Innovations Bolster a Struggling Athletic Program

A year full of changes in the Georgia Tech Athletic Association brought a new attitude to Tech toward its sports programs — a positive, can-do spirit that almost immediately began showing results. Fresh faces combined with a renewed commitment among students and alumni to rebuild Yellow Jacket sports back to the pinnacle of the Golden Years.

All of the action had been precipitated by Tech's entrance into the Atlantic Coast Conference. Still in the process of integrating the ACC into its schedules, Tech began to realize that change was necessary if it was to become competitive when fully active in 1983.

The inadequacy of the facilities at Tech was a bane to recruiters: the locker rooms were from the Dodd era, the weight room was a fenced-in area underneath the North Stands of Grant Field, and the administrative offices were housed in one of the oldest buildings on campus. Generous alumni contributed over five million dollars for a new Intercollegiate Athletic Center, with over two million coming from the Callaway Foundation. With demolition of the Naval Armory in August, Tech fans could witness the rapid progress being made as the construction continued. The IAC was a big step for Tech, and with its completion set for September of 1981, it would be ready for football season.

Faces changed at the AA. Bill Curry began his first year as head coach at his alma mater, while Home Rice took charge as Athletic Director. Rice had a reputation for rebuilding faltering programs, and Curry possessed the personality, drive, and optimism needed to put the football team back on track. Billy Dees moved from men's assistant coach to interim women's head basketball coach, replacing now full-time intramural director Jim Culpepper, and John Sledge became the new coach for the women's softball team.

TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Fred Hall goes for two against North Carolina State. The Tech Cross Country team finished second in the Georgia Collegiate Cross Country Championships. Coach Bill Curry looks on as offensive guard Ben Utt takes a swing at the Naval Armory which was demolished to make room for the new intercollegiate athletic complex.

BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: Freshman Ann Parker played the number three spot for the Lady Jackets. Freshman Doug Thomason takes a few warm-up laps, prior to breaking the varsity 200-meter back-stroke record.
Athletic Fee Initiated to Support Minor Sports Program
Tech's minor sports teams have always been short of funds. Drawing on experience gained as athletic director of two other colleges, Homer Rice proposed a student athletic fee to finance the non-revenue teams. Supported by Coach Curry and President Pettit, he argued that Tech was the only school in the ACC that did not have such a fee, and that the money was needed to keep the minor sports alive. Although football and basketball were still to support themselves, the fee would be a windfall to the smaller teams. While a referendum went against the fee 2-to-1, SGA voted to recommend that the fee be approved. The final decision was up to the Board of Regents, who voted in favor of the fee.

With so many changes taking place, it was logical that there would be an attitude change at Tech toward the future of the athletic program. Coach Curry often complimented the student body on their support. The warm response of the students to the underdog Jackets' tie with Notre Dame was so warm that Curry promised them "a new day is dawning at Tech."

TOP LEFT: Senior Peter Cole serves in his first-round match at the ACC tournament. Cole lost to UNC's Ray Disco 6-4, 2-6, 1-6. ABOVE LEFT: Tech's lacrosse team moves in on the Georgia goal. ABOVE RIGHT: High jumper, Mack Reese, clears the bar at the ACC championship. Reese is Tech's indoor record holder at 7'1.75". ABOVE: Harold Ford on the cross-country course at Wake Forest University. Ford ran the championship course in 33 minutes 9 seconds. FAR LOWER LEFT: Jeff Larkin brings in the anchor leg of the 4x100 meter relay. Tech's time of 41.4 seconds was fourth best in the ACC. BELOW LEFT: Doug Johnson blasts out of a sandtrap at the ACC golf championships. Johnson shot a 230 in the three-round tournament.
The circumstances surrounding Coach Curry's arrival at Tech meant that spring training would be his first and only chance to judge the talent he had available. When workouts started, Curry found a green offensive line, a suspect defense and virtually no depth on his roster.

There were a few assets for Curry to build around. Mike Kelley was back for his third year at quarterback after breaking five school records last season. The three top receivers from '79 — Kris Kentera, Marlon Heggs, and Leon Chadwick — returned to complement Kelley's sure arm. Curry teamed Ronnie Cone, last year's leading rusher, with former noseguard David Allen in a Pro-I backfield in an attempt to improve the running game. Defensively, the Jackets built around linebackers. Ivey Stokes, Sheldon Fox, Duane Wood, and Lance Skelton earned starting spots in Curry's 3-4 defense. The entire starting secondary was back, including senior Lawrence Lowe.

