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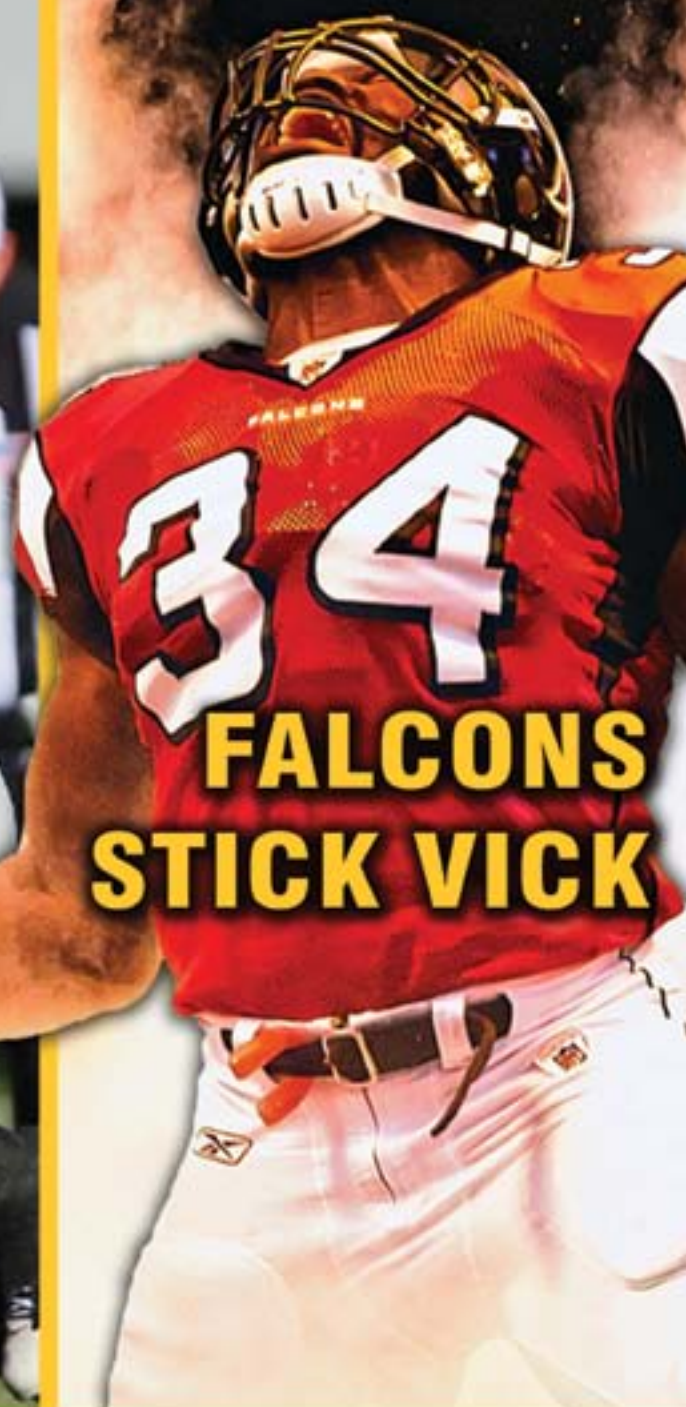
Vol. 7 | Iss. 30 | Sept. 23 - Oct. 6, 2011 **atlanta**



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COVERAGE ON PAGE 7!**

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CAN'T MISS THIS WEEK

- 5** Josh Bagriansky gives you the downlow on recent Falcons, Tech and UGA football news.
- 7** Stephen Black and Fletcher Proctor combine forces to bring you THE BEST prep cover story in the past two weeks!
- 11** Comcast's Bleachers On Demand is all the rage on cable TV and Scott St. Lifer breaks it down for you.
- 13** Want the latest in Atlanta pro sports action? Go here for our beat writers' lockdown coverage.



INSIDE AT SCORE

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 AND JIMMY CRIBB/ATLANTA FALCONS

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SHOT OF THE WEEK...



THREE AMIGOS: Dustin Johnson, Keegan Bradley and Phil Mickelson walk the course at East Lake during the practice rounds for the Tour Championship by Coca-Cola. Bradley returns to the Atlanta area for the first time since his PGA Championship win at the Atlanta Athletic Club in August. *Photo courtesy of Rob Saye.*



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GPB
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THE FLETCH



Plenty of storylines in Falcons-Eagles

By Fletcher Proctor



Second week of the NFL season. Sunday Night national NBC broadcast. Philadelphia vs. Atlanta as two of the NFC contenders tangle. Oh yeah, and Michael Vick returning to Atlanta as the starting quarterback of a team that Mike Smith just cannot seem to beat, facing the new face of the Atlanta franchise. I guess I should lead with this story, right?

The Atlanta Falcons hosted the Philadelphia Eagles on NBC last Sunday night and the angles were exactly what you'd thought they'd be from NBC. Vick returning to the city he used to "own" as a member of the Falcons. Vick did all of the interviews the week leading up to the game, saying he was happy to be in Philadelphia, this is Matt Ryan's team now, blah blah blah. NBC showed clips from the Vick interview with Bob Costas ad nauseam in its pregame show leading up to the 8:20 p.m. start. The interesting thing is, I thought NBC did a nice job of also mentioning the Falcons' new regime that took over in the aftermath of the Vick scandal. The network, in my opinion was complimentary of Smith and Thomas Dimitroff leading up to the game.

Listening to 680 The Fan the Monday after the game, however, Christopher Rude and Perry Laurentino seemed to disagree with me, saying that the broadcast was slanted towards

Vick and the angle of Vick vs. Ryan. When the game started, Al Michaels and Cris Collinsworth certainly seemed to be playing up Vick and the Eagles with little regard to the team that earned the NFC's No.1 seed entering the playoffs one year ago. Several callers pointed out—and I agree with them—that it did seem the broadcast was Philadelphia-heavy, but the Eagles were the offseason's sexy story.

SAME OLD VICK ...

What I thought was funny was how Vick claimed to be a reformed man in all of those interviews, but after he was knocked out of the game he was taunting the crowd and pointing at the scoreboard as boos cascaded down upon him. Vick's performance in the game summed up his time in Atlanta, electrifying at times, filled with turnovers, highlighted by an injury and then ending unsatisfactorily. Atlanta fans actually were (at least should have been) happy about that last part.

I thought Dan Reeves took the opportunity from this game and Vick's return to air some dirty laundry in the Philadelphia papers. In Tim McManus' piece Saturday on phillysportsdaily.com, Reeves said he remained loyal to Vick and he thought the Falcons organization should have as well,

instead of releasing him.

"When Mike really needed them they turned their back on him in my opinion," said Reeves. "I wasn't there so I don't know the organization's standpoint, but I thought they could have been more supportive and instead they severed ties with him."

Sounds like sour grapes from a guy who was also severed from the organization, interestingly enough following a year when Vick missed most of the season due to injury. I wonder if Buck & Kincade would call him out when he appears for his weekly spot on 680 The Fan. Kincade was also featured in the same story.

DUE CREDIT ...

If you read The Fletch on a semi-regular basis, you know that I have no love lost for Mark Bradley and his columns. He has taken the Terrence Moore role of poking the readers with a stick to draw clicks to his pieces. I have to give credit when it is due, though, and he wrote a very nice piece last week about what would have happened to the Falcons franchise had Michael Vick never left. It was a well-written piece and it made me ponder the possibilities. Bradley wrote that Bobby Petrino and Vick could have put up video-game numbers but ultimately would never have won a title. Probably pretty accurate.

