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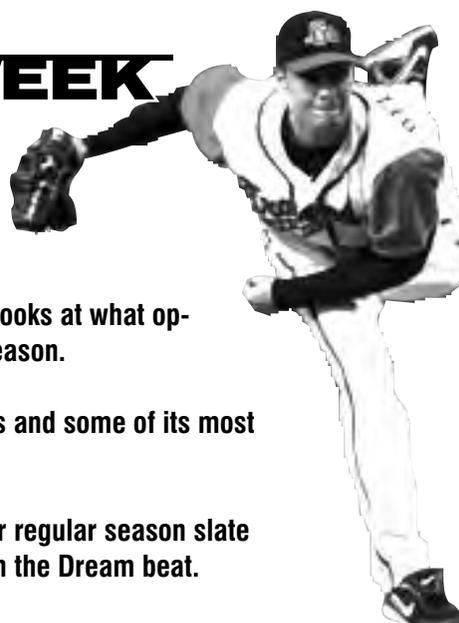
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CAN'T MISS THIS WEEK

- 4** The Fletch and the Dimon Club return this week to bring you their latest opinions on the Atlanta sports scene.
- 5** Hawks beat writer Robby Kalland looks at what options the team has during the offseason.
- 7** We break down the soccer playoffs and some of its most interesting stories.
- 14** The Dream are ready to begin their regular season slate and Joe Deighton breaks it down in the Dream beat.



TEAM SCOOP AND VOICES

COVER DESIGN BY DJ GALBIATI
 COVER PHOTOS COURTESY OF SONNY KENNEDY
 AND DJ GALBIATI

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INSIDE AT SCORE

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SHOT OF THE WEEK...



MILLION DOLLAR QUESTIONS: The Hawks face several difficult questions this offseason. One of which is if they will re-sign Rick Sund, the team GM. Atlanta has done well to make the postseason five straight years, but has yet to make the conference finals. Whether Sund and several key players return has yet to be determined. Photo courtesy of Scott Cunningham NBAE/Getty Images.



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THE FLETCH



Hawks questions on Atlanta's mind

By Fletcher Proctor

While it may not have been for ideal reasons, the Atlanta Hawks dominated the radio airwaves and newspaper inches for the last few weeks. They managed to get the city talking about them during the first-round Eastern Conference series against the Boston Celtics as the talk centered around whether the Hawks could finally make people believe. After the Hawks took Game 1, many thought that they would break through, especially with Chicago dealing with injury after injury. However, the Hawks lost Game 2, leading many people to jump ship, but not before burying the Hawks on the way out of the door. After a Boston massacre in Game 4,

many people figured the Hawks were dead. Al Horford carried the team to a Game 5 win, causing a stir of interest, but it was dashed by a loss in Beantown in Game 6.

While Atlanta lost in the first round for the first time since 2008, people were following the Hawks more closely than any year prior. The storylines were thick and juicy with Rajon Rondo being suspended for Game 2, Josh Smith missing Game 3, Horford's return and, of course, Michael Gearon Jr.'s comments about the Hawks not receiving any calls and about Kevin Garnett being a dirty player. But not in the last few years have fans really gotten into the Hawks, and perhaps that

is because fans have an outlet now in Twitter. The social networking medium was exploding with every play from the Hawks games as fans and local sports radio personalities weighed in.

After the season's conclusion, the Hawks were still in the mainstream with Gearon's comments and subsequent backtrack, and with the AJC's Mark Bradley pounding the Hawks for blowing "a great chance," and Jeff Schultz looking to assign blame. Even Score's own Robby Kalland searched for a potential direction this offseason.

The season did not end the way Hawks fans wanted but for a two-week stretch, the Hawks were THE hot topic in Atlanta. That shows the city has a passion for the team and for the NBA. If the city didn't care and didn't whine about a broken heart, the Hawks would be in more trouble. It would have been interesting had the Hawks beaten the Celtics and then the 76ers to see what the fans would have done with a taste of the Eastern Conference finals. Would the fans have enjoyed the ride? Would they have been angry with a loss on the doorstep of the NBA Finals? Would they have given credit or chalked it up to Chi-

cago's injuries? I wonder if Hawks fans are like Cubs fans in that they secretly wish for doom so they can have the identity of bridesmaids and never brides. Maybe they like the complaining and wouldn't know what to do with success.

FOOT IN MOUTH ...

One of the Hawks co-owners, Gearon really put his foot in his mouth before Game 6 of the Hawks series with the Celtics. Thinking he was off-the-record in a crowd of 200, including reporters from various media outlets, Gearon spouted off on topics such as Garnett being a dirty player to the Hawks not receiving calls that other teams receive. While the average Hawks fan may agree with him, the owner of a team has to be above the level of the average fan. The owner cannot think ANYTHING he/she does is off-the-record in this day of instant media with cell phone cameras and iPhone updates. The owner must rise above that and find other ways to inspire the fan base. Set the proper example and raise the level of your fans; don't lower yourself to the base of the base.

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THE DIMON CLUB



City is Braves country after Hawks' miss

By Ricky Dimon

The NBA playoffs are lining up nicely for a surprise team, or more, to make a serious run at the title. Unfortunately, the Atlanta Hawks are no longer in that pool of contenders.

Derrick Rose-less Chicago is gone after compiling the best record in the entire league. Without Chris Bosh, Miami no longer has the "Big 3" and its first effort as a "Big 2" did not work out well against Indiana. Of the supposed top contenders for the NBA Championship, only two are devoid of serious question marks. One of those teams—OKC—has an average age of 25.8 (24.4 for five starters) and the other—San Antonio—has three crucial players who were on the title-winning

team way back in 2003 (Kevin Durant was 14-years old at the time). While one may be too young, the other may be too old.

The 2012 championship is becoming more and more up for grabs by the day, and that won't do anything to ease the pain of Atlanta's early exit. With Al Horford back from injury and Zaza Pachulia gearing up for a possible second-round series, the Hawks were seemingly rounding into form at just the right time. But it was not to be.

It would not be totally unfair to blame the first-round loss to Boston on two narrow setbacks at the TD Garden. In Game 3, the Hawks stormed back in the fourth quarter and

had two chances at the offensive end to take a lead in the final minute only to eventually succumb in overtime. Boston won the clincher in Game 6 four days later, but not before an 83-80 thriller ended with a blown call for which the NBA would soon apologize.

Of course, what really decided the series was the Game 2 debacle at Philips Arena. Not only were the Hawks playing at home, but their opponents were also without Ray Allen (injured) and Rajon Rondo (suspended). A 2-0 advantage was sitting right there on a silver platter for Atlanta, even more so when the home team led by 11 points in the third quarter. Nevertheless, the Hawks choked, Paul Pierce didn't choke and Celtics stormed back for victory to turn the tide swiftly and decisively in their favor.

If some team like the Indiana Pacers or Philadelphia 76ers goes on to win the Eastern Conference (or, dare I say, even the NBA Championship), these Hawks are going to endure many a sleepless night.

THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE UGLY ...

The Braves are the talk of the town now, and not simply because the Hawks are done and the Falcons are yet to begin. Chipper Jones and company are playing stellar ball,

fresh off a sweep last weekend at defending World Series-champion St. Louis, and they are atop the NL East as of Wednesday with a healthy 23-14 record.

Although they play in arguably the toughest division in baseball, the Braves are good enough to win it. They can hit (196 runs, second-most in the National League), pitch (Beachy, Hanson, Delgado and Hudson all have ERAs lower than 4.00) and close (Craig Kimbrel leads the NL with 11 saves).

But they need to make their move right here and right now. The Nationals, who are a half-game back, have the longest injured list in the majors at the moment. The Phillies, mired in last place, are still without Ryan Howard and Chase Utley. The Marlins have been the streakiest team in the league so far and could implode at any second. As for the Mets, they just aren't very good—far worse than their current record suggests.

Regardless of the various injuries or question marks involving the opposition, the NL East is a taxing puzzle to solve. Armed with a clean bill of health, though, the Braves have all the pieces to do just that. It's go-time in Atlanta.

Dimon can be reached at rdimon@scoreatl.com.



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HAWKS OFFSEASON



Hawks head into offseason in flux

By Robby Kalland



The Atlanta Hawks were unceremoniously bounced from the first round of the playoffs in six games by the Boston Celtics, and as they head into the offseason there are a few pressing issues that need to be resolved.

SMOOVE MOVES ...

The biggest question for the Hawks is what to do with their mercurial star forward Josh Smith. Smith is set to make \$13.2 million next season in the final year of his contract. Smith was integral to the success of the Hawks this season and was the best player Atlanta had at both ends of the floor (18.8 ppg, 9.6 rpg, 3.9 apg, 1.7 bpg, 1.4 spg). Smith was tied for the lead or led the team in points, rebounds and blocks and was second to Jeff Teague in assists and steals.

The frustration for many Hawks fans comes in the inconsistencies they see in

Smith's effort level and mental focus during games. Smith averaged 2.5 turnovers per game, the highest on the team, and often left fans scratching their heads with his decision-making, whether it was dribbling the ball down floor, making a bad pass or taking an ill-advised jump shot. Atlanta's front office has a tough task in front of it as it tries to resign Smith this offseason, despite the clear signs he wants out, or explore possible trade options for him to ensure the Hawks receive some form of compensation for their star.

If the Hawks do end up trading Smith, they will have to get another big man as compensation because, as we saw against Boston, Atlanta is perilously thin at the power forward and center spots already. Ideally, the Hawks would be able to get a young player with some upside that could come in and play major minutes with a small contract that would

also allow the Hawks to find another scorer in free agency. Derrick Williams of the Minnesota Timberwolves or Tristan Thompson of the Cleveland Cavaliers would give them a young player with upside and also cap room to make a move on a free agent. Another option would be to go after a veteran like Pau Gasol in exchange for Smith and hope that move pushes the Hawks over the second-round hump.

CAP ISSUES ...

The Hawks will enter next season just above the salary cap and will have a mid-level exception and a number of minimum spots that they can fill. For them to make any serious moves in free agency they will need to make a trade or amnesty someone. The only two players that would make any sense to amnesty would be Marvin Williams (claim \$8.2 million in cap room) or Joe Johnson (claim \$19.7 million in cap room). Neither players' on-court production has matched their respective contracts, but Williams would be more likely to get waived on the amnesty clause because he would cost less to ownership.

Johnson may make the most sense to amnesty because he has not met the demands of his contract. He ranked 56th in the league in John Hollinger's PER (Player Efficiency Rating) and was tied with Smith for 18th in the league in scoring. For a supposed "go-to" scorer, Johnson has not lived up to his billing in the past two seasons, and his struggles in this postseason have made it evident that the Hawks can't rely on him to be the scoring threat he once was that can carry the offense when the team is struggling.

If the Hawks do bite the \$20 million bullet and amnesty Johnson, it would free them up to make a number of moves in the offseason. First, it would allow them to explore even more trade options for Smith because they would have the option to get a big man in free agency rather than being forced to only trade Smoove for another big. Smith's value has never been higher and he could bring in a dynamic scorer on the perimeter if the Hawks had the cap room to bring in another big in free agency. Or, if the Hawks can make a move in free agency they might be able to make Smith happy enough to come back and re-sign with the Hawks.

This free agent class is heavy with front-court players and much lighter in the back-

court. Brook Lopez, Roy Hibbert, Chris Kaman, Kris Humphries and Carl Landry all could be available in free agency. Lopez and Hibbert are restricted free agents, but their qualifying offers are much lower than their value so they would be definite possibilities. Scoring options in free agency include Eric Gordon and O.J. Mayo, each restricted but likely not to be retained by their teams.

NO MORE JOE? ...

The Hawks, if they had Joe's \$19.7 million to spend, could sign either Gordon or Mayo for around \$7-8 million (Mayo's qualifying offer is \$7.4 and Gordon's value is more than his \$5.1 qualifying offer), and also go after either Lopez or Hibbert for \$10-12 million and have an impressive and deep squad without even having to deal Smoove. There would be the potential to have a lineup of Jeff Teague, Mayo/Gordon, Smith, Horford and Hibbert/Lopez, with Williams and Pachulia coming off of the bench. That combination of size, athleticism and depth would make the Hawks a formidable opponent to any team in the NBA. Smith's speed and athleticism would allow him to defend small forwards, while creating a mismatch on the offensive end with his size and post game.

Johnson has lost a step and the Iso-Joe era may need to come to an end. Smith has been great, and many Hawks fans would be glad to see him return to the team as long as there are changes around him. His contract situation may force a move, but the Hawks ought to do everything in their power to keep him because he did carry this team through the regular season.

Teague and Horford played great in the playoffs, arguably the two best players the Hawks had against Boston, and it would be tragic for the front office to move either of them. With the salary cap situation the Hawks are stuck in, amnestying Johnson seems to offer the most relief and the best chance of retooling this team and really improving its chances to make a run past the second round of the playoffs. It is doubtful it will happen with the cost it would have on ownership, but for the Hawks to make a true run at the Eastern Conference Finals and the NBA Finals, it is what needs to be done.

Photo of Josh Smith courtesy of DJ Galbiati. Kalland can be reached at rkalland@scoreatl.com.

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WHOS HOT

THUMBS UP TO CRUNCH TIME



Prep Playoffs

All the spring high school sports are wrapping up. It's the final time for some of Georgia's finest student-athletes to lace 'em up and compete. Get up, go out and catch a baseball, soccer or lacrosse game now. These kids deserve our support and praise.

Michael Bourn

The Braves' centerfielder is off to a tremendous start in 2012. A career .275 hitter, Bourn has been around the .340 mark all year, is on pace to steal around 50 bases and score over 100 runs. Let's hope Frank Wren can find a way to keep the speedster in a Braves uni for years to come.