The schedule was remarkably similar to last year's — murderous. By the end of the season, the vagaries of the poll system meant that Tech would face three number-one-ranked teams. It was Curry's misfortune to open his head coaching career against the national champion Alabama Crimson Tide, coached by forty-year veteran "Bear" Bryant. The young Jackets could be expected to make mistakes, and the Crimson Tide could be expected to take advantage of them.

It wasn't too surprising, therefore, when a bad punt snap went by Jeff Pierce at the Tech 27 and Alabama took only one play to capitalize. By halftime, the score was 19-0. Though behind, Tech was also benefitting from Alabama's early season sluggishness. The Jackets moved the ball almost as well as the Tide, but hurt themselves with mistakes in execution.

The game's final moments saw Ted Thurson stifle an Alabama drive with the season's first interception. For Tech, Ron Rice provided the only points with a 36 yard field goal. 'Bama retaliated with another touchdown, closing out a decade of Yellow Jacket opening losses 26-3.

TOP LEFT: Al Skaggs gets attention from Coach Larry Travis. TOP RIGHT: Mitch Ashley tries to beat the heat during spring training. BOTTOM LEFT: Kevin Schmidt, Wally Cawthorn, Marvin Dyett, and Ivey Stokes converge on an Alabama running back. BOTTOM CENTER: Quarterback Mike Kelley draws back into the pocket. The Junior quarterback set records for most passes completed, most passes attempted, most passing yardage, total yardage (season), and total offense (game) in 1979. BOTTOM RIGHT: Ken Taylor gets a hand on Alabama quarterback Don Jacobs as he tries to run the option.
Memphis State Succumbs for Engineers’ First Victory

Field goals by Johnny Smith and Ron Rice gave Tech an early advantage over Florida, and it seemed for a while that the Jackets would rebound from defeat. Then the heavens opened, a torrential rain swept Grant Field and an incredible display of lightning led the referees to delay the game until the furor subsided.

When play resumed, it became obvious that the Gators were better suited to the wet environment than were the Yellow Jackets. Tech ball carriers could not control the soaked pigskin and Florida changed the game’s momentum with a quick touchdown, then capitalized on four interceptions and two fumbles to seal the Jackets’ fate.

The only sort of excitement the Tech offense generated came with Ronny Cone’s 60 yard TD run down the left sideline. Missing the two-point conversion left the score 45-12, and that’s the way the scoreboard read until the clock ran out.

Victory finally came to Tech disguised as a Memphis State Tiger, but it did not come easily. It was difficult keeping up with the ball in the early going as the Tigers coughed up three and the Jackets handed over two before halftime. The Jackets managed to capitalize on two of the MSU fumbles, including Kelly’s first TD pass of the season, a fifteen yarder to Leon Chadwick. Tech kept a 14-0 lead until the fourth quarter, when Johnny Smith expanded it to 17-0.

The defense came within one play of a shutout, despite having three of the four starting linebackers sidelined with injuries. The play was set up when MSU fell on a Tech fumble. Breaking away on the next snap, a Tiger scammed down the sideline for a 76 yard touchdown. The two point conversion narrowed the winning margin to 17-8. This first victory may not have been elegant, but it was a win; yet no one dreamed it would be Tech’s only win.

LEFT: Marvin Dyett falls on one of Memphis State’s five fumbles. State’s Tory Wiley grabs for the mishandled pivot. FAR LEFT BELOW: Memphis State’s Stanley Adams forces quarterback Mike Kelley out of the pocket. Fullback Ronny Cone drops back to lend a block. CENTER BELOW: Florida’s Gordon Pleasants makes a vain attempt to stop Ronny Cone’s 60-yard touchdown sprint. This was Cone’s longest run from scrimmage all year. BELOW: Freshman Robert Jaracz proved a pleasant surprise at outside linebacker. Gator Curt Garrett goes down here for a three-yard loss.
Frustration Dominates Mid-Season

Tech was hit by a Tar Heel steamroller as they traveled to Chapel Hill to take on the fourth-ranked University of North Carolina. Between quarterback Rod Elkins and tailback "Famous Amos" Lawrence, the Heels ran up 536 yards total offense on the Tech defense.

Tech's offense wasn't having any better luck against a Carolina defense whose first unit hadn't allowed a touchdown in four games. The Jackets didn't cross midfield until late in the fourth quarter and never even managed a field goal attempt. Coach Curry summed up the 33-0 loss by remarking that "There is very little positive to say about our game against North Carolina." Indeed, the best that could be said was that three interceptions upped the Jacket total to nine on the year.

