By Ryan Peck
Contribution Writer

The play of Georgia Tech’s B.J. Elder has been a pleasant surprise for Tech basketball fans since he stepped foot on campus in 2001.

The sweet-shooting sophomore is currently 19th in the ACC in scoring (16.1 points per game) and is hitting three-pointers at a 44.4 percent clip on the season. Elder never ceases to amaze with his deft shooting touch, explosiveness, and leaping ability. Perhaps most amazed at times through it Elder, himself.

During the 2001 Regional Playoffs in Elder’s senior year at Morgan County High School in Madison, GA, his explosiveness was on display for many to see. Elder delivered, following up one of his teammate’s missed jump shots with a mammoth follow slam dunk. The backboard shattered, leaving spectators frenzied and dazzled, but onlookers weren’t the only ones caught in a state of amazement.

“I was surprised more than anyone,” said Elder.

Earlier this season, Elder fought through nagging leg cramps to sink a key three-pointer in the midst of a 24-point outburst against Georgia Tech would go on to defeat the Dawgs 83-77 on the strength of Elder’s toughness and leadership. B.J. was gracious enough to take some time with us to talk a little bit about his life, on and off the basketball court.

Peck: Briefly talk about the nagging foot injury you suffered before college.

Elder: The foot injury happened about a week after the backboard. Talk about your good and bad luck. It happened in the first round of the State Playoffs. I went up for a three and came down on this dude’s foot and it snapped. Lucky for them, because I was beaten. I think I was on pace for 40, but we still won.

Peck: What is your favorite arena other than ACC to play in?

Elder: My favorite place to play other than ACC is Cameron. I really enjoy the atmosphere. Their fans are crunk from the tip.

Peck: What is your favorite car?

Elder: Al Green.

Peck: What is your favorite musician/musical group?

Elder: Al Green.

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Women’s tennis rolls over Auburn, falls in Mobile

By Al Prepgochi
Senior Staff Writer

The 18th-ranked Lady Jackets took a tour of Alabama last weekend and came back with one solid victory and one tough loss to push their overall record to 2-1. On Saturday, Tech lost a heart-breaking match against 27th-ranked Southern Alabama by a 3-4 margin. The Jackets took two of the three doubles matches to earn the all-important doubles point, but were unable to turn the day’s early momentum into singles success. Jamie Wong and Kelly Anderson won their matches in straight sets, but they stood alone in the winners’ circle as their fellow Jackets dropped two close matches and two not-so-close matches.

At No. 1 Singles, Wong downed Andrea Kurekova in a 7-6, 6-1 fashion. In No. 4 Singles action, Anderson steamrolled through Malinke Jager by a score of 6-4, 6-1. No. 2 Singles saw the B.J. in a 6-3, 6-0 Gunn fall to USA’s Viktoria Staklovova in tight 7-5, 6-3 matches. Anne-Lies Schenk dropped the Number 5 Singles match to D. o m i n a c i a Nemecavcovca 6-2, 6-3. Tech’s last chance to salvage a victory went by the wayside when Maria Nierfeldt to Klara Jarova in the Number 6 Singles match by a lopsided margin of 6-2, 6-0.

See Tennis, page 29.

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Track runs strong

The season is in full swing and the teams are on the way to the ACC’s. Check out the results from the Carolina Fast Times meet. Page 29.

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Alumni Baseball game on Saturday

Georgia Tech’s top-ranked baseball team will play its annual Alumni Game on Saturday at 12 p.m. at Russ Chandler Stadium. The nine-inning game will match up the current Yellow Jackets against former Tech players. The game will be the first chance for fans to watch the 2003 edition of the No. 1 ranked Yellow Jackets.

Swimmers win one, lose one

Highlighted by an NCAA “B” cut performance in the 500-yard freestyle from senior All-American Shalo Alyea, the Georgia Tech men’s and women’s swimming and diving teams concluded their dual meet schedule Saturday against Maryland and North Carolina at the Tar Heels’ Koury Natatorium. Tech’s men defeated Maryland, but fell to No. 23 North Carolina. The women lost to the Tar Heels while the No. 15 Terps topped the Jackets.

