

Two former Jackets taken in NBA Draft

By Alex Mitchell
Sports Editor

On June 24, two former Tech basketball players heard their names called at the annual NBA draft. Forwards Derrick Favors and Gani Lawal left Tech early with hopes of playing professional basketball, and both players will have that opportunity after being selected.

Favors, who left Tech after his freshman season, was drafted third overall by the New Jersey Nets. Before the draft's lottery, most experts had Favors going to Golden State with the seventh pick. However, because the NBA uses a lottery system to determine the draft's order, the NBA's worst team, the Nets, selected Favors.

While at Tech Favors averaged 12.5 points and 8.5 rebounds per game. Favors' numbers were good enough to earn him the title of ACC Freshman of the Year.

After a slow start, Favors was arguably Tech's best player during conference play. He was Tech's leading scorer and rebounder in conference games, averaging 11.8 points and 8.7 rebounds (No. 2 in the ACC) while hitting 62.5 percent of his field goals. Favors was also instrumental in Tech's postseason surge and was named to the ACC All-Tournament first team.

Before the draft began, New Jersey was looking to improve at the power forward position, Favors' natural spot. With their pick, the Nets selected Favors as the first big man off the board. The 6-10 forward has a great chance of starting from day one alongside New Jersey's other big man, Brook Lopez. The addition of Favors creates a formidable frontcourt for the Nets as they look to improve upon their NBA-worst 12-70 record.

Lawal's situation could not



Photos by Jarrett Skov / Student Publications



Photo by Kelvin Kuo / Student Publications

Left: Gani Lawal finishes off a dunk against Siena. Right: Derrick Favors goes up for a layup against North Carolina at the ACC Tournament. Both players were taken in the NBA Draft.

be more different than Favors'. Lawal was drafted 46th overall by the Phoenix Suns, and he will most likely be a backup player for a team that went 54-28 last season and made a deep run into the NBA playoffs, reaching the Western Conference finals.

While Favors was selected earlier than most analysts originally thought, Lawal slipped back a few places. Most analysts had Lawal going early in the second round, between 30-40 in the draft.

Favors' performance in pre-draft workouts led to him

being projected higher in the draft, but Lawal arguably had the better career at Tech. He only averaged seven points per game his freshman season but improved dramatically in his second year. Lawal was statistically the most improved player in the ACC during his sophomore campaign, more than doubling his scoring average (from seven to 14.9) and his rebounds (from four to 10). In his junior and final season at Tech, Lawal was named third-team All-Atlantic Coast Conference for the second straight year, after again leading Tech

in scoring and rebounding.

The Suns run a fast-paced, high-scoring system that requires their big men to run the floor quickly, a scheme they will likely try and fit Lawal into. The Suns hope that Lawal's success in college can transfer over to the NBA. Lawal will most likely be Amar'e Stoudemire's backup when he arrives in Phoenix.

However, that could all change if Stoudemire opts out of his contract this summer, and joins another NBA team. This move could force Lawal into the starting line-up.

SPORTS shorts

Bedford chosen to Outland watch list

One of Tech's own, senior center Sean Bedford, was announced as a candidate in the running for the Outland Trophy. The award, presented annually since 1946, celebrates the nation's top interior linemen. On June 22, the Football Writers Association of America selected 63 players as early picks in a list that will eventually be narrowed down to three finalists in late November. The winner will be announced on Dec. 9 at the conclusion of the season. Bedford is one of 11 ACC players in the running for an award that has yet to be won by a Tech player.

Mateker selected as an ESPN Academic All-American

Tech senior track and field member Billy Mateker was named to the ESPN The Magazine Academic All-American men's track and cross country team for the second consecutive year. Members are selected for this award by the College Sports Information Directors of America and the finalists were announced on June 22. Mateker is a mechanical engineering major with a 3.98 GPA. Mateker was Tech's highest finisher in two events on the season and posted his best 8K performance of his senior year at the Great American Cross Country Festival with a time of 25:14.

Tech to host NCAA Golf Championship

In 2013, Tech will host the NCAA Golf Championship. The decision to host the tournament came on June 25, with the prestigious Atlanta Athletic Club hosting the 2013 NCAA Men's Division I Golf Championship with Tech as the host institution. As a result of the announcement, Tech will host two NCAA events in 2013, the Golf Championship and the NCAA Basketball Final Four which will be played at the Georgia Dome.

Radakovich, Joseph rewarded with contract extensions



Photo by Michael Schneider / Student Publications

Dan Radakovich speaks at a press conference. Radakovich's new contract extension will keep him at Tech through 2015.

By Nishant Prasad
Online Sports Editor

Two key figures within Tech athletics received contract extensions earlier this week, as Athletic Director Dan Radakovich and women's basketball Head Coach MaChelle Joseph agreed to deals that will keep them at Tech through 2015.

For Radakovich, the new contract came as he enters his fifth full academic year as athletic director. He took over in February 2006, becoming the seventh athletic director in Tech's history and has overseen growth off the field and success on the field in all Tech sports.

Notably, it was Radakovich who hired current head football coach Paul Johnson, who has led the team to a 20-7 record in two seasons. In both seasons Tech earned at least a

share of the ACC's Coastal Division regular season title, and the 2009 squad won the ACC title and earned a trip to the Orange Bowl.

Over the 2009-10 academic year, Tech's athletic teams were successful across the board. Seven teams qualified for the NCAA Tournament in their respective sports, with four (baseball, softball, golf and women's tennis) hosting an NCAA regional. Tech's collective .727 winning percentage across all sports was the best in school history.

Radakovich has also overseen the construction of several new facilities for Tech's athletic teams. Among these are Mewborn Field, the softball team's new home stadium; and the Zelnak Center, a practice facility for the basketball teams.

After a slow start to her coaching stint at Tech, Joseph has led the

women's basketball squad to 20 wins and a berth in the NCAA Tournament in four straight seasons.

Joseph's teams have earned some of the most notable wins in the history of Tech women's basketball. The 2006-07 squad became the first Tech team to win an NCAA Tournament game.

That year, the Jackets edged DePaul 55-54 in their opening round game before falling to Purdue in the second round.

The 2008-09 team earned the Jackets' first-ever win over an opponent ranked in the national top five, defeating then-No. 2 North Carolina 66-62. Last year, the Jackets recorded 23 wins, their highest mark since joining the ACC, and forward Brigitte Ardossi became the third player from a Joseph-led team to be selected in the WNBA Draft.