Despite crippling injuries to the backfield, Tech didn't give Tennessee's Volunteers an easy victory. Mike Kelley went down with a bruised shoulder early in the game, but the team was close enough for Ted Peeples and David Allen to easily pick up the seven points. Allen was injured next, then Ronnie Cone soon followed him to the locker room. With the starting backfield out, lots of young players were having to do their best to hang on. Just surviving was an accomplishment, as the defense tenaciously stood fast in hopes the offense could win in the last gasp. Tied 10-10 going into the last quarter, it looked like Tech might actually be within striking distance of its second triumph. Unfortunately, it was the Volunteers who put on the final surge to win 23-10 as the clock wound down.

After weeks of frustrating efforts and sporting a 1-4 record, the Yellow Jackets went to Jordan-Hare Stadium to meet a troubled Auburn team. Tiger head coach Doug Barfield was facing severe alumni criticism as his team suffered through a lackluster early season.

During the first half, Tech looked as though it had finally absorbed the lessons of earlier games. Senior Ted Peeples made his first collegiate start, replacing the injured Mike Kelly, and defied expectations with an outstanding performance, gaining 177 yards on completions. The Jackets moved the ball with authority, executed crisply, and managed to contain Auburn tailback James Brooks very effectively.

Trailing by seven in the final quarter, Peeples brought the Jackets downfield, reviving Bobby Dodd's style old razzle-dazzle with a flea-flicker pass to tie the game at 14-14.

Later, though, Peeples forced a pass that slipped through Jack Westbrook's hands and landed in those of an Auburn defender. Capitalizing on that Tech mistake, Auburn kicked what proved to be the game-winning field goal, giving the Turkey Buzzards a 17-14 win.
Tech alumni made their traditional Homecoming pilgrimage to Grant Field, anxious to see their alma mater's new coach in action. Curry's first year wasn't going too well, with his team sporting a dismal 1-5 record, but everyone wanted a look at the man who was so optimistic about the Jacket's future.

Ted Peebles found himself back at the helm of the Yellow Jackets, since Mike Kelley was still out with a shoulder injury. He didn't have the same success that marked his efforts in the Auburn game, completing only one pass while Tulane was running up a 17-0 halftime lead.

To try and generate momentum, Curry went with freshman Stu Rogers. In the fourth quarter, he brought the team alive by directing one long drive, then he launched a 73-yard aerial to Marlon Heggs for Tech's second score. Tulane then hammered down the lid with a final touchdown to dash hopes for a victory.

Despite the 31-14 loss, Rogers was named the ACC Rookie of the Week for his outstanding play. The rookies were showing plenty of promise as they filled in for the growing in numbers of injured starters. But they couldn't pull off a win and the Jackets' record went to 1-6.

RIGHT: Mark Sheffield and Ken Taylor separate Tulane receiver Nolan Franz from the ball. ABOVE RIGHT: Lawrence Lowe and Ken Taylor go for an end-zone interception. BELOW: Leon Chadwick brings in Stuart Rogers' twenty-two yard pass. BELOW RIGHT: Rodney Holman hears Ted Thurson's footsteps as the Tech cornerback lines up the tackle. FAR LOWER RIGHT: Coaches assist Duane Wood from the field. Injuries were one of Tech's biggest problems all year. EXTREME LOWER RIGHT: Reggie Reginelli almost disappears under Mark Sheffield, Lance Skelton and Marvin Dyett.
Ramblin' Reck Rolls Over Notre Dame in 3-3 Upset

Tech had a bad first half at Duke, falling behind 17-0 after 30 minutes. The defense provided the only memorable play on Ken Taylor's partial block of a field goal attempt.

The second half was a wholly different ball game. Lawrence Lowe hauled in an interception at the Tech 31 which set up a Johnny Smith field goal. Stu Rogers engineered a 45 yard drive that ended in another field goal. Ronnie Cone dove two yards for a touchdown to cut Duke's lead to five, but the Tech momentum ran out as the two point try went down in a quarterback sack.

Even though the defense had held the Blue Devils scoreless in the last half, the game ended in a 17-12 Duke win.

The long series of football games between Georgia Tech and the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame has had few fond memories for Jacket fans. This year, the disparity between the two teams was, if anything, more pronounced. The Irish came to Atlanta undefeated, untied and expecting to solidify their hold on the nation's top spot by thrashing the Jackets.

But Irish coach Dan Devine hadn't counted on either Tech defensive coordinator Ken Blair or freshman walk-on Ken Whisenhunt. Blair created an absolutely masterful defensive scheme for the game, one that predicted and negated every idea the Notre Dame offense could think up. No matter where the Irish went, they were met by a swarming horde of Tech-men and completely shut down.

Curry gave Whisenhunt a call after Mike Kelley's shoulder was injured again. Whisenhunt had never taken a collegiate snap, but he completely justified Curry's choice with a veteran's poise.

