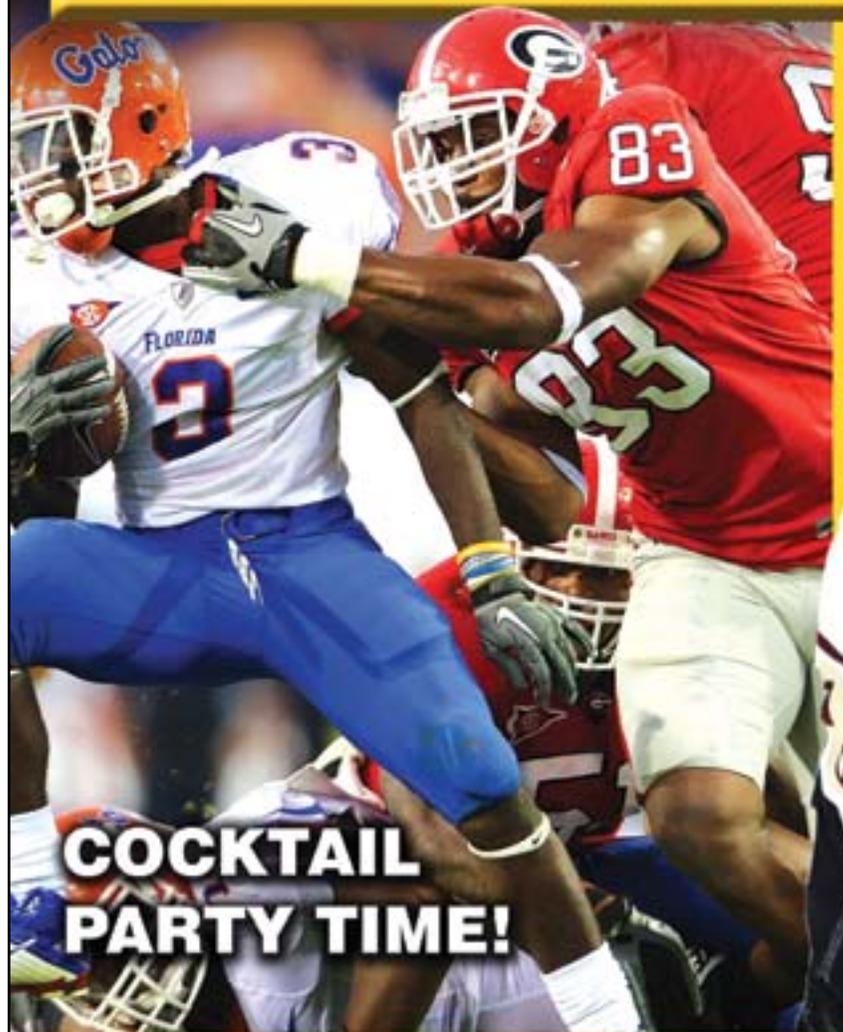


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CAN'T MISS THIS WEEK

- 4** The Fletch comments on the rivalry between 680 The Fan and 790 The Zone.
- 5** In our cover story, Scott St. Lifer previews the Gwinnett Gladiators' season just in time for their home opener.
- 7** We break down the big high school sports news throughout the state, including the recent melee in Hancock County.
- 9** Our full-on high school sports coverage. Four beat writers cover all four varsity sports.



SHOT OF THE WEEK...



DEION'S RING: Prime Time receives his NFL Hall of Fame ring with Arthur Blank looking on Sunday at the Dome. Deion Sanders became the first player to be inducted as a Falcon into the league's Hall of Fame. Photo courtesy of Jimmy Cribb/Atlanta Falcons.

TEAM SCOOP AND VOICES

COVER DESIGN BY DJ GALBIATI
 COVER PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROB SAYE AND
 DALE ZANINE/GWINNETT GLADIATORS

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INSIDE AT SCORE

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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL LIVES HERE

THE FLETCH



Warren County coverage reaches Atlanta

By Fletcher Proctor



The melee that followed the Hancock Central/Warren County game is certainly a shame and it is shaping up to perhaps be a national story based on the timing. The incident happened just 24 hours before Grantham and Franklin got into it in Nashville and on the same weekend Harbaugh and Schwartz needed to be separated. The Hancock Central/Warren County incident, though, was far worse as the Warren County coach went to the hospital.

After some information trickled out initially from Augusta-area news outlets, Score Atlanta and the rest of the Atlanta media jumped on it quickly and hopefully helped to bring light to an awful situation. Score Atlanta was able to speak with Warren County Schools Superintendent Carole Jean Carey early Tuesday morning, less than 24 hours after football coach David Daniel was released from the hospital. 790 The Zone had Carey on the next morning for a follow-up. Carey is fighting for her coach and she really came across as willing to do whatever it takes to see that justice is served.

FAN VS. ZONE ...

It is interesting to hear the two different approaches taken by the two sports talk radio stations here in Atlanta to their broadcast properties. For years, 680 The Fan was known as the flagship of the Thrashers and now the

Braves and it seemed that Buck "Blue Skies" Belue and Leo Mazzone always talked about how great things were in Braves Country, even when the Braves were choking down the stretch or gagging in all of the series against Washington and Florida.

It sounded like everything was always peachy in Blueland despite the fact that the team had just one playoff appearance and on-air personalities would make excuses for the team instead of calling out the ownership and management for poor execution.

On the flip side, it sounds as though 790 The Zone is really taking the Falcons to task for a 2-3, now 3-3 start, including ripping the punter on a regular basis. Mayhem in the AM has gone on the record claiming that the Falcons punter will cost the team a game this year and that is a bit of a shock after hearing The Zone's main competitor always spit-shines its coverage. A refreshing shock, but still a bit of a shock.

I thought perhaps it was a bit much following the Seattle game, though, when the guys were bringing up mistakes despite the win. Both stations could go a little closer to the middle.

COACHES GONE WILD ...

For the second season in a row, Georgia defensive coordinator Todd Grantham made headlines for perhaps the wrong reasons.

Last year, Grantham was caught on camera giving the Florida punter-turned-placekicker the choke sign before the Gators defeated the Dawgs in overtime. This year, Grantham was caught on film dropping a few F-bombs towards Vanderbilt first-year head coach James Franklin after Franklin had been mouthing off to a Georgia player.

Other reports via Twitter had Grantham also saluting the Vanderbilt crowd with his middle finger, but that was not confirmed by a major source and you should take Twitter with a grain of salt in most cases. Grantham was defended by Beau Bock on 790 The Zone, but it is tough for me as a Georgia alumnus to really get behind and defend our defensive coordinator. I know he was sticking up for a player. However, no one saw Franklin supposedly yelling at the player on camera, while Grantham shouting obscenities was seen clear as a bell on television.

Aren't these college coaches supposed to be shaping the lives of these players and setting a good example for these young men to become respected members of society? I don't think you do that by trying to fight another grown man on national television.