Football gains new players for 2003

The Jackets saw 20 prospective student-athletes sign national letters of intent to play for the Rambling Wreck on Wednesday, in addition to one freshman football player already enrolled in classes at Tech. Headlining the class is USA Today prep All-American cornerback Kenny Scott of Daytona Beach, Fla., as well as running back Rashun Grant of Tampa, Fla., quarterbacks Reggie Ball of Stone Mountain, Ga., and Stephenson High, and Patrick Carter from St. Petersburg, Fla., and linebucker Nick Mootie of Arlington, Texas. Check out Page 30 for the list of the signees.
Tech bounced back from the tough loss to South Alabama with a 5-2 victory over No. 32 Auburn on Sunday. Tech swept the three doubles matches to earn the all-important doubles point and rolled through four of the six singles matches to take the victory.

In No. 2 Singles, Catherine Gunn claimed an easy 6-1, 6-2 win over Petra Bercik. No. 4 Singles saw Kelly Anderson also roll in a 6-2, 6-1 fashion. Lyndsay Shooshu took a grueling 3-setter, 6-3, 5-7, 6-4 over Auburn's Ashley Cowart in No. 5 Singles competition.

No. 3 Singles saw Maria Nieto round out the singles stampede with a 6-3, 6-3 topping of Jenny Paul. Only Jaime Wong and Annelies Schenk were unable to claim wins in doubles over their Tiger foes.

Tennis Notes:

Freshman Kelly Anderson was named ACC Women’s Tennis Player of the Week on the heels of a 6-0 week. Anderson, a native of Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, didn’t drop a set in any of her singles or doubles matches in dual-matches with Georgia State, South Alabama, and Auburn. Anderson, who did not play with the team in the fall, is quickly developing into a dominant force on the squad. Tech’s match against Texas A&M has been rescheduled for March 17. The next match will be Saturday at the Bill Moore Tennis Center at 11 a.m. as the Jackets host the Iowa Hawkeyes.

By Finny Turner
Contributing Writer

Last weekend the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets faced their first indoor meet against conference rivals. At the Carolina Fast Times Meet at North Carolina’s Eddie Smith Field House, the Jackets faced ACC rivals Duke, Florida State and North Carolina, as well as Southeastern Conference opponents Florida, Georgia and South Carolina. In all, 15 teams participated in this highly competitive event.

The Jackets went into the meet with a quartet of NCAA provisional qualifiers on the women’s side. Sprinters Jessica DeFreitas and Amandi Rhett met the standard in the 60-meter dash earlier in the season, while freshmen pole-vaulter Jessica Graff and freshman high jumper Chaunte Howard were also provisionally qualified for the NCAAs.

Rhett and Howard lead the conference in their women’s events like their male teammates, Chris Crawley and Dennis Davis, who lead for the men’s events.

Saturday, the women’s team was led by wins that set the school record in the 3000 and 5000 meters by senior Amy Dock. Dock was victorious in the 3000 with a time of 10:09.87 and she held off teammate Neta Ezer to win the 5000 in 17:35.15. Both times were season-bests for the Jackets.

Freshman Chaunte Howard joined Dock in the winner’s circle for the women, as she took the high jump in 5’11.25”, which equals a season-best. Howard also took third in the long jump with a season-best mark of 19’8.25”.

On the men’s side, sophomore Neil McDonagh placed first in the mile in 4:13.50. In addition to those victories, two Jackets improved on school records set earlier this season. Freshman Jessica Graff cleared 12’11.50” in the pole vault to finish second. She improved not only her NCAA provisional mark, but also surpassed the school record posted earlier this season at the Kentucky Invitational.

Sophomore Ian Brewer claimed the other school mark, as he had a toss of 57’4.75” in the weight throw to finish seventh in a very competitive field.

“I’m happy with how our team is progressing, but I think we are going to improve even more and have a great shot at winning ACCs.”

Ian Brewer
Sophomore weight thrower

See Track and field, page 28
This week I want to take a closer look at A-League basketball, in particular the matchup between the top ranked Beta team and TKE. Beta was coming off a 60-4 thrashing of Pi Kappa Phi, while TKE lost to Sigma Chi by a 46-25 count last week.