The game was a defensive masterpiece, as was shown by the final score. Tech led most of the game on a Smith field goal, while Notre Dame finally struggled even on Harry Oliver's three-pointer.

The final minutes were a melange of stricken Irishmen watching the clock tick off their last seconds at the top, and a victory ride for Coach Curry to thank a delirious student section for its support. The game's important result came when both polls dropped the Irish from number one and elevated Tech's hated rival, the Georgia Bulldogs, to the top.

That confrontation was still three weeks away...

After the stunning upset against Notre Dame, the Navy game was something of a disappointment. Cold, rainy weather kept many fans at home and left Grant Field emptier than it had been since the 1930's. The emotional drain of the week before, combined with the lack of support, had to hurt the Jackets' spirit. It was no wonder, then, that history repeated the '76 sequence where Tech beat the Irish and lost to Navy. The Middies came in and literally ran over the Jackets 19-8. Tech never crossed midfield until four minutes into the fourth quarter, and only scored with forty-eight seconds left in the game.

TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Freshman free-safety Carey Colquitt bats down a pass. David Allen takes the Navy kick-off. BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: Glen Ethridge leans for the two point conversion. Freshman walk-on Ken Whisenhunt leads Tech's scoring drive to set up a field goal against Notre Dame. Marlon Heggs makes the reception, but comes down out of bounds.
Jacket’s Late Surge Falls Short

Going into the final game of the regular season ranked number one and within reach of their first national championship, Georgia expected to have an easy victory over the Yellow Jackets. The Jackets went to Athens looking for an upset in the style of their tie with Notre Dame, and were ready to fight for it.

Mike Kelley was back in the lineup after seven weeks of recuperation for his shoulder. It took him a while to work the kinks out of his arm, while the Bulldogs rolled up a 17-0 halftime lead. In seven Tech possessions during the first half, the Jackets were only able to penetrate into Bulldog territory on three occasions. A twenty-five yard pass from Mike Kelly to David Allen to the Georgia 15 yard line was negated when Allen fumbled and Georgia recovered. On the other two Tech drives into Georgia territory, the Jackets could push their way no further than the forty-yard line of the Bulldogs. In spite of Kelly’s sore arm, the majority of Tech offensive yardage was gained through the air, with 150 of Tech’s 165 first half total yardage racked up in the passing category.

Although things looked bleak, the Jackets returned from the break inspired and scored on their first possession of the third quarter. The scoring see-sawed after that, with the teams trading touchdown for touchdown until the final score was 38-20, Georgia.

The difference in the game was Georgia’s Hershel Walker. The freshman running back was too much for the Tech defense to contain, and his three touchdowns accounted for the uneven score.

Mike Kelley set three school records, despite missing much of the season with a shoulder injury. His twenty-seven completed passes against Georgia was good for one record, while the 333 yards passing from that game gave him a record 4382 yards for his career. Kelley also broke the total offensive mark by 282 yards.

Tech’s kickers had a good year. Johnny Smith set records of 75 career PATs and 159 points scored by kicking, and Jeff Pierce boomed a record of 88 punts. Pierce’s average fell just one tenth yard short of another record after having to punt into an 18-mph wind at Georgia.

The Jacket pass defense was the best in the ACC, allowing only 123 average yards to their opponents. Ten different Jackets intercepted 19 passes, with Ted Thurson’s four leading the pack. The defense also broke a record, as Duane Wood made 171 tackles.

"It was a team to cheer, it was a team to love, this one which represented Georgia Tech in football for the season of 1934," was the way the ’35 BLUEPRINT described the last Jacket squad to go 1-9. The same was true of the 1-9-1 edition that took the field during the 1980 season. With one of the toughest schedules in the nation, no one expected great miracles from this Yellow Jacket squad. With a new, first-time head coach and an inexperienced, young team everyone knew it was going to be difficult from the beginning.

The year was not without accomplishments. Tech gave tough competition to the likes of three number one teams: Alabama, Notre Dame, and Georgia. Bill Curry brought respectability and enthusiasm to rebuilding the athletic program at Georgia Tech. Curry’s recruiting efforts paid off as several blue chip athletes signed to play football for the Jackets.

EXTREME LEFT, ABOVE: Quarterback Mike Kelley returned to the starting lineup in fine form, completing 27 of 46 passes for 333 yards. FAR LEFT, ABOVE: Tailback David Allen cracks the line and heads for the endzone. His 46 yard run was the longest the Bulldogs allowed all season. ABOVE LEFT: Head Coach Bill Curry watches his Jackets battle the top-ranked ’Dogs. ABOVE: Susan Reid and David Ray vent their feeling with this display of "The Good Word." BELOW LEFT: Herschel Walker, the sensational freshman, dives over the line for Georgia’s first score. The Bulldog tailback gained 205 yards, breaking Tony Dorsett’s freshman rushing record with 1616 yards during the season.
JUNIOR VARSITY FOOTBALL

Jackets Have Break Even Season

Playing an expanded schedule of four games, Tech's Baby Jackets split the outcomes of their games evenly between the win and loss columns.