Al Horford

Horford has officially become the heart and soul of the Hawks. Despite missing over 50 regular season games this season, he came back and did everything he could to help the Hawks against the Celtics in the playoffs. His steady presence should be a big piece in the Atlanta foundation for years to come.

Overzealous parents

Parents, remember why your kids play sports. They play sports because they love the games and like to be with their friends. Kids don't play sports for you, Dad. Keep it all in perspective and buy your little superstar a slushy next time you're on the way home from the park.

NBA Floppers

Who do NBA player think they are, Ted Flop-adopolis? We should be talking about LeBron and the Heat, Kobe and the Lakers or Tim Duncan and the Spurs, but one of the playoffs' hottest topics right now is flopping. C'mon guys, we want see some raw hoops not some bad physical comedy.

Bryce Harper

The Washington Nationals 19-year-old phenom has some growing up to do. He's got tremendous talent, but over the weekend, he slammed a bat into his own face after a frustrating at bat. The result was 10 stitches. Harper's a player, but he needs to grow up now that he's in The Show.



WHOS NOT

THUMBS DOWN TO HOT DOGS

SCORE LIST

BY BRIAN JONES

- 1** **CHAMPIONSHIP WEEKEND:** It's the end of the road for boys and girls soccer and lacrosse, as the championship games take place this weekend. It's been an exciting season for both sports and it will only get better with the championship games. The one sport and classification that I will especially keep an eye on is 5A boys soccer. Can Centennial keep up their torrid pace, or will Collins Hill take down the red-hot Knights and add another trophy to its collection? It should be a very fun weekend.
- 2** **CONGRATS BART:** Former Falcons quarterback Steve Bartkowski has been selected to enter the College Football Hall of Fame. Bartkowski played his college ball at California and was an All-American in 1974, leading the nation in passing with 2,850 yards. He went to be the first overall pick in the 1975 draft and led the Falcons to a 12-4 record in 1980. Two other Falcons were also selected and they are Ty Detmer and Mark Simoneau. Detmer won the Heisman at BYU in 1990 and Simoneau was the Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year in 1999. Both players were on the Falcons' roster in the early 2000s.
- 3** **BIG DECISIONS:** Now that the Hawks are out of the playoffs, it's time for the front office to make some tough decisions. With six bench players becoming free agents in July, Larry Drew and company have to decide who they want to resign and who should walk away. There's also the situation with general manager Rick Sund because his contract expires next month. Portland has expressed interest in Sund and if he goes, Drew may be right behind him. Man, oh man. This is not a real good time to be a Hawks fan.
- 4** **DONE DEAL:** By the time you read this, the Falcons should have all their draft picks signed. On Tuesday, the Falcons signed Lamar Holmes to a four-year deal and before that they signed four other draft picks including second-round pick Peter Konz. The only draft pick they have not signed by Wednesday was Jonathan Massaquoi, but the team was close to coming to a deal with the defensive lineman from Central Gwinnett High School. This is always good news because you never want to deal with holdouts when training camp begins, and it looks like the Falcons will avoid that problem.
- 5** **HALFWAY POINT:** The Georgia Force are halfway through the season and they are right where they want to be. With a 3-4 record, the Force are in first place in the American Conference South Division and have done it with a solid running game and a hard-nosed defense. Georgia is doing a good job finding ways to win considering it seems like it has to alternate quarterbacks each week with R.J. Archer and Kevin Eakin. They will look to start the second half strong with a win over the Milwaukee Mustangs on Friday.

CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

BY RICKY DIMON

- 1** Number of home runs hit by Braves' CF Michael Bourn, tied with Albert Pujols
- 1.60** Brandon Beachy's ERA, ranking him No. 1 in all of Major League Baseball
- 11** Number of saves for Braves' closer Craig Kimbrel, most in the National League
- 14** Road wins (against eight losses) so far for the Braves, most in the major leagues
- 10-3** The Braves' record this season against teams that made the playoffs in 2011
- 2** Ranking for Georgia DE Jarvis Jones on Mel Kiper's 2013 NFL Draft big board
- 5** Draft picks the Falcons have signed (only Jonathan Massaquoi is unsigned)
- 88** Michael Turner's place on the NFL Network's list of Top 100 players in the league
- 38** Games started in five seasons by Ovie Mughelli, who was released last week
- 24** The Falcons' strength of schedule based on 2011 opponents' records (125-131)

TRIVIA QUESTION

As of May 16, what is the Braves' record this season on Mondays?

Answer on Page 14

SANITY AT LAST

"We knew we were on the road and we weren't going to get anything [and] we were going to have to earn everything we got so it was no surprise they didn't call the foul earlier. He was grabbing me the whole time."

- Hawks Al Horford after the NBA announced its refs blew a call in Game 6 of the Celtics series.

COACH'S DIARY

New Centennial football coach Jeffrey Carlberg is quickly putting his fingerprints all over the Knights program, and he has invited Score along for the ride during his first year at the helm. Here are highlights from last week.

Spring practice came to a close last Thursday with our intra-squad scrimmage. The action was intense and ended in a 24-24 tie. Our offense had its best showing of the spring as Chase Rosenbergpassed for a pair of scores and Christian Glynn and Michael Lopez each hauled in five receptions. These players should lead the offense as the team gets more and more comfortable in



the new spread base.

The defense was led by Ryan Bennett's playmaking and Arnold Johnson's interception. There was much progress made during the spring by both units.

Saturday was an incredibly busy day at Centennial. We had our Blitz Day to end our discount card sale fundraiser and over 30 players went out into the community to raise money for the program. The Junior Knights program also hosted its annual jamboree. The event featured scrimmages for Centennial's sixth, seventh and eighth grade teams against teams from Alpharetta, Creekview and Cambridge.

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Titans girls soccer makes semis

By David Hurst and Fletcher Proctor

Northview girls soccer coach Jen Barr knew she had to make some changes after a disappointing 2011 season. The Titans finished 9-10 last season and Barr made some off-season adjustments to help the girls bounce back. The adjustments seem to be working; the girls team finished the regular season with a 12-6-1 record and played for a shot in the state championship this past Wednesday night. Barr said scheduling a team camp last summer is one of the reasons for this year's success.

"It began last summer when we went to the UGA camp," said Barr. "It gave us an opportunity to get an early jump on everybody, build camaraderie and gel as a team. That led into our preseason workouts in October and you could just tell everybody, especially our

seniors, wanted it real bad this year. Our team goal, from early on, was to make the championship and win it all."

MATTER OF MOTIVATION ...

If last season's disappointing finish isn't enough to motivate the team, Barr and a few seniors are still trying to redeem themselves from a state championship loss in 2010. This year's team has four seniors from the 2010 squad and Barr says they want a state championship more than ever.

"They're so fired up, so mature, so hungry for a ring," said Barr. "With all the distractions going on at the end of the year with graduation, exams, prom and spring break, I've constantly tried to keep them focused, but they do such a

good job of staying focused on their own because they want it so bad."

