Michael Johnson forces a fumble while he tackles Marc Verica during Saturday’s game. Derrick Morgan recovered the fumble.

“(The first fumble) was a dropped snap. On this level, you like to think you can get quarter-back, center exchange. The one on the goal line, we just fumbled the ball…. And the interception at the end was a poor decision,” Johnson said.

Nesbitt also struggled with just 1:18 left in the game. Jackets, as the Cavaliers took over line and ended the game for the game. It came at the UVA 43-yard tion on Tech’s last drive of the third quarter.

Tech was in the red zone during Dan Voss. The second came while between him and junior center came because of a botched snap fumbles during the game. One Nesbitt. He was involved in two sophomore quarterback Josh Dwyer has only had two other games this season with less carries. The Jackets first loss of the season, and the second came in the near upset by Gardner-Webb.

It was also a rough day for sophomore quarterback Josh Nesbitt. He was involved in two fumbles during the game. One came because of a botched snap between him and junior center Dan Voss. The second came while Tech was in the red zone during the third quarter.

Nesbitt also threw an interce on Tech’s last drive of the game. It came at the UVA 43-yard line and ended the game for the Jackets, as the Cavaliers took over with just 1:18 left in the game. Nesbitt was also struggling with defensive penetration by Virginia, as he was sacked four times for a combined loss of 36 yards.

11 tackles a piece, tying the season high for Burnett and setting a new career high for Taylor.

Roddy Jones returned kicks for the Jackets against the first time since the Boston College game. He re turned a total of three for a combined 58 yards. Freshman A-back Marcus Wright saw his first two kick returns of the year on Saturday, which combined for 38 yards. Jones also had 29 yards on his only punt return, the longest return for the Jackets this season.

“My feel like [the kick off re turns] went a lot better today. It was something that we have been working hard on in practice, but it is still something we have got to keep getting better on,” Jones said.

With the loss to UVA, the Jackets fell out of all major national polls and out of the top spot in Coastal Division, which UVA now leads, being the only team in the Coastal division with one conference loss.

The Jackets hope to rebound this Saturday as they take on No. 15 Florida State, who is now the highest ranked team in the ACC. The Jackets have not beaten the Seminoles since 1975, the year before Head Coach Bobby Bowden took over the Seminoles.

“Any time you lose you are disappointed…. We have a young team. And as I told them after the Virginia Tech game: good teams don’t lose two in a row. We have to see if we can come back and, next week, play against a team that is as athletic, or more athletic than any team in the league,” Johnson said.
Hockey from page 28

hospital immediately after games. However, the late coach could always rely on hockey to help him overcome the many obstacles he faced over the years.

"He had a lot of illnesses since he was young, but hockey was something that he could always find comfort in. If he wasn't feeling well, he could turn on the TV and have friends over...When I first met him, he was like, 'You'll love me in the summer, but come winter, I can't give up hockey. It's a part of my life, and it's something I can't compromise, but I want you to be a part of that,' said Maryann, Stathis's wife of 17 years.

"He was a very passionate person all along, and this was just another way that you could see what a passionate person he was. He put his heart and soul into [hockey], no matter if he was having a good day or feeling horrible; he was definitely dedicated to it." The health issues never got in the way of his personality. Stathis treated his players and fellow coaches, and really the entire Tech hockey community, as an extension of his family.

"He was an educator, so his main concern was making sure these kids...[became] successful wherever life took them after Georgia Tech. So we've been to weddings of players and stayed in touch with them, and it truly is a family," said Assistant Coach Kenny "Sarge" Day, who also noted that there were almost never any disagreements among the coaches.

"He's so good at developing the kids, and he understands the game, and he's a great coach. But more than that, he was just a wonderful, tremendous person... everyone respected him for making [hockey] fun, and for having so much knowledge. He had the whole package," said O'Connor.

