

Senior Jon Babul sets pace for Yellow Jacket basketball

By Derek Haynes
Assistant Sports Editor

Darryl Strawberry was one. A player with so much talent, but so little drive. He could dominate a game.

Jon Babul is not one. He won't dominate a game. In fact, he may have never made an appearance on Sports Center in his career.

Sometimes a team's style of play is similar to a player on that team. The Yellow Jackets are Jon Babul.

Astute fans saw it on February 11. Against 6th ranked Virginia, Tech came together as a team. The Jackets had just come off an upset win over Maryland earlier in the week, and whispers of the NCAA Tournament could already be heard behind closed doors.

The Cavaliers came into the game with a strategy that seemed perfect. Contain Alvin Jones and watch Tony Akins, Shawn Fein, and Marvin Lewis on the outside.

Jones was on a stretch where he was averaging nearly 20 ppg. Akins poured in 28 against Maryland, and Fein and Lewis were two of the best long-range shooters in the ACC. Every time Jones got the ball, Babul's man would double team Jones. When Babul got the ball, Virginia dared Babul to shoot.



By Carrie Chin / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Senior Jon Babul's presence on the Jacket squad has helped the team both on and off the court.

Babul shot—and scored. “Earlier in my career I would have stopped shooting after that,” said Babul. “Now I realize I have time to make up for it later in the game.”

Babul hit his next shot. Then he hit a three. Then Virginia called a timeout. Babul would finish with 9 points in the game, right about his average in the ACC.

It doesn't take an engineer to figure out what went on in that timeout.

Virginia head coach Pete Gillen had just found out what Jacket coach Paul Hewitt already knew.

“It's tough for some people who watch the game casually to appreciate what he does for you,” said Hewitt.

Hewitt is right. Few people notice him. But in the season finale last Sunday against Clemson, it wasn't Alvin Jones or Shawn Fein that got the biggest ovation when he left the court. It was Babul. It took him five years to get noticed.

However, Babul is not the typical player that demands attention. He believes that if he works hard; life will take care of itself.

Just like his parents.

Jon's father Mike is in his 30th year teaching fifth grade; his mother Joan is a nurse. Jon, who has a twin brother named

Michael, always had a parent around.

“We made a decision not to put our sons through child care. Because of that, Joan would work the second shift at the hospital,” said Jon's father Mike.

Working the second shift is like studying for a test when your roommates going clubbing, but the dedication Babul's parents showed to their children shows in him. Both have gone on to play college basketball; both have copied their parents' work ethic.

Growing up, Jon and Mike Jr. were always close to a basketball. Their father was the Varsity Basketball Coach for North Attleboro High School in Massachusetts; the school Jon and Mike Jr. would later attend.

“They were in the gym when they were 2 years old,” said Mike Sr.

Their father remembers vividly one moment in particular after a YMCA League game. Mike Sr. had just finished buckling in the seven year olds, and was getting ready to leave. Jon started to speak.

The seven year old, with missing teeth and scrapes on his legs went on for several minutes about how he loved basketball. That hasn't changed yet.

“I'd like to play overseas if I get the chance, but if that doesn't work I'd like to coach or contin-

ue taking graduate degree courses,” said Babul.

The coaching aspect seems to fit Babul perfectly. On the court, the 6'7" forward rarely makes a mental mistake, but on the bench is where you really notice Babul. He takes pride in helping the younger players.

“Confidence is a big thing, and it is easy for the young players to lose it,” says Babul. “For example, Robert Brooks wasn't supposed to play a lot this season, and it's easy for a young guy to get down easily. I just try to talk to them since I've been there before.”

Babul, who still stays in contact with former Tech coach Bobby Cremens, will have plenty of contacts for finding a coaching job. He's already brought the subject up to Hewitt.

There are players you worry about in college basketball today. They are the players where basketball is their life and they don't really have anything else. Jon Babul, who has been bothered by injuries throughout his career, is not one of those.