Northview faced defending Class AAAAA-champion Harrison (14-4-1), but the result was not available at press deadline. The winner will take on the winner of the Milton/Collins Hill game for the state championship on Saturday.

KNIGHTS ROLL ON ...

The No. 1 Centennial Knights advanced to the Class AAAAA boys finals with a 5-1 decision over Parkview. The result, while thrilling for Centennial coach Phil Thomas, may have turned out to be a bit bittersweet. Thomas was a 1996 graduate of Parkview, but his new school has things clicking right now. Fischer Olliff, Cameron Bean, Kane Davis and Connor Davis have things cooking for the Knights, but Centennial's best weapon may be Ryan Spence. The senior set up three goals

with throw-ins during the quarterfinals win over Mill Creek in the quarterfinals before assisting on two goals against the Panthers.

The Knights seniors are seeking a state title after peaking at No. 2 nationally in the ESPN Fab 50 poll last week. This senior class has helped win three region championships and has earned the distinction as the winningest class in Centennial soccer history. Despite all of the region crowns though, the Centennial program has never captured a GHSA soccer title. The Knights will try to win the missing trophy when they face Collins Hill, a team that beat out Centennial for the 2009 Class AAAAA title. Collins Hill has now reached the championship game the last five seasons.

Photos courtesy of Robert Greenfield and Lambert HS. David Hurst can be reached at 404-256-1572. Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.

BASEBALL NEWS



Class AAAAA beasts fight for throne

By Fletcher Proctor

Brookwood faced Harrison in a quarterfinal showdown in Snellville Tuesday night, pitting Gwinnett against Cobb. Lucas Sims went the distance for the Broncos in Game 1, allowing just two earned runs on four hits while striking out eight Hoyas in Brookwood's 11-2 victory. Zach Moon knocked a pair of home runs and drove in five to help the cause. Game 2 was delayed for nearly two hours after some of the lighting went out at the field. When play finally resumed, Harrison avoided a sweep by blasting the Broncos 9-4. The Hoyas used a big first inning, highlighted by Cole Ragsdale's two-run double.

Grayson faced North Cobb in another Gwinnett vs. Cobb quarterfinal best-of-three series. The Rams pounded out a combined 22 hits in a two-game sweep, besting the Warriors 14-1 and 5-3. Korey Anderson and Jeril Dawson each stroked a two-run home run in Game 1 to push the Rams to the mercy rule

victory. Taylor Allum earned his eighth victory of the season. In the second game, North Cobb took an early lead thanks to Eli Sepnieski's RBI double and sac fly. The Rams battled back from a 3-1 hole as Austin Meadows scored a pair of runs. Jack Banda would drive in another with a sacrifice fly and Allum would score the final run on a North Cobb error.

COLUMBUS KYLE ...

The Columbus Blue Devils are just four wins away from a third-straight Class AAA title after sweeping through the first three rounds of the playoffs. Earlier this week against Cartersville, Kyle Carter was on fire for the Blue Devils both on the mound and at the plate. Carter struck out eight batters through four innings before the game was called for the mercy rule. The Blue Devils crushed four home runs in the third inning to

start the rout. J.T. Phillips hit one of the home runs in the big inning, then the UGA-commit blasted another in Game 2. Phillips had a one-hitter through five innings before giving up a late home run in Columbus' 3-1 win.

QUITE CAVALIER ...

Calvary Day's Ryan Lawlor was a one-man team in the Cavaliers' 7-1 win in Game 1 over Savannah Christian in the Class A quarterfinals. Lawlor opened the game with a triple and was driven home by Skylar Strickland's sacrifice fly. That would nearly be enough offense as Lawlor mowed down Savannah Christian to the tune of 11 strikeouts while allowing just one hit and one run, coming via a wild pitch.

CHAMPIONS FALL ...

The title defenses of Marist and Hebron Christian came to an end in the quarterfinals as both were swept out of the playoffs. Marist fell 7-2, 5-3 at Greenbrier in the Class AAAAA bracket, ending a chance at a three-peat. Meanwhile, Hebron Christian lost two heartbreakers to Providence Christian 2-0, 2-1, despite strong pitching performances by Jordan Hillyer and Mason Felt, who each struck out 12 batters but were saddled with losses.

Photo courtesy of Toni James Photography. Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.



TENNIS NEWS



Metro Atlanta rules the hardcourt

By Stephen Black

In the state tennis finals this weekend in Clayton County, all 10 state championship trophies were won by metro Atlanta schools.

Cam Newton's alma mater, Westlake, made its second straight run to the state finals, but again fell short of the state title. The Lions lost 3-2 to Alpharetta after yet another successful season.

Meanwhile, the Raiders won their second title in three seasons.

In Class AAAAA, north Fulton neighbors Johns Creek and Chattahoochee battled for the title with the Gladiators coming out on top with a 3-0 sweep. It is the second time this season Johns Creek had defeated the Cougars; in March, the Glads beat the Hooch 5-0.

Johns Creek finished the season 20-5, with no losses to Class AAAAA teams. It is the

Gladiators' second title in three years, but first in Class AAAAA.

Two more Fulton County schools faced off in the finals of the AAA tournament, with Woodward Academy sweeping North Springs 3-0 for the War Eagles' third state championship in four years. The one exception during that period of time was Johns Creek's state title in 2010.

In Class AA, the setup was the same: two more schools located in Fulton. This time, it was a battle of private schools, with the Westminster School of Buckhead facing off with Blessed Trinity, located in Roswell. The Wildcats prevailed 3-1, winning their 11th state title in 12 seasons.

Unlike the other four classifications, the Class A title was not between schools from Fulton. Instead, Columbus's Brookstone took on

Cobb's Whitefield Academy, and the Wolf Pack took a 3-1 decision for their first-ever state title.

GIRLS ACTION ...

The most anticipated matchup of the weekend was the final in Class AAAAA between Peachtree Ridge and Roswell. Both teams had been chasing Walton the past eight seasons as the Lady Raiders were on their state-record win streak. But the Lady Hornets dethroned Walton in the quarters, then edged the Ridge in the finals 3-2.

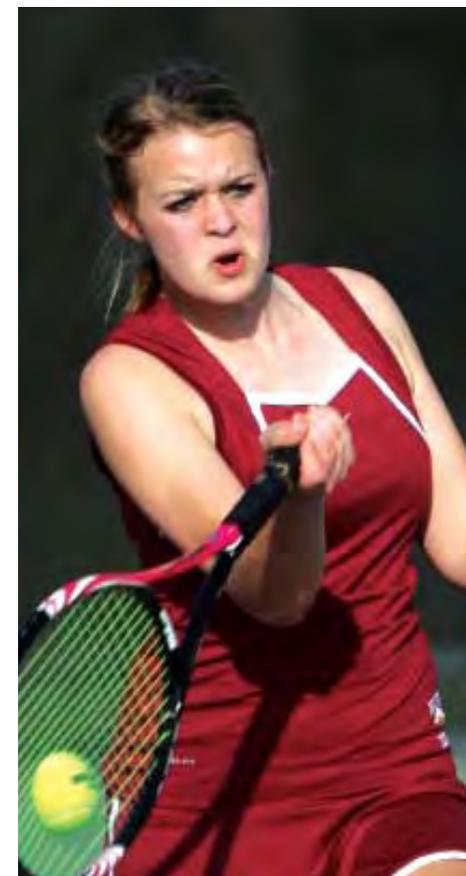
It is the first Class AAAAA state champion in girls tennis besides Walton since 2003, when Chattahoochee won it.