Ob o d y had anything remotely negative to say about Stathis, except in jest. "Greg was very loud, but he was also very predictable...before a game, he would always have written out on a note pad, 'These are the 15 things we have to do tonight.' It was always the 15 things. And by the time he got to #3 on the list, everyone had forgotten what the first two were," Day said.

Stathis's coaching career began long before his time at Georgia Tech. As the head coach at St. Peter's High School in Staten Island, NY, he led the team to a number of state championships. He also coached at the collegiate level in New York with considerable success. In 1991, Stathis took over the Georgia Tech hockey club and quickly grew it into a nationally competitive team in the College Hockey South, winning five division titles. Eight years later, in 1999, he played a key role in the founding of Division III of the American Collegiate Hockey Association (ACHA), and he led the Jackets to the title game in the league's first season. Though Tech lost the title game 1-0 to Butler, it was at that tournament that Stathis pulled off perhaps his most notable on-ice victory.

"The tournament was in Annapolis, Maryland, at the Naval Academy...and the first night, we beat the U.S. Naval Academy 3-2. And they were ranked #1 in the country at the time with a record of 29-2. Greg said that was one of his most memorable wins," Day said.

Tech hosted the ACHA D-III national championships for the next two seasons, and both years the team finished in third place. The team consistently excelled throughout Stathis's tenure, posting winning records in 15 of his 17 seasons as head coach. Stathis was also responsible for starting a major part of Tech hockey's culture—the Pep Band, a small group of students that occasionally play at Tech games and have earned the collective nickname of "the seventh man."

Perhaps the most notable statistic relating to Stathis's career lies off the ice, though. During his 17 years as Tech's head coach, every single player who took the ice for Tech went on to graduate. "We talk about academics first... if anyone has a smart kid who's not going NCAA, but wants a world-class education and wants to play competitive hockey, then we want to talk to them. They can play competitive hockey here, but the focus has to be on education," Day said.

The team has continued its strong play under new coach Brian McSparron, who has deep ties to Stathis; he captained one of Stathis's championship teams at St. Peter's High and served as an assistant coach at Tech from 2000-04. McSparron left the team to take care of his young children, but decided to return and assume the head coaching duties on hearing of Stathis's passing.

"The way I looked at it was this: When he left our high school, the program went downhill. He was also coaching a college program back in New York, and when he left, that program went down. I didn't want to see a third program go down. He put a lot of time and effort into this program, and it became his baby," McSparron said.

Stathis's presence remains strong among the players and coaches even today, even to those who never met him. "I was honored that guys look to me and ask me about him...ten of these guys [the freshmen] aren't going to know who Greg was, so hopefully...they can appreciate what he meant to this program," McSparron said.

"He will be sorely missed, but...his spirit lives on. I think this will be a great season, because this season is really dedicated to him," O'Connor said.
as well. Tech took a 10-5 lead and kept it until the Tar Heels took it back with a point to tie it at 19-19. The Tar Heels won the next six points to win the set and the match.

The Jackets are currently tied for fourth place in the conference. There are three teams currently tied for the lead in the conference, Virginia Tech, Duke and Clemson. Miami, Tech and North Carolina are tied for fourth. With just over half of the conference schedule under the belt, Tech hopes to run the table in the second half in order put them in a favorable position for an NCAA tournament berth. The Jackets’ most recent run at the NCAA tournament was in 2004, when they lost to fourth ranked Minnesota in the Minneapolis regional. The Jackets start their run this weekend when they play Virginia Tech and Virginia in Atlanta.

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Volleyball from page 28

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After ascending to 15th in the BCS rankings, the Seminoles look to stay perfect against Coastal Division opponents this Saturday against Tech. Florida State enters this game with a four game winning streak which includes a 30-20 win over Virginia Tech in Tallahassee.

Florida State sits atop the Atlantic division of the ACC with a record of 6-1 with that loss coming to Wake Forest in third game of the season. They currently lead the ACC with 36.1 points per game, 406 yards per game, and 50 percent third down efficiency.

