

SCORE

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atlanta

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CAN'T MISS THIS WEEK

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- 5** In our cover story, Stephen Black breaks down Falcons' QB Matt Ryan's offseason training regimen.
- 7** Former coach David Boyd recently resigned from Milton's basketball program as Fletcher Proctor discusses on our prep cover.
- 8-9** We preview the GPB games of the week for Sept. 21 in our prep section.

TEAM SCOOP AND VOICES

*COVER DESIGN BY DJ GALBIATI
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 AND JIMMY CRIBB/ATLANTA FALCONS*

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INSIDE AT SCORE

ON THE Score Atlanta is looking for new sales associates as well as writing and graphic design interns. For sales positions, e-mail IJ Rosenberg at ijrosenberg@scoreatl.com. For writing internships, e-mail Stephen Black at sblack@scoreatl.com. For graphic design internships, e-mail DJ Galbiati at djgalbiati@scoreatl.com. Feel free to call 404-256-1572 to speak with someone about any of these positions.

SHOT OF THE WEEK...



ROAD WARRIORS: Falcons fans show their enthusiasm prior to the Birds' game at Kansas City in Week 1. Atlanta responded with a convincing 40-24 win over the Chiefs. Photo courtesy Jimmy Cribb/AtlantaFalcons.com.

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DIMON CLUB



Braves, Falcons sit in good shape

By Ricky Dimon

There's no denying the Falcons got off to a flying start to their 2012 campaign, as they went into Kansas City and blasted the Chiefs 40-24. The question, now, is what to make of it?

SLOW YOUR ROLL ...

First, a word of caution. The Chiefs were bad last year (they were lucky to go 7-9) and I fully expect them to be worse this season. Furthermore, it's not like Arrowhead Stadium is a feared territory for opponents like it was in the early and mid-90s when Derrick Thomas roamed the middle of K.C.'s defense. Kansas City has enjoyed just a single winning season at home (2010) and even that resulted in the team parlaying home-field advantage in Round 1 of the playoffs into a 23-point blow-

out loss to Baltimore. The Chiefs went 3-5 at Arrowhead last year, a mark worse than their 4-4 road record.

As for the unquestionably bad news, cornerback Brent Grimes is out for the season due to a torn Achilles. Grimes, playing under the franchise tag, had 13 interceptions in his last four years with the Falcons—including 11 combined in his two complete, 16-game seasons (2009 and 2010). Dunta Robinson will start at right cornerback in Grimes' absence and nickel situations, where Grimes' injury has to hit the hardest, will see increased playing time for Christopher Owens and/or Dominique Franks.

Of course, plenty of positive momentum came out of Kansas City. Only two teams

scored more offensive points than Atlanta in Week 1—the Redskins (against a depleted New Orleans defense) and the Bears (against a rebuilding Indianapolis squad). The Falcons also accomplished what has become a trademark of the Mike Smith era, as they dominated the turnover battle against Kansas City. Matt Ryan and company did not turn it over a single time while the defense forced three takeaways. Ryan was the most productive fantasy quarterback in the business, with 299 yards and a trio of touchdowns.... And you thought RG3 and Peyton Manning had big weeks!

Speaking of Manning, who's excited for Monday? It's not just Monday Night Football with two playoff contenders and arguably the biggest draw in the sport right now in Manning. Falcons vs. Broncos is a game that will show us what the home team is all about. After all, these Broncos don't need Tim Tebow to walk on water for a victory, like they did in 2011. These Broncos are going to win and win in legit ways, like they did last weekend. Denver already has a primetime game under its belt, having thumped Pittsburgh 31-19 on Sunday night behind stellar play from Manning and an interception return for a touchdown by Tracy Porter.

This is going to be an awesome test for the Falcons. Like the rest of Atlanta, I can't wait to see if they'll pass it.

BRAVE NEW FOCUS ...

Any success this weekend will be too little too late for the Braves, at least in terms of the National League East. Following Tuesday's shutout loss at Milwaukee combined with Washington's road win over New York, they are a whopping 7.5 games out of first place in the division. With a combined 39 games left on the schedule (19 for Atlanta, 20 for Washington), the Nationals' magic number is already down to 13. It's time to accept reality.

Still, it's a reality that isn't so grim. The Braves have a 5.5-game lead at the top of the wild card race ahead of (sound familiar?) St. Louis, but this time they would have to be passed by not one team, but two, in order to miss the playoffs. They are 6.5 games clear of third-place Los Angeles as of Wednesday. On this date last year, the Cardinals were already surging and the Braves were in full-fledged collapse mode. Now, though, Atlanta—despite a two-game skid in Milwaukee—has won seven of its last 10 and St. Louis is stalling if not going south. Every wild card contender within striking distance of the Braves is currently below .500 in its last 10 games.