In Class AAAAA Johns Creek completed the tennis sweep as the Lady Glads held off Marist 3-1.

DeKalb private school St. Pius X captured the AAA title with a sweep of Allatoona. In Class AA the same two teams that decided the boys title played for the girls title as well as Blessed Trinity and Westminster squared off. This time, the Lady Titans won giving BT its fourth straight championship.

In Class A, Mt. Pisgah won its second straight championship as singles players Taylor Carson and Samantha Russell won their matches and the Lady Patriots took the doubles point.

Photo courtesy of John Gardner. Black can be reached at sblack@scoreatl.com.



SOCCER NEWS



Throw-ins propel Knights to finals

By Stephen Black

In a clash between Gwinnett powers, Collins Hill edged Brookwood 1-0 when Eli Carrasco found the back of the net with 13 minutes left. Jackson Taylor had seven saves for the Eagles, who will face No. 1 Centennial in the finals (ranking by eurosportscoreboard.com).

Centennial looked especially impressive in a 5-1 victory over perennial-power Parkview in the semifinals. With the win, the Knights captured their 14th straight win. Coach Phil Thomas's squad has developed a unique way of scoring goals. In the 3-1 quarterfinals win over Mill Creek, the Knights scored all three goals on throw-ins. Then, against Parkview, Centennial scored twice more off throws.

If they get past Collins Hill in the final, the Knights will bring the first state soccer championship trophy to Centennial.

Lambert and Greenbrier will meet in Fri-

day night's Class AAAA final after each team won 2-0 on Tuesday night. Neither team has ever won a boys state soccer championship.

Defending Class AAA champ St. Pius X was upset by Gainesville, the 2010 champion, 2-1 after trailing 1-0 at halftime. Charlie Bryant and Douglas Mejia each scored for the Red Elephants in the second half.

Gainesville will face Woodward Academy in the finals. The War Eagles edged Carrollton 3-2 last night. Woodward Academy has won three state titles in its history: 1999, 2004 and 2005. The Red Elephants have won two titles in their history: 1998 and 2010.

Blessed Trinity defeated Lovett 7-6 in penalty kicks after nine rounds of PKs. The Titans took a 2-0 lead in the first half, but the Lions tied it with two second half penalty kicks by Colin Tucker.

Westminster will face the Titans in the

finals after dispatching GAC 5-2. The Wildcats have won a whopping nine state titles since the GHSA began awarding them in 1966. Westminster is the defending Class AA state champion and has won three state titles since 2006.

Aquinas and AIS advanced to the finals in Class A. The Fighting Irish, an Augusta-area private school, won the state title in 2005, while the Eagles have yet to win a GHSA title in soccer. AIS won its semifinal game against Paideia on penalty kicks, 5-4, after being tied with Paideia 3-3 after overtime.

Photo courtesy of Sonny Kennedy. Black can be reached at sblack@scoreatl.com.



BOYS FINALS

AAAAA

Centennial @ Collins Hill

AAAA

Greenbrier @ Lambert

AAA

Woodward Academy @ Gainesville

AA

Westminster @ Blessed Trinity

A

Aquinas @ Atlanta International

LACROSSE NEWS



Westminster's three-peat still viable

By Fletcher Proctor

The Class A-AAAA girls championship has only ever known the Westminster trophy case, and the Wildcats are in a position to make it three straight tomorrow when they face laxpower.com's No. 2 McIntosh. Caroline Heys scored six goals and Eve Knapp tallied five to help No. 5 Westminster past No. 14 Chattahoochee 20-7 in the semifinals. The Wildcats jumped out early to a 12-5 lead at halftime and held the Cougars at arm's length to advance to the finals. McIntosh awaits after smothering No. 16 Johns Creek 17-10. The Chiefs were led by Senneca Ward's four goals in the victory.

GIRLS PLAY ...

In Class AAAAA, No. 1 Milton squared off with No. 4 Walton this past Wednesday in one semifinal while No. 6 Roswell met No. 7 Alpharetta in the other to determine the pairing for the championship game. Neither

score was available at press deadline. Milton has won the last two AAAAA titles and six since 2005.

MEN AT WORK ...

No. 1 Lassiter and No. 2 Milton will meet up for the Class AAAAA title tomorrow night after each cruised to an easy semifinal win. Lassiter took out No. 3 Alpharetta 14-4 behind hat tricks from Garrett Shank and Jack Fitzharris. The win was the ninth straight for Lassiter. Alpharetta was not able to find the magic from the 16-1 quarterfinal win over Collins Hill. Chris Katz scored five times in that game while Patrick Baldwin toasted the Eagles for three goals. Meanwhile, Milton stepped over No. 4 Etowah 12-3 in the semifinal round to advance to the state title game. Jake Jenkins and Evan Lockwood each scored multiple goals to help the Eagles' cause. Lassiter is seeking its second GHSA title since

2006 while Milton is looking for its second in three seasons.

In the Class A-AAAA quarterfinals, No. 3 Westminster bumped off No. 13 McIntosh to earn the right to face No. 1 Lambert, 11-2 winners over No. 10 St. Pius X in the quarters. Lambert and Westminster have earned the previous two A-AAAA titles. The Longhorns had won 40 straight games entering the semifinal showdown, including a victory over Westminster in the regular season. All-Americans Zack Price, Colin Massa and Cory Phillips lead the Longhorns. Westminster won the Area 2 title after dropping the contest to Lambert.

No. 2 Pope faced No. 6 Decatur in the other semifinal game, but the results were not available at press deadline. Decatur overcame goals from Tommy Stanton, Jack Cioffi and Grayson West to defeat No. 4 Chattahoochee in the quarterfinals. Pope skated by No. 5 Lovett 14-4 to earn a spot in the semifinals.

SERIOUS SCORER ...

Peachtree Ridge was bounced from the GHSA Class AAAAA girls playoffs in the quarterfinals by Alpharetta 9-8 but not before Michelle Fortier made her mark. Fortier scored three goals to bring her final season total to 105.

Photo courtesy of Jeff Cordle. Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.



DREAM NEWS



Dream ready to begin 2012 season

By Joe Deighton

The Dream took a 91-89 victory over the Tulsa Shock in the first and only pre-season game at Philips Arena before a crowd of 4,340 on May 5. Point guard Lindsey Harding looked sharp in 21 minutes of play, scoring 11 points with six assists, three rebounds, a steal and a block. Harding finished the game with just two turnovers, which was somewhat surprising considering how close the game was going into the fourth quarter.