He's not an All-ACC forward, but his work ethic and knowledge of the game surpass most on the Tech team.

After 5 years, Tech fans realize that too.

Many thanks to Jon Babul for his contributions to Tech basketball.

ACC from page 32

against Wake Forest this past Sunday. Senior Jaime Kruppa led the Jackets with 16 points to beat the Deacons by a score of 79-63 in her final home game. The impressive team victory was a good sendoff for a mediocre season.

Tech will have another chance to shine next year with Alex Stewart, Milli Martinez, Sonja Mallory, and Niesha Butler returning. Butler, the 1999 ACC rookie of the year shows great promise and we will lead the team in the coming years.

A respectful ACC Tournament is the first step to commanding the respect that many thought Tech deserved prior to the season.

Georgia Tech begins play in the ACC Tournament Friday against North Carolina (14-13, 7-9 ACC) Friday at 2 p.m.

Briefs from page 32

ups. Tech took the doubles point in both matchups, led by duo Roger Anderson and David Wright. The Jackets take on Georgia this Saturday at 1:00 p.m.

Softball hit twice at home by Troy State

Troy State (9-2) took Tech (6-6) in both games of last Saturday's double-header at Glenn Field. Erin Voeltz took the 2-1 loss in the first game. Tech's lone run came off a Tara Knudsen home run. Tech pitcher Tiffany Goodman took the loss in the second 4-0 shutout.

Sports Commentary

Cameron Indoor should serve as model for making Thrillerdome

*By Derek Haynes
Assistant Sports Editor*

The entire game I was kneed, kicked, spit on, and extremely cramped.

It was the best place I've ever seen a college basketball game. Duke University.

The place: Cameron Indoor Stadium. It is recognized as one of the top, if not the best place to watch a college basketball game. It is not because of luxury suites - it has none - or great courtside seats for prominent alumni - only students sit courtside - or a gigantic interior - it seats only 9,314. There is an atmosphere at this historic arena in Durham, North Carolina that is seen at few stadiums across the country.

Tiger Stadium in Detroit had it. Notre Dame football games have it. Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto had it. None of these places had anything spectacular; you won't see a place like them built again today. What made these places special was the atmosphere. It is the feeling that you aren't going to watch a sporting event, you are going to take place in a religious experience.

Alexander Memorial Coliseum will never be in the same echelon as Cameron Indoor Stadium, but it could come close. The Coliseum doesn't look like the gothic master piece that is as Cameron, but looks don't matter. Like Robin Williams, the Coliseum could

shine even beyond all the fuzz.

It would require only one small step - a step even Mini-Me could take. Put the students where they belong. Where they can see the sweat on the floor glisten when the players hit the floor, where they can listen in on a coach's profanity-laced tirade.

Put the students on the court. At Duke, the students completely surround the court in a special bleacher section. At Tech, the students completely surround an area about 30 feet wide in the middle of nowhere.

How would putting the fans that pay the least - actually nothing - in the best seats help Tech basketball? It'd make going to a game more than just watching basketball. Yes, let's bring on the favorite cliché; let's make it "more than a game."

First, the crowd would be able to have an effect on the game. About the only people the students can heckle now is the pep band; I haven't seen that happen too much since I've been covering basketball. I have not heard an opposing player say the Tech crowd had an effect on their play all season - Jacket head coach Paul Hewitt

called the Duke experience the way a college basketball game should be run. Departing senior Jon Babul has told me Cameron is his favorite place to play even as a visitor. The Coliseum can generate noise well; just think what it'd be like if the students surrounded the court.

Secondly, recruiting would receive a boost. Ask yourself, would you rather play in an arena where the fans didn't seem to care or an arena where if a Band-Aid is spotted on the floor, the entire student section screams for it to be swept off? Remember, we're dealing with young adults, just like us. We want

the fans, the ESPN highlights, the attention.