One last thought for ESPN. I have railed on the World Wide Leader before and I am afraid I must do it again over Pam Ward. I was watching her "call" the UVA/UNC game over the weekend and she is just awful. She didn't know the difference between the play clock and the game clock, at one point wondering why UVA wasn't penalized for letting the clock run out...in the first quarter. Her play-by-play partner—or perhaps the producer or director or spotter or statistician or anyone with a brain—must have explained to her during the commercial that it was the game clock that expired, not the play clock and THAT is why there was no penalty. She seemed to be OK after the commercial. Well, not really OK.

HOLD THE MAIL ...

Before I get any emails from angry women saying that I hate her because she is a woman, don't. I am not Mike Bell from 790 The Zone, doing the Pam Ward impression,

making insinuations towards her personal life. I have NO problem with a woman in the broadcast booth. She never played the game? So what? Neither did half the play-by-play guys out there. I have a problem with Ward because she doesn't know the games she calls. She flubbed up college baseball. She's flubbed up Georgia Tech football broadcasts before on ESPN 2. I assume that is why she was demoted to ESPNU, so fewer people could watch her mess up.

My question is why is she with ESPN? Everyone in sports broadcast/journalism/communications programs across the country at one point dreams of working for ESPN. You are telling me that ESPN cannot look through its six warehouses of resume tapes and find a woman more qualified to call a football game? I am CERTAIN there is at least ONE out there. I don't want her gone because she is a woman. I want her gone because she is bad. She isn't bad because she is a woman. She is bad because she lacks talent.

Photo courtesy of Jimmy Cribb/Atlanta Falcons. Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.

CAN YOU BELIEVE... ...HE SAID THAT?

"They could have been a big supporter and they let him go. I think it could have been handled differently."

That was former Falcons head coach Dan Reeves talking about how the Falcons "turned" on Michael Vick after he participated in criminal activity then lied about it to the Falcons organization, the NFL and the authorities. Are you kidding? Sorry Dan, but this sounds like maybe you are still a little upset that the organization let you go. The organization made a business decision and Mr. Blank actually tried to help Vick get back into the league, just not with his team.

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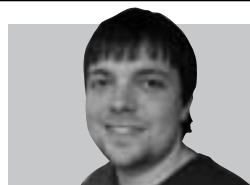
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STATE OF FOOTBALL



Tech, Dawgs, Falcons all victorious

By Josh Bagriansky



Football is the sport most beloved in Georgia, and within this state there are three programs that make the natives tick. There are also three drastically different moods in Athens, Atlanta and Flowery Branch, where the Georgia Bulldogs, Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets and Atlanta Falcons all find themselves in a variety of positions early in the season.

GEORGIA TECH ...

Paul Johnson's tenure at Tech had fans inspired after just two seasons at the helm, with his new option offense taking the ACC by storm and pacing the Yellow Jackets to the Orange Bowl after winning their conference in 2009. But an underwhelming 6-7 season last year left many to believe that Tech had returned to its mediocre ways.

However, after a promising 3-0 start heading into conference play, hope is alive and well at Bobby Dodd Stadium.

The biggest victory of the three was last week's 66-24 dismantling of the Kansas Jayhawks, who defeated Johnson's boys last year in Lawrence. Johnson's dynamic offense was back and better than ever last Saturday, racking up 768 yards of total offense in the win. That includes 604 yards on the ground, also a school record.

The stats show that GT has a good

backfield, one that could perhaps rival the fine running game previously led by current Steelers' running back Jonathan Dwyer in 2009. Filling the Dwyer void are the experienced Roddy Jones, Embry Peeples and Orwin Smith (who scored on a 95-yard touchdown on the first offensive play from scrimmage against KU).

The key will likely come at quarterback, where Tevin Washington faces the difficult task of replacing Josh Nesbitt. Sure, Johnson's offense is based on the run, but a quarterback must be ready to pass the football should the Jackets have to come from behind (something that even Nesbitt was inconsistent doing).

Granted, it's still very early and Tech fans need not get too carried away after three consecutive wins that have come against relatively lackluster competition. But the ACC appears to be wide open as per usual, and surely Tech is among the group of squads looking to separate themselves from the rest this fall.

GEORGIA ...

It's a different story in Athens, where an 0-2 start put head coach Mark Richt squarely on the hot seat and brought on perhaps the most scrutiny regarding the state of the program since

the hopelessly average Ray Goff era.

With a relatively simple schedule (by SEC standards) in front of the Bulldogs, there is still time to turn things around between the hedges. But UGA's problems of seasons past were once again on display in defeats to Boise State and South Carolina. A lack of overall discipline and execution cost the Dawgs a chance at staying competitive with BSU and a victory that was there for the taking versus the Gamecocks.

These types of problems are nothing new. Georgia was one of the most penalized teams in the SEC last year and the defense has long been a weakness after being the anchor of the team early on in the Richt era.

Simply put, we're just three games into the season and it's already crunch time in Athens. Fortunately, the schedule is not the hardest. Trips to Ole Miss (blown out by Vandy last week) and Tennessee (still rebuilding), sandwiched around a home game against Mississippi State (perhaps not as good as expected) over the next three weeks are all winnable, plus Alabama and LSU are both off the schedule.

Add in the immediate impact of touted freshman Isaiah Crowell at running back and the continued starring play of Aaron Murray under center, and things do look good on one side of the ball (although the line play must get better).

Should we see some improvement from Todd Grantham's enigmatic defense, things could turn around in a big way in Athens.

But while the talent is there to make a run, Dawg fans are all too used to that same story of near-misses. The real question is whether UGA will suddenly find some discipline and poise in a league that requires both in order to be successful.

Now, after an unmemorable 59-0 win over Coastal Carolina, Richt and company need to steer the ship back onto its course or they won't be sailing for much longer.

ATLANTA FALCONS ...

Looking beaten and battered in a humiliating 30-12 loss at Chicago in Week 1, the Falcons returned home last Sunday night to face Michael Vick and the high-flying Philadelphia Eagles in what was a borderline must-win game.

In some ways, the same sloppiness and inconsistencies that plagued Atlanta at Soldier Field were on display. But this time the Falcons displayed one of the main qualities of a Mike Smith team—fighting for 60 minutes.

Atlanta showed great resolve, battling back from 10 points down in the fourth quarter en route a massive 35-31 win, which helped it avoid a dreaded 0-2 start.

For a team that has been known to execute in all aspects, the early-season mistakes can't make the coaching staff happy. But similar problems are prevalent across the NFL, where teams are struggling to hit their strides after being locked out for most of the offseason.

In the end, the core is similar to that of last season but also surely improved thanks to acquisitions made by general manager Thomas Dimitroff. He signed defensive end Ray Edwards, who recovered a Vick fumble in the red zone and rumbled deep into Philly territory to set up a touchdown, and drafted wide receiver Julio Jones, whose huge catch on third-and-12 in the fourth quarter kept Atlanta's first scoring drive of the stanza alive.

Jones appears to be fitting nicely into an offense that includes weapons such as Tony Gonzalez, Roddy White and Michael Turner. If the pass-blocking improves, the pieces are there for one of the best units in the league.

Offensively, though, much rests on the shoulders of Matt Ryan. The fourth-year man has been good under center, but he made far too many mistakes in the first two matchups and needs to continue improving if he wants to become the elite QB that the Falcons want.