The Rude Awakening was split on the recent Jim Harbaugh vs. Jim Schwartz Handshake-Gate the day after the San Francisco 49ers head coach upset the Lions head coach by gripping and backslapping a bit too jovially following the 49ers victory. Interestingly enough, I seemed to agree the most with Leo, as the former Braves pitching coach made the most sense. Mazzone didn't think the incident should have warranted all of the reaction it did and he is absolutely correct. Schwartz didn't like the handshake? Come on, man.

The worst part was that CBS's Bill Cowher, FOX's Jimmy Johnson and NBC's Tony Dungy all took Schwartz's side, saying that Harbaugh disrespected him. Huh? What? Harbaugh gave a quick handshake and slap on the back before moving on to celebrate with some players. Schwartz was the one that dropped the foul language, then CHASED AFTER Harbaugh to bump him and cause a dustup. Harbaugh was the one in the wrong?

I have seen Patriots coach Bill Belichick give less of a handshake with no words exchanged, no eye contact, but this Harbaugh thing is what grinds your gears? Seriously? When as a society did we wuss down to the point that EVERYONE must apologize for EVERYTHING? Why are we demanding an apology from Harbaugh for being happy?

Schwartz is sour over losing and not being the golden child of the NFL after his Lions suffered a defeat. You want to be mad, Coach Schwartz? Perhaps you should be angry at your quarterback for missing that wide open touchdown early on. Kudos to you coach Harbaugh for not apologizing and please don't. One is not needed.

GPB GETS IT DONE ...

Finally, if you haven't been going to ga-prepnews.com or gpb.org/sports much recently, you've really missed out on some great interviews conducted by GPB Sports' Gil Tyree. The voice of Friday Night Football's Game of the Week has posted interviews the last few weeks with players involved in the GPB TV game of the week. Tyree recently snagged Alvin Kamara and Kenyan Drake and the names will only get bigger as the playoffs approach.

GPB.org/sports has really stepped up its football coverage this year with its own poll, Southern Conference coverage and fresh blogs nearly every day from Tyree, Jon Nelson and Mark Harmon. It is worth a look, no doubt.

Photo courtesy of Rob Saye. Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.

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

*"I didn't think it was
that big of a deal."*

That was Trent Duffer talking about the Jim Schwartz/Jim Harbaugh ordeal that was called by some analysts as a "black eye for the Shield." Give me a break, please. The fact that fines were discussed over two coaches shaking hands is unbelievable. Don't require them to do it if you don't want something like this potentially happening. In the heat of the game one coach was excited over a big win and the other got his feelings hurt because the rookie coach didn't want wisdom imparted. Get over it.



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GLADIATORS HOCKEY



New-look Gladiators take over Atlanta

By Scott St. Lifer



After coming off of a 30-34-8 season and missing the playoffs, the Gwinnett Gladiators feel a new-look squad can lead them to the Promised Land. On Friday night at the Arena at Gwinnett Center, Atlanta's only professional hockey team will awe fans when the Gladiators take the ice against the defending South Division champion Greenville Road Warriors for the 2011-2012 home opener.

John Wroblewski takes the reigns for this season replacing Jeff Pyle, the only other head coach in franchise history. Pyle left the Gladiators to take the same position with the Texas Stars of the American Hockey League.

"It is [exciting] for the Gladiators to an-

nounce our new head coach," exclaimed team president Steve Chapman. "We were looking for the right fit for what we do – play exciting hockey, develop talent and young men and be an asset in our community. John Wroblewski fit exactly what we were looking for in a coach. He has the credentials and the background in developing hockey players. He has the character and the commitment that fit our philosophy and he has the passion to get it done. I'm looking forward to working with John in accomplishing our goals."

TRACK RECORD OF SUCCESS ...

Wroblewski joins the Gladiators after serving as an assistant coach for the Wheeling Nailers last season. With the help of Wroblewski, the Nailers achieved their best postseason finish since 1998 by advancing to the Eastern Conference Finals. Prior to coaching Wheeling, Wroblewski got his start by coaching the USA Hockey Under-18 National Development Program from 2007 to 2010. In 2010 he led the team to a Gold Medal finish in Minsk, Belarus.

"John was honestly one of the most prepared individuals that I have ever interviewed for a job of any kind," said Chapman. "His background with the National Team and as an assistant in our league provided the right mix of knowledge in terms of recruiting and development. His X's and O's and the style of game that he wants to implement – up-tempo and aggressive – were detailed and in line with our goals. And his passion and energy fit exactly what we were looking for in a coach. His age will not be an issue. Heck, there are NHL Head Coaches that are only a few years older than John. We're

very happy to give him his first opportunity to take the helm in pro hockey."

In addition to Wroblewski's hiring, the Gladiators signed former defenseman Rick Emmett as an assistant coach for the upcoming season. Emmett played with the Gladiators from 2003 to 2006 and helped lead the team to the 2006 American Conference title. In total, he played 11 seasons professionally in the East Coast Hockey League, International Hockey League and the United Hockey League.

NEW PARENT CLUBS ...

Besides the hirings of Wroblewski and Emmett, the Gladiators also signed new affiliation agreements with the Phoenix Coyotes and the Buffalo Sabres of the NHL to mark the team's fourth and fifth NHL affiliates. Gwinnett will now serve as an ECHL affiliate for two NHL teams for the third time in team history. The other instances occurred during the 2008-09 season with Chicago and Atlanta, and during the 2009-10 campaign with Columbus and Atlanta.

"Having two affiliates could be a challenge," said Chapman. "We could be stocked very well by our affiliates. Gwinnett should have several good prospects, but any of those players can be called up at any time, leaving the team short-handed. I know we will pull together and battle during the call-ups. It is a challenge for the die-hard fans to endure the mass call-ups, but that is part of the game and it's good for the prospects. I think we have the leadership in place behind the bench and on the ice to see us through."

During the team's first eight seasons, 156 call-ups involving 112 players have transpired. Over the past four seasons, the Gladiators have had approximately 22 player call-ups to the American Hockey League and in 2009-10 they set a team record with 28.

"Buffalo is an appealing affiliate to us for many reasons," said Chapman. "They have always been an organization that builds within their own system. The new ownership

in Buffalo supports the philosophy of building from within. In addition, Wroblewski's [Wroblewski] relationship with Ron Rolston, the head coach in Rochester, cemented the connection. We're looking forward to beginning a strong relationship with the Sabres of developing talented players and upstanding individuals."

This year also represents the first season since Gwinnett's inception that it is not an affiliate of the Atlanta Thrashers for the assignment of draft prospects and player development because of the franchise's recent relocation to Winnipeg, Manitoba.

In addition to new NHL affiliates, the Gladiators made a deal this fall to acquire Alpharetta native Brad Miller from the Trenton Titans for Dustin Cameron. Last season, Miller split time between Trenton and Elmira, where he earned a combined 23 points (eight goals, 15 assists). He began playing professionally in 2009 with the Idaho Steelheads and played collegiately at the University of North Dakota. Back in his youth days, Miller played for the Atlanta Fire at The Cooler and won three national titles for the "Cooler Selects" roller hockey team.

