Beyond the White and Gold
Bad seats? Too damn bad

By Kimberly Rieck
Sports Editor

Recently the Atlanta-Journal Constitution published two articles on Georgia and other Southeastern Conference schools uproar over their ticket allotments at rival schools. The schools are crying foul over what they claim to be unfair seating practices. My first instinct when I read the June 13 article on Georgia fans being miffed about being given “nosebleed seats” at Tech was to laugh. At last year’s Georgia game, I sat with most of the Tech fans in the very upper deck of Sanford Stadium. Did I whine or call the AJC? No because I understand Georgia doesn’t want their team seeing anything but red and black while they’re on the field. Sure all but 785 of Georgia’s 8,500 tickets are not in the upper deck, but the upper deck of our newly expanded stadium is a helluva lot closer than most visitor’s tickets at Sanford Stadium. So where was Tech’s pity party in the AJC last year?

Poor Scott McLaren. He’s made out to be a villain in the article when really he’s just doing his job. We desperately need a home field advantage which we haven’t had at many of our big games. Florida State’s vantage which we haven’t had at Tech’s top assistant, Earleywine helped lead Georgia Tech to its two most successful seasons ever. The past two seasons have seen the Jackets make its two first NCAA Tournament appearances and capture the school’s first ACC title in softball in 2002. The team won 90 games the last two years, including 52 wins in 2002, a school record. In 2002, the team came within one game of reaching the Women’s College World Series.

As an assistant coach, he worked with the Jackets’ batters and infielders and coached first base. After batting .213 as a team before his arrival, the team average rose to .263 in his first year. Individually, shortstop Tara Knudson tied the ACC season record with 16 home runs. Knudson lead the quad with a .374 average and the ACC in home runs in the spring with 13. Additionally, catcher Lindsay Wood set a conference mark with 27 doubles.

Earleywine’s previous coaching experience includes three seasons as head baseball coach at Westminster College, an NCAA Division III program and his alma mater. At Westminster, Earleywine had a 65-44 record. He also spent three years as an assistant coach at Westminster and one year as an assistant at Texas A&M Corpus Christi.

Besides coaching, Earleywine has been a standout in major men’s fastpitch softball. He was a member of the USA men’s fastpitch team in 1998-99 and 2002-03. He earned a gold medal at the 2002 Pan Am Qualifier. Earleywine is also a six-time All America and was an All World selection in 1999 by the International Softball Congress.

Earleywine named interim coach

By Kimberly Rieck
Sports Editor

Earleywine, an assistant coach on the Georgia Tech softball team for the past two seasons, has been named the interim head softball coach. Kate Madden resigned after five years as head coach to pursue other interests. Madden had compiled a record of 161-143 in five seasons and was the ACC coach of the year in 2002. She was also the program’s first full-time assistant coach before she became head coach.

During the past two years as Tech’s top assistant, Earleywine helped lead Georgia Tech to its two most successful seasons ever. The past two seasons have seen the Jackets make its two first NCAA Tournament appearances and capture the school’s first ACC title in softball in 2002. The team won 90 games the last two years, including 52 wins in 2002, a school record. In 2002, the team came within one game of reaching the Women’s College World Series.

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**Expansion**

From page 20

Nina Barlin  
Senior  
Point Guard

Named one of Atlanta’s “50 Most Beautiful People” by Jezebel Magazine, Barlin has made her mark at point guard. During her career, she has earned All-ACC honors in 2002 even though she had missed 12 games with a knee injury at the end of the year.

A native of Sweden, Barlin is just the second internationally-born women’s basketball player for the Jackets. She has been a member of the Swedish National Team and the all-star team at the European World Championships. At Tech, she majors in international affairs.

“**The ACC is stronger today than yesterday and may well be at its strongest point in its history**”

John Swofford  
ACC Commissioner

At this year’s NCAA Championship, Nicholas Thompson closed out the season in great fashion by playing the final 36 holes in 2-under-par and finishing in a tie for 12th place. He earned All-America honors for the second straight year for his performance. In addition, he was also named to the Golf Coaches Association of America All-America teams.

In high school, Thompson was a member of the U.S. Izzo Cup team and the East Canon Cup Team. He has reached the semifinals of the AJGA Polo Golf Junior Classic and qualified for the U.S. Amateur at Pebble Beach. Hailing from Coral Springs, Florida, Thompson majors in management at Tech.