In the season opener, fullback Eddie Fortier and tailback Rusty Bennett combined to lead the J.V.s toward 535 total offensive yards and a 57-0 blowout of Baptist College. The Jackets didn't have such an easy time against Fort Benning, though, as the Army Special Forces from Columbus defeated the team 21-13. The team from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, succumbed to an offensive barrage and left town on the short end of a 33-6 score.

Chuck Simmons and Andy Thomas shared quarterback duties when Stu Rogers and Ken Whisenhunt were promoted to the varsity squad. By season's end, injuries on the varsity level had claimed so many players that the team facing the Georgia Bullpups in the final game was composed almost entirely of walk-ons.

Regardless of the score, the real winner in the annual clash between the Tech and Georgia frosh teams was the Scottish Rite Hospital, the beneficiary of the proceeds from the contest. To encourage greater attendance, this year's duel was moved from the traditional Thanksgiving date to the Saturday before the holiday. One tradition was maintained, however, as members of both teams visited the children at the hospital before kickoff. Although Tech dropped the game, 24-6, the experience of participating in Tech's most famous philanthropic event made it a memorable day.

FAR LEFT ABOVE: Tailback Rusty Bennett scored five touchdowns while rushing for more than 200 yards. LEFT: Brian Allison and Tom Standfill chase down a ball knocked loose from a Georgia running-back. FAR LEFT BELOW: Eddie Fortier pushes back the Doughboys while Chuck Simmons holds for Tom Braatz. BELOW CENTER: Quarterback Chuck Simmons completed 23 of 42 passes for 247 yards and two TD's. BELOW RIGHT: Georgia's children benefit from the Georgia-Georgia Tech J.V. game, as all proceeds from the Shriners-sponsored event go to the Scottish Rite Hospital.
Young, Inexperienced Team Faces Difficult Season

The outlook for the 1980-81 basketball season was not optimistic for the Jackets. No seniors or starters returned from last year's team, and the four lettermen who did return brought with them a total average of only 7.5 points per game. Three transfers — Stu Lyon from Oregon, Bill Patterson from Western Texas, and Lee Goza from Alabama Christian Junior College — brought their experience to the team. But these additions alone were not enough to offset the overall youthfulness of this edition of the Yellow Jackets. In Coach Morrison's own words, the squad was as "green as gourds."

One big asset of the team was its speed. To capitalize on this fact, Coach Morrison decided to switch from last year's slow, deliberate attack to a "run and gun" offense. Another advantage was the team's height, the average height of the members was 6-7. Steve Neal was the tallest player ever to play at Tech, measuring an even seven feet. Coach Morrison expressed hope early in the season at being able to use this size as a powerful offensive weapon.

Once again, however, Tech was not to have an easy season in the "roundball conference." The Jackets would face three ACC opponents which were nationally ranked, including then-number one ranked Virginia. The inexperience of the team indicated that it would be a long, cold winter in Atlanta for the Yellow Jackets.

TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Freshman Dave Kowalski had to make the transition from inside to the wing. Stu Lyon out-jumps Duke's Kenny Dennard and Allen Williams. A transfer from the University of Oregon, Lyon was the most experienced player on the Yellow Jacket squad. Head Coach Dwane Morrison refines his game plan at court-side as he begins his eighth season at Tech. BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: George Thomas, the leading scorer among the returners, makes a one-handed jump shot in front of Mike Tisson and Gene Banks. Greg Wilson's hook arches toward the basket as Dave Cole runs into the lane to assist. Dave Kowalski turns to avoid Clarke Bynum and Chris Dodds during the Jacket's only game played at the Omni.
Although the Jackets were fortunate enough to have their first seven games at home, their season opener was no pushover. Western Carolina was the top-rated team in the Southern Conference, and didn't hold anything back. After having trailed by as much as 18 points in the second half, the Jackets couldn't come any closer than eleven and lost 88-77.

Two wins in a row followed the opening loss, with Tech trampling Flagler 87-59 and pushing by Sewanee 45-42. The Jackets led Flagler by up to 34 points, with George Thomas' 17 points pacing the team. Sewanee went into a stall game with a one point lead in the first half, but after a fifteen foot shot by Thomas Tech led until their 45-42 victory.

