

**Baseball** from page 28

in high school a lot, so it won't be my first time being on the mound in tight situations," Nichols said.

In the ninth, freshman closer Mark Pope made his first appearance in a Tech uniform, throwing a perfect frame of his own to complete the 9-0 victory.

Saturday's game saw the Jackets' offense put up even bigger numbers while cruising to a second victory. Lipscomb drew first blood on an Allen Bolden home run in the top of the first, but Tech tied the game in the bottom of the second on freshman third baseman Matt Skole's first home run. One inning later, the Jackets took a large lead as two walks, two hit batsmen and two errors helped them put together a six-run inning and force Lipscomb starter Brandon McClurg out of the game. The offense continued to roll, adding five more runs over the next two innings, and the Jackets coasted to a 13-3 victory.

Skole and Rowland had three hits apiece to power the offense, and senior right fielder Luke Murton added two hits and two RBI. Junior second baseman Patrick Long went 1-1 with three walks, and through two games he was 2-2 with two doubles and seven walks for a perfect on-base percentage of 1.000. Also of note was that backup catcher Cole Leonida started the game; the usual catcher, senior Jason Haniger, started on Friday but sat the rest of the weekend in order to rest a minor injury.

As for pitching, Tech junior starter Zach Von Tersch struggled a bit, allowing three runs on six hits and a walk in five innings, but he did strike out five. After he left, four relievers threw a scoreless inning each—right-hander Jacob Esch and left-handers Jed Bradley, Zach Brewster and Jake Davies, all of whom are freshmen except the sophomore Brewster.



**Derek Dietrich slides into second base during Friday's season opener against Lipscomb at Russ Chandler Stadium. Dietrich hit a grand slam to help push the Jackets past the Bisons for a 9-0 win.**

Photo by Michael Schneider / Student Publications

"I wanted to get some of those young guys in a situation where there wasn't a lot of pressure on them," Head Coach Danny Hall said.

In Sunday's contest, Hall did not have the luxury of a pressure-free environment, as the Bisons kept the game close the entire way.

Sophomore starter Brandon Cumpston was shaky early on; after striking out the first two batters on six pitches, he loaded the bases in the first inning before escaping the jam, and he allowed a run in the second.

Tech responded quickly, though. Skole led off the bottom of the second with a double, and Nichols singled him in to tie the game. After a pair of outs, consecutive walks by Rowland, Long and Dietrich that brought in a second run, and a single by Mur-

ton immediately afterward, Tech had a 3-1 lead.

Cumpston allowed just one run over the next four innings. Junior Andrew Robinson pitched a scoreless seventh, and sophomore Kevin Jacob got the first two outs in the eighth before Pope came in to finish off the inning. Pope came out for the ninth and looked strong, but with two outs and a man on second, Long—who had moved to third base after Hall pinch-ran for Skole—made a stop, but his throw sailed wide of junior first baseman Tony Plagman and allowed the tying run to score. With the game tied in the bottom of the ninth, Murton singled to lead off, and freshman Evan Martin pinch-ran for him. A groundout and an aggressive hit-and-run call moved Martin to third, but it would not matter; the next batter was Nich-

ols, who launched a Kyle Tognazini pitch over the right field fence to give Tech a 5-3 victory.

The team was jubilant after the game, but they were also careful not to get too excited. "I think this is just a small portion of a great season ahead.... It's a lot of fun celebrating now, but I've got to put it behind me and get ready for Georgia Southern," Nichols said.

In the series at Georgia Southern, Tech midweek starters Robinson and Jacob faced two of the Eagles' best, Matt Murray and Jake Brown. "I fully expected them to throw good pitchers at us... I think they set their schedule so they could do that," Hall said of the Eagles' plan to line up their better pitchers for the series.