Tulsa put up a fight all the way until the last buzzer. The lead changed hands 20 times and the score was tied 10 times. The Dream never led by more than six points, but Atlanta pulled all of its starters early in the fourth. The game was in the balance with nine seconds left and Tulsa with the ball down by two points. The Shock took a three-point shot and missed at the buzzer to give Atlanta the win. Rookie

Aishah Sutherland out of Kansas scored four points and grabbed two key rebounds in the last two minutes. Sutherland finished with eight points, five boards and a block.

KOEHN SHINES ...

One of the pleasant surprises in the win was the play off the bench by new shooting guard Laurie Koehn. The 5-foot-8 Koehn entered the game with a flourish in the second quarter, knocking down four consecutive three-pointers. After a rest to start the second half, Koehn came back in and hit three more threes, including one in the fourth quarter that gave the Dream a 77-71 lead, their biggest of the game. The 30-year-old finished 7-for-9 from behind the arc for 21 points.

Koehn signed with Atlanta in February after playing last season in Poland, where she

averaged just over 13 points per game. She played four seasons with the Washington Mystics but last played in the WNBA during the 2008 season. Koehn did sign a contract with Phoenix in 2009 but was cut shortly before the season started. The veteran guard's three-point shooting will be a major asset on this year's team. After final roster cuts, Koehn made the squad and will contribute off the bench.

ROSTER CUTS ...

The roster was cut from 17 players to 13 and should remain that way barring any unforeseen injuries or mishaps. Despite Sutherland's play down the stretch against Tulsa, she was cut along with the other two free agent signees, Chelsea Regins and Brittany Johnson.

Johnson proved to be a disappointment against Tulsa. In 12 minutes, the guard shot 0-for-3 for zero points. The only free-agent to make the team was Koehn. Draft pick Tiffany Hayes played limited minutes in the exhibition, but this being her rookie season, she was given the chance to be part of the 13-player roster.

SEASON OPENER ...

The fifth WNBA season for the Dream will start in Indiana on Saturday. The Fever gave Atlanta a good run in last year's confer-

ence finals, losing two games to one in the three-game set. Most of Indiana's team from a year ago is back in 2012, including the always-dangerous veteran Tamika Catchings.

Catchings ranks as one of the greatest women's basketball players of all-time. In her WNBA career, she has averaged 16.5 points and just under eight rebounds per game. She won rookie of the year back in 2002 and has been named to seven all-star games along with last year's WNBA MVP award. More recently she has been frustrated by Atlanta's defense. She was held to just eight points per game in last year's playoffs against the Dream.

Indiana will be looking for a measure of revenge, so a quick start will help the Dream. The starters for Atlanta should be Lindsey Harding, Coco Miller, Armintie Price, Catherine Kraayeveld and Courtney Paris. Harding is the one of the keys to Atlanta getting an opening game win. If she can control the tempo and style of play by distributing the basketball and limiting turnovers, then the Dream will be able to keep the score close and have a chance in the fourth quarter.

After the season opener on the road, the Dream return home to face the New York Liberty next Friday night at Philips Arena.

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PANTHER PROWL



Baseball heads to conference tourney

By Brian Jones

It's the final regular season weekend for the baseball team, and the Panthers are trying to qualify for the CAA Tournament with a regular season finish of sixth place or better. Currently, the Panthers are tied for sixth with Towson at 12-15 but hold the tiebreaker over the Tigers.

The Panthers took on Delaware in the final home series of the year this past weekend. In the first game, the Panthers were able to squeak out a 4-3 win. Joel Van Asch was the hero for the Panthers as he belted a two-run single with the bases loaded in the bottom of the ninth. It was the Panthers' ninth one-run win of the year.

The following day featured a doubleheader and the Blue Hens bounced back with 4-1 and 11-6 wins. Panthers senior pitcher Ben Marshall pitched a complete game, but the Panthers' offense only mustered three hits in the loss.

In the second game, the Panthers were down 7-0 at one point in the game, but made it a 7-6 game after the sixth inning. But thanks to eight defensive errors by the Panthers, the Blue Hens were able to hold off the Panthers and give them their 13th home loss (30th overall) of the year. The Panthers will conclude the season this weekend when they face Old Dominion Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

JUST SHORT ...

While the baseball team was battling Delaware over the weekend, the softball team was taking on Hofstra in the CAA Championship. The Panthers got on the board first as Lauren Coleman hit a one-run double in the first inning. But it was all Hofstra after that, hitting four home runs en route to a 9-1 win.

The Panthers were trying to repeat as champions, winning the conference title last year in Hempstead, N.Y. The loss marks the fourth time the Panthers have lost to Hofstra in the conference championship. On the bright side, the Panthers finished with a 38-18 record and Lauren Coleman, Paige Nowacki and Ashley Christy were named to the All-Conference Tournament Team.

MAKING SOME NOISE ...

Former Georgia State football player Christo Bilukidi was drafted by the Oakland Raiders and made an impression at their mini-camp. According to the San Francisco Chronicle, Bilukidi was holding his own on the field, able to learn the playbook and make minimal mistakes. Bilukidi played two years at Georgia State and tallied 10 sacks and 89 tackles.

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OWL OUTLOOK



Familiar foe ends Owls' season

By Chris Lionetti

After splitting the Atlantic Sun regular season title with the Florida-Gulf Coast Eagles, the Lady Owls softball team (33-24) fell short of their goal of a bid to the NCAA regional and the conference tournament championship, thanks to those same Eagles. The two teams faced off in the championship round of the tournament and the Owls were ousted, 8-0. Kennesaw State's pitching was tested from the first pitch, as FGCU scored in the first inning.

The Owls would allow runs in all but one of the game's six innings. KSU had baserunners in every inning against A-Sun Pitcher of the Year Shelby Morgan, but could not capitalize, stranding seven Owls. Overall, the Owls finished the tournament with a 3-2 record. They opened up the tourney with a loss to Stetson but proceeded to win three games before falling to FGCU in the final round.

While the Lady Owls wished their season ended differently, three individuals, Abbey Mixon, Jessica Cross and Lindsay Vollmer, were honored with A-Sun All-Tournament team honors. Mixon hurled two complete games during the postseason tournament to gain the honors. Cross, a senior, batted .500 in her last A-Sun conference tournament and

Vollmer had four RBIs to gain their place on the All-Tournament team.

ROUGH TRIP ...

After going 1-4 on a recent road trip, Kennesaw State (29-22) returned home Tuesday afternoon to face Georgia Southern. Their struggles continued as they fell to the Eagles, 7-3. The bright spots for the team were freshman Colton Cross and senior, Will Howard. Cross tossed two scoreless innings and struck out three in relief of Owls starter Nathan Harsh. Howard went 2-for-4 with an RBI as well as a run scored. The Owls conclude their season with a three-game series against conference foe, East Tennessee State.