What the Falcons really want is a run to the Super Bowl. After Sunday's win over perhaps the NFC's most talented team, that still seems a distinct possibility for last year's NFC South Champs.

Clearly, there is still work to do for all three of the Peach State's major programs. But in a state thoroughly obsessed with football, there will always be potential for big things when it comes to the Falcons, Dawgs, Jackets and even Georgia State and Southern.

The question is whether the squads have the right ingredients to bring it all together. And that is where the trio of teams differ greatly at the present time, as the Falcons look poised to perform well in the long run, while the Yellow Jackets hope to be headed into the ACC's elite under Johnson, and the Bulldogs just want to start winning again before it's too late.

But no matter how you slice it, the next several months should be very interesting to watch, as three programs try and find success this season any way they can.

Photo of courtesy of Jon Barash. Bagriansky can be reached at jbagriansky@scoreatl.com.

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WHO'S HOT

THUMBS UP TO EFFORT GUYS



Chipper Jones

The 2011 model has exceeded expectations. He'll likely play 130 plus games and hit over .280. Chipper is the leader among Braves regulars in slugging and on-base plus slugging percentage, even though he literally can't run anymore. It's safe to say Chipper is definitely leaving it all on the field.

Ga. Tech offense

No, former Nebraska star Turner Gill hasn't turned around Kansas, but Paul Johnson's offense—No. 1 among BCS teams so far—is working like a surgeon trying to get to a tee time at Augusta National. Against Kansas last Saturday at Grant Field, Tech churned out 66 points and 768 total yards.

Falcons offense

We know all about Pro Bowl receiver Roddy White. His counterpart, rookie Julio Jones, is already proving to be a matchup problem for opposing secondaries; running back Michael Turner has back-to-back 100 yard games; future Hall of Fame tight end Tony Gonzalez burned Philly for two touchdowns. That's how you "Rise Up."

Tech's schedule

Tech deserves some credit for kicking the tail out of lesser opponents in its non-conference schedule, but who would call Western Carolina, Middle Tennessee and Kansas world-beaters? Wouldn't you like to see Johnson's triple option against a top-tier non-conference team, maybe even an old school rival from their SEC days?

Falcons defense

For the Falcons to make a play-off run, we're gonna need a little more from the D. Yes, Green Bay (the playoff loss), Chicago and Philadelphia are potent teams and the offense has turned the ball over, but the Birds just can't continue to let teams score 48, 30 and 31 points in consecutive games...period.

Braves pitching

These guys were the story behind the team's success from April through August. Lately it's been less than pretty, though. Jair Jurrjens and Tommy Hanson can't get healthy, the other starters can't find the seventh inning with a map and the bullpen is struggling, too. Hang on, boys!



WHO'S NOT

THUMBS DOWN TO BELLY ITCHERS

SCORE LIST

BY BRIAN JONES

- 1** **ON TO TAMPA:** After an emotional win against the Philadelphia Eagles Sunday, the Falcons will take their show on the road as they travel to Tampa Sunday afternoon. The Bucs are also coming off an emotional win, there's a come-from-behind affair against the Minnesota Vikings. A game like this against a divisional rival is key, even this early in the year.
- 2** **BUZZ ON THE FLATS:** Georgia Tech has looked strong in the early stages of the season and is now ranked in the two major polls. However, the Jackets have their toughest test to date on Saturday when they face North Carolina, which is undefeated and has won their last five games. If the Ramblin' Wreck wins, they will be the dark horse to win the ACC.
- 3** **BATTLE IN MISSISSIPPI:** Georgia got its first win of the season by taking down Coastal Carolina 59-0. Now the Bulldogs head to Oxford to face the Rebels looking for their first SEC win. Ole Miss is a struggling football team that recently lost to Vanderbilt 30-7. If the Bulldogs get off to a fast start and not make mistakes, it should be another easy win.
- 4** **DREAM FEVER:** The Dream are in the playoffs looking to make another trip to the WNBA Finals. On Thursday, they started their series against the Indiana Fever for the Eastern Conference Championship and will play Game 2 of the series on Sunday at Philips Arena. I know the place is going to be rocking and it will be huge for the Dream if they can get a win.
- 5** **RIVALS DO BATTLE:** There is nothing like a rivalry game in high school football and GPB will be broadcasting two grudge-matches Friday night. Lovett faces Buford in the webcast on GPB.org/sports, while the TV game will feature Norcross and Mill Creek. If I said it once I'll say it again, it should be another great week of high school action.

CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

BY RICKY DIMON

178	Points scored by Georgia Tech in its first three games, the team's most since 1918
768	Total yards of offense for Tech against Kansas, its most in school history
604	Rushing yards for Tech against Kansas, a school record and an ACC record
265	Total yards for Orwin Smith, the first Tech player to go for 100 rushing and receiving
9	Consecutive possessions on which Georgia Tech scored against Kansas
8.5	Braves' lead in the National League wild card race as recently as September 6
2.5	Braves' lead in the wild card race as of Wednesday afternoon
1.71	Randall Delgado's ERA in his last three starts for the Braves
0-21	Dan Uggla lifetime vs. Mets' starter R.A. Dickey after going hitless Saturday
35	Home runs for Uggla this season, the most in his six-year MLB career

TRIVIA QUESTION

When was the last time Georgia Tech and North Carolina entered their game with both teams undefeated?

Answer on Page 15

SANITY AT LAST

"We've been sweating ourselves and we don't want to get him hit either. We really have to pull it together and really firm it up so that he can make plays."

- Falcons OT Sam Baker on protecting Matt Ryan

MY TWO CENTS

How refreshing was that Sunday night win over the Eagles? After losing eight of nine in the series - including a couple of playoff games - the Falcons had to get off the schneid against their nemesis from the City of Brotherly Love. And what a way to do it! Even the most diehard Falcons fans have to admit that there was a moment of two during the game when you thought the Eagles were about to take control.

But the Falcons - especially Matt Ryan - showed a ton of heart in making that fourth quarter comeback. Once the O-Line started protecting the franchise player, he delivered. And what about Michael Turner's play? The stocky tailback kept trucking on the ground,