Robinson made the first start of his Tech career two days after

pitching an inning in relief. The junior will likely see time in both roles this year, and his first start was solid, though not spectacular. In six innings pitched, Robinson allowed four runs on seven hits and two walks, but he struck out seven hitters and kept Tech in the game. With the score tied 4-4 after six innings, Dietrich drove in a run to give Tech the lead, but Nichols gave up a two-run single to Eagles third baseman A.J. Wirnsberger in the bottom half. The Jackets could not muster any offense against closer Dexter Bobo in the final two innings, so Georgia Southern took Tuesday's game 6-5 to hand Tech its first loss of the season.

Wednesday's game saw Jacob, another first-time starter, take the mound for Tech. The pitcher received plenty of early run support, as Haniger drove in two runs on a first-inning single and Skole hit a two-run homer in the third. Jacob actually allowed a run in the bottom half of each of those innings, but he was able to end the threat quickly both times. In the first, he allowed Eagles leadoff man Matt Miller to work his way around for a run off of two singles and a sacrifice fly, but he got a quick fly-ball out afterwards and Rowland recorded an outfield assist to end the inning. In the third, he allowed a one-out RBI single before striking out two batters in a row.

Jacob left in the seventh inning after a solid performance; in 6.2 innings, he gave up three runs (two earned) on nine hits and struck out four. Brewster came in to get the final out in that inning, and Pope closed out the game with two shutout innings, earning the save and preserving the 5-3 victory.

At 4-1, Tech will return home for a three-game set against Rutgers this weekend, and the ACC schedule will begin one week from Friday when Maryland comes to Russ Chandler Stadium.

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### sliver

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There should never be class on Friday  
To the people that complain about other people's sex lives, don't hate because you can't get laid.  
LOL! Until you say something to me in person, I'm having sex as loud as I want, k thx.  
I was totally expecting a satirical comic showing 8 mile detours to get from arch to the student center always the friend never the girlfriend...  
Cuddle buddies? Anybody?  
Last week's Dilbert wasn't funny, it was true.  
can you not see that i am interested in you or are you blind?  
to the boys who continuously complain about us girls and how we dress: uuum arent you the ones who cant live without sexual contact of some kind?  
so maybe you should STOP complaining about what we look like and start focusing on the fact that WE HAVE VAGINAS. and that is apparently something you want.  
"dude it's not called saving, it's just not spending" - nd  
To the Swarm at women's basketball games: I appreciate your enthusiasm.  
I hate every girl dresses the same and thinks they have great style.

# Men's tennis splits two matches

By John Anderson  
Contributing Writer

Tech had a strong showing on Friday afternoon, handing Georgia State a 7-0 loss at the Bill Moore Tennis Center to improve their record to 4-2 on the season.

The well-rested Jackets, who had not played a team match since Jan. 31, got off to a quick start against the Panthers. Tech was able to show off its strength at doubles, taking all three matches relatively easily.

The doubles team of sophomore Doug Kenney and freshman Kevin King were the first to win their match, ending it quickly with a score of 8-2, and sophomores Guillermo Gomez and Ryan Smith clinched the point with an 8-4 victory over State's

Nejc Podkrajsek and Martin Shishkov. Sophomore Eliot Potvin rolled an ankle, but he and sophomore Miguel Muguruza were still able to pull out a win in their doubles match against Panthers William Adeimy and Lucas Thomaz with a score of 8-7.

The 15-minute break between doubles and singles play was not enough to cool off the Jackets as they picked up right where they left off. Muguruza was the first to draw blood at the No. 3 singles spot, winning easily over Henri Mangin 6-1, 6-1. In his singles match, Kenney controlled the points off his serve and finished next with a 6-2, 6-1 score, defeating Trenton Spikes.

Gomez improved his record to 19-4, clinching the match for the Jackets with a 6-2, 6-1 victory

over Nejc Podkrajsek in the No. 1 spot to give Tech the 4-0 lead to win.

Tech did not drop a set the entire day as junior Austin Roebuck finished last with a 6-3, 6-3 win over Lucas Thomaz, giving the Panthers their seventh straight loss and a record of 0-7, while handing the Jackets a 7-0 victory.

