Tech drops second game of Georgia series

By Joseph Jeong
Contributing Writer

Georgia tied the season series one up against Tech when Bulldogs freshman Josh Morris hit the go-ahead homerun in the eighth inning off Tech’s Brian Burks. It was a game of missed opportunities for Tech as they left 13 men on base which included letting Georgia off the hook on three separate bases loaded situations. Bad fielding also contributed as the Jackets allowed UGA to score three unearned runs. The 6-5 loss dropped Tech to a 20-15 record while the visitors improved to 21-15.

The game started well for Tech, when first time starter Blake Wood pitched a 1-2-3 first inning, inducing three easy groundballs. Leadoff hitter, Eric Patterson walked and then produced a Ichiro-esque performance on the base paths as he stole two bases on consecutive pitches. He then scored easily on a wild pitch by Georgia’s starter Johnny Dobbs. Tech quickly found itself on top three with a sacrifice fly by Justin Holmes. Tech struck again when Georgia’s Josh McLaughlin couldn’t find the plate. Tech scored the first of its three runs in the fifth when Dobbs couldn’t find Dobbs. Tech struck again when Georgia’s Clint Sammons hit a two RBI double to right field, driving in two unearned runs and giving the visitors the lead. Hodges’ glove let him down again when another error allowed Sammons to score and extend Georgia’s lead to 3-1. Tech finally got out of the inning when catcher Mike Nickeas caught Kyle Keen stealing second.

In the third inning, Tech walked to a No. 22 ranking and most recently a win over No. 10 Alabama. With a stable workhorse in Reddick, this looks to be a special year for the softball team.

By Christopher Gooley / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

After defeating Georgia in Athens by one run last month, the Bulldogs came to Tech Wednesday night and defeated the Jackets by the same margin. The two rivals will meet again at Turner Field May 11.

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The auspicious start turned sour what turned out to be the game of disparity was unexpected. When asked about what is the best thing about being an athlete at Tech, it was a simple answer: the fans. Even though the field is not technically on campus and the softball tradition at Tech is not as rich as other sports, plenty of fans cheer on the team at every game.

In high school, Reddick was a vital part of four regional championships. All of this set the stage for her success with the Yellow Jackets. In her sophomore season, Reddick ranked second on the team with a .283 batting average and third with 53 hits. She also sported a stellar .984 fielding percentage and led the team with 14 steals in 16 attempts.

Her shining moment came in the ACC Championships of that year. She batted .571 and was named the ACC Championships of that year. Her shining moment came in the ACC Championships of that year. She batted .571 and was named the ACC’s glove let him down again when another error allowed Sammons to score and extend Georgia’s lead to 3-1. Tech finally got out of the inning when catcher Mike Nickeas caught Kyle Keen stealing second.

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Freshman Ashley Kidd won the 400-meter title at the Indoor ACC Championships and has the top times in the ACC in the 200 and 400 this outdoor season at 23.62 and 52.70, respectively. She will be looking to continue her success at the Outdoor Championships this weekend. Also, look for Brandy Depland’s good start to carry over to this weekend’s event. She has the team’s top marks in the long and triple jump, and her triple jump mark of over 42 feet is tops in the ACC this season.

Other athletes to watch for on the women’s side include Amari Rhett in the 100-meter dash, Dana Rogers in the 100-meter hurdles, Shanta Smith in the triple jump, and the women’s 4 x 100 relay team of Rogers, Ameca Williams, Adriane Lapley and Rhett.

The men’s team is also hoping to find themselves at the top of the ACC by the end of this weekend. “As always, we are looking forward to competing in the 2004 Outdoor Championships in Chapel Hill,” said men’s head coach Grover Hinsdale. “With a few exceptions, we are healthy and ready to go, and we look forward to a great competition.”

Montrell Person, who won an ACC title in the 60-meter hurdles during the indoor season, leads the men’s squad. He is currently No. 1 in the ACC in the 110-meter hurdles, and his time is a half-second better than the next best mark in the conference this season.

