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In the bottom half, with Tech sophomore third baseman Matt Skole on base, Burnette connected on his game-winning homer. Tech's offense was much improved from the first two games of the series, with 11 runs in the final two games compared to just one run in the first game.

Tech picked up its first run of the game in the bottom of the first. Tech followed up with a three-run second inning, giving them the lead for good.

On Tuesday, April 20, Tech sent freshman pitcher Mark Pope to the mound. Pope kept the Eagles scoreless for seven innings, allowing just one run. He struck out eight batters and lowered his season ERA to 2.91. He was named SEC Pitcher of the Week for the second time this season.

Junior right-hander Deck McGuire got the win in the game against the Eagles. He allowed one run in six innings, striking out six batters.

Even though Tech put up a 17-4 win against the Eagles, they were unable to translate these into definite runs. Tech picked up its final run on an eighth-inning Esch home run and won 11-3.

"Anytime you can sweep Clemson is huge," Hall said. "The first two games could have gone either way. We put a little distance between ourselves today, but they are a great team and are going to finish high on the side over there. Anytime you can beat Clemson, it is a good day."

Tech will next take on the Georgia Southern Eagles in a three-game series. The Eagles are currently in fourth place in the conference with a record of 13-17. Tech is currently in first place with a record of 17-13. The first game will be played on Friday, April 23, at 7 p.m.
Men’s Tennis loses to UVA, wins home finale

By Kyle Conarro
Staff Writer

The No. 26 men’s tennis team finished out the regular season this past weekend, hosting Virginia on April 17 and Virginia Tech on April 18. The Jackets fell 5-2 to the top-ranked Cavaliers but rebounded on Sunday to defeat the No. 21 Hokies and finish the season with a win.

In Saturday’s match, Tech dropped the doubles point to give Virginia an early 1-0 lead. Juniors Eliot Potvin and Ryan Smith were the only pair to secure a victory for the Jackets in doubles, winning 8-4 in the two spot.

Sophomore Kevin King and freshman Juan Spir, who faced the sixth-ranked doubles team in the nation in Michael Shabaz and Drew Courtney, stayed within reach but ultimately lost 8-6. Juniors Guillermo Gomez and Dean O’Brien, who were at the three spot for the Jackets, also went down 8-6 to Virginia, giving the Cavaliers the doubles point heading into singles play.

In singles play, Gomez and Potvin were able to secure points for the Jackets, each winning their singles match to give Tech its only two points on the day. Gomez, who dropped the first set to Shabaz, recovered to win the match 4-6, 6-2, 6-2. Potvin also lost in the first, falling 2-6 to the Jarmere Jenkins of Virginia, ranked No. 45 in the nation. Potvin came back to win defeat Jenkins 2-6, 6-4, 6-2.

Unfortunately for the Jackets, the Cavaliers took the other four singles matches, sealing their 5-2 victory.

“Losing the doubles point was a little bit of a dagger for that match,” said head coach Kenny Thorne, courtesy of ramblinwreck.com. “Winning four singles matches against the No. 1 team in the country was too tough to do today, but hopefully we’ll see them again next week at the ACC Championship.”

Against Virginia Tech, the Jackets faced much better. Although they again lost the doubles point, they were able to win four singles matches to top the Hokies 4-3, including a three-set comeback by junior Miguel Muguruza to give them the win.

In doubles, the Jackets notched one win behind King and Spir, who defeated Will Beck and Patrick Daciek 9-7. Potvin and Smith fell 8-4 in their match, while O’Brien and freshman Magan Ortega went down 7-9 in a close match at No. 3.

After again giving up the doubles point to start the match, Tech headed into singles matches. Gomez and King gave Tech its first two points, each downing their opponent in straight sets to open singles play. Gomez defeated Virginia’s Re 6-4, 6-2, while King defeated Luka Somen 6-1, 6-1.

Spir, who also won in straight sets, pushed the Jackets’ total to three a short time later when he defeated Sebastian Jacques 6-3, 7-5 at the No. 6 spot.

Potvin and Ortega, who both stayed close, dropped their matches in straight sets to the Hokies, leaving only Muguruza to win the contest for the Jackets.

Muguruza gave up the first set 3-6, but he fought back to win the second 6-3 and force a third set to decide a winner. He rallied from a 4-2 deficit in the third set to defeat Patrick Daciek 5-6, 6-3, 7-5 and capture the win for the Jackets.

