Tech wins first ever NCAAT game

By Michael Clarke  
Sports Editor

The seventh-seeded women’s basketball team entered the NCAA Tournament without a tournament win in school history. That changed as the Jackets defeated the Blue Demons of DePaul 55-54 in the first round. The team would not advance past the second round as they fell to the second-seeded Purdue Boilermakers 76-63.

Jacqua Williams led the Jackets past the Blue Demons with 10 points, six steals and a career-high three blocks. She added four more steals against Purdue to bring her season total to a school record 95 steals. Williams passed current Tech assistant coach Kisha Ford’s record of 92 that was set during the 1993-94 season.

Chioma Nnamaka hit a jump shot with 26 seconds remaining in the game to bring the Jackets to within one point. After DePaul’s Jena Rubino stepped out of bounds, the Jackets had one final possession. After Jill Ingram missed a jump shot, Williams was there for the rebound and put the ball back to give the Jackets the 55-54 victory and the first NCAA win in school history.

Nnamaka and Janie Mitchell had identical double-doubles as both scored 14 points to go along with 11 rebounds. Stephanie Higgis was held to just two points after missing all eight of her shots from the field. As a team, the Jackets struggled from three-point range. Tech shot just 4-for-22 from behind the arc.

The Jackets were unable to recover from their thrilling victory two nights earlier as Purdue led Tech from start to finish in a 76-63 Boilermaker victory. Purdue led by as many as 24 points in the first half. In the first half, Purdue shot 19-for-24 from the field to open up a 49-29 halftime lead. The Jackets outscored the Boilermaker’s 54-27 second half, but the deficit was too large to overcome.

Higgs led the Jackets with 27 points and seven rebounds. Mitch-Allen added another 16 points and six rebounds before fouling out of the game.

Stephanie was selected to attend the WNBA Pre-Draft combine starting today at Cleveland State University.

The Lawrenceville, Ga. native will be among approximately 40 top prospects from among this year’s group of 300+ seniors. "Stephanie is one of the top players in the ACC and she has developed into one of the top point guards in the country this past season,” Head Coach MaChelle Joseph said. “We are excited and thrilled that she has earned this recognition.”

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Speaker: Jared Feuer  
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Movie: Darfur Diaries
4/3 7PM  Student Center Theater

WEDNESDAY  4/4  Labor Rights
Speaker: Anna Avato  Chair of Atlanta AFSCME and
Terence Courtney, coordinator Jobs with Justice
Movie: At the River I Stand
4/4 7PM  Student Center Theater

THURSDAY  4/5  Abolish the Death Penalty
Speaker: Billy Neal Moore, Death Row Exonerée and
Ordained Minister. Spent 16 years in prison and was
exonerated 7 hours before his scheduled execution.
4/5 7PM  Student Center Theater

FRIDAY  4/6  War on Terror and Prisoners of Conscience
Speaker: Ngawang Choephel  
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of an 18 year sentence for making a documentary on
Tibetan culture.
4/6 7PM  LeCraw Auditorium, COM room 100, Tech Square
Baseball offense with a 3-for-4 day when Chris Goodman shutout Virginia and took the lead in the series. The Tech bats exploded.

The Jackets' ACC road schedule included four wins over Duke, against whom they had four losses in the season.

The ACC conference is regularly considered one of the top in the nation, with arguably the most talent in the conference. Playing in college has been a different experience for all three, with different fans and larger environments. In high school, everyone was smaller and weaker than you. In college, you have to use your mind," Peacock said.

While all three differ in the way that college and the conference have changed, they have learned in the season to a whole different atmosphere," Crittenton said.

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The Jackets were probably happy to win that match as quickly as they had because the team had to turn around and play 15th ranked Florida State the next morning. Tech had a more dominant game against FSU than Miami. The 15th ranked team in the nation had trouble keeping up with the Jackets as they dropped just one point to the Seminoles.

The Jackets’ Kristi Miller and Whitney McCray quickly beat Nicola Slater and Carolin Walter, 8-3. Taking the deciding point was Alison Silverio and Amanda Rynarzewska. Craddock, who defeated Lauren Macfarlane and Ania Rynarzewska, was 8-4.

For good measure, Tarryn Rudman beat Miranda Foley 6-3, 6-3 for Tech’s fifth point. Tech’s only hiccup came against Lauren Macfarlane when she beat Silverio 6-4, 6-4.

