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### **Times Facts**

Ernest joined the *Times* in 1992 as a Tampa sports editor. He coordinated coverage of prep and community sports events for Hillsborough County. He also supervised 10 staff writers and correspondents, produced budgets, issued photo assignments, wrote and edited stories. In July 1997, he covered the NFL/Bucs beat for the *Times*. He wrote features, sidebars, weekly television/radio sports columns and related stories. He is currently a columnist who writes news notes columns three times a week on numerous topics around the city of Tampa.

### **Talking Points**

• Tampa Nightlife • Politics • Sports

Ernest has made numerous appearances on sports talk radio and local television shows. He is also an occasional guest on the weekly political forum, Tampa Bay Week.

### **Education**

Ernest graduated from Godby High School in Tallahassee, FL. He then proceeded to the University of Florida where he earned a bachelor's degree in public relations.

### **Background**

His journalism career began at the *Daily Commercial* and the *Gainesville Sun*. He covered prep events, university events, football games and doubled as a copy editor. From 1988 to 1992, he worked at the *Tampa Tribune* as an editor and reporter. He coordinated coverage of prep and community sports, supervised staff writers, produced budgets and wrote weekly television/radio sports columns. Ernest lives with his wife and three children in Seffner. His hobbies include cycling, reading, video games and just "hanging out."

### **Awards**

While at the *Times*, Ernest has received several awards for his writing. In 2000, the Associated Press Sports Editors recognized one of his stories as one of the Top 10 in the nation. He also won a first place and honorable mention from the Society of Professional Journalists in regional competition. And in 1996, he was honored with a second place by the National Association of Black Journalists in their national contest.

### **Contact**

Tel: (813) 226-3406  
Fax: (813) 226-3381  
E-mail: [hooper@sptimes.com](mailto:hooper@sptimes.com)



**Ernest Hooper**  
Columnist

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**St. Petersburg Times**

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