However, they are the most penalized team in the conference at nine penalties per game.

The Seminoles are currently led by Hall of Fame Coach Bobby Bowden. Bowden is second all time in NCAA Division-I wins with 379. Saturday’s showdown will mark the thirteenth time that Bowden and his Seminoles play the Yellow Jackets. Currently, he is 12-0 against Tech with his last victory coming in September 2003, but he has never coached against a Paul Johnson team.

This game should be a battle of wills, as Florida State attempts to stay perfect on the road this season.

The Seminoles will have to rely on their No. 7 nationally ranked rushing defense, which has held opponents to 79.9 yards per game to counteract Tech’s effective rushing attack, an offense that boasts the ninth best rushing offense in the nation with 236.6 yards per game.

Tech looks to regain ground in the race to Tampa after a heart breaking 24-17 lost to Virginia. The Jackets are No. 2 in the ACC Coastal division after Saturday with conference record of 3-2.

Tech will have to correct some of the miscues on offense to get a victory against Florida State. The Jackets have had at least two fumbles lost and one interception in both losses this season. One main focus should be to get the ball to sophomore B-back Jonathan Dwyer. He has rushed for over 100 yards in 5 of 6 Tech victories this season, but he has not rushed for more than 70 yards in each loss.

Another key to a Jackets victory will be defensive pressure currently ranked No. 2 in the nation at 8.88 tackles for loss per game.

Florida State brings a completely balanced attack on offense with 197.9 rushing yards per game and 196.7 passing yards per game. Seminoles quarterback Christian Ponder has thrown for nine touchdowns this season, but he has been known to make some mistakes with six passes intercepted. That should provide opportunities for sophomore defensive back Morgan Burnett, who is tied for the lead in the nation with six interceptions.

Tech is 7-6-1 all time against Florida State in Atlanta, with its last win in 1975. The Jackets look to become bowl-eligible and hand Bobby Bowden his first loss to the Ramblin’ Wreck.
Hockey remembers coach before 6-2 victory over South Carolina

By Nishant Prasad
Contributing Writer

Tech’s ice hockey team continued its undefeated run to start the season on Friday at the Kennessaw Ice Forum. Senior center Brian O’Connor, senior right wing John Howell, and senior winger Drew Baker added two assists to lead the attack. The team’s effective defensive play also continued as the Jackets moved to 7-0 on the year.

Jeremy Spafard and teammates participate in the pregame ceremony. Former Head Coach Greg Stathis was honored pregame.

By Matt Hoffman
Sports Editor

Tech suffered its second loss of the season on Saturday at Grant Field when the Jackets fell to the Cavaliers from University of Virginia, 24-17. This loss was the first Homecoming loss for the Jackets since 1996, and moved this to 6-2 overall and 3-2 in the ACC.

“We made enough mistakes in about every area to lose the game about twice over. You have to give [UVA] credit. They came in here and did what they needed to do to win the game, and we didn’t get it done,” said Head Coach Paul Johnson.

Throughout the game, the Jackets struggled to get their offense onto the field. The Cavaliers held the ball for almost nine more minutes than the Jackets, and Tech’s defense was only able to force one punt during the entire game.

“We could not get [UVA’s offense] off the field in the first half. We had four possession in the first half… When you get the ball on offense in this type of game you better put points on the board. You better maximize it and take advantage of the [possession],” Johnson said.

Virginia topped Tech in just about every offensive category. UVA had 270 yards passing compared to Tech’s 105 yards. The Cavaliers completed 29 of 39 passes attempted, while the Jackets only pulled in seven of 15. Virginia went 18 on third downs, while Tech converted only four of 10. While the Jackets were not able to stuff the Cavaliers in rushing yards, the 30-yard difference was not enough to carry the Jackets to a win.

“We missed a ton of tackles. We have been getting a lot of pressure on the quarterback, but [UVA] protected their quarterback pretty well,” Johnson said.