With this group, Gwinnett hopes a special season is in store. After splitting the first two games of the season on the road with the Florida Everblades, a 3-2 loss and a 2-1, 11-round shootout victory, the Gladiators seek the backing of the home crowd to beat Greenville.

For the opening series, fans will be given magnetic schedules on Friday and wall calendars on Saturday. Before the games, defensemen Paul Flache and Brad Miller will sign autographs on Friday while forward Andy Brandt and defenseman Will Colbert will sign on Saturday. Come on out to the Arena at Gwinnett Center and bring the whole family for a fun-filled day. Gates open up to the public at 6:35 p.m. on Friday and at 6:05 p.m. on Saturday.

Photo of Pat Galivan courtesy of Dale Zanine/Gwinnett Gladiators. St. Lifer can be reached at [sstlifer@scoreatl.com](mailto:ssstlifer@scoreatl.com).

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WHOS HOT

THUMBS UP TO THE BURNER



Michael Turner

On Sunday against the Carolina Panthers, the Falcons' Pro Bowl running back was dominant. He pounded the Panthers for 139 yards and two touchdowns, leaving Carolina defenders black and blue. His ability to move the chains and grind clock took the heat off the offensive line and quarterback Matt Ryan in Atlanta's 31-17 victory.

Georgia Southern

It's time to take notice of the pig-skin renaissance taking place in Statesboro. Georgia Southern is 6-0 on the season and averaging 44 points a game. The Eagles' offense is the best in the FCS, and in November, they'll try to step up their game against Nick Saban's Alabama team. Represent.

Must-see football

The high school football playoffs haven't started yet, but in some cases, they may as well have. The non-region schedules are all behind the prepsters. Now, every week is a must-win rivalry game for almost every team in the state. That's must see football, Georgia-style.

World Series

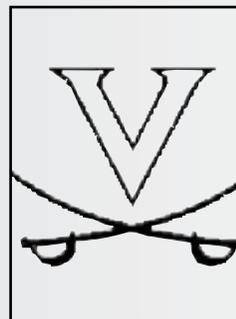
Yes, we should be more interested in the baseball playoffs and World Series, but after the Braves' nearly historic collapse, the hangover still pounds in the skull of Atlanta fans. It's too painful to watch this post-season knowing our team should be getting a piece of the national spotlight.

Todd Grantham

Really, Todd? Yes, you have improved the Georgia defense, but let's look at your "signature" moments since you took over the Bulldogs' defense. Last October, you gave a choke signal to a kicker in Jacksonville ... a kicker. Now, you go "tough guy" at Vanderbilt? Really?

Charlottesville

What is the deal with Scott Stadium at UVa? The Cavaliers can't seem to beat anyone with a pulse until our Yellow Jackets come calling. Tech has now lost nine of 10 in Hooville. We wouldn't mind if everyone else lost there, but Virginia usually struggles to beat quality teams.



WHOS NOT

THUMBS DOWN TO VIRGINIA

SCORE LIST

BY RYAN CAIAFA

- 1** **COCKTAIL PARTY:** One of the SEC's biggest rivalries returns as Georgia and Florida renew their rivalry in Jacksonville on Oct. 29. The Gators look to snap their three-game losing streak and hope their bye week can help solve their offensive and defensive woes, while Georgia hopes to beat the Gators for the fourth time in 22 seasons.
- 2** **FALCONS FLY NORTH:** The Falcons look to keep the momentum from their victory over the Panthers as they travel to take on the Lions, who, after their surprising 5-0 start to the season, try to bounce back from their loss to the 49ers. The Falcons will have to stop the Lions' explosive offensive attack in order to secure their fourth win.
- 3** **REDEMPTION:** After its surprising first loss of the season to Virginia, Georgia Tech travels to Miami to try to bounce back against the Hurricanes, who will try to beat the Jackets for the third straight season. Tech looks for its seventh win and also hopes to avenge last season's embarrassing 35-10 home loss to the Canes.
- 4** **DOMS HOMCOMING:** Georgia State looks for some homecoming magic as it tries to snap its five-game losing streak against South Alabama on Oct. 22 in the Georgia Dome. The Panthers will need improved quarterback play and hope their strong rushing attack continues in order to have a shot at knocking off the Jaguars, who beat them 39-34 last season.
- 5** **RIVALRY RENEWED:** After a student-made rap video made the internet rounds and asked "Brookwood, where you at?," the defending state champion Broncos will look to show Grayson where they're at as they travel to take on the second-ranked Rams on Oct. 28. The game can be seen on GPB or online at GPB.org starting at 8 p.m.

CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

BY FLETCHER PROCTOR

- 4** Shutouts posted this season by East Paulding's defense. The Raiders face Pope in the GPB.org webcast Friday
- 45.4** Points per game that East Paulding is scoring on average during its 7-0 start.
- 6** Times the Pope Greyhounds have scored at least 27 points this season. Pope enters the game 6-1.
- 6** Number of Stephenson players committed to play for SEC schools. The Jaguars are on GPB TV Friday night.
- 2** Quarters Kwame Geathers and Shawn Williams will each have to miss in Georgia's game against Florida
- 66,000** The number of hits the Grayson/Brookwood rap video received at press deadline on YouTube
- 3** SEC West teams in the top 10 of the first BCS Standings released last Sunday. LSU is No. 1
- 24** Georgia's ranking in the AP Poll. The Dawgs have won five straight after starting 0-2.
- 8** Consecutive games with a touchdown reception for Elon's Aaron Mellette. Elon faces UTC this Saturday on GPB TV.
- 6** Touchdowns in the last two weeks for Chattanooga's Terrell Robinson. He has run for three and passed for three.

TRIVIA QUESTION

Since 2002, Marist has won all but two of the Class AAAA boys cross country state championships. What school won the other two?

Answer on Page 14

SANITY AT LAST

"If you watch it you see this kid speed up while everybody else is slowing down and he's locked in on my son's leg. If you look closely you can see the guy give a thumbs up to the sideline and the coach telling him 'good job.'"

- Robert "Jumpy" Geathers on why his son threw a punch in the Georgia-Vandy game.

MY TWO CENTS

The situation in Hancock County is a sad one not only for the high school football world, but also for the state of Georgia. For a team to attack another one en masse is unacceptable. And I have a hard time believing that the Hancock Central team attacked their counterparts at Warren County without any sort of encouragement from their coaches.

The frustrating part about this is that the Hancock County sheriff is refusing to allow the GBI to come in and investigate the situation. This incident simply cannot be allowed to be swept under the rug. Someone in this state needs to make sure that the

incident is thoroughly investigated and that any and all guilty parties are punished to the fullest extent of the law.