The second half saw much better shooting from sides and baskets were traded instead of bricks. TKE got them back to within 28-26 before Beta closed the game to make the final score 57-49. 

The picture will get clearer as the week progresses.

Next week, we’ll check out the A-league soccer action to pick out the front-runners in those leagues.

### Women’s Basketball Top 5

1. Phi Mu
2. Romans
3. Alpha Xi Delta
4. Alpha Gamma Delta
5. ADPi

### A League Basketball Top 5

1. Phi Darts
2. Pike
3. Beta Theta Pi
4. Sig Ep
5. ESPN All Stars Pt. 2

### Women’s Soccer Top 5

1. Alpha Gamma Delta
2. Alpha Chi Delta
3. Phi Mu
4. Alpha Xi Delta
5. Alpha Chi Omega

### A League Soccer Top 5

1. Replacements
2. Red Rockets Too
3. Theta Xi
4. Fiji
5. TKE

Michael Pasten led the way with 17 points for Beta with some nice work in the post.

TKE can take some consolation in the fact that the game was close by a 61-26 count, while Pike beat Sigma Chi 48-32.

Wallyball got underway this week and the eight teams that posted wins are tied for the top spot. Pulling out their game was close by a 23-4 late in the fourth and fifth positions.

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A run by Beta finally pushed the score out to a whooping 23-4 late in the first half. A late response by TKE got them back to within 28-26 before Beta closed the game to make the final score 57-49. 

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Respecting Elder

Peck: Do you listen to any particular music or artist to get you pumped up before a game?
Elder: I do. I listen to Lil’ Wayne or Tupac before the games.
Peck: What is your favorite sport other than basketball to play/watch?
Elder: Football.
Peck: Who is your favorite actor?
Elder: Will Smith and Angela Bassett.
Peck: What is your favorite television program?
Elder: Sportscenter and “Martin.”
Peck: What is your favorite movie?
Elder: Barry Gordy’s Last Drag On (Leroy Green and Show-nuff).
Peck: On (Maryland) was the toughest player, at any level, you’ve ever played against?
Elder: Juan Dixon.
Peck: Who is the biggest joker/clown on the team? How so?
Elder: Cole Field House (Maryland).
Peck: If you were to travel to any place in the world, where would you go?
Elder: Hawaii.
Peck: Who is your most influential person? Why?
Elder: My grandmother.
Peck: Why did you choose GT over others?
Elder: The coaches won me over early, and my boy, Isma’il Muhammad, was coming here also. We were teammates on the same summer team for three years.
Peck: What do you enjoy to do most in your free time?
Elder: Listen to music and chill with friends.
Peck: Where is your favorite place to shop?
Elder: Lenox and South Dekalb.
Peck: Do you have any brothers and/or sisters? Names?
Elder: I have a sister, Tiffany. She is 18.
Peck: Who is the toughest player, at any level, you’ve ever played against?
Elder: Juan Dixon.
Peck: Who is the biggest joker/clown on the team? How so?
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Beyond the White and Gold

It’s never too early for the bracketologist

By John Parsons
Senior Staff Writer

Selection Sunday is still well over a month off, but the tournament picture is starting to take shape. At this point any team not yet under consideration, needs to make a move fast. It looks like it’ll be tougher on teams from major conferences this year, as there is a lot more hype and buzz surrounding the mid-majors. In fact, it is extremely unlikely that a team will make the tournament with a losing conference record this year. Teams with even records might even find it tough to justify themselves.

One thing that is definitely clear though is quality road wins are worth a premium this year. While this makes it seem that a team needs a few road wins, my feeling is that it primarily makes it all the more important to defend one’s home court, as our Jackets have done. How can a team expect to get in with a less-than-excellent home court record in a year when nobody that is any good is losing at home? Let’s look at couple recent developments. Florida can no longer be viably considered for a one or two seed after their thrashing at the hands of Kentucky. Arizona needs a late run to get back to within 20 does not deserve a one or two seed, and only deserves a three or four if they bounce back and dominate someone else.

Georgetown is hands down the tough luck team of the year. They’ve lost to two top ten teams by one point each and somehow failed to notice that Seton Hall had six men on the floor...

Right now I like the Dayton Flyers because they come out of the A-10 playing their ugly, yet effective, bruising style that can pull a favorite down to their level.