Third, attendance would increase not only in students but also in the general public. The students would be courtside, and would love to have those tickets. The general public would want to go to a game where they knew it was going to be loud and fun. If they wanted it quiet and boring; they could head down Techwood to Philips Arena. I fell asleep at a Hawks game last year. At the Coliseum, only a small percentage of

the public sits courtside and half the time they don't even show.

Finally, Tech students would realize how much the administration cares about the students. If the administration would boot the high-paying patrons from the courtside seats, Tech students would soften their cries that Tech is the most impersonal college in the south. It would be a small sign in at a school where the only contact we have with the administration is letters from the Bursar's office, and yellow envelopes under our car windshield wipers.

There are negatives. Former courtside patrons will be upset over losing their high-priced seat. Because students stand for the game, they couldn't have seats on the far side where the seats slope up gently. Presently, students could only be placed behind each basket where there is a drop off between the court and the general admission area. The present seats on the ends would have to be turned into bleachers so more students could be held there, which would also cost money.

The chances of students getting closer to the game drop with every Tech win.

As Tech continues to climb back to prominence, fans will buy the pricey tickets again.

Students will be forgotten. The Coliseum will die as a basketball arena - nothing more.

It starts, and ends, with the students.

"Put the students on the court...It starts, and ends, with the students."

Derek Haynes
Assistant Sports Editor

T E C H N I Q U E

Get your
TECHNIQUE
headlines

on

WREK
(radio)

(listen to)

TECH TALK

Thursdays at 6:00 • FM 91.1

48th Annual ACC Tournament

March 8-11, 2001
Georgia Dome, Atlanta, Ga.



* Standings represent likely seeding and are subject to change

Bubble

from page 32

tournament were turned down. This can cause many worries for players and can affect their play in a negative way. However, Coach Hewitt approaches the tournament from a different focus.

"If we just play good basketball it will take care of itself," said Hewitt.

While he believes that the NCAA was a goal from the beginning, he would rather have the team believing that they are a great team and can establish Tech as a basketball power.

Tech had proven that they could win when they needed to until Florida State. After a devastating loss to Duke, a loss which Hewitt said he'll just leave behind, Tech rallied to beat Clemson 85-64. The win was their largest margin of victory against an ACC rival this year.

Against Clemson, Alvin Jones was unable to score due to early fouls, but he demonstrated his presence in the lane blocking 3 shots and forcing many Clemson players to alter their shots and make bad shot choices. Tony Akins, who also was plagued by early foul trouble, added 14 while Shaun Fein led the team with 22 points and capped the game in the last two minutes with the first dunk of his Tech career.

For Tech to be successful in the postseason, the players will have to continue their maturation during the postseason.

"Every day we go on the floor we are working that much harder. Our intensity is going to be that much more intense," says forward Jon Babul, "we are on a mission right now."

For seniors like Jon Babul, Alvin Jones and Shawn Fein who have not yet had the pleasures of continuing on after the regular season other than to the NIT, this would be a great sendoff.

Babul is finally excited to be playing for something.

"It's just so great to be part of something this late in the season. My last four seasons we had to look at the ACC tournament as our tournament," said Babul.

Before one can start making cases for Tech's entrance into the tournament, the Jackets must first be impressive in next weekend's ACC tournament.

Jon Babul said it best.

"We can see the light at the end of the tunnel; we know we're close and we don't want to blow it at the end," says Babul. "It would be very hard to turn us down."

T E C H N I Q U E

Baseball from page 32

What was originally a two game series became a three game series with a seventh inning third game added to the schedule Tuesday to make up for the one rained out against Elon.

It turned out that seven innings was all Tech needed as they crushed hapless Oakland in all three games.

In the first game, Tech hammered Oakland for 16 runs in just 6 innings, and Kevin Cameron shut them out for seven as he went on to pick up his first win of the season for Tech.

Cameron (1-0) allowed only one hit and struck out seven. He faced one over the minimum in seven innings of work.

