but Fenroy doesn't talk much about it. He'd rather let his 44 career rushing touchdowns – the most in Sun Belt history – speak for him.

He also shredded UL Monroe for a school-record 297 yards this season; touchdown bursts of 89, 52 and 80 yards are fresh evidence of his improved speed, earning Walter Camp National Player of the Week notice.

"Tyrell is a great kid to work with," Jenkins said. "He goes hard and he works hard. The only negative is, he doesn't say anything. You ask, 'Are you OK?' and he'll nod. You ask 'Is something wrong?' and he'll shake his head 'no.' It's like cracking a nutshell to get him to talk".

When he does talk, Fenroy chooses his words with sometimes surprising candor.

"A guy from ESPN asked him what he wanted to be doing next year,"



Tyrell Fenroy set a Sun Belt Conference career rushing touchdown record this fall.

BRAD KEMP/THE ADVERTISER

Bustle said, "and Tyrell told him he might want to be a police officer. The guy was stunned. He asked him about the NFL, and Tyrell said, 'That would be nice.'"

Fenroy smiled at the story. "I do think about it," he said of the NFL. "Everybody wants to play in the NFL. That's why I'm out here every day working. But I put that on my backside. I'm going to get my degree in criminal justice next spring, and if things don't work out in the NFL, I'll have something to fall back on."

NFL scouts have elevated Fenroy from a prospect who might get his foot in the door at training camp, to one with a good chance of being selected in the league's draft. They also hope to get him in the scouting combine to cure his still overlooked status.

Those who know him don't need convincing.

"I'm never surprised at what he's able to accomplish because he works so hard," Jenkins said. "If he gained 400 yards in a game, I wouldn't be surprised. That work ethic was established at home, and he wears that every day on his chest."

Bustle agreed that Fenroy's work ethic is key.

"What makes this more special is that everything he's getting now, he deserves." ■

*Bruce Brown is senior reporter for The Advertiser, Lafayette's daily newspaper.*

## GOOD COMPANY

**T**yrell Fenroy is only the seventh player in NCAA history to have four 1,000-yard seasons. He has rushed for 1,051 yards in 2008 with four regular season games left, after previously gaining 1,053 as a freshman in 2005, 1,197 in 2006 and 1,021 in 2007.

He joined Heisman Trophy winner Tony Dorsett of Pitt (1973-76), Amos Lawrence of North Carolina (1977-80), Dennis Manns of New Mexico State (1995-98), Heisman Trophy winner Ron Dayne of Wisconsin (1996-99), Cedric Benson of Texas (2001-2004) and DonTrell Moore of New Mexico (2002-2005) with four 1,000-yard seasons.

Some of college football's biggest names – Archie Griffin, Bo Jackson, Emmitt Smith, Barry Sanders and Ricky Williams – are not on the list.

Fenroy, who has 21 100-yard games in his career, is already the leading rusher in UL and Sun Belt Conference history with 4,322 yards.

### TYRELL FENROY CAREER RUSHING

YEAR	ATT	YARDS	AVG.	TD
2005	179	1,053	5.9	12
2006	223	1,197	5.4	10
2007	180	1,021	5.7	7
2008*	152	1,051	7.5	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>734</b>	<b>4,322</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>44</b>

\* Through eight games.