The winning streak ended when Georgia came to the Coliseum. Lee Goza, a former UGA player, led Tech with 14 points. The Jackets couldn't keep up after the first five minutes, however, and dropped the game 55-38. The loss seemed to knock the Engineers off track, as they had a hard time defeating Presbyterian College, then suffered a loss to Wofford College. More bad luck followed the team to their ACC opener, where Maryland dragged out a 66-55 win. At the Gator Bowl tournament, Purdue and Jacksonville extended the losing streak to five games.

TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Fred Hall drives under the net against Clemson. George Thomas lead the team with 42 steals. BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: Greg Wilson scores in the victory over Flagler. Dave Kowalski dribbles down court against Georgia.
Tech Moves to Omni for ACC Match Against Clemson

The Jackets needed to snap a losing streak, but a trip to Athens failed to produce the necessary victory. Even though the Engineers made a valiant effort to avenge their earlier loss to Georgia, the event was a repeat performance. Stu Lyon sunk eight of nine shots and Lee Goza put in thirteen points, but UGA's Dominique Wilkins topped them with 31 points. That was almost half of Georgia's total in the 65-51 Tech loss. The next weekend the Jackets didn't fare any better, as Wake Forest handed them their second ACC loss.

The Clemson game marked Tech's first visit to the Omni. It was one of the season's best games, as the Jackets never let the Tigers pull far ahead. However, turnovers hurt the Jacket effort and were a major factor in Clemson's 65-54 win.

The Engineers faced Newberry College at home, their first game at the Coliseum in weeks. The 77-70 win gave Tech fans hope for the rest of the season. The fans soon found out that this triumph would be the last victory the Jackets would have.

TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Dave Cole jumps to shoot over a Tar Heel. Greg Wilson averaged 40.7% from the floor. Fred Hall had the team's highest average, 12.2 points per game. BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: Stu Lyon drives his way around a Wake Forest Deacon. Steve Shaw strains to keep the ball away from North Carolina's Al Wood. Although Tech is even with Georgia on this jumpball, the score favored the Bulldogs.
Tech Men Encounter Spirit Crushing Defeats

The season ended dismally for Tech. Following the win over Newberry the Jackets faced all seven ACC opponents, one after the other, for a spirit-crushing string of defeats. The worst was a forty point blowout at the hands of North Carolina; the best was an excellent contest with Maryland that left Tech down by eight. After being humiliated by Baptist College 74-51, the Jackets dropped three more ACC games. Not having won a conference game during the regular season, they had to face number one seed Virginia at the ACC Tournament.

The team met other troubles before the tournament, however. Dwane Morrison was under fire as being responsible for the Jackets' string of misfortunes, especially for ineffective recruiting. He resigned under pressure, two days before the tournament began. Morrison ended his eighth season at Tech with a record of 91-122, after the fourth-ranked Cavaliers ran over the Jackets 76-47.

TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Dave Cole's hook helped make the Maryland game one of the season's best. Lee Goza led the team with 14 blocked shots. Steve Shaw drives toward the lane. BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: Opponents sometimes had a hard time getting past guard Stu Lyon. North Carolina gave the Jackets their worst drumming of the season, but Dave Kowalski is determined not to give up.
Lady Jackets Season Hindered by Multiple Injuries

The Lady Jackets entered the '81 season with a new coach and a lot of ambition. Benny Dees assumed the head coach's position after four years as assistant men's coach. With the leadership of seniors and team co-captains Jamie Posey and Karen Rainwater the team aimed to improve last year's two win record.

Tech started out competitively by winning two of their first three games. However they faced stiff opposition and managed only an 8-19 season record. Wake Forest fell 78-62 at midseason for the only ACC victory.

Contributing to Tech's difficulties were knee injuries to key players, including Mary Rucker and Tina Blalock, who were averaging 13.6 and 12.7 points per game, respectively. Blalock appeared in only six games before she was injured for the remainder of the season. Both were the team's top scorer when they left the lineup.

The end of the season was brightened when Tech defeated Furman 83-54, then traveled to Mercer in Macon and avenged an earlier loss. The girls won 79-77 with an exciting buzzer shot by Kate Brandt.
First Full Scholarships Awarded

The state of women's sports at Tech took a big step forward this year when Tech's first full scholarship female athletes joined the ranks of the Lady Jackets. Kate Brandt and Tina Blalock proved themselves to be very valuable to the team as Brandt led all scorers with 346 points, and Blalock shot over fifty percent from the floor before being injured early in the season.

After spending fall quarter at Auburn, LeeAnn Woodhull transferred back to Tech to give Teresa Lopez help on the boards. Both women completed the season with over 200 rebounds. Woodhull also aided on offense as she put in almost 14 points per game. Team leaders included Karen Rainwater with 96 assists, and Teresa Lopez with 40 steals and 10 points per game. Brandt led in the steals department as she paced the team with 44 on the season. Throughout the season, five players — Woodhull, Rucker, Brandt, Blalock, and Lopez — averaged into double figures.