“To come back and bounce back today was huge for the team going into the ACC tournament,” Head coach Kenny Thorne said after that match.

The Jackets, who get a first-round bye in the ACC Tournament, will play again April 23 in Cary, N.C. Tech will take on the winner of Thursday’s matchup between Virginia Tech and Boston College.

By D.J. Carson
Staff Writer

Several Jackets had strong performances this past weekend, with Alana Clooten taking first place in the hammer throw.

In Saturday’s meet, Clooten became the first Tech student-athlete to win the hammer throw, throwing a career-best of 62 feet, 8 inches. Clooten added another highlight when she earned All-ACC honors in the high jump.

Cary, N.C. Tech will take on the No. 21 Hokies and finish the season with a win.

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Outdoors from page 32

feet, eight inches. Sophomore Mary Kate DuBard finished eighth in the 10,000-meter distance run, and junior Kayla McKeinlan placed in the top ten of three of the four heptathlon events in which she participated, taking eighth in the 200-meter dash.

Several Jackets had strong performances on day two of competition. Senior Alphonso Jordan and sophomore Jhanelle McLeod placed in the top five of the men’s and women’s long jump, respectively. Junior Antonio McKay Jr. took third in the men’s 400-meter dash, while freshman Kel- lie Christian and senior Tiffany Grant each placed in the top ten on the women’s side of the event. The star of the day for Tech was Marcelle, who set a new personal best with a throw of 62 feet, 5.25 inches in the shot put to win the event. Wagner took sixth in the women’s shot put.

Tech received strong performances from Jordan and fellow senior Alana Clooten on the third and final day of competition. Jor- dan set a competition and school record when he reached 54 feet, 6.5 inches in the triple jump, securing his second straight victory in the event. He also took fifth in the 110-meter hurdles.

Clooten, meanwhile, became the first Tech student-athlete to win the hammer throw, throwing her new mark of 88 feet, six inches.

Sophomore Terri Ann Grant added a highlight when she earned All-ACC honors in the high jump.
Women’s Tennis wins one over weekend

By Nishant Prasad
Sports Editor

The No. 25 women’s tennis team ended its season with a split of its final two ACC games. The Jackets took on Virginia and Virginia Tech, falling 5-2 to the Cavaliers on Saturday, April 17 and sweeping the Hokies 7-0 on Sunday, April 18.

Tech finishes the year 14-9 overall, with a 5-5 mark in ACC play that put them in seventh place in the conference.

After concluding the home schedule the previous weekend, the Jackets traveled north to Charlottesville, Va. to face No. 31 Virginia, which was a spot above Tech in the ACC standings.

The match got off to a rough start for the Jackets, who dropped all three doubles matches. Freshman Elizabeth Kilborn and sophomore Viet Ha Ngo were the first to fall, dropping their match 8-5 against Emily Fraser and Katie Gater. UVA’s other two tandems were both ranked; No. 55 Lindsey Hardebergh and Erin Vierra held off Tech sophomores Lynn Blau and Hillary Davis 8-5, and the No. 38 pair of Jennifer Stevens and Hana Tomljanovic held off sophomore Irina Falconi and junior Sasha Krupina 8-4.

Though the Cavaliers held the early 1-0 advantage, Tech evened the score in singles play behind the effort of Falconi, who remains the No. 1 singles player in the nation. Falconi, facing No. 44 Hardenberg on court one, cruised to a 6-0, 6-3 victory.

The next three courts to finish, though, were all in UVA’s favor, securing the match for the Cavaliers. Fraser took down Krupina in straight sets, 6-3, 6-2, and Tomljanovic defeated Blau 6-4, 6-2.

Kilborn and UVa’s Stevens had a well-contested match on court five, with each of the first two sets going to a tiebreaker, but Stevens eventually pulled away in the third set. Her 6-7 (4), 7-6 (6), 6-2 victory clinched the match for the Cavaliers.

With the outcome set, the teams split the final two matches. Gater and Davis saw their match go to three sets, but Gater took the final two sets to win 7-5, 5-7, 6-4.

Ngo overcame an early deficit on court three to give Tech its second point. The sophomore dropped the first set but came back to defeat Vierra 5-6, 6-2, 7-5.

Despite the loss, the Jackets managed to bounce back and reach 500 in conference play following the dominating victory in Blacksburg. Va. They had a fortunate matchup as their opponent, Virginia Tech, entered the match on an eight-game losing streak.