OTHER NOTES ...

The Kennesaw State women's golf program finished 20th at the NCAA West Regional, marking the team's best season in school history. Matt Nagy and Ben Greene qualified for the U.S. Open Sectional Qualifiers after 18 holes at the Marietta Country Club. The two golfers clinched two out of the nine qualifying spots available at the event.

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BULLDOG BEAT



Spring sports head into postseason

By Stephen Black

The men's tennis team advanced to the Sweet 16 in the NCAA tournament for the ninth year in a row and 12th time in 14 seasons after wins over South Carolina State and Florida State. The Bulldogs will face No. 15-seed North Carolina Friday. The winner of that contest will draw the winner of seventh-seeded Pepperdine and unseeded Tulsa.

In the first and second rounds, Georgia took out South Carolina State 4-0, then the No. 33 Seminoles 4-1.

"UNC is always very well coached and a deep team," Diaz said. "They're particularly good in the doubles, so that will be a big challenge for us. I do think our guys are prepared. I think we will have a great atmosphere - playing at 7 p.m., night matches tend to be a little more exciting. I think both teams will look good."

LINK DAWGS ...

The men's golf team will host the NCAA Athens Regional this weekend at the University course. No. 24 Georgia has made the NCAA regionals 23 times since 1989 and has made the NCAA tournament 16 times in that time span. The team has won NCAA titles in 1999 and 2005.

Despite his team's relatively low ranking,

coach Chris Haack is expecting big things.

"Why not? We've got as good a chance as anybody," Haack said. "It's a young team, but it's a talented team. The main thing this team needed was experience."

"We've got some of that experience now. The talent is there, and I believe we can contend."

PERNO'S PUPS ...

Georgia beat ETSU 7-4 on Tuesday in the home finale. The baseball team honored 11 seniors before the game who were playing in their final home game.

The win came on the heels of a weekend split with No. 4 in which in Sunday rubber game was rained out. The Bulldogs were shut out in the series opener Friday night before rebounding to take Game 2 Saturday 6-5 in 10 innings.

David Perno's team now stands 29-22 overall and 13-13 in SEC play heading into the final weekend series at Alabama (18-31, 7-18 SEC). Following the series in Tuscaloosa, the team will remain in Alabama for the SEC tournament, which is held May 22-27 in Hoover, Ala.

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TECH TALK



Softball set for NCAA regional

By Patrick Tighe

The Yellow Jacket softball team has qualified for the NCAA Softball tournament for the 11th year in a row. Coach Sharon Perkins leads Tech into the first game of the regional against the South Alabama Jaguars in Tuscaloosa, Ala. The game is scheduled for Sunday at 4:30 p.m. on ESPN U.

Tech defeated the Virginia Cavaliers, the No. 19 Florida State Seminoles, and Virginia Tech Hokies in the ACC Tournament. Tech outscored its tournament opponents by a 24-6 total.

Tech enacted the run rule on the Hokies in their 9-1-championship victory. Junior Tech pitcher Hope Rush gave up one run in the five innings needed. Her stellar pitching efforts landed her Tournament MVP honors. Senior catcher Kate Kuzma drilled a walk off RBI to clinch a Tech ACC Tournament title.

"I mean, it helps we played them earlier in the season," Rush said. "Anybody can be beat on any given day, that was the mindset going in."

Tech received their NCAA Tournament bid news during a team viewing party of the NCAA Softball Selection Show on ESPN U. Tech was named the three seed in the Tuscaloosa Regional. The regional will be comprised of No. 2 ranked Alabama, South Alabama and UT-Martin.

The team was excited but not fazed about going into enemy territory. Earlier this season, Tech defeated Alabama 12-9 in the ACC/SEC Big 12 challenge held in Auburn, Ala.

"Obviously we are excited, we know

wherever we are going to go, they are going to be a good team," sophomore catcher Alysha Rudnik said. "Right now, we have to focus on South Alabama, that just beat ULL in their conference championship. We played Alabama earlier in the year and we know we can do it."

ILLINOIS NOISE ...

The Tech men's basketball team will travel to Champagne to face Illinois for the ACC/Big Ten Challenge sponsored by DICK'S Sporting Goods. The game is scheduled for Nov. 28. This will be the first time Tech has faced Illinois since the 2001 season.

Tech is 1-6 against Illinois in the program's history. The victory came during the 1985 East Regional in Providence, R.I. by a 61-53 score.

Tech coach Brian Gregory enters his second full season as the head man for the white and gold. Tech hosted a few informal team workouts May 12. Gregory spoke on what he wanted the program to gain from these workouts.

"We want to use this as a continuation of our spring workouts. One of our points of emphasis in the spring was the returners taking greater ownership [in the program]," Gregory said. "It doesn't have to be coach-directed; it needs to be player-directed. Our returners have a pretty good feel for where we want our standards to be."

Tighe can be reached at 404-256-1572.

HAWKS HAVEN



Opportunities missed highlight exit

By Robby Kalland

Atlanta let the first-round series with the Boston Celtics slip away in the final minute of Game 6. The Hawks took a 79-78 lead with about a minute to play in the game and looked poised to take the series the distance and force a Game 7 in Atlanta.

However, a Kevin Garnett jumper, a bad call from the officials and a missed Al Horford free throw concluded the Hawks' season earlier than they had hoped. Referees called a foul late on an inbounds play with three seconds to play that, as the NBA later admitted, should have been called before the inbounding pass was thrown. That would have given the Hawks one free throw and the ball in a two-point game, and could have possibly led to overtime or an outright Hawks win in regulation.

FINAL ANALYSIS ...

The Hawks have to look at this series as one they let get away from them. They had great chances to win Game 2, Game 3 and Game 6, but allowed Boston to convert them instead. Boston was banged up, missing play-

ers at times and struggled offensively for most of the series.

Mentally, this series has to hurt because it just perpetuates the idea that Atlanta cannot get the job done in Boston, having not won in Boston in the playoffs since 1988. The difference between this experience and that of 2007-08 is that Atlanta competed well in every game except for Game 4 and had the chance to win two games in Boston. In that 2007-08 campaign, the Hawks were run out of Boston in all four road games, but this time they refused to roll over in Game 3 and 6 when Boston jumped out to big leads.

Atlanta has some work to do this offseason to make it over the hump and get beyond the second-round wall that has been in front of them for the past five seasons (first-round exits in 07-08 and 11-12; second-round exits in 08-09, 09-10 and 10-11).

For an in-depth look at the Hawks' offseason options, check out the Cover Story on page five.

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FALCONS FLIGHT



Rookies take part in first minicamp

By Sean Conway

Even the casual NFL fan can tell you that E games can't be won and playoff spots can't be clinched in mid-May. Regardless, the Atlanta Falcons are having a great offseason month.

ROOKIE FRONT ...

Last weekend the Falcons brought in their prospects (rookie draft picks, rookie free agents, unsigned tryout players and a number of players that didn't see the field much in their rookie 2011 year) for a minicamp and an indoctrination of how to do things "The Falcon Way."