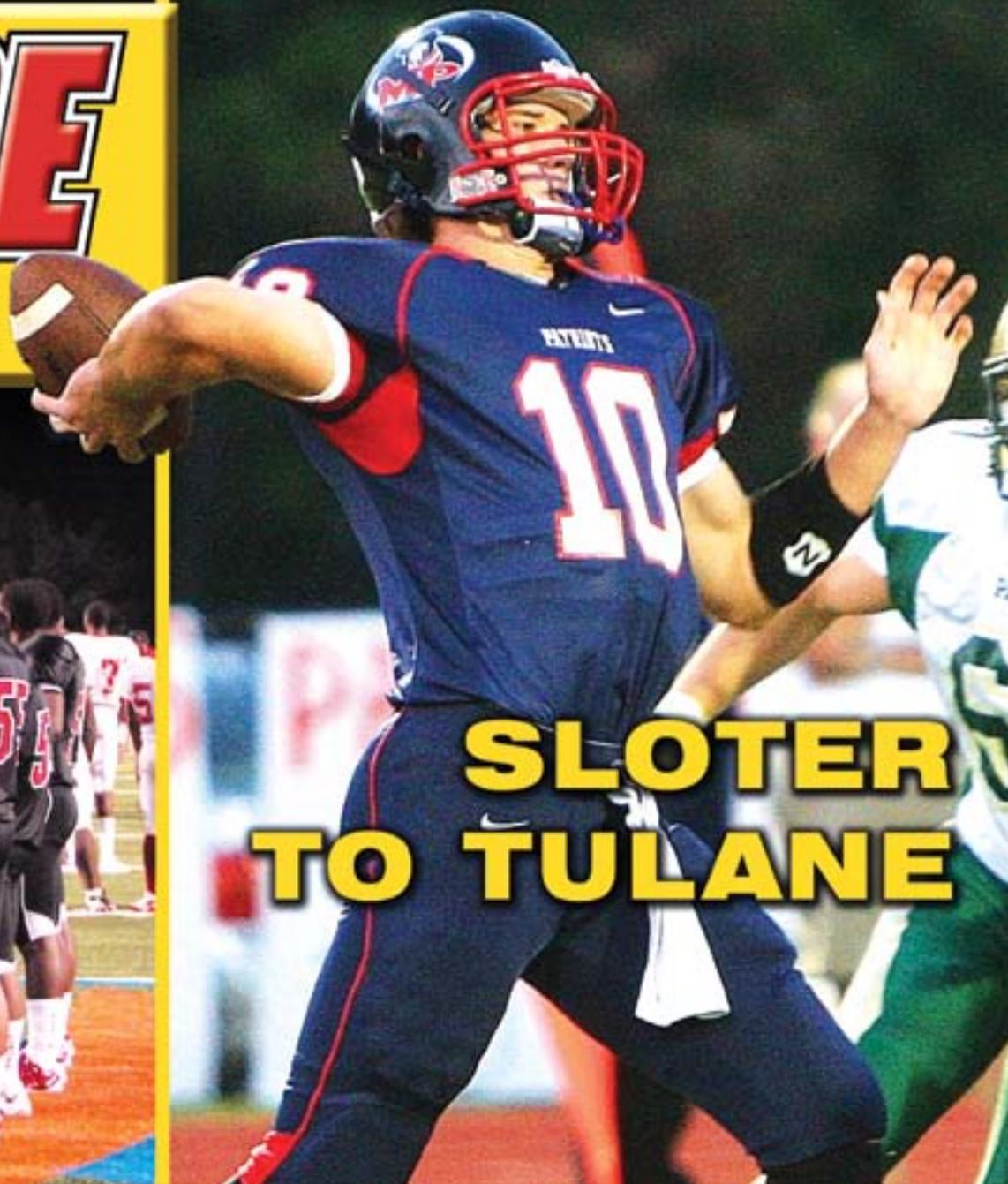
Let's all hope that the situation is rectified and the injured players and the head coach at Warren County recover from their injuries. In the meantime, players and coaches at all levels of athletics need to reflect on this incident and remember that sportsmanship and respect for opponents are an important part of what they do. After all, sports are meant to be fun.

Black can be reached at sblack@scoreatl.com.



SCORE

PREP



Investigation ongoing in assault case

By Fletcher Proctor

Warren County Superintendent of Schools Carole Jean Carey was on hand in Sparta last Friday night when a Hancock Central player assaulted Warren County head coach David Daniel, sending the Screaming Devils coach to the hospital. According to Carey, she was walking back to the locker room with Daniel when the fracas started. "We saw helmets go up and he (Daniel) took off with the offensive coordinator."

Carey said that she and Daniel were 30-40 feet away from the players when the melee broke out initially. The Warren County locker room was locked, according to Carey, and the team was standing outside the doors when a Hancock Central player smacked a Warren County player. Carey was putting equipment on the truck when she saw Daniel get struck. Daniel was taken to University Hospital before he was transferred and eventu-

ally released on Monday, according to Carey. The Augusta Chronicle reported that Daniel suffered fractures around his cheek, nose and right eye that will require major reconstructive surgery.

Assistant coach Jim Turner has been serving as acting head coach but Daniel is still involved in the team's game plan. "He was breaking down film last night and he's leading from afar right now," said Carey. "He might be in the press box (for the upcoming game), but right now we just don't know. It's too early to tell."

INVESTIGATION BEGINS ...

As far as the investigation, the Hancock County Sheriff's Department denied Carey's request for GBI involvement, but that hasn't deterred the Warren County Schools Superintendent. "I am working through the board

attorney to petition the DA or the Attorney General to get the Bureau's involvement." Carey said that there are different facets to the case, more than just the assault on Daniel. "A lot of things are going on. A few other things happened." Carey did not wish to comment on the other incidents until after the investigation but she is looking out for Daniel. "We need to hold the person accountable that did this to Coach Daniel."

GHSA spokesman Steve Figueroa said the organization is waiting until authorities finish their investigation before they can get involved. "We will monitor what happens and then act," said Figueroa. However, the GHSA cannot rule on this issue due to the fact that it took place after the game and off the field of play. "It is similar to a fight in the lunch room," said Figueroa.

The only thing the GHSA could rule on is if the host school, in this case Hancock Central, were to be found guilty of not providing a safe atmosphere for the game. In this case, the GHSA could either fine the school or put the school on probation, possibly being

ruled ineligible for the playoffs.

BIG EASY KYLE ...

Mt. Pisgah Christian quarterback Kyle Slotter committed to Tulane this past Monday after visiting the campus the previous weekend. According to Slotter's father, Kyle came away from the visit "energized," and believes he "can be a major part of helping to turn around the program." Some of the factors that Tulane had in its favor included a strong education and beautiful facilities on a gorgeous campus.

An interesting note to keep an eye on: Tulane head coach Bob Toledo resigned the day after Slotter committed but the staff promised that the commitments will still be honored by the new coach. Slotter and his family say they will watch the selection process closely but are "hopeful (Tulane) gets in a head coach that runs the style of offense that is conducive to Kyle's talents."

Photos courtesy of Jon Barash (left) and Rob Saye (right). Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.



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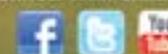
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PREP SOFTBALL



Mt. Pisgah player overcomes illness

By Scott St. Lifer

During the Mount Pisgah Christian School's 5-4, first-round victory over North Cobb Christian in the state playoffs, Courtney Condon hit a home run and pitched seven strong innings. This performance was made even more special because nine months ago, doubts arose that the reigning All-Region 5-A player would ever walk again.