But the Jackets were unable to keep up their winning streak, as they fell to the No. 30 ranked Auburn Tigers in a tough match on Sunday.

Tech, now 4-3 on the season, fell in an early hole losing the doubles point. Down 0-1 in doubles play, Muguruza and Roebuck evened it at one apiece, but Gomez and Smith lost 9-7 in a hard-fought match. Smith got the Jackets on track again with a 6-4, 6-0 victory over Alex Petropoulos, tying the match score at 1-1.

But Auburn struck back when Alex Stamchev defeated Miljevic 6-1, 6-1 to regain the lead for the Tigers. Tech was able to rally back, tying the score at two apiece when Potvin won 6-2, 6-2 over Lukas Marsoun.

When Auburn took the lead 3-2, Tech needed a victory from either Muguruza or Gomez to keep the Jackets in the match, but Muguruza was unable to capitalize off an early one-set lead, ultimately losing to Milan Krnjetin 4-6, 6-1, 6-2 to give Auburn the 4-2 lead and the match. Shortly thereafter Gomez's match was suspended early in the third set.

Gomez is now the highest ranked male tennis player in Tech history, advancing to the No. 7 spot. This season he holds a 19-4 singles record to lead the team and already has three victories over players ranked in the top 30. He will have a chance to improve this ranking with upcoming matches against two top 50 players.



Photo by Blake Israel / Student Publications

Irina Falconi returns the ball during a game against Northwestern. She beat No. 1 Maria Mosolova in her singles match, 6-3, 2-6, 6-4.



Photo by John Nakano / Student Publications

Austin Roebuck returns a ball at the Bill Moore Tennis Center. Roebuck and Muruguza won their doubles match against Auburn.

## Tennis from page 28

On Wednesday, the women's team traveled to Clemson to face the Tigers in the 31st meeting between the two rival schools. Clemson held a 23-7 advantage in the series, but the Jackets had won four of the last six meetings. Last year, the Jackets won the regular season match at home 6-1, but then lost to the Tigers 4-2 in the semifinals of the ACC Tournament.

The Tigers opened the day by sweeping doubles and taking the point to give them an early 1-0 lead over the Jackets. Two of the doubles matches were in range of a win, however, as both teams of McDowell/Falconi and freshman Lynn Blau/Krupina lost in an 8-6 decision. The doubles game play for Tech will need some reworking as the team has been swept

several times in doubles since the spring season began.

Ina Hadziselimovic pushed Clemson's team score to 2-0 to open singles as she defeated Stripplin 6-3, 6-1 in the third court position. On court four, Hickey got the Jackets their first point of the day as she defeated Keri Wong 6-3, 6-2. Clemson jumped back up 3-1 as No. 15 Josipa Bek won her match 6-2, 6-2 over No. 13 Falconi.

The Tigers won after Estefania Balda defeated McDowell 7-5, 6-4 at the second position. Even with the match lost, freshman Viet Ha Ngo and Krupina won their individual matches soon after to make the final game score 4-3.

The Jackets will see action again on Sunday and continue to face top-25 ranked teams as they host No. 7 Baylor at the Bill Moore Tennis Center.

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# Jackets fall to conference rival No. 13 Clemson

By Christian Bockhop  
Contributing Writer

The men's basketball team started off strong at Alexander Memorial Coliseum, only to fall in the second half to the No. 13 Clemson Tigers in Tech's twelfth loss to an ACC team this season. The Jackets came out swinging in the first half, enjoying a 15-point lead just ten minutes into the game. Unfortunately for Tech, an All-Star performance by senior guard Lewis Clinch was not enough to snap the Jackets' now six-game losing streak, leaving the Jackets with a 10-15 record.

Both Tech and Clemson shot 50.9 percent from the field, sinking 27-for-53. This was a 10 percent improvement for Tech over last Wednesday's loss to Wake



Photo by Jarrett Skov / Student Publications

Paul Hewitt expresses frustration during a game at AMC.

Forest. The game ultimately became a three-point shooting contest with Clemson going 12-for-23 compared to the Jackets' six-for-11.