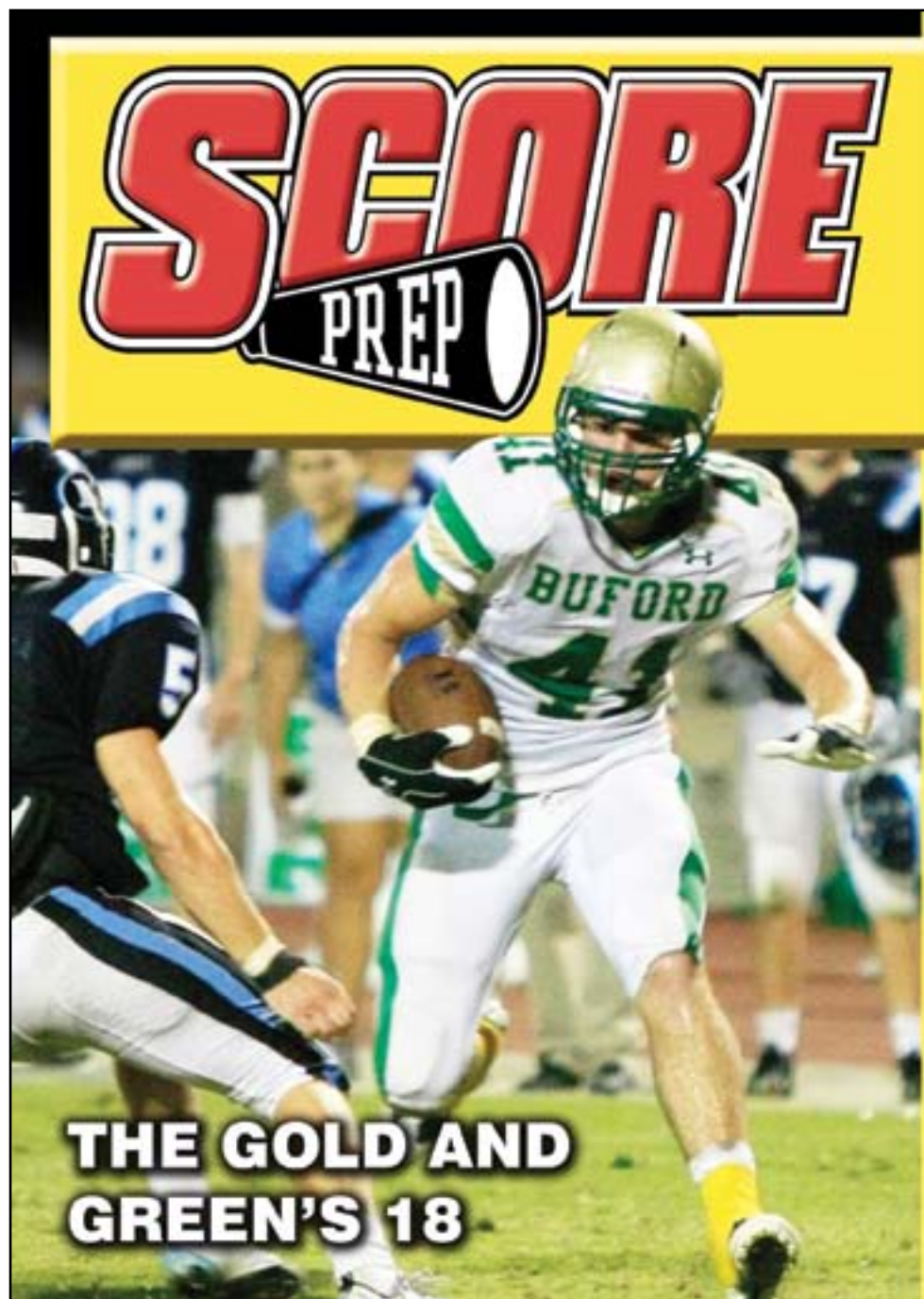
keeping the Philly D back on their heels.

Say what you want about No. 7 (whose name will not be mentioned in this space) leaving the game with a concussion, but remember that his backup, Mike Kafka, went 7-for-9 and had the Eagles moving until DeSean Jackson dropped a key third-down pass. And he didn't turn the ball over, unlike the guy he relieved.

The bottom line is the Falcons were the more resilient team and played with more heart than their guests. And next time they get together, I expect the same result.

Black can be reached at sblack@scoreatl.com.





Winning streaks grow another week

By Stephen Black and Fletcher Proctor

Two-time defending state champion Sandy Creek now holds the longest current winning streak at 32 games after Clinch County's loss last week. The Fighting Patriots defeated Drew 35-0 in the Georgia Dome, part of the Great American Football Classic. Four-time defending Class AA champ Buford is second with 18 straight victories. The Wolves, who have surrendered just 14 points through five games and have posted three shutouts this year, host Lovett this Friday in the GPB.org Game of the Week.

QB WOES ...

The Year of the (injured) Quarterback continued over the weekend as Lassiter's Eddie Printz and Duluth's Anfernee Stewart both left games with injuries. Neither injury is expected to force either player to miss extensive playing time.

Add one more name to the top quarter-

backs of the 2013 recruiting class as Eman Westmoreland threw for 582 yards in the Georgia Dome Saturday. He has a serious weapon in Malachi Jones to help him pad stats all season long.

WEEK IN REVIEW ...

Marist was held to under 60 yards of offense in the first half of its region battle with Southwest DeKalb, but quarterback Myles Willis found the endzone late in the half and then twice more in the second half as Marist moved to 3-1 with a 24-6 win. ... Defending AAAA champion Chattahoochee used a powerful ground game to sink Creekview 45-21. C.J. Leggett scored three times while Chase Nelson tallied two touchdowns. ... Joseph Farrar scored three touchdowns and piled up 167 yards in Dunwoody's 34-3 win over Lithonia. ... North Gwinnett continues to put its

last-minute loss in the Georgia Dome behind it as the Bulldogs thumped Collins Hill 34-10. Joseph Jones ran for three first-half scores in the victory. ... Alvin Kamara fell just short of 100 yards but did score three times on 18 carries in Norcross's 35-14 rout of Duluth. Jason Croom hauled in two scoring receptions. ... Jonquel Dawson came alive against Westlake with four scores (two passing, two rushing) as ML King defeated Westlake 35-14. ... The Walton Raiders donned black jerseys and Tyren Jones brought the thunder with 279 yards and three scores on 21 carries as Walton ripped Roswell 45-3.


RECRUITING NEWS ...

Walton OL Brandon Kublanow received his first scholarship offer Saturday after Georgia Tech's victory over Kansas. Jackets HC Paul Johnson offered the junior personally after the game. In-state rival Georgia may be the next to offer him as Bulldogs OL coach Will Friend visited Walton on Friday, according to Michael Carvell of the AJC.

Kublanow is 6-foot-3, 290 pounds and

has been nicknamed "The Finisher" due to his devastating pancake blocks. Kublanow told Carvell he was looking for offers from Alabama and Clemson in addition to UGA. The Finisher will visit Georgia for the Mississippi State game on Oct. 1. ... Stephenson's Raphael Kirby may be reconsidering his commitment to Miami, as the Hurricanes are looking at a major NCAA investigation. The OLB prospect has offers from dozens of major programs, including 10 from the SEC. Kirby unofficially visited UGA this weekend for the Coastal Carolina game. ... Under the radar during the busy football season was the commitment of Harrison hoops star Marshall Guilmette to East Carolina. The 6-foot-10 power forward from Kennesaw committed to former Auburn head coach and current ECU head coach Jeff Lebo last week.

Photos courtesy of Josh Martindale (Buford) and Walter Pinion (Sandy Creek). Black can be reached at sblack@scoreatl.com. Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.



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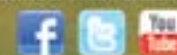
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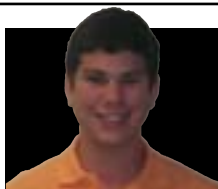


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PREP SOFTBALL



Mill Creek continues winning ways

By Scott St. Lifer

Mill Creek continues to play well in region games. By defeating Duluth and Norcross 16-2 and 16-1, respectively, the Hawks improved their record to 9-1 in the region. Even though the Hawks have a pretty solid lineup from top to bottom, senior Nikki Sagermann has truly earned the honors of MVP thus far. She has a .657 batting average, 38 RBIs and eight home runs. With runners in scoring position, she still produces by hitting .639. Mill Creek's offense has been on a tear since Taylor Rogers moved to the leadoff spot about 10 days ago. Since the move, she has a batting average around .600.

"We made a few tweaks in our lineup by putting Taylor Rogers in the leadoff spot, and she has done a dynamite job as for getting on base and scoring runs," said Mill Creek head coach Roger Parham.

KELL-ING THE COMPETITION ...

By defeating East Paulding 9-1 and Kell 7-4, Pope is now within a win of locking up the top seed for its subregion.