Richard Lewis homered twice and drove in seven runs.

Things didn't get any better in the second half of the doubleheader as Tech put 19 past Oakland this time, but allowed them to score 4.

Tech's offense stayed hot in the closing game of the series as they won 18-0. Twelve runs were scored by Tech in the bottom of the fourth inning.

Freshman Michael Lorenzo tossed a complete-game shutout in his first. Lorenzo (1-0) surrendered only four hits, all singles, while striking out four.

Oakland's Rob Brockman homered and went 3-for-3 and catcher Matt Gabrielli also went 3-for-3 and drove in a pair of runs.

Tech will host No. 25 Rutgers in a three game series this weekend.



By Dale Russell / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Third baseman Mark Teixeira is helped off the field during the second inning of Tech's contest with Elon College. Teixeira's foot was later found to be broken and estimates for his return range from six to eight weeks.

Seminoles sink Jackets

By Terence Jones
Ya se fue

The Jackets NCAA tournament hopes suffered a big blow Wednesday night as Adrian Crawford scored 20 points to lead Florida State (8-20, 3-12) past Tech (16-11, 8-8) 69-59 in Tallahassee.

After falling behind 44-42 in the second half, Florida State went on an 18-3 run to take control of the game and hold on for the win.

Crawford, a senior playing in his final home game, caught fire in the second half, tallying 12 of Florida State's 18 points during their decisive run. He scored 16 altogether in the second half and went 7-for-8 from the field for the game. "He played like an inspired senior," said Tech coach Paul Hewitt. "FSU deserves a lot of credit, they played hard."

Tony Akins led Tech in scoring for the 11th time this season, pouring in 20 points. However, it wasn't enough as Tech, trailing by two at halftime, went ice cold in the second half, while Florida State caught fire. The Jackets shot just 25 percent (18-for-71) for the game, their lowest total of the season, while the hot-handed Seminoles shot 51 percent (26-for-51) for the game.

"We're upset that we lost, but I wouldn't say our confidence is down," commented Akins. "We just weren't making our shots in the second half, and they were."

After scoring only 10 points in

the first 12 minutes of the game, Tech used a 9-0 run to briefly pull ahead 22-20 in the first half, but Crawford scored the final four points of the half to put FSU up by two at intermission. Delvon Arrington and Mike Mathews scored 13 a piece for the Seminoles, each with nine in the second half.

The win snapped a three game losing streak for Florida State, while the loss dropped Tech to 6-4 in its last 10 games. The 8-8 conference record for Tech marks the first time they have finished above .500 in the conference since the 1995-96 season when they won the conference title outright with a 13-3 mark.

Tech does not play again until next Friday in the ACC tournament where they may need to win at least one game to be invited to the NCAA tournament. "I don't think we're out of it yet," said Hewitt. "Now it's in other people's hands. 17 wins would have been nice to make the NCAA tournament."

"We can't dwell on this now, we have to look towards Friday," said Hewitt. "We'll have to review the tape and fix our mistakes."

The Jackets will likely be the 5th seed in the tournament and take on either Maryland or Virginia, depending on the outcome of their game this Saturday.

Against both of those teams this year, the Jackets are a combined 3-1, and will have the added advantage of playing the tournament on home turf in Atlanta.

SPORTS

Basket-ball

SPORTS

Beesball

SPORTS

Foot-ball

SPORTS

You Writing Sports-ball

"Sports" by the substitute PSA fairy

A	S	I	D	E		P	A	N		S	T	O	P		
S	T	O	O	D		O	M	E	N		P	A	R	T	
T	O	N	G	U	E	P	I	E	R	C	I	N	G	S	
E	R	I	S		A	P	E		A	U	K				
R	E	C		U	S	A				J	E	S	S	E	
			I	S	T		E	C	T	O		T	E	L	
		O	L	D	S		G	L	O	W		S	E	A	L
		P	I	E	R	C	E	B	R	O	S	N	A	N	
L	E	N	S		A	R	O	N		W	O	K	S		
I	R	E		D	R	E	W		L	I	B				
D	A	N	C	E				G	E	M		F	O	F	
			L	E	T			E	R	A		D	O	S	E
D	A	V	I	D	H	Y	D	E	P	I	E	R	C	E	
A	M	E	N		Y	O	G	A		L	E	G	A	L	
M	I	T	T			M	E	T		E	M	E	R	Y	