Last December, Condon was diagnosed with blood clots in both of her legs that required three surgeries over 19 days at Eggleston Children's Hospital. Despite the surgeries, the clots still remained so Condon traveled to Arizona for 15 days to endure three additional surgeries. This time the blood clots went away. Because of the extended time off of her legs, Condon practically had to relearn how to walk through hours of physical therapy.

Now after a full recovery, Condon has helped lead the Patriots to the second round of the playoffs behind an 11-2 record and 2.76 ERA in the circle while holding opponents to just a .196 batting average. Condon has been a force at the plate as well with a .424 batting average, three homers and 26 RBIs.

UPSETS GALORE ...

Lovett pulled off a 2-1 upset series victory over the top seed from Region 5, Heard County, in the first round of the state playoffs.

"We knew with Heard County being a one seed that they were going to be tough opponent," said head coach Mark Bagwell. "It is a tough place to play ... I think everybody was there at that series to watch them play, so [Heard County] had a lot of support."

Jordan Wolfe pitched all three games for the Lions. She also helped herself out at the plate, producing a big two-run hit in the first game.

CAMDEN COUNTY FALLS ...

North Cobb also pulled off an upset over a top seed by sweeping Camden County 6-2, 5-4. The Warriors won Game 2 in comeback fashion by hitting two sacrifice flies in the bottom of the eighth inning to cap off a three-run inning. The Warriors scored on Casey Page's bunt single and on sac flies from Rachel Bartoe and Kaitlyn Lawrence to win the game and series.

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

PREP CROSS COUNTRY



Brookwood, Creekside win at Coach Wood

By Ricky Dimon

The Brookwood boys remained on course for their third consecutive Class AAAAA state championship when they dominated last Saturday's Coach Wood Invitational at Mill Creek. A whopping nine Broncos broke the 17:00 mark and all five point-scorers placed in the top 13 overall. Brookwood's 42 points were 98 better than second-place Lakeside, Evans' 140. Morgan Malanoski finished runner-up in 16:08 for the Broncos, trailing only Peachtree Ridge star Josh Brickell (15:57).

There was far more drama on the girls side, where champion Creekside edged Walton 96 points to 92. The Seminoles had two runners in the top 10 individually to prevail over a 25-team field. Sarah Heisner finished ninth with a time of 19:55 and Lauren Rodriguez was not far behind in 20:01. Alexa Womack led Walton with a fourth-place performance in 19:30. Chloe Whitworth of Collins Hill won the race and her 19:11 was nine seconds faster than runner-up Sarah Bowles of Lakeside, Evans.

GREAT SCOTS ...

Galloway's boys showcased their superior depth to triumph at the Winder-Barrow Invitational last Saturday. The Scots compiled a low score of 42 points by taking the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh individual spots.

Freshman Riley Freidman paced the team in 17:05 and senior Calvin Henry provided an additional boost with a time of 17:10. Hakeem Mustafaa of Shaw won the race in 16:44.

Landmark Christian captured the girls' title and also boasted individual champion Lindy Long (19:36). Winder-Barrow, whose Amanda Clark finished in second place behind Long at 19:41, finished runner-up in both competitions.

Westminster and Lovett emerged victorious at last Wednesday's Buford Invitational. The Wildcat boys, led by runner-up Jake Candler's 17:23, placed all five point-scorers in the top 11 and dominated the 10-team field with 38 points. Lovett was second in the boys' race and its girls' team prevailed by placing all five scorers in the top 10, good for a score of 35 points.

WHAT'S AHEAD ...

Teams will take to the state meet course this weekend for the prestigious Carrollton Last Chance Invitational. Among those on a blockbuster entry list are Blessed Trinity, First Presbyterian, Lovett, McEachern, St. Pius, Wesleyan and Westminster. Most region championships are next week, but the Region 6-AAAA title will be on the line this Saturday at Marist.

Dimon can be reached at rdimon@scoreatl.com.

PREP FOOTBALL



North Gwinnett defense stepping up

By Fletcher Proctor

According to the GHSA, Athens Christian will have to forfeit three wins due to the use of a player that did not meet the GHSA standards for eligibility regarding foreign exchange students and was therefore ineligible to play in six varsity games. The victories over Hebron Christian, Banks County and Social Circle will be vacated.

The North Gwinnett defense has been coming to play the last six quarters. After scoring a defensive touchdown and coming up with several crucial turnovers against Norcross in a come-from-behind 29-22 victory over the Blue Devils, the Bulldogs held Mountain View to just 115 yards in a 35-7 win. The Bulldogs have scored 64 points in the last 61:30 minutes of football.

The Grayson/Brookwood rivalry was revved up a level recently when Grayson students released a Youtube video rapping about the game. The video had over 66,000 views at press deadline.

Rush Propst appears to have the defensive woes that troubled Colquitt County one year ago solved and the Packers could truly be a force come playoff time. The defense has stepped up this year, allowing just 11 points per game, down from 31 points per game one year

ago. In region play, that number decreases even more as the Packers have allowed 9.5 points per game. Colquitt County defeated Lowndes 34-7 to move to 2-0 in region play and pushed the Vikings to the bottom of Region 1-5A.

The stage has been set for the Region 6A-AA showdown everyone was waiting for: No. 1 Buford at 8-0 hosting No. 3 GAC, 7-0 on the year. Both teams average around 48 points per game offensively, but GAC has given up an average of 18 points per game while Buford gives up just over a field goal per contest. GAC's offense has kicked it into a higher gear in preparation for the matchup with the Wolves, splurging for 69 against Decatur and 62 against Clarkston its last two times out.

Savannah Christian has made it to the state championship game the last two seasons. In 2009 the Raiders entered the game undefeated while in 2010 Savannah Christian had one loss on its schedule. If Donald Chumley's team wants another unblemished record entering the 2011 playoffs, its toughest task may be when the Raiders travel to 7-0 Calvary Day this Friday.

Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.

PREP VOLLEYBALL



Pope breezing through playoffs

By Joe Deighton

Pope cruised to two playoff wins against Lambert and North Paulding. The Greyhounds have yet to lose a game in the postseason, winning 3-0 in both victories. Seniors Mary Hannah Arrington and Katie Bange led the team in nearly every category including hitting percentage with Arrington's .505 and Bange's .485.

"They have both had outstanding seasons and careers at Pope," said head coach Bryan Jones. "Both of them have been starters on varsity since freshman year. I'm proud that the two of them will be continuing their volleyball careers at the next level."

Arrington will be playing at Auburn and Bange just committed to Middle Tennessee State. The Greyhounds are inching closer towards a third consecutive state championship, but their third-round opponent, Whitewater, the top seed out of Area 3-AAAA, will be tough to beat.

BROOKWOOD MOVES ON ...

Brookwood dropped the first game to Etowah 25-17 in their second-round Class AAAAA playoff matchup. The Lady Broncos rallied and took the next two games 27-25 and 25-18, but Etowah forced a decisive fifth game.