"If we win one of our next two games, we clinch first in our subregion," stated Pope's coach Chris Turco. "Being first in subregion does not mean much. You get the first seed and you play a fourth seed. The fourth seed from subregion-A is going to be a good team."

The Greyhounds' Jenna Reilly helped lead the team to victory over rival Kell by hitting two home runs and driving three runs.

Harrison has produced this season on the backs of its two all-state pitchers: Kayla Caruso and Dresden Maddox. Caruso currently has an 8-0 record and has received countless offers from schools to play next year. Maddox has already committed to play at Rutgers next year.

Another Cobb team has played well lately behind its consistent star pitcher. Lassiter defeated North Cobb 4-1 on Mackenzie Kayler's two-hitter. The game was a pitchers' duel before the Warriors had a fifth-inning error that sparked a Trojan rally. The Trojans finished region play 6-0.

HOLY ROLLERS ...

The Marist War Eagles are clicking on all cylinders lately. By posting their third consecutive shutout Tuesday night, a 12-0 win over Tucker, the War Eagles remained perfected in region 6, Class 1-4A. The victory also marked the fifth shutout in their past six region games. During this remarkable region run, freshman Grace Packer has truly pitched lights out; she started the past three shutout wins.

St. Lifer can be reached at 404-256-1572.

PREP CROSS COUNTRY



Brookwood dominates Gwinnett County race

By Ricky Dimon

Brookwood's cross country teams took care of business at last Saturday's Gwinnett County Championships, hosted by Peachtree Ridge.

The Broncos were especially dominant in the boys' race, placing six runners in the top 10, while compiling a minuscule score of 26 points. All 10 varsity runners for Brookwood broke the 17:00 mark by at least 30 seconds. Morgan Malanoski of the Broncos finished second overall in 15:36, followed closely behind by teammate Gabriel Gomez with a time of 15:50. Peachtree Ridge standout Josh Brickell won the race in 15:30, leading the host Lions to second place in the team competition.

Brookwood and Peachtree Ridge also finished one-two in the girls' race, which saw Chloe Whitworth of Collins Hill cross the line first in 18:37. The Lady Broncos then showcased their superior depth, placing three runners in the top 10 and six in the top 15. Caroline Kissel led the way for Brookwood, finishing fourth overall with a time of 18:59.

Walton enjoyed a similar weekend to that of Brookwood, sweeping both races at Cherokee High School's Warpath Invitational. Brian Sullivan took home top individual honors with a time of 15:51, leading the Walton boys past runner-up Marist and third-place St. Pius X. Alexa Womack finished first overall for the

victorious Lady Raiders, who held off Woodstock (74 points to 92).

EAGLES SOARING ...

Milton hosted the Run for the Eagle Cup last Saturday and its girls' squad took care of business on the familiar trails. Annie Kelly, Blair Gelb and Maddie Butzer finished in the top 10 as the Eagles outran Lakeside, Evans 64 points to 70. Alex Cameron of Dunwoody captured top individual honors in 20:08.

On the boys' side, Sid Vaughn finished first overall in 17:30 to lead Lakeside, Evans to a team victory. Milton also turned in a strong performance but the home team did not have quite enough firepower as it compiled 60 points to Lakeside, Evans' winning score of 45 points. Both teams placed three runners apiece in the top 10.

Woodward's boys ran away with the title at last Saturday's Sandy Creek Fall Classic. Underclassmen led the way for the War Eagles, as freshman Drew Sands recorded a second-place time of 16:33 and sophomore River Holifield crossed the line seven seconds later for third place. McIntosh finished runner-up in the team competition and boasted the individual champion, Brad Hort.

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PREP FOOTBALL



Stars strut their stuff in Georgia Dome

By Fletcher Proctor

The GHSA state championships will be held in the Georgia Dome once again this December, but the Dome featured some championship-level performances last week. The Great American Football Classic was held at the Georgia Dome and matched up some impressive teams just weeks into the season.

Eman Westmoreland of Central Gwinnett passed for 582 yards, completing 31 of 48 attempts, but it was not enough as the Black Knights fell to South Gwinnett 63-35. Westmoreland threw for five touchdowns on the night, including four to Malachi Jones, who finished with 11 catches for 283 yards. Score 44 member George Morris finished with 126 yards rushing for Central Gwinnett. Meanwhile, for the victorious Comets, Mason Hart passed for 289 yards while also rushing for 95 yards. Overall, South Gwinnett produced 621 total yards of offense to win its first game of the year.

Travis Custis scored four touchdowns in the Dome as Lovejoy stomped Morrow 71-0. Five other Wildcats scored for Lovejoy, including two defensive scores.

SANDY CREEK RISING ...

The last few years Sandy Creek won state titles on the legs of Rajion Neal or the arm of Ronnie Bell. This year, Sandy Creek is doing it with defense and a dash of Mike Hilton. The

talented tailback had 120 yards and two scores in the Georgia Dome against Drew, but it was the defense that picked off three passes, forced three fumbles and held Drew to 82 yards in a 35-0 victory. Watch out for Sandy Creek's defense in 2011.

Moody and Ealey are at it again for Emanuel County Institute, but unlike 2007, this is Buck Moody and Wesley Ealey. In the team's 44-0 win over Treutlen, Moody and Ealey each carried the ball just seven times, but Moody scored twice while gaining 63 yards. Ealey was held to under 125 yards for the first time all season.

WOLVES WINNING ...

Buford has won four straight Class AA state titles, and so far this season the Wolves have been demolishing all competition. After giving up a touchdown to both Carver-Columbus and Yulee (FL), Buford got stingy again last week, posting its third shutout of the season with a 49-0 victory over Therrell. The Wolves had previously whitewashed Blessed Trinity 42-0 and Gainesville 49-0. Only two truly challenging games remain for Buford this year, and both will be played on Buford's own turf: Lovett this Friday (GPB.org's Game of the Week) and Greater Atlanta Christian on October 21.

Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.

PREP VOLLEYBALL



Pius starts another winning streak

By Joe Deighton

St. Pius X has had a terrific year. The Golden Lions own a 36-4 overall record and a 7-0 mark in 5-AAA area play. Two of those area wins came against Druid Hills and North Springs early last week. Junior outside hitter Emily Morrison continues to lead the team in kills and aces. The Golden Lions' 24-match winning streak was recently snapped by Whitewater. Barring any more defeats, St. Pius should finish the regular season strong and make a run for the AAA state championship, once postseason play starts.

WALKER SURPRISES ...

One of the biggest surprises this season has been the outstanding play of Walker. The Wolverines are 26-2 and have taken on all comers. Walker competes in Class A-2A but has played and beat teams from each of the higher classes. The biggest reason for the emergence of Walker has been the young players on the roster. Freshman Brooke Warner and sophomore Anna Chocallo have played pivotal roles for the squad. Warner has been relied upon to finish points, while Chocallo has stepped up and become the top libero for the Wolverines. Ironically, Walker notched its most

recent win over Pace Academy 2-0 (25-14, 25-12) on "Senior Night."

GWINNETT GAMERS ...

North Gwinnett took the final of the Collins Hill Classic over Peachtree Ridge 2-1 (27-25, 13-25, 15-11). Junior outside hitter Kristina Stinson was named the tournament MVP after posting 38 kills in the win. Alex Panks led the Bulldogs with 69 kills, while Miller Howard and Matia Hughes combined for 49 digs against the Lions. NGHS currently sits at 35-6 (2-0) with seven regular-season games remaining.