The ACC and the Georgia Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women Tournament witnessed an abrupt end to the Lady Jacket's second season in Division I competition. Their appearances in both tournaments were cut short in the first round by Virginia (61-49) and Georgia (89-70) respectively.

In the end, Coach Dees spoke of the season as, "a year to gain respect." With eleven of thirteen players returning for the upcoming season, the Lady Jackets expect to continue along the path of constant improvement with the goal being an even more respectable '82 season.

TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Karen Rainwater, co-captain, led the Lady Jackets with 96 assists for the season. Mary Grambruno puts it up for two in the Jacket victory over Mercer University. BOTTOM: Guard Kate Brandt led the Lady Jackets in the total scoring category, amassing 346 points during the course of the season.
A complete ACC schedule brought the excitement and intensity of conference competition to Georgia Tech baseball. The entire 1979 pitching staff returned to give an otherwise young team a hopeful foundation for success. That base was complemented by the return of All-American first baseman Tommy Thompson. In 1979 play, Thompson led the nation in RBIs and was fifth in homeruns.

The season was typified by outstanding individual performances. First baseman Thompson re-wrote the Tech record books with career totals of 112 RBIs and 30 homeruns. He was voted the Minor Sports Athlete of the year for his efforts. Meanwhile, freshman second baseman Gary Newson led the Jackets with eight round-trippers for the season. Both men received All-ACC honors.

*TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT:* Third baseman Rick Lockwood maintained the Jacket's second best batting average, .304. Second baseman Gary Newsom was named All-ACC. Tommy Thompson was named Minor Sports Athlete of the Year. Outfielder Larry Maurer tries to beat the throw back to first. *BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT:* Tech's batters averaged .266. Eric Perry had a season earned-run average of 5.53.
BASEBALL

Thompson Named "Minor Sports Athlete of the Year"
In spite of these high points, the season was somewhat disappointing. The pitching staff completed the season with an earned run average of 7.56. A tough schedule forced the Jackets to mature against some very unforgiving opponents. A 5-9 mid-season mark proved to be an ominous indication of the final season outcome, as a seven game losing streak was capped by an additional loss in the opening round of the ACC Championship Tourney.

The tourney loss was especially disheartening in light of three victories against ACC competition during a single week of the regular season. The Jackets took both games of a double header with North Carolina State after falling behind by four runs early in both games. Excitement intensified with a 12-10 decision over Clemson to cap the third victory against the ACC in five days.

The season did not end on a completely negative note, as Coach Luck's 300th career victory came during the course of his 19th season of Tech baseball. Ending the season with 306 wins, this milestone gave Coach Luck more career victories than any coach in Tech sports history.

**TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT:** Rick Lockwood had a .852 fielding average as third baseman. Larry Maurer slides under the tag to steal second base. Gary Newsom throws to first. Jim Luck passed the three hundred mark with 306 wins. **BOTTOM:** Steve Watts jumps to catch a high shot to second.
Coach Luck Marks Three Hundredth Career Victory
Homer Rice Brings ACC Experience to Top Tech Post

When then Athletic Director Doug Weaver departed for the A.D. slot at his alma mater, the search was on for an experienced and innovative person who could guide and direct Tech out of one of the lower points in her sports history. A head football coach had just been fired and a new one hired. The long-awaited and promised athletic complex was nearing reality, yet the first yard of concrete had not even been poured. So close and yet so far.

Into this vacancy stepped Homer Rice. A quick glance down his list of accomplishments yielded an impressive summary of a life-time of accomplishments: former head football coach for the Cincinnati Bengals, former head football coach for both Rice University and the University of Cincinnati, a prep coaching record including seven Coach-of-the-Year awards and a 50-game winning streak, Carcimichael Cup winner as Athletic Director at North Carolina for the best overall sports program in the ACC, a listing in Who's Who in America, and author of numerous publications.

And so, in Spring 1980 Homer Rice came to Georgia Tech as Athletic Director, to mold Tech's athletic program into one resembling the "Golden Years."

And what does Homer Rice see in the future of athletics at Georgia Tech? His comments on this subject, and more, follow.

"The long range plan for Georgia Tech athletics is to become competitive within the Atlantic Coast Conference. The conference, at this moment, is very strong. We have a long way to go, but with the direction we have taken and the commitment we have made, we can get there."