Doubles play went well for the Jackets, who won two matches to secure the opening point.

On court three, Kilborn and Ngo topped to 8-0 win against Emily Lauten and Courtney Rauscher. The Hokies evened the score, with Shannon Betts and Martha Blakely topping Blau and Davis 8-2. In the decisive court one match, the No. 25 tandem of Falconi and Krupina rolled to an 8-3 win over Yasmin Hamza and Holly Johnson, securing the doubles point for the Jackets.

Singletons play was a clean sweep for the Jackets, who won three matches in straight sets and took the other three via superset tiebreakers.

Falconi managed to take down Krupina 6-3, 6-4 in their first-flight matchup. Blau and Kilborn also won their matches in straight sets; Blau cruised past Lauten 6-2, 6-3, and Kilborn dispatched Rauscher 6-1, 6-4.

In each of the other three matches the Hokie player took the first set, but the Jackets went on to win all three.

Ngo dropped her first set against Blakely, but she won the second set decisively and rolled in the superset tiebreaker. The final tally had Ngo winning 4-6, 6-1, 10-4.

In the second-flight matchup, Krupina earned the victory when Betts retired due to injury with the score even in their tiebreaker.

As the No. 7 seed in the ACC Tournament, the Jackets earned a rematch against the Hokies in their first-round battle on Thursday. The tournament is being held in Cary, N.C.

Elizabeth Kilborn makes a forehand return at the Bill Moore Tennis Center. Kilborn was edged in a three-set battle versus UVA’s Jennifer Stevens, but she beat VT’s Courtney Rauscher in straight sets.

Softball

from page 32

Saturday, Coan started Sunday’s game for the Jackets and she ran into trouble early in the game. In the bottom of the first inning, UGA leadoff hitter Taylor Schlopy hit a homer to give the Bulldogs the lead. Another RBI later in the inning gave UGA a 2-0 advantage.

Coan got into trouble again in the second inning, but she managed to escape a big inning and only gave up a sac fly RBI.

After leaving runners on base in the third inning, the Jackets finally got onto the scoreboard in the fourth inning. Priebe hit a one-out single, and Rush walked to give Tech a runner in scoring position. Sinclair homered to left, tying the game at three.

Rush relieved Coan in the fourth inning, and the Bulldogs took the lead in the fifth. Schlopy walked to lead off the inning and a triple sandwiched between two singles allowed the Bulldogs to score three runs and hang on for the 6-3 win.
With the Spring Game set for this weekend, keep an eye on players at these three positions

1) Backup QB Battle

Rising senior Joshua Nesbitt—who is sitting out the spring after offseason ankle surgery—is the undisputed starter at quarterback, but with the transfer of former backup Jaybo Shaw, the battle for the No. 2 spot on the depth chart has become a key storyline in spring practice.

“It’s been open competition. We haven’t designated anybody as anything,” said quarterbacks coach Brian Bohannon.

Of the three leading candidates, redshirt sophomore Tevin Washington is the only one with game experience from last season against Jacksonville State. Still, Washington has shown a good grasp of the offense as he enters his third year under Head Coach Paul Johnson’s system, and his abilities as a passer and runner make him a good fit for the offense.

Redshirt freshman Jordan Luallen has demonstrated the best pure passing abilities of the three, regularly making strong and accurate throws. Still, he also has a strong tendency to make mistakes through the air and has not been very effective as a runner.

“There’s times that [Luallen] shows some glimpses of what I know he can do, and there’s times he’s all over the place,” said quarterbacks coach Brian Bohannon. “He just has to work on some things fundamentally...but he’s got the ability to throw the ball.”

The last of the candidates, redshirt freshman David Sims, may be the most athletic of the trio. Sims resembles Nesbitt most closely in terms of size and skill set; at 5-foot-11 and 229 pounds, he is better built to handle a heavy workload on the ground. Still, he has struggled in the passing game this spring.

2) B-back Rotation

When two-year B-back starter Jonathan Dwyer declared for the NFL Draft, the Jackets lost one of their most reliable and talented running backs. In the aftermath, though, Tech may actually be stronger overall at the position in 2010 thanks to much greater depth.

Redshirt senior Anthony Allen will start for the first-string offense on Saturday. Allen shifted to A-back last season to accommodate for Dwyer’s presence, but now he will take over the feature role at B-back.