Seniors Brendan Mahoney and Michael Massey will be pursuing ACC crowns in the 800 meter and high jump, respectively. Mahoney has only been in one event so far this outdoor season, but currently holds the ACC indoor title in the 800. Massey holds the second best high jump in the ACC this year, and he is looking for his first title.

Marcus Canty, Holt McPherson and Jeb Ston are also expected to make major impacts in the Yellow Jackets’ push for the title this weekend. Canty is second in the javelin throw with a mark exceeding 218 feet, and McPherson is third in the long jump, flying just over 24 feet. Ston, a junior, broke the school record in the shot put, and he currently owns the third best toss in the ACC this year.
Get ready for Buzz, cheer tryouts

By Kimberly Rieck
Sports Editor

Tired of cheering from the sidelines for your favorite Tech sport? Next weekend, the Athletic Association is offering fans the chance to become a part of the action as it hosts the annual Buzz, cheerleading and dance team tryouts. Tryouts are open to all students, male and female.

As a member of the cheerleading squad, Buzz performs at all Tech football games both home and away, men’s and women’s basketball games, NCAA tournaments, bowl games, pep rallies and official Georgia Tech events such as the annual President’s Dinner. Buzz is also involved with charity events, sports conventions, photos and can also be hired for social events such as weddings and birthday parties.

Judges at the tryouts will look for very specific qualities in choosing potential mascots. “We’re looking for someone who is energetic, has good skills with the crowd, has good nonverbal communication, which is very difficult to do,” said Lauren Gryszkiewicz, head coach of the Georgia Tech cheerleading squad and coordinator for the Buzz mascots. “We look for pantomime and basically just energy.”

Another key requirement is strength and athleticism. “[The Buzz] is a lot like a Gold Gloves game where we score 52 points; they have to do pushups every time we score. Besides being strong, Buzz has to be able to balance academics and the requirements of the job. Buzz has to attend a weekly meeting, attend all home football games and keep track of many appointments.

Additionally, the mascots’ identities extend all home football games and other related events, while the white squad cheers for all home football games, women’s basketball games, a few volleyball games and related events.

Although most of the participants at the tryouts for the cheerleading squad will have cheered previously, experience may not always be necessary, although it is recommended. “Many of our guys in college have never done any cheerleading,” Gryszkiewicz said.

There will be a clinic April 22 and 23 at 6:30 p.m. in O’Keefe Gym, where students will be able to learn the routines necessary for the cheerleading and Buzz tryouts. April 24. The cheerleading portion will focus on standing tumbling, running tumbling, jumping and stunting, while Buzz tryouts will be a clinic April 22 at 6:30 pm. and 23 at 6:30 p.m. in O’Keefe Gym, where students will be able to learn the routines necessary for the cheerleading and Buzz tryouts. Buzz will begin April 24 at 10 a.m., 11 a.m. and 12 p.m. in O’Keefe Gym, where students will be able to learn the routines necessary for the cheerleading and Buzz tryouts. Buzz will begin April 24 at 10 a.m., 11 a.m. and 12 p.m. in O’Keefe Gym, where students will be able to learn the routines necessary for the cheerleading and Buzz tryouts.
Georgia Tech’s 2004 baseball season began with high expectations, really high expectations. High expectations, as in preseason rankings of No. 4 according to Collegiate Baseball and No. 5 per Baseball America. Tech was the unanimous selection to finish first in the loaded ACC. The hoopla was understandable.

The Jackets returned the core of its lineup from a 2003 team that finished 44-18 and won the ACC Tournament championship. What’s more, coach Danny Hall added yet another prized recruiting class. Micah Owings, a freshman All-American, was back as the Jackets’ No. 1 starting pitcher. All of the pieces were in place for a run to Omaha.

After a 6-0 start in which Tech outscored its opponents by a combined count of 61-17, things seemed just peachy, but then something odd happened: Tech stopped hitting. Tech stopped scoring, and started to lose…a lot.