SPORTS

Technique • Friday, March 2, 2001

Babul backs Jackets

Jon Babul, you know, he plays basketball. Find out more about who Babul is and his future in basketball. Page 27

Thrillerdome a thriller?

After his trip to Duke, Derek Haynes shares his opinion on what the Coliseum needs to spice up home basketball games. Page 29



Baseball starts 10-1; Teixeira in the dugout

By Joseph Jeong
What are the odds?

They swept Elon and Oakland, but they lost the star.

Tech's baseball team successfully defended their home turf against Elon and Oakland, stretching their winning streak to nine games, but lost last season's collegiate player of the year Mark Teixeira.

Teixeira broke his ankle in a collision in short left field as he chased after a short fly ball. He is expected to return in early May.

"He handled it great. He's a great kid, and he'll bounce back and be as good as new. The team has to rally and hold the fort until he gets back," said head coach Danny Hall.

Teixeira underwent surgery Tuesday and a news conference is scheduled for today to further discuss the injury.

Last Friday, Elon was looking to add to number one ranked Tech to their resume of impressive wins. Having swept Maryland and winning a three game series against Duke, they were hoping to continue their run of success against ACC teams. They met their match in Tech.

In the first game, things started well for Elon as they jumped to a quick 3 run lead. Elon's star right fielder Wes Bryant hit a

three run homer off Tech's junior pitcher Steve Kelly.

Tech answered in the second inning when they scored two runs to bring it within one. Elon came right back as Bryant homered for the second time to restore a three run cushion for the visiting underdogs.

Things looked as if Elon might really pull off a stunning upset as Tech seemed to be still reeling from the ankle injury Texei-

"He [Teixeira] handled it great...he'll bounce back and be as good as new."

Danny Hall
Head Coach

ra suffered in the second inning. However, Tech regained their composure and slowly regained the lead.

Heading into the bottom of the seventh inning with a 9-7 lead, Tech blew it open as Elon's pitching fell to shambles with nine runs. There would be no rising from the ashes for Elon in this game. Brian Burks was the winning pitcher for Tech.

Saturday Tech came off the blocks hot, with an early four-run lead in the bottom of the first inning. It never got much closer than that as Tech answered every Elon run with one of their own.

Tech's ace, Rhet Parrott, was enjoying a good outing until he got into some trouble in the fourth. He loaded the bases with two outs in the innings. Just a play earlier, Parrott was slow to field a groundball and failed to turn an inning ending double play. He gave up two runs before he could get out of the inning. Despite a lackluster performance, Parrott still managed to pick up his third win of the season.

Despite the win, there was some concern about Tech's defense as they committed four errors in the second game.

The third game of the series was cancelled because of poor weather. Despite being swept, Elon impressed many fans with their potent offense and their very own version of Babe Ruth in right fielder Wes Bryant, who was also their starting pitcher in the second game.

Tech had a much easier time against Oakland Tuesday and Wednesday, their second home series.

See Baseball, page 31



By Daniel Uhlig / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Junior Rhet Parrott, now 3-0, took the mound for the Jackets in last Saturday's contest with Elon College. Parrott gave up 3 hits and 3 earned runs in 5 innings of work. The Jackets' took the first two games of the series and rain cancelled the third.

Kruppa, Lady Jackets finish strong, head to ACC

By Derick Stanger
Nine to five

It wasn't the way women's basketball head coach Agunus Berenato pictured the last game of the regular season—a battle to stay out of the ACC cellar. However, not only did Tech stay out of the proverbial basement, they now take a two game winning streak into the ACC tournament.