In preparing for the future, the athletic association has been taking some positive steps. Rice comments on these actions when he notes,

"A giant step was taken when Georgia Tech accepted the responsibility of joining the Atlantic Coast Conference. When an institution takes this step, it is accepting responsibility to be competitive within that conference, and it also represents a commitment that Georgia Tech wants a broad, comprehensive sports program.

"I believe Georgia Tech, in time, will have a competitive, viable sports program. There have been numerous changes that indicate Georgia Tech has taken the right approach and direction towards succeeding within its athletic programs. I can list several, such as: the hiring of Bill Curry as head football coach, the campaign to raise six million dollars to build a new athletic center, the dedication of the new Bortell Tennis Center, a change in the charter of the Alexander/Tharpe Scholarship Fund to increase the giving from its members and provide funds for capital improvements, the implementation of the student athletic support fee to maintain a solid non-revenue sports program for both men and women, the creation of the Director of Marketing and Promotions position, and pursuit of a strong basketball program.

As a former athletic director at an ACC school, Rice speculates on Tech's ability to be competitive.

"Georgia Tech's ability to compete, effectively, in the Atlantic Coast Conference will take some time — perhaps two, three, or four years before the results are noticed. Our football will qualify, through scheduling, for the championship in 1983. I believe — very strongly — in 1984 and 1985 Georgia Tech will become highly competitive within the Atlantic Coast Conference in football. Basketball may take as many as four or five years to really see the benefits.

"It will be difficult for all of our non-revenue sports to become competitive. But, hopefully, we can select two or three and give them more help in order to have a few teams competitive in that area.

"It will be fun watching the program develop, and it will certainly be well worth all our efforts to bring it about."

Continuing along the theme of the "competitive spirit", Rice gives his thoughts on the philosophy of winning.

"In competitive athletics, winning is important — that's why you play the game. Winning is important to everyone — to the player, to the coach, to the student body, to the alumni, and to the fans. It brings about much satisfaction, and that's what we prepare for — to win. However, losing teaches us a tremendous lesson. We learn to take a licking, bounce back, and go after the win. Naturally, we win some and lose some. But the important thing is that we have the will to win and direct our forces to that end."

Recruiting for an engineering school is not always easy. Coach Rice expresses his views on this situation when he notes.

"I do not believe the 'academics versus athletics' issue should be detrimental to our plans, because we want to maintain the high principles in academic standing that Georgia Tech represents. In this way, we will have an outstanding, quality program whereby we recruit that type of student athlete that will produce outstanding Tech graduates who will become successful in their careers ahead."

In the past year, a mandatory student athletic support fee was instituted. Rice comments on this fee.

"Throughout the years, I have watched the development of athletic programs regarding finances. At one time, a football and/or basketball program could support the entire athletic program. As costs continued to rise, it then became apparent that more funds were needed. That's when programs began raising funds from its alumni and friends to support its scholarship program and capital improvements. Spiraling costs continued upwards, and programs throughout the country were running high deficits. It was then necessary to implement a student fee to pay for the so-called minor sports that do not produce income. Also, about this time, women's athletic's programs came into the picture, increasing the cost even more.

"Georgia Tech was late starting with its fund-raising capabilities and is now many years behind other schools in implementing a support fee. At this point, it has become necessary to implement a student fee or drop several of our non-income producing sports, which — in turn — would hold back our women's programs."

Homer Rice / 329
Although cheerleaders have been making their appearance on Grant Field since the earliest football seasons, this year's squad managed to blend the traditional aspects of cheerleading with innovative ideas. With Bill Curry making his coaching debut and a new head at the Athletic Association, the cheerleaders attempted to convey the "New Tech Spirit" to the student body.

"Buzz," a six foot tall Yellow Jacket, was introduced to the student body at the Florida game and promptly joined the cheerleaders on the sidelines for typical mascot antics. The cheerleaders also brought back an old tradition in a new form: the spelling out of "Tech" during pre-game festivities. A new twist was added, however, as the squad arranged their bodies on the fifty-yard line in the formation of the letters. Additional cheers, both serious and not, were introduced — including the infamous "Go Bananas."

("'Lean to the left; lean to the right; peel your banana and — uh — take a bite.'")

As always, the cheerleaders were active at pep rallies and parades. The squad traveled to every away game to cheer the Jackets. The members competed in the national cheerleading competition on CBS television.

Members of the squad are chosen at annual tryouts each spring. Thirteen students are chosen (six women and seven men) including two alternatives.

TOP: Steve Jensen asks Tech fans "What 'a ya' have?" BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: A Shriner clown joins the cheerleaders on the 'Reck before the annual Georgia-Georgia Tech J.V. game for charity. Tech's new mascot was Richie Bland. Senior Elaine Baker awaits the kick-off of the Tennessee game.