At 230 pounds, Allen has ideal size for the position and has demonstrated plenty of athleticism. He led Tech’s A-back corps in rushing last season, recording 626 yards and six touchdowns while averaging 9.7 yards per carry.

“[Allen] was a B-back when he started...I think it’s more natural for him,” said Bohannon, who also coaches the B-backs.

Senior Lucas Cox should see plenty of carries. The 232-pound bruiser has had a strong spring at his more natural position and will be a key reserve behind Allen. Redshirt sophomore Richard Watson will also be in the mix for carries.

The wild card will be true freshman Charles Perkins, who enrolled at Tech this spring. Perkins has shown promise and could see time at A-back or B-back.

“I think Charles has got a great future here. He’s just learning how things work right now,” Bohannon said.

Redshirt junior Preston Lyons, the primary backup to Dwyer last season, is sitting out the spring with an injury. Still, all five have shown the ability to play and play well, and all should be factors in Tech’s backfield this season.

“Competitiveness is the best driver, so it’s definitely helping us all get better,” Cox said.

3) Outside Linebackers

If spring practice is any indication, the Jackets’ defensive players have taken well to the 3-4 scheme introduced by new defensive coordinator Al Groh. The front seven of the defense have taken well to the 3-4 scheme introduced by new defensive coordinator Al Groh. The front seven of the defense has a strong showing, causing plenty of disruption during contact drills and forcing mistakes and turnovers.

Surprisingly, one of the strongest units has been the outside linebackers. Most of Tech’s often-used linebackers from last season are inside linebackers now, leaving backups and converted defensive ends to handle the primary pass rush positions. As a result, the performance of the new OLBs has been a pleasant surprise for Tech.

Redshirt senior A.T. Barnes says the transition has gone well for the defense.

“There’s nothing hard about [the 3-4]....The biggest thing is that we have to talk more and communicate with each other. We’re doing that better, so the defense is [getting] better each day,” Barnes said.

Barnes—a reserve for the past three years—has earned most of the first-team reps at weakside linebacker and has had a stellar spring, doing well both at stopping the run and rushing the passer.

“I’m a big linebacker, so this fits me perfectly...I feel like I’ll be able to help the defense out a lot,” Barnes said.

The leader at strongside linebacker is fellow redshirt senior Anthony Egbuniwe, who spent much of last season at defensive end. Like Barnes, Egbuniwe’s size likely makes him a better fit at 3-4 outside linebacker than at his previous position.

The second-stringers at each OLB position are in the same mold. Redshirt sophomore Malcolm Mumtre will play the weakside position, while redshirt senior Oshain Tongo will man the strongside spot.
By Alex Buchanan

Contributing Writer

This weekend saw the No. 5 Jackets sweep Clemson at Russ Chandler Stadium. Tech wrapped up three consecutive wins against the No. 16 Tigers, giving the Jackets a 15-3 record this season in the ACC. Tech went on to defeat Georgia Southern in a pair of midweek games to improve to 33-5 this season.

The first of the three weekend games saw Tech edge out Clemson in an 8-6 win over the Tigers in a tight game. Tech clinched the win in the bottom of the tenth when junior outfielder Chase Burnette hit a two-out, walk-off home run over the wall in the right center field against Clemson pitcher David Haselden led the Jackets to victory late Friday night.

“It’s a great feeling,” Burnette said. “It’s one of those things you think about as a kid at the park tossing the ball up and hitting it. You are dreaming about hitting a walk-off home run. That is what everybody would love to do, and it is a really good feeling.”

The game started off with Clemson scoring two early runs against junior pitcher Deck McGuire. The Jackets did not answer these runs until scoring a string of six runs at the bottom of the second. The Tigers did not respond until the top of the fifth, when they scored four runs, but these would be the last runs the Tigers would get for the rest of the game. Tech, down one run in the bottom of the sixth, pulled even with the Tigers when junior designated hitter Thomas Nichols scored Tech’s sixth run. Following this, a defensive battle ensued between the Tigers and the Jackets that grew tense in the late innings. In the top of the tenth, senior pitcher Andrew Robinson entered the game after Clemson had loaded the bases. After striking out Clemson outfielder Deck McGuire, the Jackets added to their lead in the bottom of the inning. Yee led off the inning with a RBI single to pull ahead 1-0.