The injuries on the defensive line of the ball also hurt the Jackets. Senior cornerback Jahl Word-Daniels did not play due to a hamstring injury he suffered last week during the Clemson game. Sophomore free safety Dominique Reese went out at halftime with an injury after picking up an interception and two tackles for losses in the first half. The loss of those two defensive secondary

Volleyball splits weekend matches in N.C.

By Randy Darnowsky
Staff Writer

The Tech volleyball team split their matches last weekend in the state of North Carolina. Senior outside hitter Talia Kellogg posted a match-high of 16 kills at both games. Senior middle hitter Callie Miller added 11 kills while hitting .610 to aid the Jackets in their win against the North Carolina State Wolfpack. This was the Jackets’ fourth consecutive 3-0 win. Senior setter Allie Niekamp directed the offense by assisting in 31 situations and posting four kills. The defense was led by Michelle Kandell, who had a match-high of 13 digs.

Tech cruised by in the first set with a 25-12 victory, due in large part to Kellogg’s efforts. The Jackets started the match with a 5-1 run and then a 13-5 lead later in the set. The Jackets later capitalized on several North Carolina State errors for a 13-point win. After falling behind in the second set, a combination of timely serves from Allison Campbell and offense from Kellogg, Miller and Niekamp pushed the Jackets to a 9-4 lead. Tech went on a 7-3 run to put the set out of reach before taking the set 25-17.

The Jackets went without a single error in the third set and it showed in the result, with Tech taking the frame 25-18.

The Jackets had six kills between Kellogg and Miller and three block assists. The North Carolina Tar Heels proved to be a challenge for the Jackets. Carolina, Lauren Prussing led the team with 19 kills and Ingrid Hanson-Tunland had 11 kills for the Heels.

Despite the efforts of Kellogg’s offensive power and senior libero Michelle Kandell’s leadership in the back row, the Jackets fell to the Heels in four sets. Miller and DeMichelis, the leading blocker, added 14 kills apiece in the loss. In addition, Niekamp posted another double-double. The Jackets fell behind early in the first set and dropped a 25-21 decision. Tech evened up the score with a win in the second set. The Jackets trailed the Tar Heels 11-12 before going on a 10-2 run to take a 21-13 lead that would lead to a 25-17 win in the set.

DeMichelis, Kellogg and Miller combined for 13 kills in the set.

The third set proved to be the turning point for both teams in the match. The Jackets endured eight ties and four lead changes before they saw the Tar Heels tie the game at 20. North Carolina took a 23-20 lead, but the Jackets pulled within a point before losing the set 25-23. The Jackets were able to keep it close in the final set.

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See UVA, page 24

Jackets lose first homecoming in 13 years

By Matt Hoffman
Sports Editor

The Tech players, both alumni and current, lined up at center ice, and assistant coach Norm Sparford called three of Stathis’s close relatives—his wife Maryann, his father John, and his brother George—out to the ice. Shawn Montague, a former team captain who played from 1998-2002 and is one of four Tech players to have his jersey number retired, then spoke on behalf of the alumni. He recalled the late coach’s dedication to the team despite his lingering health problems, his constant pursuit of perfection and his undying joy for hockey and for life.

Montague concluded by signaling to the rafters, where the team unveiled a new banner displaying Stathis’s name, his tenure of 1991-2008 and his career win total of 348. McSparron then presented Maryann, John and George with an honorary team jersey that bore the number 348, and the team participated in a ceremonial puck drop with players from both teams.

“What Greg Stathis was to Georgia Tech was something almost beyond words…[He was] a great teacher and a great motivator for the kids, and just a super role model,” said Pat O’Connor, Brian’s father.

Stathis had struggled with medical problems for decades. During the ceremony, Montague spoke of times when Stathis would check out of the hospital and head straight to Tech games, as well as times when he would return to the