After trailing 6-2 in the final frame, senior outside hitter Erin Shelton came up with a big

kill that started a 5-1 rally. Shelton added another kill to make the score 9-8 and get service back in the Lady Broncos' favor. Senior Colleen Thompson added consecutive aces and Brookwood eventually took the game 15-11 to advance to the Elite Eight. Shelton finished with 17 kills and two blocks, while Bethany Eason added 23 assists. The Lady Broncos will face Roswell in the quarterfinals.

WARRIORS VICTORIOUS ...

The state's top two volleyball counties were represented when North Cobb faced North Gwinnett in the second round. The Lady Warriors were victorious, but it wasn't without a struggle. North Cobb and North Gwinnett went back-and-forth, splitting the first four games, before the Lady Warriors finally finished off the Lady Bulldogs in the fifth set.

Senior middle hitter Katie O'Rourke led the way for North Cobb with 20 kills in the match, while Tobi Forrest contributed 18 kills. Senior Lauren Schmitz had 45 assists to go along with three blocks and one ace. Sophomore Tate Pember was stellar on defense with 29 digs. The Lady Warriors will play Lassiter in the quarterfinals.

Deighton can be reached at jdeighton@scoreatl.com.

TEAM BASEBALLS



Worst-to-first baseballs for sale

Anyone who experienced the 1991 Atlanta Braves "worst-to-first" season will never forget the excitement of that magical year—with names like Tom Glavine (Cy Young Award), Terry Pendleton (MVP), John Smoltz, Otis Nixon, Steve Avery, Dave Justice, Deion Sanders, Mark Lemke, Mark Wohlers, and, of course, Bobby Cox. As if the drama of the regular season was not enough, the 1991 World Series was one for the ages; on the 100th anniversary of the Fall Classic, out of the first 100 World Series, ESPN ranked the 1991 Series "the best ever." Although the Braves fell one victory short of a world championship, the 1991 season was the start of one of the greatest dynasties in baseball history, as the team went on to win an amazing 14 consecutive division titles, with a world championship and four more National League pennants along the way.

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of At-

lanta's first World Series, teambaseballs.com is offering for sale a limited quantity of authentic, original and rare 1991 Braves team-signed baseballs. There is no better memento of those cool, crisp, electric October evenings at the ballpark than these baseballs, which were actually signed by the team back in 1991. Each baseball is unique and comes with a signed letter of authenticity from team baseball expert John Mitnick, co-author of the acclaimed book *Team Baseballs: Artifacts of the Game* (<http://www.spenceloa.com/network.asp>, and also available on amazon.com).

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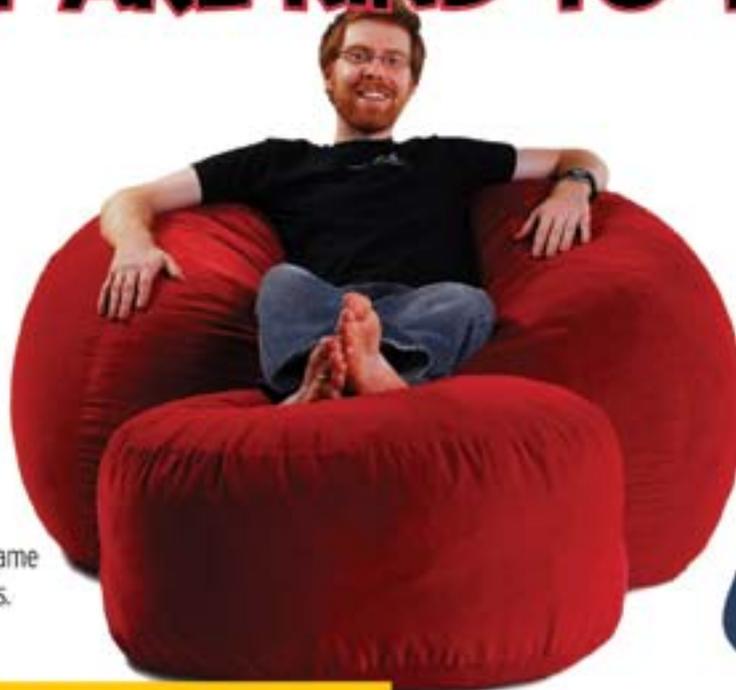


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PANTHER PROWL



Football struggles as hoops begins

By Dave Cohen

Despite putting together its best rushing performance of the season, a school-record 244 yards on 45 carries, the Georgia State football team was hampered by turnovers in its 23-13 loss at South Carolina State last Saturday in Orangeburg, S.C. The loss was the Panthers' fifth straight heading into the South Alabama game.

Without starting quarterback Drew Little, who was sidelined with an injury, Bo Schlechter shared the duties with Kelton Hill. Schlechter, however, was intercepted twice while completing only four of 11 passes. Hill, on the other hand, rushed the ball 16 times for a team-leading 94 yards. Donald Russell rushed for a season-high 85 yards on 15 car-

ries and one touchdown, his seventh of the season. Christian Benvenuto kicked two field goals from 23 and 40 yards out and Michael Hall led with 11 total tackles.

"We've got to learn to finish the job," said GSU head coach Bill Curry. "But we took another step forward, and we've got to look at it that way. We were in position to give ourselves a chance to win." Georgia State's next game is Oct. 22 when it hosts South Alabama in the Georgia Dome. Kickoff is at 3:00 p.m. (Listen on WCFO-AM 1160 and WMLB-AM 1690).

HUNTER ERA BEGINS ...

A new era of Georgia State basketball began last Friday night when new head coach Ron Hunter held his first practice. He inherits a team

that won 12 games last season. "I was excited to get out there tonight," commented Hunter. "Although it has been nearly seven months since I was hired, the time has flown by. I now can really start to build our system and get our players ready for the upcoming season."

The Panthers play their first exhibition game on Oct. 31 when they host Southern Poly in the GSU Sports Arena. Hunter's squad will have four weeks of practice leading up to the Panthers' first regular season game on Nov. 12 at Washington in the opener of the World Vision Classic in Seattle, Wash. Georgia State's home-opener is Nov. 18 against McNeese State (WRAS-FM, 88.5).

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

BULLDOG BEAT



Grantham outburst source of controversy

By Stephen Black

Fire and passion from its coaches are what Georgia's fans have been yearning for in recent years. But Todd Grantham's explosive confrontation with Vanderbilt head coach James Franklin following the Bulldogs' 33-28 win in Nashville Saturday was a bit much.

Athletics director Greg McGarity was not happy with Grantham's role in the argument.

"We need to talk about the student-athletes and what they did that day – and not reduce it to where things off the field are the topic of discussion during that day," said McGarity. "So it's something we're really not proud of, and we'll deal with it and learn from it and also teach our student-athletes on the positives and negatives of situations like that."

Georgia head coach Mark Richt was also not pleased with the situation.

"We are grown men and we need to act that way," said Richt. "But we're also competitors and we all have emotions and sometimes when you get a little fired up it's hard to keep from getting in some kind of jawing contest."