The Jackets averaged just 4.1 runs per outing over its past 17 games. That ain’t a whole heckuva lot in the aluminum-laced world of college baseball. Tech went 3-9 during that stretch. Suddenly, the Jackets were sitting at 9-9. The team plummeted out of the national rankings faster than you can say, “Luke Schenscher has a posse.” Players, coaches and fans alike were scratching their heads.

Newsflash: things are better now. Tech will make the NCAA Tournament. They may even host a regional. Heck, they may be playing in June in Nebraska’s Rosenblatt Stadium. No, I’m not insane. The Joltin’ Jackets are starting to click on all cylinders. The bats have awoken, nay, erupted from a slumber. Tech is averaging 11.4 runs per outing over its past 17 games. The Jackets are 11-6 during that span, including woodshed routs over national powers Auburn, Miami, and North Carolina, as well as a good ole’ fashioned pasting of metropolis neighbor Georgia State.

The starting pitching has been solid for the most part. The bullpen has been shaky, but coach Danny Hall has addressed that issue: Micah Owings is now the Tech stopper. Brian Burks is the Friday starter, Andrew Kown the Saturday starter and freshman Lee Hyde is the Sunday starter. For those who don’t know, Hyde is pretty good. He tossed two no-hitters last year as a high school senior in Fayette County.

But the most lasting impact has been the one made by Owings out of the bullpen. Arguably, Owings is directly responsible for two Tech wins during the recent surge, and both were BIG wins. Owings came on in relief of Hyde versus Georgia on March 24 with the Jackets trailing 3-2 in the latter innings. He came on in relief of Kown versus North Carolina on April 10 with the Jackets trailing 4-2 in the late stages. Tech won both games: 4-3 in Athens, and 8-4 in Atlanta over the Tar Heels. Owings’ line in those two outings: 7.1 innings pitched, zero runs, 2-0 won-loss record. Me thinks he’s found his niche.

Make no mistake, however, Tech is winning with offense. The Jackets boast a team batting average of .324. Six of Tech’s nine regulars are batting over the .300 mark. A seventh, right fielder Clifton Remole, is at .299. Five of those six have averages over .325. A new hero steps up each and every game at the plate.

With 20 games remaining in the season, Tech sits at 20-15 and 4-5 in the ACC. Granted, things could be a lot better off, but it’s not where you start, it’s where you finish. The 2003 Jackets couldn’t finish, losing two straight in the regional to end the season. The 2004 Jackets are tougher. Such a fate will not haunt this team.

Rest assured, the streak will continue. Tech will lose some games over the next few weeks, but they’ll win much more than they lose. Right now, all the pieces are in place. Once again, Tech is playing like they expect to win.
Gailey strengthens offense and defense teams at spring drills

By Clark Nelson
Contributing Writer

Tech’s spring football practice is winding down, and the team is looking very different from when it began practicing a couple of weeks ago. Most of the changes have occurred in the linebacking corps and on the offensive line.

Gerris Wilkinson, who moved back to his natural position of linebacker, has been shifted from an outside position to an inside position.

Chris Reis recently moved from strong safety to outside linebacker position in hopes of getting on the field more this season.

Sophomore KaMichael Hall is starring at the other outside linebacker position as of now, after contributing mostly on special teams last season.

Last season, Reis had played a hybrid linebacker position in run-support and pass-rush situations, acting as a blitzer or a fifth defensive back. But the 210 pound junior will have an adjustment to make now as an every-down player.

"Usually at safety, you don’t take on any 350-pound linemen, so it’s a little tough in that aspect," Reis said.

Wilkinson should have easier time since he had to learn to shed blocks last year at defensive end.

Another area of change has been the offensive line. Senior Andy Tidwell-Neal takes over at center for the departed Hugh Reilly. Leon Robinson is starting at guard where Tidwell-Neal played last season.

With Nat Dorsey’s decision to apply for the NFL draft, a huge void will be left at the tackle position. Kyle Wallace has been switched from right to left tackle position, while Kenneth Johnson and Salih Besirevic are vying for Wallace’s former position.