GAC went to the Gold Bracket final of the Lovett Block Party last week. The Spartans took straight-set wins over Johns Creek, Bluford, Lassiter, Starr's Mill and Northgate. Then they took Pope to three sets before losing. Senior outside hitter Dede Bohannon led the team with 60 kills and 34 digs, while senior setter Rachel Waldrop added 104 assists in the tournament. The Spartans record stands at 25-4 as play continues this week at the Gwinnett County Championships against Meadowcreek, Peachtree Ridge, and Shiloh.

Deighton can be reached at jdeighton@scoreatl.com.

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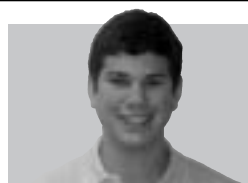
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BLEACHERS ON DEMAND



Comcast's prep sports venture

By Scott St. Lifer

If you like to take in the action of your school's football games from the stadium, then Bleachers On Demand is the show for you. It gives the feel of the game and emphasizes the game day experience through the aspect of a reality show. Going through the stands to find people who truly make the game experience is host Wendy Adams from Q100's The Bert Show.

Each week, she will go to different schools from across the metro area to find the ultimate game day experience. While at the schools, she will look for different personas to feature in the show's segments.

One such segment the show features is the "I'm With the Band" segment. This segment focuses on the students in the band and their experience at the game. Another is the "Cheer Chatter" which focuses on the cheerleaders and their participation in the game.

A fan favorite is the "OMG - That's My Mom!" segment. This showcases wacky parents who display an enormous amount of school spirit and emotion towards the game.

"We try to find a parent who is the crazy, over-the-top parent that's so obsessed with the team, and they really show their spirit so much that it embarrasses their kid," remarked

Melanie Snare, Executive TV Producer and Marketing Manager of Comcast. "[Because of this], we try to interview the kid and get photos of the parent."

Another segment displayed is the "Road King" or "Road Queen" scene. In this part, a fan from the visiting team who displays a magnitude of spirit shows off their loyalty to their school. Some other segments on the show include "Mascot Minute", "Style Star", "Timeout" and "Before the Whistle."

The show, however, does not only focus on the bleachers, but the game itself. Spectators will be interviewed throughout the game's entirety to provide viewers with score updates on fans' perspective. This allows people at the game to add their own spirit and flair to the score based on their emotions of the game. Because of this, the schools make up the entire interactions on the show.

"We really like the whole show to be about the people and everybody that is there," stated Snare. "We are all [receiving] that whole experience of being in the stands at a high school football game in Georgia."

Besides segments on the show, Comcast offers a student ambassador program titled "All Stars". This allows students to intern and re-

ceive experience in television or marketing. By participating in the program, they get credit and can use it for college applications and resumes.

One task the All Star interns perform is the usage of the company Twitter and Facebook accounts. Here, they upload photos of the game and trailers for upcoming episodes. Also on the Facebook page is a poll where fans can vote for their favorite mascot from the "Mascot Minute" segment each week. Fans can even watch teaser trailers of all the episodes for this year's season. By using social media, Bleachers hopes to attract the student demographic into following the show more closely.

Another perk to the show is a prize of \$500 and a free movie night is given to the school that earns the most viewership within the 30-day viewing period. This means whichever episode has the highest viewer ratings results in Comcast rewarding the schools aired on the episode.

"It is kind of our way of giving back to the community and another way to put money back into these schools and their sports programs," said Snare. "We are just encouraging [the schools] to spread the word about their episode so that everybody they know watches it."

The winning schools will be announced at the end of the season with Comcast contacting the schools and posting on their social media sites. The movie night will occur at one of the winning schools or both depending on how close each school's proximities are to each other.

This week's episode showcases the Chamblee-Southwest DeKalb game and will be replayed on Comcast On Demand, along with other games from this football season.

Photos courtesy of Comcast. St. Lifer can be reached at sslifer@scoreatl.com.



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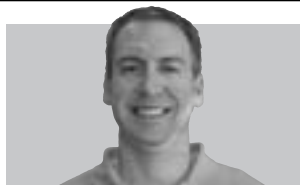
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BULLDOG BEAT



Dawgs romp, travel to Ole Miss

By Stephen Black

Georgia got its first win of the season Saturday 59-0 over outmatched Coastal Carolina. However, the news of the day may have been that, for the first time since 2000, the Bulldogs did not sell out a home game.

A crowd of 91,946 bought tickets to the game (though there were thousands of empty seats), a number that is 800 fewer than the capacity of the stadium. While the non-sellout is partially due to the lack of competition the Chanticleers represented, it also reflects the amount of discontent in the Bulldog fanbase.

BACK TO WINNING ...

The Dawgs wasted little time in earning their first "W" of the season. Aaron Murray threw three first half touchdowns and ran for another as Georgia sprinted out to a 35-0 halftime lead.

The massive edge gave the Bulldogs plenty of room for error in the second half, but they did not need it. Georgia scored 24 points in the third quarter to attain the final margin of victory.

It was a much-needed boost of confidence for Mark Richt's team, which was able to empty the bench and allow reserves some key time in the game.

"I was proud of the way we came out in the second half," said Richt. "We were able

to sub freely and give a lot of guys an opportunity to play. Everybody covets scrimmage downs. That was a good opportunity for them. I think the young guys played well."

ON DECK ...

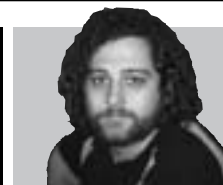
Georgia will travel to Oxford this week in search of its first SEC win. Ole Miss has not appeared on the Dawgs' schedule since 2007, a 45-17 Georgia win in Athens. The Rebels have not beaten UGA since 1996, a 31-27 win in Athens.

Despite the recent success over Ole Miss, Georgia has had some difficult days in Oxford. In 1993 and 1995, Georgia quarterbacks were blitzed and hit all game, resulting in turnovers, sacks and low scoring outputs as well as two Rebel wins. Also, in 1975 and 1976 — two of Vince Dooley's better squads of the decade — the Rebels managed wins in Oxford over quality Bulldog squads.

Ole Miss is coming off a disparaging 30-7 loss at Vanderbilt, a result that had athletics director Pete Boone criticizing the program's current state this week. But despite the loss, Georgia can expect a lot of fight from the Rebels in Oxford Saturday.

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TECH TALK



Tech opens ACC schedule against UNC

By Thomas Watson

It may only be the end of September, but it is becoming harder and harder to temper expectations for this explosive Georgia Tech football team.

The last few months have been bleak in the Atlanta sports scene. The Hawks are still locked out, the Thrashers are in Canada, the Braves are stumbling into—or maybe even out of—the playoffs and the Falcons opened the season with a Week 1 dud. The Yellow Jackets have been the hottest thing around, and they will try to use the momentum to propel them through their ACC schedule and into conference championship contention.

The first step on the road to the ACC Championship begins Saturday against North Carolina. After breaking the NCAA record for rushing yards per attempt with 12.1 against Kansas, the Jackets face a defense that has only allowed 77 rushing yards per game this season.

"Well, they're just huge," head coach Paul Johnson said of Carolina. "They're big guys that are strong. I think the Copes kid [Quinton Copes] no question is probably a first-round draft pick." Playing against NFL-caliber talent

will be a stiff test for Johnson's option offense, but it will also be a good measuring stick going forward to gauge the possible success of this team.

NATIONAL RECOGNITION ...