SUSPENSIONS LEVIED ...

Aside from the much-scrutinized conduct of its defensive coordinator, Georgia also had two players involved in questionable behavior at Vandy. As a result, DL Kwame Geathers and DB Shawn Williams have been suspended by the SEC for the first half of the Florida game on Oct. 29.

Geathers was punished for punching Vandy's Logan Stewart in the second half of the game, reportedly after being chop-blocked by the center. Stewart was also suspended a half game for his role in the conflict.

Williams received his suspension for targeting a defenseless player's head while attempting a tackle in the third quarter.

COCKTAIL PARTY ...

After a bye week, the Dawgs will take on nemesis Florida in Jacksonville on Oct. 28.

At 4-1 in the SEC, Georgia is tied for the SEC East lead with South Carolina. However, the Gamecocks have lost starting quarterback Stephen Garcia, who was kicked off the team, and starting running back Marcus Lattimore, who suffered a season-ending knee injury.

Black can be reached at sblack@scoreatl.com.

TECH TALK



Tech looks to bounce back from first loss

By Thomas Watson

Just three days after Georgia Tech's first loss of the season, head coach Paul Johnson put things in perspective: "We're disappointed that we lost, but the sky isn't falling. The team is 6-1. Before you bury us let us play two more games. It seems like everyone wants to end the season and bury the team. Maybe they're right, but let's at least go play and see what happens."

DROP IN THE POLLS ...

The loss dropped the Yellow Jackets eight spots in the poll to No. 20, but the next few weeks will determine the success of Tech's season. At 3-1 in the conference, the Jackets still control their own destiny, and Miami is the first in a series of big tests.

"I think that there's no question that right now they're probably playing as well as anybody in the league. They always have great athletes so it will be a big challenge for our guys," Johnson said of playing Miami. Tech struggled to score points against Maryland and Virginia after having one of

the top offenses in the country for the first few weeks of the season.

SEVEN IN A ROW ...

This will be the seventh straight game for Tech, so Johnson and his staff are balancing preservation with preparation. "This week we will try to cut back some more and do some less physical stuff. Hopefully, we can get to the gate a little fresher and play fast like we did early on in the year. It's very important, especially when you have a young team and they need the practice. But at the same time there's got to be some balance there, and it's our job to find that balance."

Tech will have one more game after Miami before its bye week, and a win against the Hurricanes would set up one of the biggest home games in recent memory for Tech. Clemson visits Bobby Dodd for Tech's homecoming, and if the Tigers can remain undefeated, they would bring a top 10 ranking with them.

Watson can be reached at twatson@scoreatl.com.

HAWKS HAVEN



Hawks sale to Meruelo not final

By Josh Bagriansky

Alex Meruelo appears to be on his way to becoming the new owner of the Atlanta Hawks after agreeing in July to buy the team from the Atlanta Spirit Group. But the deal isn't done just yet, with both sides still waiting on official approval from the NBA's Board of Governors.

Both sides have declined to comment on the issue. It is not uncommon for a long and drawn out process to take place regarding a team's sale garnering approval from the league. A collective bargaining agreement is expected to be reached by late 2011, but with the sale still in flux, members of ASG have been representing the Hawks during lockout talks.

"I am a lifelong basketball fan, a student of the NBA game, and this is a dream come true for me," Meruelo said in August. "I believe that both the Hawks and Philips Arena have unlimited potential for the future. I am honored to be a part of that future."

HOLMAN INDUCTED ...

Longtime Hawks radio announcer Steve Holman was inducted into the Georgia Radio Hall of Fame, receiving a "Career Achieve-

ment" award in the process. Heading into his 27th season as the "Voice of the Hawks," Holman has broadcast an incredible 1,890 consecutive games for Atlanta.

"It's a tremendous honor to be voted into the Georgia Radio Hall of Fame by my peers and to be included with the great professionals that are already members," said Holman.

MORE CANCELLATIONS ...

Hawks center Al Horford didn't sound too optimistic when asked whether an end to the current NBA lockout was anywhere in sight. In fact, the two-time All-Star said he was prepared to miss games a long time ago. "To tell you the truth, that's something [games being cancelled] we more or less saw coming because we both were so far from an agreement," Horford told Fox News Latino. "I think that (the) way everything is looking right now, I think more weeks will be canceled because both sides are not seeing eye-to-eye. The players are holding up strong because we think it's the right thing."

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FALCONS FLIGHT



Falcons face Detroit before bye

By Sean Conway

On Sunday, the Falcons of the Mike Smith era did what they do best. They "defended the Dome" with a 31-17 victory over an NFC South divisional rival, the Carolina Panthers.

The Falcons won the game in large part because they used running back Michael Turner to win the possession battle and kept Carolina's rookie phenom, quarterback Cam Newton, off the field and playing from behind. Turner rushed for 139 yards and two touchdowns on 27 carries. After the game he was a little nicked up and bruised from his efforts, but at the same time, he inflicted more punishment than he absorbed.

On the season, the Falcons are 2-1 in games in which Turner rushes for 100 or more yards. It seemed as though the Falcons wanted to send Carolina a message from the first play from scrimmage. Utilizing back-up Reggie Kelly, Atlanta started its first drive in a double tight end formation. That physical tone allowed the Falcons to win the time of possession battle on Sunday despite running fewer plays than Carolina.

Turner's efforts certainly showed up in other areas of the statistics as well. Quarterback Matt Ryan recorded a 101.1 passer rating on the day, while only throwing for 163

yards (with one touchdown and no interceptions) on 14 completions. At no point in the game was Ryan forced to make an ill-advised throw just to create instant offense.

On the defensive side of the ball, the Falcons pinned their ears back and went after last year's Heisman Trophy winner. Newton looked good early, proving to be a strong force in the pocket. He delivered accurate passes and was able to scramble for first downs, but at key times Newton was forced to make too many big plays, and the Falcons defense took full advantage. He was hit eight times in the pocket, sacked twice and threw three interceptions.

MEGATRON AND COMPANY ...

This week, the Falcons travel to Ford Field to take on the upstart Detroit Lions (5-1). The Lions' top playmakers should be familiar to football fans in and around Atlanta. Former Georgia quarterback Matthew Stafford is making quite a connection with former Tech wide receiver Calvin Johnson. Through six games, Stafford has thrown Johnson a league-best nine touchdowns.

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CHOP SHOP



MRI negative, Heyward avoids surgery

By Fletcher Proctor

The Atlanta Braves offseason spit out a bit of good news last week when it was announced that the MRI on Jason Heyward's right shoulder revealed no structural damage. According to the team's website, the Braves' right fielder had several MRI examinations done earlier this year that showed inflammation, but the most recent MRI revealed negative results around the cervical spine area.

Surgery will not be required to "fix" Heyward's shoulder, instead the team will place Heyward on a stretching program to strengthen the shoulder. Heyward hit just .227 with 14 home runs in his second season.

NEWS AND NOTES ...