As the young players digest the experience and prepare for a grueling summer and fall, the weekend can be deemed a big success. First, guard/center Peter Konz, selected with the 55th overall pick, and his fellow draft picks all broke camp healthy. Second, general manager Thomas Dimitroff has now signed all the draft picks with the one exception being fifth-round selection, defensive end Jonathan Massaquoi.

(After last summer's labor agreement, league teams in general are finding it much easier to sign players out of college because of the adjustments made with the Player's Association on rookie contracts).

In other rookie camp news, the Falcons

signed three rookie tryout players that had an impressive weekend. Former Georgia Bulldog tight end Aron White agreed to terms, as did projected fullback Lee Meisner from Colorado State-Pueblo and wide receiver Kenny Stafford from Toledo. Stafford has good bloodlines. He's the nephew of former NFL great Cris Carter.

SALARY CAP NEWS ...

While it may be bittersweet for the Falcons Nation, the team has created more spending money under the salary cap. The release of fullback Ovie Mughelli, a standout on the field and in the community, will give the Falcons approximately \$2.5 million more to spend.

Also earlier in the month, the NFL granted the Falcons a salary cap credit of about \$3 million as a result of debt former quarterback owed to the team after declaring bankruptcy in 2008 meaning the Michael Vick era is officially over.

Speculation is that former San Diego Charger offensive tackle Marcus McNeill may be targeted with the new-found flexibility. McNeill, a native of Ellenwood, is a two-time Pro Bowl left tackle but is recovering from neck and back injuries.

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CHOP SHOP

PRESENTED BY



Braves impressive during road trip

By Fletcher Proctor

The Atlanta Braves returned home this week after putting together perhaps their most impressive road trip of the last few seasons. Atlanta swept a three-game series against the Colorado Rockies as well as a three-game set against the defending World Champion St. Louis Cardinals. The team finished the road trip with a 7-2 mark.

The team returned to "The Ted" for a quick two-game series against the Reds, followed by a two-game series against the Miami Marlins. The Braves were hoping for plenty of fan support over the home stand, and team president John Schuerholz recently addressed the Turner Field faithful.

"We (as an organization) have vowed to give (the fans) a good product," said Schuerholz. "If we give them that, they'll support us."

Against the Reds, Atlanta lost, then found, its offense. Randall Delgado didn't receive much in the way of help, just one run, and his defense let him down early with an unearned run. The Braves managed just the lone run on eight hits and left the bases loaded in the eighth, down 3-1. In the series finale, the Braves torched Johnny Cueto for five earned runs in just four innings. Brian McCann was 2-for-3 with a home run. Five players drove in runs for the Braves. Tim

Hudson picked up his second win of the year with seven strong innings.

STRONG PITCHING ...

During the Braves' extended run of excellence, the recipe seemed to always start with a dominant pitching staff. The Braves appear to be on the road to another strong staff, led by Brandon Beachy. The right-hander owns the lowest ERA in the National League as of press deadline with a 1.60 mark through his first seven starts. Ryan Dempster (six starts) and Lance Lynn (seven starts) were behind Beachy. Beachy and Tommy Hanson were in the NL top eight with four wins as of Wednesday while Hanson was tied for 15th with 43 strikeouts. Closer Craig Kimbrel led the National League with 11 saves in 12 opportunities. Kimbrel has appeared in 14 games this season after Tuesday's game.

FREEMAN HURT ...

First baseman Freddie Freeman left Monday's game against the Reds with a scratch on his eye. The injury was not believed to be serious, though he was held out of Tuesday's game as a precaution.

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GWINNETT BRAVES



G-Braves maintain division hold

By Ryan Caiafa

Despite stumbling a bit at the beginning of the month, the Gwinnett Braves continue to remain atop the South Division standings with a comfortable lead over the remaining competition. The G-Braves are also neck and neck for the International League's best overall record, which will be key down the stretch as they look to find themselves with home-field advantage come October.

Gwinnett continues to get great production from several players who have been the driving force of the offense throughout the first two months of the season. Jose Constanza has been a nightmare for opposing pitching as the speedy outfielder's .321 average leads the team. Speaking of speed, Luis Durango has dominated the base paths, leading the team in stolen bases to go along with a .285 average and 18 RBIs. Newcomer Ernesto Mejia is continuing to make the most out of his first season in Triple-A, driving in a team-high 26 runs to go along with five homers. He has not disappointed manager Dave Brundage, who has kept Mejia in the cleanup spot in the order, where his productivity has been consistent.

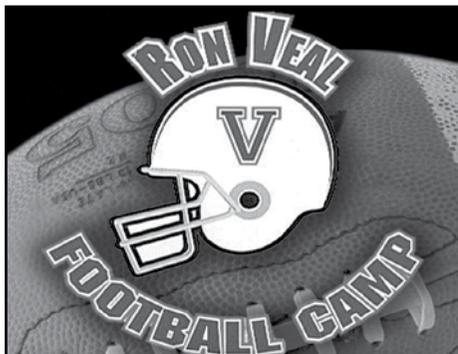
On the mound, Julio Teheran continues to

dazzle, posting a 3-1 record so far, along with a 2.48 ERA. With each start, Teheran looks to prove why he should find himself as a mainstay on the Atlanta roster sooner rather than later. A former Atlanta mainstay, Jair Jurrjens, is making the most of his stint in Gwinnett as he tries to regain his form from 2011, when he was selected as an all-star. In three Triple-A starts, Jurrjens has a 2-0 record with a 2.05 ERA.

GARTRELL HONORED ...

Outfielder Stefan Gartrell was named the International League's Batter of the Week for the week ending May 6. During that span, Gartrell hit .400 while hitting three home runs and driving in eight runs. After a slow start to the season, Gartrell has come on strong for Gwinnett over the past few weeks, as he's blasted a team-leading seven home runs to go along with 22 RBIs. He's also boosted his batting average to .236 from below .200 earlier in the season. For Gwinnett to remain atop the IL standings, Gartrell will be expected to continue providing the power-punch to an already potent lineup.

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TRIVIA ANSWER

The Braves' record on Monday's this season is 0-6.

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CLASS AA - GAC

CLASS AAA - MONROE

CLASS AAAAA - REDAN

CLASS AAAAAA - WALTON

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CLASS A - ATHENS CHRISTIAN

CLASS AA - PUTNAM COUNTY

CLASS AAA - CARROLLTON

CLASS AAAAA - KELL

CLASS AAAAAA - BROOKWOOD

GOLF

BOYS

CLASS A - BROOKSTONE

CLASS AA - NORTH OCONEE

CLASS AAA - GAINESVILLE

CLASS AAAAA - MARIST

CLASS AAAAAA - MILTON

GIRLS

CLASS A - ATHENS ACADEMY

CLASS AA - GAC

CLASS AAA - GAINESVILLE

CLASS AAAAA - LAKESIDE, EVANS

CLASS AAAAAA - MILTON