After last week's record-breaking performance against Kansas, the Yellow Jackets find themselves ranked in the top 25 for the first time since losing to the Jayhawks last season. Tech is ranked 25th in the AP poll and 24th in the coaches poll.

"First conference game, division game at home, national game on ESPN; hopefully we can get a great crowd and make this place a great atmosphere to play on Saturday at noon," Johnson said. "I know our players feed off that a lot."

A win against the Tar Heels would give Tech its first 4-0 start since it was co-national champion in 1990. It would also extend the Jackets' streak to six wins in seven tries and 12 in the last 14 against North Carolina.

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HAWKS HAVEN



Drew reflects on 9/11 anniversary

By Josh Bagriansky

Hawks' head coach Larry Drew remembers it like it was yesterday. The current head man, who is entering his second season at the helm in Atlanta, was entering his second season as an assistant coach for the Washington Wizards during the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

Drew's wife, who had just dropped off their two children at school, informed him of the news.

"Where the school was located, you could actually stand in the back and see the Pentagon," Larry recalled. "Right as we pulled up we could see the smoke. We walked to the side, walked to the back and could see the Pentagon in flames. At this time a lot of parents were coming to the school and grabbing their kids. Going back home we had to cross a bridge that ran not very far from the Pentagon. We could see the actual fire and all the smoke, all the people panicking. Downtown was absolutely shut off. Everything had been put on lockdown."

Drew remembered 9/11 well on the 10th anniversary and said that the NBA season that followed in 2001 was different than most.

"During that season, I just remember before games there were always prayers," explained Drew. "Just a reminder of all the innocent lives that were lost. That's something that will always be in my memory from that year."

RECASNER IN D-LEAGUE ...

Former Hawk Eldridge Recasner is back in the game as an assistant coach for the Sioux Falls Skyforce. A seven-year NBA veteran, Recasner played for the Hawks from 1996-98. He played 130 games in Atlanta, averaging career-highs of 9.3 points and 2.4 rebounds in the 1997-98 season.

Recasner will work under head coach Mo McHone, who coached him with the Yakima Sun Kings from 1993-95.

"Coach McHone has been a great mentor and I'm honored that he wants me to be a part of his staff this upcoming season," said Recasner. "I would like to eventually coach in the NBA and I can't think of a better organization to work for in order to reach that goal."

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FALCONS FLIGHT



Falcons rebound with comeback victory

By Sean Conway

The Falcons certainly took advantage of the primetime spotlight last Sunday night at the Georgia Dome. Their fourth-quarter comeback in a 35-31 victory over the perennial playoff-bound Philadelphia Eagles proved that predictions of a Falcons' demise after the season-opening loss at Chicago were premature.

Quarterback Matt Ryan looked good early. Operating out of the shotgun in goal-line situations, he fired short touchdown passes to Roddy White and Tony Gonzalez. Ryan threw two inceptions in the game but also added two second-half touchdowns, one more to Gonzalez and one to Ovie Mughelli.

Michael Turner recorded his second 100-yard game thanks in large part to a 61-yard burst in the fourth quarter. He finished the drive moments later and completed the game's scoring with a three-yard touchdown run.

GONZALEZ STILL TRUCKING ...

With a pair of playmakers at wide receiver, Pro Bowler White and rookie Julio Jones, many experts thought that future Hall of Famer tight end Gonzalez might have trouble getting touches in 2011. Not so. Through two games, Gonzalez is the Falcons' leading receiver with 12 catches for 155 yards (numbers

that easily pace him to what would be the fifth 1,000-yard season of his career.)

On Sunday, Gonzalez passed Terrell Owens for fifth all time in total receptions. The five-time first-team All-Pro now has 1,081 catches for his career. With 22 more catches, he can pass Marvin Harrison for second all time on the list. Career receptions leader Jerry Rice is likely out of reach, though, with 1,549 grabs over 20 seasons.

TILT IN TAMPA ...

This Sunday, Atlanta travels to Tampa Bay to take on the Buccaneers at 4:00. The Falcons swept the series versus their divisional rival last year, including a comeback victory in Week 13 at Tampa.

Down 10 points with less than 11 minutes left in the game, Eric Weems returned a kickoff 102 yards for a score to pull Atlanta within a touchdown. On the next offensive possession, Ryan capped a 67-yard drive with a nine-yard touchdown pass to Michael Jenkins. Falcons win 24-20.

Atlanta issued its probable starters for Week 3 on Tuesday. Notably absent for the third straight week was center Todd McClure.

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CHOP SHOP



Braves hope for postseason pitching help

By Fletcher Proctor

The Atlanta Braves had not clinched a postseason berth as of this Wednesday, but that has not stopped the organization from gearing up for its second straight October of baseball.

The team recently sent Kris Medlen and Tommy Hanson down south to Orlando in hopes that both can get in some work to be ready for the postseason. Medlen is recovering from his Tommy John surgery 13 months ago and could make the postseason roster out of the bullpen. The righty said earlier this season that he was feeling good, but he suffered a setback a few weeks later. Many believed Medlen would be out until 2012, but he recently turned in some pain-free work, leading the Braves to send him to Orlando for two outings. Should Medlen feel no more pain, he could see some action in the final series of the season against Philadelphia.

Hanson is joining Medlen in Orlando as he tries to bounce back from right shoulder pain. He has not pitched since August 6, but he could also see some late regular season action to get ready for the postseason. Jair Jurrjens is being ruled out for the team's first-

round series but could possibly return should Atlanta advance to the NLCS.

ROOKIE RECORDS ...

Starting pitcher Brandon Beachy set the franchise rookie strikeout record with 160 on the season after striking out eight in a loss to the Mets. Irv Young K'ed 156 back in 1905 when the team was in Boston and called itself the Beaneaters. Beachy is 7-2 on the season. Craig Kimbrel set not only the team's rookie save record but also MLB rookie record earlier this season. As of Wednesday, Kimbrel had recorded 45 saves while finishing 61 games. He made the All-Star Game earlier this year.

Lastly, it was announced recently that the Braves will play an intra-squad exhibition game next year at Coolray Field in Gwinnett County on April 3. Coolray is the home of the Class AAA Gwinnett Braves. The team will not play an exhibition game at Turner Field for the first time since the stadium opened in 1997. The Braves begin the 2012 season in New York on April 5.

Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.

ON THE DREAM BEAT



Dream roll into Eastern Conference Finals

By Brian Jones

The Atlanta Dream knew they were going to the playoffs when they faced the Indiana Fever on Sept. 11, the Dream's final game of the regular season. However, if Atlanta won against the Fever, it would clinch the No. 3 seed heading into the playoffs.

The Dream did just that as they cooled the Fever 92-90. With the win, not only did they clinch the No. 3 seed heading into the playoffs, but it was also the Dream's fourth consecutive win and seventh win in eight games.

Atlanta's first-round opponent was the Connecticut Sun and the series started last Friday in Connecticut. Angel McCoughtry scored 16 points and pulled down 10 boards to help the Dream earn an 89-84 win over the Sun in Game 1. Lindsey Harding led all scorers with 21 points while Erika de Souza added 16. Sancho Lyttle scored 13 points and grabbed 11 rebounds in the victory.

Game 2 was played on Sunday in Atlanta and the Dream were able to win 69-64 and advance to the Eastern Conference Finals. No Atlanta player scored more than 12

points, but McCoughtry, Lyttle and de Souza all chipped in 12 to help the Dream overcome a nine-point deficit in the fourth quarter.