**Freshman Issue**

**coming August 22**

**faces in the crowd**

**Damarius Bilbo**  
RS Sophomore  
Quarterback

Nicknamed D-Bo, he displayed his big-play ability and strong arm on more than one occasion on the field. At the Wake Forest game, he connected with Kerry Watkins for a 69-yard touchdown pass. This season he’s competing for the starting spot.

In high school, Bilbo was the Dick Burkus High School Player of the Year. He was the Mississippi Player of the Year by USA Today and Gatorade after leading his team to the state title. In addition, he was an all-state baseball player who was drafted by the Milwaukee Brewers as a pitcher.

**Nick Thompson**  
Sophomore  
Golf

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**John Swofford**  
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Expansion - that either the NCAA must overturn its rule or the ACC must add a 12th team. The $10 million in profits that would accrue from this match would provide more than half the amount needed to ensure that this 11-team setup will be as profitable as the former 9-team setup.

However, the ACC has no plans at the moment to add another team. “We’re not in any rush at this point. We think we have got two great new members and we need a little time to bring them into the fold and get going with our two new members before we jump to any other conclusions,” said Wayne Clough, Institute President, at the press conference.

On the scheduling front, the new conference intends to model its format on the Big 10, where each team annually plays one rival and seven non-conference opponents. This will allow, since Miami and VT already have annual ACC rivals in Florida State and Virginia.

Nonetheless, everyone seems to be excited at the prospect of a new ACC. The leaders of each of the existing and incoming schools expressed their excitement, as did Georgia Tech football coach Chan Gailey.

“We have added two very strong football schools, and when you do that, you make it a stronger football conference. We should do well in football because of it, we should do well at the gate because of it, we should do well in the television ratings because of it, and we should have a stronger program overall because of it,” said Gailey.

**Georgia Tech football coach Chan Gailey**
The Atlantic Coast Conference grew to 11 teams on Monday, June 30, as the University of Miami followed Virginia Tech in accepting an invitation to leave the Big East. The two programs will athletically join the ACC after paying a $1 million Big East exit fee and a $2 million entrance fee, possibly as soon as 2004.

"The ACC is stronger today than yesterday and may well be at its strongest point in its history," said ACC Commissioner John Swofford at the press conference where he announced that Miami and Virginia Tech will join the ACC. It was previously believed that Miami would join the ACC after paying a $1 million Big East exit fee, but the ACC's offer was extended to Virginia Tech.

The ACC's growth is the result of the league's decision to expand from 12 to 14 teams, with Miami and Virginia Tech completing the expansion. This move is expected to increase the ACC's revenue by $2.91 million a year, as the new contract means that Miami will earn a $1 million Big East exit fee and a $2 million entrance fee.

"The ACC is much different than it was when we started," said ACC Executive Director John Swofford. "We have a lot of new faces on the sidelines, and we're excited about the future." The ACC is expected to announce its new commissioner in the near future, with former ACC President John Swofford serving as interim commissioner. The ACC's expansion is expected to bring in additional revenue and enhance the league's positioning as a major player in college sports.

By John Scaduto
Contributing Writer

Hewitt signs on for 5 more years

By Clark Nelson
Contributing Writer

The Georgia Tech Athletic Department has announced that men's head basketball coach Paul Hewitt has received a new five-year contract, keeping him at Tech through the 2007-2008 season. Coach Hewitt has coached three seasons in the Thrillerdome while compiling a record of 48-44 (.527). In Hewitt's first season, the Jackets reached the NCAA Tournament and Hewitt was named the ACC Coach of the Year. He was also named District 5 Coach of the Year by the National Association of Basketball Coaches.

"I look forward to continuing to build the program. We're proud of what we've accomplished so far, but there's so much more to do," said Hewitt. So far he has had at least one player earn first- or second-team all-ACC honors each year. Alvin Jones was on the ACC first team in 2001, Tony Atkins was a second-team all-ACC player in 2002, and freshman Chris Bosh made the ACC's second team last season.

In his short time here, he has had two excellent recruiting classes. Bosh, by VT – in place of Syracuse and BC. The initial lawsuit filed by several Big East members cited the negative impact of expansion and accused the ACC of conspiracy. Even when it became clear that expansion would occur, the Big East still remained adamantly in curtailing the subtractions from its league. In a counteroffer led by Syracuse and Boston College, the conference tried to persuade Miami to stay by guaranteeing $45 million over five years, in addition to a travel supplement.

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