Tech’s Amanda McDowell cemented the match when she beat Jessica Wente 6-3, 2-6, 1-0 (10-7). With the win, Tech moved to 4-1 in the conference with FSU falling to 2-3.

Tech played a non-conference game at the University of South Florida last week. No. 8 Kristi Miller and Whitney McCray beat Shadisha Robinson and Courtney Vernon 8-4.

The Jackets clinched the doubles point when Kirsten Flower and Tarryn Rudman beat Liz Cruz and Iciri Rai 8-5.

They swept the doubles matches when Amanda Craddock and Alison Silverio beat Gabriela Duch and Jessica Sweeting, 8-4. After the doubles matches, Miller easily beat No. 27 Robinson 6-1, 6-1. Christy Striplin followed suit with a 6-2, 6-2 win over Iciri Rai.

Freshman Amanda McDowell clinched the match for the Jackets with a 6-4, 7-5 win over Liz Cruz. After Tech had already won the match, Gabriela Duch defeated No. 21 Kirsten Flower 7-5, 7-5. The Bulls continued to play competitive even with the match was out of their hands; Amanda Craddock beat Jessica Sweeting 7-5, 7-6 (8-6). Courtney Vernon closed out the match with a 6-2, 4-6, 7-6 (7-4) victory over Alison Silverio.

Tech is looking to continue their torrid win streak as they take on No. 12 Duke at Miami this weekend at 12 p.m.

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**Jackets look ahead to ‘08**

The Jackets will look to build upon their success from this season and make another run towards the NCAA Championship next season.

By Hahmning Lee
Assistant Sports Editor

After a season that ended with a loss to UNLV in the NCAA Tournament, Tech looks ahead to its next season.

The Jackets return with a roster that will largely go unchanged and is likely to bring back all five of its starting players from this past season. Tech’s starting lineup included top freshmen players, Javaris Crittenton, Maurice Miller, and Thaddeus Young. Both freshmen have yet to make an announcement on their collegiate future. Both will decide whether or not to return to the team for their sophomore seasons.

If they do declare, they can still retain NCAA eligibility if they don’t hire an agent and if they withdraw their name from consideration in the NBA draft before a certain date. NBA scouts and analysts have been watching both players as first round picks and possible lottery picks in the upcoming draft if either chooses to enter.

If both players return, the Jackets would keep last season’s two top scorers. Each player averaged 14.4 points per game during the 2006-2007 campaign. Both also showed a vast improvement in their numbers as the season progressed.

Crittenton ended the regular season with two straight double-doubles and Young scored a career high against Wake Forest.

Lewin Clinch, a junior next season, will also return after being inactive for much of the season. He averaged 13.2 points in the games he played during the season.

Tech loses just one senior from its team, guard Mario West. West was the last remaining player from the team that reached the Final Four in 2004.

Four players will be returning to the Jackets to play their senior season. Ra’Sean Dickey, Anthony Morton, and likely-Captain Jeremis Smith will look to provide senior leadership to an experienced team. Senior transfer Matt Causey will play his first year in a Jackets uniform.

In the recruiting class, Tech has signed three players to letter of intents to play for them next season, including two players ranked in the top 20 at their positions.

Maurice Miller, a point guard, and Lance Storrs, a shooting guard, will join the Tech back court. Gani Lawal, a power forward, will help anchor Tech’s front court.

Lawal is a Georgia native and a former national AAU power forward who played for Norcross High School. He was named Mr. Georgia Basketball 2007 during his senior season and led Norcross to their second consecutive state championship.

Miller was named Mr. Basketball and other excellent military benefits.

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The freshmen class entered the season ranked as high as sixth in some national polls. The class included two five-star prospects.

**Freshmen class adjusts to ACC play**

By Hahmning Lee
Assistant Sports Editor

The typical freshman at Tech may face numerous challenges in the classroom and on campus, but few have to worry about playing on a national stage on ESPN while juggling calculus. For Tech’s freshman basketball players, it is just another obstacle in their rookie season on the Jackets basketball team.

Last year’s freshman class came with extremely high expectations, with two five-star recruits and a recruiting class ranked sixth in the nation. The class of four was Zach Peacock, Thaddeus Young, Brad Sheehan and Atlanta native Javaris Crittenton.