The first half started with freshman guard Imam Shumpert assisting sophomore forward Gani Lawal in sinking a jumper to put Tech on the board. Lawal got the rebound after Clemson center Raymond Sykes missed from the field. This set up Tech for a quick succession of threes and jumpers by Clinch and junior forward Zachery Peacock to make the score 10-5, with the Jackets looking much more energized than they have in the past few games. Despite pressure from Clemson's defense, Lawal and senior forward Alade Aminu were able to make multiple layups.

After a layup by Aminu with eight minutes left in the half and a score of 29-15, Tech's luck turned for the worse.

"They came down and scored on eight or nine straight possessions. [We] just didn't have the same energy level defensively," said Head Coach Paul Hewitt.

With 11 unanswered points by the Tigers to tie the game at 29, Aminu fired back with a massive dunk and a layup to finish out the half with the Jackets and Tigers tied again at 33. As the game headed into halftime, there was a notable downturn in the morale of the Tech faithful.

At the start of the second half, Clemson guard K.C. Rivers fired off a three from the top of the arc and 40 seconds later scored again

after a turnover by Shumpert. With those 5 points Clemson took the lead and never gave it up. Despite the Tigers' growing momentum, Clinch performed amazingly well, sinking four more threes.

"We made an emphasis in the locker room really trying to make contact with [Clinch]. He got the separation he needed, and he made shots," Hewitt said.

The scene at Alexander Memorial Coliseum became dismal, however, in the last few minutes of the game. With 1:51 left, Clemson forward Trevor Booker dunked the ball, giving the Tigers a 75-65 lead and ending all realistic hopes of Tech making a comeback. With Jackets fans leaving in droves, the cheers of some 1,500 Clemson fans reverberated around the stands.

Ultimately, the game came down to the inability of Tech's players to convert around the basket.

"I think that's where the lead went. We had some easy opportunities. That happens. You can't just put your head down. You have to come back and get stops. That's where we're disappointed as a staff and as a team. We didn't get those stops after those opportunities," Hewitt said.

With the 10-15 record, the rest of the season looks bleak for the Yellow Jackets.

"We're not going to quit," Clinch said. "We're going to keep battling, keep motivated in a tough situation like this. Collectively, we're still together and still a team."



Photo by Jarrett Skov / Student Publications

Lewis Clinch presses a fast-break chance during Sunday's game against Clemson. Clinch had a career-high 27 points in the loss.

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## Fast out of the gates

Photo by Michael Schneider / Student Publications

### Jackets win four against Lipscomb and Ga. Southern

By Nishant Prasadh  
Assistant Sports Editor

It's been a banner opening weekend for the baseball team's 2009 season. Sophomore Thomas Nichols capped it off with a walk-off home run in the bottom of the ninth on Sunday, while the Jackets swept a three-game set against Lipscomb and split a midweek series against Georgia Southern.

Against Lipscomb, Tech rolled to a pair of easy victories in the first two games, winning 9-0 on Friday and 13-3 on Saturday, before having to fend off the visiting Bisons in Sunday's 5-3 contest. The Jackets stumbled in the first game against Georgia Southern, falling 6-5 on Tuesday, but they recovered the next day to pull out

a 5-3 victory.

If opening day was any indication for the Jackets, the team is more than capable of living up to its No. 12 preseason national ranking.

Friday's game saw a pitcher's duel for four innings, but in the fifth inning Tech's offense came to life. After junior first baseman Tony Plagman reached base on an error and eventually scored on a well-placed squeeze bunt by senior left fielder Chris House, sophomore center fielder and leadoff man Jeff Rowland hit his first home run of the year to give Tech a 3-0 lead. Tech added two more runs in the sixth, and sophomore shortstop Derek Dietrich hit a grand slam in the seventh.