Georgetown is hands down the tough luck team of the year. They’ve lost to two top ten teams by one point each and somehow failed to notice that Seton Hall had six men on the floor in the closing moments of regulation. I don’t see how they could fail to notice that there’s six men on the floor when the bring the ball up the floor and Seton Hall can afford to double the guy with a ball and still take away all possible passes.

I’m closing. I’ll be the first to call some tournament chokes and Cinderellas. First off, I’ll go ahead and put Pitt and Marquette in the choke column because, well, whendon’t they choke? Pitt looks like they’ll end up with a one or two seed, so they’ll probably wait until the second round to fold. On the Cinderella side, the Butler and Creighton bandwagons are full, which generally means one thing; neither will make much noise. Right now I like the Dayton Flyers. I like them mainly because they come out of the A-10 playing their ugly, yet effective, bruising style that can pull a favorite down to their level. It’ll be ugly, but if they start knocking off favorites, no one will care.

Over the next several weeks, the picture will become clearer. Then hopefully on Selection Sunday we’ll all be celebrating the Jackets eight or nine seed.
Heels fading fast, Jackets move up as ACC season moves on

By Andrew Levine
The Diamondback

(U-WIRE) University of Maryland—A four-game losing streak, a steadily declining defense and a leading scorer pulled from the starting lineup. Put it all together and North Carolina is headed down the same beaten path it traveled last year, when it suffered through a near-disastrous 8-20 record and missed the postseason for the first time in 28 years.

Last season, however, was regarded as an exception to the rule for the Tar Heels pre-sumably had enough talent at the start of the season to make a run in the conference. Those prospects were soon bolstered by the Tar Heels’ 5-0 start in which it defeated two top-25 teams—Stanford and Kansas—in succession at the preseason NIT.

But North Carolina (11-9, 2-5 ACC) has lost five of its last seven games, is yielding 82.3 points per game over the last four and has sorely missed the inside presence of its leading rebounder, Sean May, who has missed more than a month with a broken foot.

Coach Matt Doherty even inserted freshman guard David Noel into the starting lineup Saturday in favor of leading scorer Rashad McCants in a failed attempt to ignite his team. And despite it all, Doherty said everything is going according to plan.

"I think things are on track," he said. "Were certainly headed down the right path. I think we certainly took a little hit after Sean’s injury. I’m not using it as an excuse, but that’s a fact. Next year we’re going to be a year older, a year wiser and that’s going to help us."

"With that being said, every year it’s our goal to win a national championship. Right now we don’t have a great league record. Hopefully we’ll win our share of games and make the tournament."

Yellow Jackets buzzing

With all the hoopla surrounding the rather surprising records forged by the Terps, N.C. State and Wake Forest, Georgia Tech is going about its business in Atlanta, quietly putting together a decent NCAA tournament resume.

Coach Paul Hewitt’s freshman-laden team has three of the ACC’s most potent scorers in freshman forward Chris Bosh (16.7 points per game), sophomore guard B.J. Elder (17.4 ppg) and junior guard Marvin Lewis (17.7 ppg) and is a perfect 10-0 at home this season.

A bubble team at best right now, the Yellow Jackets have impressed Hewitt with the uniquely refreshing attitude they are bringing to the court.

"With our players it’s really game-to-game," Hewitt said. "I think the fact that we’re a young team is kind of good because they’re in a bubble. A lot of the freshmen are definitely not conscious of the standings. They don’t look at a game as a must-win game. They just go out and play."

Crossword Answers, from page 25

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Track & Field

season begins Saturday. As for the women, sophomore Shanta Smith had a strong day with a time of 55.91 to place fourth in the 400 meters and a leap of 40’00.50” to take second in the triple jump. Both marks were Smith’s bests for 2003.

Sophomore Dana Rogers posted her best mark in the 60-meter hurdles (8.55) in a runner-up finish, while the 4x400 relay also recorded a season-best mark of 3:48.04.

Sophomore Brian Ford led the men with a season-best 49.11 in the 400 meters. He placed third, while senior Sharif Azim was fourth (49.15). Junior Michael Massey added a career-best, clearing 6’11.75” in the high jump to finish second.