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### Men's Tennis Press Releases 2000

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**From:** Bill English englishww@wofford.edu

**Subject:** Ray Hired As New Tennis Coach

**Date:** February 18, 2002 at 10:40 AM

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Rod Ray has been named the head coach of the men's and women's tennis teams at Wofford College.

"I have been in tennis all my life and this is a dream come true," said Ray. "Wofford is a wonderful school and I am excited about the opportunity to work with both programs. I just feel fortunate to be given the chance to coach at Wofford."

Born in Cross, AR, Ray comes to Wofford from the Topspin Racquet and Swim Club in Lexington, SC, where he has served as Tennis Director since 1991. He established a strong junior program at the club and has sent several players into Division I tennis programs throughout the country. He has coached players that have received state, sectional, and national rankings and has seen the club grow from 75 to 345 members.

"Rod Ray is one of the state's top tennis professionals and a man of outstanding integrity and character," said Wofford Athletic Director David Wood. "He brings to Wofford a wealth of successful tennis experience, a strong network of professional contacts, and an enormous amount of energy and enthusiasm. We believe he will be well-received by all involved and welcome his family to Wofford.

Ray has been a prominent fixture around junior tennis in South Carolina. He is the head coach of the South Carolina Junior Davis/Federation Cup teams. He has served as the head coach for the USTA Junior Player Development program since 1995 and has been a USTA Zonal Coach since 1996. He received the South Carolina Tennis Professional of the Year Award in 1998. President of the South Carolina Tennis Professional Association, he has obtained Professional 1 certification from the United States Tennis Professional Association.

An active tennis player, Ray has been ranked as high as No. 2 in singles and No. 4 in doubles in the South Carolina rankings.

Ray earned a B.S. degree in political science from East Tennessee State in 1987 where he was a three-year letterman on the Buccaneer tennis team. He and his wife Merritt have a son, Cole, born on Apr. 12.

Ray takes over both programs after the retirement of Dr. Deno Trakas, who has been the women's coach since 1987, and the resignation of Jim Newcome, who has been the men's coach for the last three years. Trakas brought the women's program from club status to a varsity sport and led the Lady Terriers to Top 20 national rankings in 1993 and 1995. He will remain at the school to concentrate on his duties as a professor in the English department. Newcome led the men's team into Southern Conference competition in 1997.