Gailey said Besirevic has improved the most of anyone is spring practice.

Reggie Ball is coming off an ACC Rookie of the Year campaign, but is being pushed hard this spring by redshirt freshman Patrick Carter.

Carter was injured most of last season and dislocated a knee in February but has shown great athleticism in his limited spring action.

"He gives us so much at quarterback," said Head Coach Chan Gailey in the Atlanta Journal Constitution. "He gives us an opportunity to have an excellent athlete at the position."

In a spring scimmage, Ball threw for three touchdowns while Mark Logan threw for two and freshman Taylor Bennett threw one. Logan, who originally came to Tech as a quarterback, moved from wide receiver to quarterback when Carter injured his knee. Bennett enrolled for the spring semester and has shown promise for the future.

With Carter’s return, it is likely that Logan will be moved back to wide receiver. The coaches have introduced the shotgun setup this spring, which they hope will take better advantage of Ball’s all-around skills.

The coaches know what P.J. Daniels can do, so they have been taking a harder look at backups Chris Woods and Reshaun Grant. Woods took the opportunity to rush for 99 yards on five carries in an early spring scrimmage. Grant also ran well, rushing for 50 yards.

Nobody has emerged at wide receiver to start opposite of Nate Curry. Chris Dunlap, Damarius Bilbo, Leon Thomas and Xavier McGuire have all been getting reps. Bilbo and Dunlap have had the best spring of the group so far, but competition will still be wide open come fall.

The defensive backfield returns 3 starters from last season, including All-ACC safety James Butler, although Reuben Houston and Dennis Davis have been sidelined this spring with injuries. Sophomore Kenny Scott has impressed Gailey, but the Jackets have struggled to find a replacement on the other side of the field.

"We have to find another corner," Gailey said.

"We’re trying out just about everybody back there."

Butler has been tried at corner, but admits he is not fast enough to play there. Last season, cornerbacks Houston and Jonathan Cox played well enough in pass coverage to allow the safeties to help stop the run.

Both Houston and Davis should be ready to go it the fall.

Travis Bell has had a strong spring showing at place kicker, while walk-on David Smith and Andy Thompson have been competing at punter.

David Smith is a former track athlete at Tech.

"Travis Bell really stepped up today and kicked the ball well. He kicked the ball very well and solid the whole way. That’s been one of the biggest pluses for us all spring," Gailey said.

Scrimmages this spring have mirrored last season with the defense playing strong, while the offense has shown bright spots, but lacking consistency.

Tech will be concluding its spring football practice with an annual spring football game this Saturday at 10:30 a.m. at Bobby Dodd Stadium.
by the numbers

3

The number of no-hitters junior pitcher Jessica Sallinger has thrown this season after firing one against thirteenth-ranked Alabama on Tuesday. She recorded 10 strikeouts in the 1-0 victory, helping the No. 22-ranked Jackets improve to 35-11 on the year.

13.60

Junior Montrell Person’s time (in seconds) in the 110-meter hurdles during this season. The time currently ranks him No. 1 in the ACC, is a NCAA Region qualifying mark and is a half-second better than the next best time in the entire conference. He will be competing at the Outdoor ACC Championship today and tomorrow.

6’02.00”

Defending ACC Indoor high jump champion Chaunte Howard’s top mark for this outdoor season, which is the best in the ACC going into this weekend’s championships. Howard won the national championship in this height jump in the recent Indoor NCAA Championships.

15

The number of victories Tech’s men’s tennis team brings into the ACC tournament, against only 6 losses. They face Clemson, a team they beat 4-3 earlier this season, in the first round. The Jackets won the doubles point in that match; they are 13-0 when winning the doubles point this season.

Jackets aim for the gold at ACC meet

The No. 6 Jackets are on a mission this weekend to bring down the ACC’s best versus Clemson. Check out their chances. Page 29.

We got spirit! Do you?

If you’re energetic, love the Jackets and are tired of cheering from the sidelines, check out how you can become a part of the action. Page 29.