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Baseball shuts out Ga. State

By Asif Heejji
Senior Staff Writer

Tech was victorious against Georgia State, notching their 12th victory on the season. The Panthers were held to just five hits and no runs.

Red-shirt sophomore Eddie Burns threw the second complete game shutout in four games for Tech as the Jackets (12-10) picked up a 3-0 midweek victory over neighbors and rivals Georgia State (11-12) on March 21.

Tech only had one hit on the evening while scoring three runs, all on RBI walks in the third inning, to pick up the victory.

Danny Payne led off the inning with a double into the right center field gap. Michael Fisher was then hit by a pitch when the walk parade began.

Georgia State’s Bobby Bennett walked Matt Wieters to load the bases and then walked Luke Murton and Brad Feltes to drive in Payne and Fisher before Bennett was pulled.

Robert Hasenfelt then came on in relief of Bennett and promptly walked Patrick Long, the first batter he faced before retiring the side.

That was more than enough for Tech starter Burns as he scattered five hits and allowed no runs in nine solid innings of work. Burns was very economical as well, as he completed the feat in just 91 pitches, 62 of which were strikes.

“I felt great today, finally after coming off of surgeries during my freshman year,” Burns said. “We looked at their hitters again and where we got hurt last game and tried to exploit what we saw their weaknesses were.”

Along the way, Burns picked up one hit in the win.

The Jackets drew eight walks on the evening despite picking up just one hit in the win.

The last time Tech was one-hit was on Feb. 18, 1992 when Jamon Guejman accomplished the feat at Russ Chandler Stadium in a 2-1 Jacket victory.

The singles play did not start off any better than the doubles ended. Tech’s Rassow-Kantos lost their conference opponents. Tech has now lost five in a row and 11 of 13.

Tennis continues struggles in ACC play

By Akshay Amaraneni
Contributing Writer

Ever since the men’s tennis team started 2-0 in team play, the Jackets have struggled to find a way to beat any team. After winning at Clemson on March 7th, Tech has dropped five straight matches, including three straight conference losses.

Last weekend, Tech took on North Carolina and Duke in Atlanta.

In the first match against UNC, Tech struggled to close out the Tarheels. The Heels won the first point by taking the doubles match.


The Jackets did take one match as Jose Muguruza and Scott Blackmon beat Stefan Hardy and Sebastian Guzman 8-7 (7-4).

The singles play did not start off any better than the doubles ended. Tech’s Rassow-Kantos lost handily to Taylor Fogleman, 6-2, 6-2. That point gave Carolina a

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The Jackets led for the 10 minutes of the second half before Wake Forest began a 12-4 run to give them an eight point lead.

Tech ended the game on a 13-5 run to send the game into overtime. The first overtime saw the game going back and forth between the two teams. Hale hit two free throws with 12 seconds left to extend the Deacons' lead to three points. Thaddeus Young led all players with 30 points. Tech lost to Wake Forest in Winston-Salem to extend the Jackets' mid-season skid and extend their losing streak to four. Still, Tech was able to win the next meeting at home in late February.

Tech's bench players notched career-highs in the game, including Alade Aminu. The sophomore was the team's starting point guard, hitting four of five in the overtime.

Tech lost to Wake Forest in a double-overtime game that saw the teams combine for 226 total points. Thaddeus Young led all players with 30 points.

Free throw shooting hurt us… [We shot] 23-for-25. This time of the year we've got to convert higher than that," Hewitt said.

Tech also committed 22 turnovers, including eight by the team's starting point guard, C trittenton. The Jackets had just 13 assists to 22 turnovers.

Several of Tech's bench players notched career-highs in the game, including Alade Aminu. The sophomore was the team's starting point guard, hitting four of five in the overtime.

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Hale hit two free throws with 12 seconds left to tie the score at 99. While Tech let some chances slip away from them, Wake Forest also stepped up to seal the victory.

The Deacons' lead scorer Hale hit consecutive threes at the end of the second overtime, bringing the game at 111-111 and then hitting a three to give Wake Forest the lead at 114-111.

“I thought Hale stepped up and made some big shots. They were made at the end [hurt],’” Hewitt said.

The guard scored all the points in just 18 minutes of play. Wake Forest took two of three of the games against Tech this season, with a regular season split between the two teams.