Tech, seeded eighth, will play in Greensboro, NC on March 2 against seventh seed UNC for the right to play Clemson Saturday. This is good news for all women's basketball fans during a season in which Tech has proven

to be extremely streaky.

To begin the season Tech won nine of their first twelve games but went cold and slumped mid-season losing ten of their next thirteen games.

The Lady Jackets' wins in their last two games against Maryland and Wake Forest ended a three game slump and showed fans what coach Berenato was talking about when she said this year's Tech team would advance to the NCAA tournament. Berenato's comment came after a WNIT appearance last year when the team was plagued with injuries. But, due to a sub-par conference record of 5-11, Tech's 9-2 performance outside of the

conference is their only hope for a postseason NIT berth. While still maintaining a winning record, Tech lost what could have been a very promising year.

There is still a slim chance of survival. If Tech makes an impressive run through the ACC tournament, they could still make a postseason appearance.

Tech's attitude toward their games is to play deep. Tech finished the regular season with four players averaging double digits and with redshirt sophomore Neisha Butler leading the way.

Tech had four players score ten plus points in their game

See ACC, page 29



By Dale Russell / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Milli Martinez has 16 points and 6 rebounds in the Jackets Sunday win over Wake Forest.

No. 2 Golf takes Puerto Rico Classic

Georgia Tech captured its second first place finish in this past week's Puerto Rico Classic. The Jackets performance was led by senior Bryce Molder who finished 3rd overall. Molder shot 212 in the 72 hole tournament and was aided by Matt Weibring Troy Matteson who each shot 219 and finished tied for 15th. The Jackets have a week off before they head to Las Vegas for the March 9 Las Vegas Intercollegiate.

No. 24 Swimming and Diving finishes third at ACC Tourney

The Yellow Jacket swimmers took home a historic third place finish in last weekend's ACC Championships. The trip was highlighted by Sophomore Shilo Ayalon's 14:58.27 second-place finish in the 1,650-yard freestyle and Scott Lenyk's 1:47.93 third place finish in the 200-yard backstroke. The Jackets head to Athens this weekend for the NCAA Last Chance Meet.

Men's Tennis takes two at home

The Jackets defeated Atlanta neighbor Georgia State 5-2 and took South Carolina 4-3 in last week's home match-



By Kristi Odom / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Senior T.J. Vines shows his stuff in his final Tech home game. Vines had 12 points on the night.

Still a chance for Jackets to dance?

By Derick Stanger
Welcome back

The last time such a stir has gone through the Tech campus was during the 1995-96 season. The feeling has come again. The one time during the year when someone actually wants to catch a cold is upon us—Tech fans have March Fever.

Tech has proven that they are a team that needs to be reckoned with. They have prevailed to prove the naysayers wrong. At the beginning of this basketball season Tech was predicted to finish dead last in the ACC by many prognosticators. However, like weathermen, they are of-

ten wrong.

This year Tech has roared to a 16-11 record and has clinched at a .500 record in the ACC, arguably one of the most prolific conferences in college basketball. While Tech may not have been able to perform at their peak against top tier teams such as UNC or Duke they have shown that they can compete against everyone else.

They were able to beat teams like Kentucky and UCLA, currently ranked fifteenth and twelfth respectively but considered by many to be underrated. They also were able to split games with Maryland and Wake Forest not to mention winning both

games against Virginia. This may be one of their most impressive feats as Virginia has gone on to beat both UNC and Duke.

The only bad marks on the Jacket report card come from the hands of NC State, who beat Tech during midseason, and Wednesday's loss against Florida State. Of Tech's 10 losses, NC State and FSU were the only teams that have not appeared among the AP Top 25. This will make it very hard for the selection committee to turn down the Jackets.

Last year many teams that were believed to be locks for the

See Bubble, page 31

See Briefs, page 29