"It doesn't seem to bother us to be behind," Dream coach Marynell Meadors told the AJC after the game. "It probably makes us fight a little harder. We get to the fourth quarter, and we are tough."

FEVER PITCH ...

The Dream's opponent for the Eastern Conference Finals is a team they have had success against this year, and that is the Fever. In fact, out of the four times the Dream and the Fever have against each other, Atlanta has won all four contests.

Game 1 was played on Thursday in Indiana but results were not available at press time. Game 2 will be played on Sunday at Philips Arena. The Dream has worked hard to get where they are now and would like the support of the fans. Go to WNBA.com/Dream to find out how to buy tickets.

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PANTHER PROWL



Football heads to high-scoring Houston

By Dave Cohen

With the game at Jacksonville State now behind them, the Panther football team now turns its attention to facing the highest scoring team in the country when they travel to Houston to face the 3-0 Cougars and their Heisman candidate quarterback Case Keenum (Saturday at 8:00 p.m. ET).

faced an FBS team following last season's trip to Alabama. As good as the Tide was last year, these Cougars lead the nation in passing offense at 408 yards per game, along with 536 yards of total offense and 40.3 points a game. It's a tall order for Georgia State (1-2), a defense that has allowed 77 points in the last two games.

During the last two weeks against Old Dominion and Jacksonville State, a lot of the

focus has been on containing the run and not letting a mobile quarterback hurt you. This week it's two-fold. Houston can hurt you a multitude of ways as starting nose guard Kylan Jenkins is well aware of.

"We've put in a lot of blitzes and new formations on the defense and we'll really try to get pressure on him (Keenum)," said Jenkins. "Every week so far the focus has been on slowing or stopping the run but especially this week because they know we've been weak in the past on the run game so they're going to try and take advantage of it."

RED CROSS REPORT ...

One injury of note for Georgia State concerns Albert Wilson. After setting a school record with 146 yards receiving on six catches, Wilson pulled a hamstring

at Jax State and is sidelined for this game. Darren McCray should see his first action of the season in Wilson's absence. Donald Russell and Travis Evans continue to pace the Panthers' ground game averaging a combined 92 rushing yards per game. Russell has scored four touchdowns while Evans has found the end zone twice. (Listen on WCFO-AM 1160, WMLB-AM 1690, and WRAS-FM 88.5).

After scoring the first two goals of her collegiate career in the Panther's wins over UNC Asheville and Gardner-Webb, women soccer's Eryka Hawkins has been named the CAA's co-Rookie of the Week.

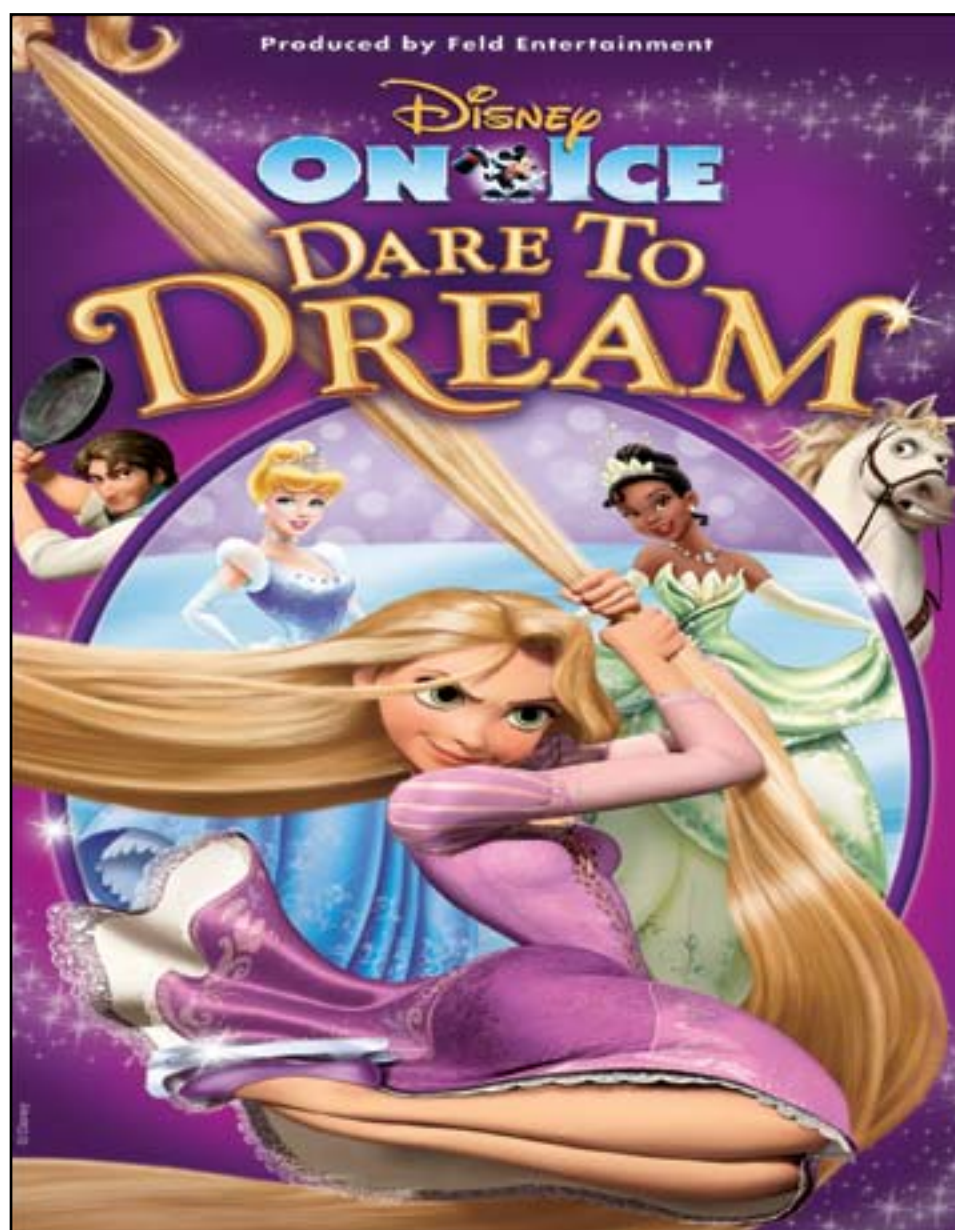
Dave Cohen is in his 28th season as the "Voice of Georgia State Athletics" on WRAS-FM (88.5) and WCFO-AM, News-talk 1160.

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TRIVIA ANSWER

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2011 Bleachers On Demand Lineup:

Buford vs. Blessed Trinity
August 19

Keil vs. Grayson
(Corky Keil Classic)
August 20

Meachern vs. North Gwinnett
(Corky Keil Classic)
August 20

Whitewater vs. Sandy Creek
August 26

Walton vs. Milton
September 2

Roswell vs. Norcross
September 9

North Paulding vs. Sprayberry
September 16

Chamblee vs. Southwest Dekalb
September 23

Meachern vs. South Cobb
September 30

Cherokee vs. Lassiter
October 7

Druid Hills vs. St. Pius X
October 14

Pope vs. East Paulding
October 21

Mays vs. Marist
October 28

Alpharetta vs. North Forsyth
November 4

Exclusively On XFINITY On Demand

TO WATCH, SELECT THE **ON DEMAND** BUTTON. THEN CHOOSE GET LOCAL ATL. SELECT SPORTS. SELECT HIGH SCHOOL.

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