Watch out Tigers

The No. 6 Tigers are on a mission this weekend to bring down the ACC’s best versus Clemson. Check out their chances. Page 29.

Sports shorts

Tickets on sale for Tech-UGA game

Tickets for the annual Spring Baseball Classic are now on sale through Ticketmaster at www.ticketsmaster.com. The matchup between Georgia Tech and Georgia is a benefit game for Children’s Health. Admission tickets, priced at $10, are also good for a high school game prior to the Tech-UGA meeting.

Tech sports show premieres today

Wes Durham will co-host the new cable show Georgia Tech Sports Today, starting today at 12:30 p.m. The show will run on Fox Sports Net South Fridays at 12:30 p.m. and then again on Comcast/Charter Sports Southeast (CSS) Sundays at 7:30 p.m. The first of ten spring shows will feature “The Ultimate Coaches Corner” with head football coach Chan Gailey, basketball coach Paul Hewitt, baseball coach Danny Hall and golf coach Bruce Heppler.

Eveland, Mahoney highlight honors

All-America volleyball player Kele Eveland and track all-America Brendon Mahoney received the Georgia Tech Athletic Association’s highest honor, the Total Person Award, at the annual Yellow Jacket Celebration. Erin Voeltz, a senior softball pitcher, received the Robert Cup as Tech’s top senior student athlete, and Marvin Lewis received the Captain’s Captain Award presented by the Georgia Tech Lettermen’s Club. For a complete list of awards, see www.ramblinwreck.com.

Nyström leaves Tech for Sweden

Georgia Tech basketball player Jim Nyström has decided to withdraw from school and return to his home in Stockholm, Sweden Thursday to tend to family matters. Nyström plans to try out for a team in Europe and strives toward earning a spot on the Swedish national team.

Tennis teams vie for ACC glory

The No. 26 Georgia Tech men’s tennis team and the No. 39 women’s tennis team head to the Atlantic Coast Conference Championship this weekend. After completing the regular season with two non-conference wins last week, the men will face No. 45 Clemson today at 12 p.m. at the Millbrook Exchange. Tied with North Carolina, both 4-4 in the regular season, the women earned a fifth seed berth due to a recorded 5-2 loss to the Tar Heels.

on deck

Event Date
Cheerleaders on CBS 4/17 @ 2 p.m.
B vs. Washington 4/16/04
S vs. N.C. State 4/17/04
S vs. UNC 4/18/04
Baseball, Softball
For complete updated schedules, check out www.ramblinwreck.com.

Jacket's set the pace on and off field

Reddick sets the pace on and off field

By John Scalato

There are over 360,000 NCAA student-athletes—and darned if we could even get to know a small fraction of them. But one you should at least know a little about is Soraya Reddick. She is a senior outfielder for Tech’s softball team. While the statistics may not merit an overwhelming response, Reddick has been a mainstay for the team since her freshman season. She is consistently ranked in the top four of most of the team’s offensive categories, and her defense has been just as solid.

The business-like approach Reddick takes to the game enables her to handle the less glorious aspects—such as batting lead-off, diving and backing up in the outfield, and managing her way around the base paths in any way possible. But that is all old hat for the 5’5” Tampa native. Reddick has been doing this since age seven, when her father, Dennis Reddick, first introduced the game of softball to a young Soraya. He coached her up to the college level and is easily the most influential person in her life—on and off the field.

Mr. Reddick saw the promise of the first athlete and graduate of the family and has successfully instilled the passion for the game and get-it-done attitude that makes Soraya so valuable. He was also a major reason she ended up coming to Tech, even though she had been recruited by many of the Florida schools. He had always been a Tech fan, and she just took up the torch.

By Jamie Howell/STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

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www.ramblinwreck.com

On Track...page 28

Maintaining a spot among the team’s best in offense and defense categories, senior Soraya Reddick has provided invaluable support to the softball team. Reddick made last year’s all-tournament team.

By Stephen March/STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

SPORTS