Tech lost to Wake Forest in Winston-Salem to extend the Jackets' mid-season skid and extend their losing streak to four. Still, Tech was able to win the next meeting at Alexander Memorial Coliseum in late February.

“It was a great game, no question about it. But it's tough when you come out on this end of it,” Hewitt said.

Basketball recruit Gani Lawal played in the McDonald's All-American game on Wednesday. Top high school basketball players were invited to play in the exhibition game broadcasted on ESPN.

Lawal, named Mr. Georgia Basketball this season, has signed on to play for the Jackets next season. The power forward is considered a top 10 player at his position. He finished with 12 points and 12 rebounds in the game.

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Women’s Tennis beats ’Canes

By Akshay Amananeri
Contributing Writer

Since losing to rival Georgia on the last day of February, the women’s tennis team has won five of six. Their only loss was a close 4-3 game at No. 13 Clemson. After that loss, the Jackets have been on a streak. They have not lost more than two points in any match, including matches against four ranked teams.

This past weekend, the Jackets faced probably their toughest test of the season since their indoor championship run. On Saturday, Tech took on the No. 9 Hurricanes of Miami. The match was headlined by No. 1 Audra Cohen versus No. 7 Kristi Miller.

Unfortunately, Miller was unable to take Cohen and Tech dropped that singles point. The only point Tech lost before the top-10 match up was the doubles point. Miller and Whitney McCray easily beat the duo of Audrey Banada and Romy Farah 8-5.

Amanda Craddock and Alison Silverio were unable to close the point as Audra Cohen and Caron Seenaoud edged them 9-7.

Miami clinched the doubles point when Laura Vallverdu and Gina Sabatino beat Rudman and Kirsten Flower 8-4. Tech did not drop another singles point as they won the other five matches. Before the headline match, Tech’s Amanda Craddock beat Romy Farah in a quick 6-3, 6-1 match.

Gina Sabatino dropped another singles match for the Hurricanes when Amanda McDowell beat her 6-2, 6-2. Tarryn Rudman continued the Tech onslaught as she ran by Claudia Wastelowski 6-3, 6-2. That point put Tech up 5-1.

Cristy Striplin clinched match point after that with a 6-4, 6-2 win over Seenaoud which made the top-10 match up meaningless. Alison Silverio also beat her opponent, Audrey Banada, in a tough match.

They split the first two sets, Silverio was able to pull out the win with a 14-12 super tie breaker win for the third set.

Baseball goes bald for good cause: The baseball team shaved their heads as part of a campaign that raised $8500 for the St. Baldricks Foundation to use toward children’s cancer research.

Men’s season ends against UNLV 67-63

By Michael Clarke
Sports Editor

The Tech men’s basketball team’s stay in the NCAA tournament was short-lived as UNLV knocked off the Jackets 67-63.

In the first half, UNLV jumped out to an 11-3 lead with the help of three consecutive three-point shots by Michael Umeh. He ended the game with 19 points after shooting 5-for-12 from the field and 4-for-8 from behind the three-point line.

Kevin [Kruger] got me some open looks, and I was able to knock down the shots.”

The Jackets did not take their lead until Anthony Morrow hit a three or four shots, and we just couldn’t get our hands on the ball,” said Tech Head Coach Paul Hewitt.

For the game, UNLV out-rebounded Tech 44-41 with both teams having 20 defensive rebounds.

“Rebounding is all about will. You have to have the will and heart to rebound out there. They had a lot more will than we did under the glass,” said Junior Jeremis Smith.

Javaris Crittenton helps to make a play on defense in Tech’s first-round game against UNLV. He finished with eight points in the game.

Baseball sweeps Ga. Southern

By Michael Clarke
Sports Editor

The baseball team returned the favor after being swept by Georgia Southern in the season opener. The Jackets defeated the Eagles 10-2 on Tuesday and 6-2 on Wednesday.

In the first game, Eddie Burns struck out a career-high 10 batters to pick up his second consecutive win. He held the Eagles to just two runs on seven hits in eight solid innings. Danny Payne and Michael Fisher each had three hits. Luke Murton and Patrick Long went 2-for-4 from the plate and scored two runs for the Jackets.

On Wednesday, the Jackets used nine pitchers that combined to hold the Eagles to just two runs on six hits. Payne and Fisher each had two additional hits for the series.

The Jackets will resume ACC play this weekend against the Maryland Terrapins and as part of a six-game homestand.

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