Nine runs were more than enough for Tech sophomore pitcher Deck McGuire,

who looked sharp despite never having made a weekend start before. The right-handed sophomore shut down the Lipscomb lineup for seven innings, striking out a career-high 13 hitters in that span and surrendering only three hits and one walk. He was forced to leave after throwing 101 pitches, but his performance still earned him ACC Pitcher of the Week. Nichols took over for McGuire in the eighth; late-inning relief is one of many roles the versatile Nichols will see this season, and he performed well, throwing a perfect inning and recording a strikeout.

"You get the best of both worlds, coming in and pitching [too]. Hopefully I can do well for us down the stretch...I pitched

See **Baseball**, page 24

## SPORTS shorts

### Women's swim and dive competes at the ACC Championships

The women's swimming and diving team tied for ninth place at last weekend's ACC Championships at the University of Maryland. The swimmers were strong all weekend, ultimately breaking a combined total of ten school records. Among the record-setters were junior Ryann Kopacka in the 200-meter backstroke, freshman Brittany Gobat in the 200-meter breaststroke and the 400-meter freestyle relay team. Junior Hannah Krimm (who placed 21st overall) and freshman David Springfels (13th overall) led the divers to a strong finish as well.

### Softball goes 3-3, Haller sets record

Tech's softball team traveled to California for the Cathedral City Classic last weekend, going 2-3 in the three-day event with wins over Loyola Marymount and Oregon State. The team then returned home and shut out Kennesaw State 8-0 on Wednesday behind a combined one-hitter by freshman Jessica Coan and sophomore Kristen Adkins. In the victory, senior first baseman Whitney Haller had three RBI to set a Tech and ACC record with a total of 195 RBI for her career.

### Women's Basketball splits ACC games

The women's basketball team could not recover from a large deficit against No. 9 Maryland last Thursday, making a late run but falling to the Terrapins 87-79. The Jackets were forced to abandon their press defense early and could not recover. Tech rebounded on Sunday though, going on the road to beat Clemson 89-54. Foster and sophomore forward Iasia Hemingway each had double-doubles, and Tech was in control on both ends, shooting 59 percent and holding Clemson to just 15 first-half points.

## Women's Tennis falls to two top-fifteen teams

By Steven Cappetta  
Staff Writer

The No. 4 Tech women's tennis team faced stiff competition this week as they squared off against both No. 1 ranked Northwestern and No. 14 Clemson to open ACC match play.

The Jackets hosted Northwestern on Sunday. The Wildcats were 7-0 against opponents this year and had defeated Georgia last weekend to clinch the ITA Indoor Championship title that Tech won in 2007 and 2008. They lead the all-time series against the Jackets 4-2, but were beaten in the last meeting between the two teams when they played each other in the finals of the 2008 ITA National Team Indoor Championships.

The Wildcats came out ahead with the doubles point after sweeping all three doubles matches. Northwestern gained the next point in singles play to bring the team score to 2-0 after a 6-2, 6-4 win by Samantha Murray over senior Christy

Striplin at the third position. No. 13 nationally ranked freshman Irina Falconi brought the Jackets closer after her third set win over the Wildcats' No. 1 ranked Maria Mosolova 6-3, 2-6, 6-4. Falconi's stunning performance over Mosolova earned her the title of ACC Women's Tennis Player of the Week on Tuesday.

However, Northwestern moved even further ahead after that, as No. 10 ranked junior Amanda McDowell dropped her match on court to the Wildcats' No. 25 Georgia Rose, who won in the third set 7-6, 3-6, 6-1. Sophomore Noelle Hickey brought the Jackets back to a 3-2 score with her 6-4, 6-0 win over Lauren Lui in the fourth position.

The Wildcats secured the game victory shortly after as Nazlie Ghazal overtook sophomore Sasha Krupina in a third set win 6-1, 4-6, 6-4. The final match score ended up 5-2 in favor of the still undefeated Northwestern.

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Photo by Blake Israel / Student Publications

Christy Striplin returns a ball at the Bill Moore Tennis Center during Sunday's loss to No. 1 Northwestern. Striplin defeated Samantha Murray in straight sets, 6-2, 6-4.