The Arizona Fall League has signaled the arrival of several major Braves prospects the last few seasons and Joey Terdoslavich may just be the latest one. Terdoslavich is a switch-hitting first-base prospect who set a Carolina League (Class A-Advanced) record with 52 doubles last year. He cranked 20 home runs and drove in 82 runs while hitting .286. In a game last week, Terdoslavich drove in four runs, scored one himself and

registered a double and a triple.

Braves All-Star catcher Brian McCann was selected by the team as its nominee for the 2011 Hank Aaron Award. The award recognizes the best offensive performers in each league.

The late Skip Caray is one of 10 finalists for the Ford C. Frick Award, a prestigious award presented annually for excellence in baseball broadcasting. Only one winner is announced each year and the name will be revealed at the Winter Meetings. Induction into Cooperstown will take place next July 20-23 at the Hall of Fame induction ceremony. Caray broadcasted Braves games for over 30 years.

Finally, the Braves are still seeking a hitting coach after announcing Larry Parrish would not return. The team interviewed Greg Walker, former hitting coach for the Chicago White Sox, but has not offered a contract. Walker spent the last eight-plus seasons with Chicago. The White Sox finished toward the middle of the American League in most of the offensive categories one year ago.

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GWINNETT GLADIATORS



Gladiators open important season

By Joe Deighton

In case you hadn't heard, the Atlanta Thrashers moved to Winnipeg this summer. That means there is only one ice hockey team left in the metro area. The Gwinnett Gladiators opened the season on the road with two games in Estero, Florida against the Florida Everglades. Gwinnett split with Florida, dropping the opener 3-2 and gaining a 2-1 shootout win.

NEW COACH ...

New head coach John Wroblewski gained his first professional win with the shootout victory. The former assistant coach for the Wheeling Nailers was hired on August 3 as Gwinnett's second head coach. Wroblewski coached the USA Under-18 team from 2007-2010. He helped that team to the 2010 Gold Medal at the World Championships in Belarus. A graduate of the University of Notre Dame, Wroblewski played four years for the Irish hockey team, tallying 64 points in 144 games.

FAST START ...

Forward Andy Brandt had a good start to his fifth season with the Gladiators, posting a goal and an assist and finishing the road

trip at plus-1. He has scored 48 goals in 219 career games with Gwinnett. The 28-year-old has also played for the Victoria Salmon Kings. Brandt was an NCAA champion at the University of Wisconsin in 2006.

Goalie Jeff Jakaitis picked up his first win of the season after recording 37 saves in the 2-1 shootout win over Florida. Jakaitis is in his first year with the Gladiators after spending the 2008 season with Columbia and the 2009 season with the Charlotte Checkers. The 28-year-old will split time this season with fellow goaltender Marc Cheverie.

HOME OPENER ...

The Gladiators will host their home opener on Friday night against Greenville. This will be the ninth season opener in Gwinnett, and even though the Thrashers are gone, there is still an excitement that comes with a professional hockey team. The Buffalo Sabres and Phoenix Coyotes are now the parent teams of the Gladiators. Perhaps you might be watching the next waves of Sabres and Coyotes this year in Gwinnett Arena.

Deighton can be reached at jdeighton@scoreatl.com.

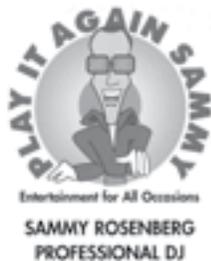
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Baseball authors included in the lineup of the 20th edition of the Book Festival of the MJCCA

The 20th Edition of the Book Festival of the MJCCA, one of the South's premier cultural events, is scheduled for November 5 – 20, 2011. A highlight of Atlanta's literary calendar for 20 years, the Book Festival of the MJCCA presents more than 40 of the year's best and brightest authors in a variety of forums. More than 10,000 visitors will enjoy engaging speaker programs, author meet-and-greets, book signings and panel discussions.

A highlight of this year's Book Festival takes place on Sunday, November 13 at 2:00 pm and features a panel of three authors

discussing various elements of the "national game" of baseball.

First up on the panel is two-time Major League Baseball All-Star Shawn Green, author of *The Way of Baseball: Finding Stillness at 95 mph*. With a baseball career that spanned 14 years and four teams, Green was known for signing autographs with a smile and tossing balls with kids in the stands. Green shares the lessons baseball taught him about being present and attaining inner stillness – no matter what life throws at you.

Next up, Aaron Pribble, author of *Pitch-*

ing in the Promised Land, tells the story of coming of age spiritually and athletically during the first (and last) season of professional baseball in Israel, in the throes of romance, Middle Eastern politics and the dreams of America's pastime.

Finally, bringing the heat is John Thorn, author of *Baseball in the Garden of Eden*, a tale of good and evil. Thorn, Major League's Baseball's official historian, examines the creation story of the game, adds bluff, bluster and bravado, to present an entertaining baseball detective story like none ever written.

Tickets for the panel of "Boys of Summer" baseball authors are: MJCCA Non-Member: \$13 / MJCCA Member: \$8.

Additional authors making an appearance at this year's Book Festival of the MJCCA include beloved American media personality Regis Philbin, United States Senator Joe Lieberman, Academy Award-

winning actress Dyan Cannon, Political commentator Chris Matthews and political journalist Jim Lehrer.

Book Festival co-chair Ina Enoch says, "For two weeks each year, we are proud to bring our community authors from around the world who are also celebrities, athletes, public figures and pop culture icons."

Book Festival co-chair Sheri Gumer adds, "During the Book Festival, our community comes together to explore, learn, and be uplifted together by these extraordinary authors. People come to hear an author discuss his or her book, and can't wait to come back to another program, this time with friends or family. The festival is such a wonderful, community-building event."

To purchase Book Festival individual or series tickets, call the MJCCA Box Office at 678.812.4002, or visit on-line at www.atlantajcc.org.

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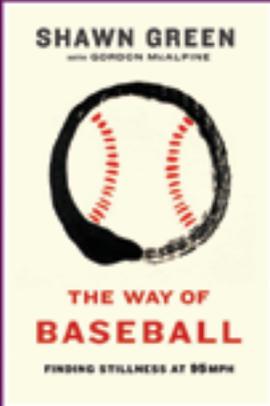
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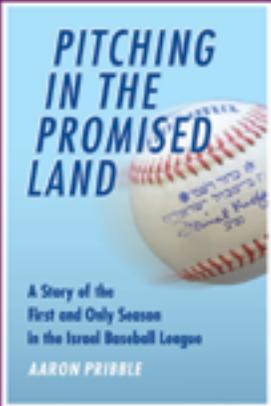
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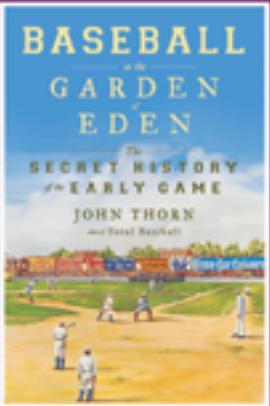
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Meachern vs. North Gwinnett
(Corky Keil Classic)
August 20

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

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