The 2012 Braves are one year older, one year wiser, and have one more playoff spot at their disposal. Get ready to welcome October baseball back to Atlanta!

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KALLAND'S KORNER



NFL openers yield season projections

By Robby Kalland

Football's return galvanizes sports fans like no other. It's all people talk about, at school, at work, at the bar and at home; the conversation is football. For the first time in eight months, the football conversations concern what goes on between the lines. No more will the dominant football headlines be Saints' Bounty-gate, Jets' camp controversies, what happened on Hard Knocks or when Maurice Jones-Drew will end his holdout. We can finally discuss what happened on the field, and thus, here is what I took away from the first week of the season.

REAL GAMES ...

What happens in the preseason stays in the preseason. The Jets' offense couldn't score a touchdown in the preseason, but New

York struck for 48 points in a dominating performance against the Bills and their new-look defense in Week 1. Mark Sanchez looked in control of the offense and threw the ball better than he ever has. While it is a little early to pronounce the Jets as "back," it is fair to say that we were wrong for calling them dead before the season.

The Falcons' offense is more developed and dangerous this year. The Falcons' offense was very solid in 2011, but Dirk Koetter seems to have unleashed the full potential of this loaded group. Matt Ryan looked great and showed that criticisms of his deep ball have been unwarranted. Julio Jones is making a very strong case for him being more than worth the bevy of picks that the Falcons gave up to take him, and Roddy White, Tony Gon-

zalez and Michael Turner continue playing at a high level. If the Falcons can maintain this type of consistency and efficiency on offense against better opponents, they will finally push past the first-round wall of the playoffs.

The same goes for the Ravens' offense. Joe Flacco appeared to fully embrace his new responsibilities in their new no-huddle attack. Flacco executed it like a seasoned pro against a solid Bengals defense. He controlled the tempo of the game, kept the Bengals off balance and took shots down the field with great success. Ray Rice got fewer touches than normal but was more efficient with his production, which should mean he will be fresher for a playoff run, a very scary idea for the AFC. If Baltimore keeps it up, the Ravens are the favorite to come out of the AFC.

The 49ers are the favorites in the NFC, if not the NFL. In the second most impressive win of the weekend, the 49ers went into Lambeau and picked the Packers apart. The offense played well using their balanced attack to grind out long drives that kept Aaron Rodgers and the Packers off the field. Once the Packers got on the field, the Niners defense kept everything in front of them, forcing the Packers to play at a slower tempo and methodically matriculate the ball down the field, which frustrated Rodgers who clearly wanted the push the aerial attack deep. The Niners looked totally in control from start to

finish and ought to finish the year as the top seed in the NFC.

RG3 ...

The most impressive victory of the opening weekend came from the Washington Redskins. The Redskins took a rookie quarterback, Robert Griffin III, and marched into the Superdome and beat the Saints in relatively dominant fashion. Griffin III looked comfortable in the most hostile environment in the NFL, especially as hyped up as the Saints and their fans were after their tumultuous offseason. The Redskins were expected to be run over by a very motivated Saints team, but instead, Griffin III led the offense to a 40-point performance including throwing for 320 yards and a pair of touchdowns. Griffin III and the new receivers on the Redskins looked very good together and they will make this season very interesting in the very tough NFC East.

It seems each year we say it, this year is going to be the best season ever in the NFL, but this year really seems to have a little extra juice. The quarterback play is better than we've ever seen it with 10 guys that could be argued as fitting into the "elite" category, and another five or so not far behind. We are living in the greatest offensive era in NFL history, so let's sit back and enjoy it. If Week 1 is any indication, it's going to be a great ride.

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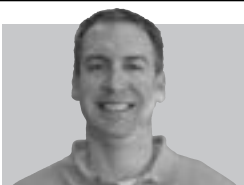
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FALCONS FOOTBALL



Ryan's offseason training paying off

By Stephen Black



When Falcons fans see No. 2 lined up behind center, they feel confident. The fans are confident that Matt Ryan will check into the right play, throw to the right receiver and put the Falcons in position to win.

Since Ryan came into the league in 2008, he has done nothing but win. Despite taking over a franchise down on its luck with serious quarterback baggage, the Boston College graduate came to Atlanta and helped turn the Falcons' fortunes around immediately. Before Ryan arrived in the Peach State, the Falcons had never won more than they lost in back-to-back seasons, had never been to the playoffs three times in four years and had never been guided to the postseason by a rookie. Four seasons later, all of those goals had been accomplished.

He started his career in style with a touchdown toss on his first NFL pass. Since then, it has been mostly success and production from Ryan and his teammates.

COMMITMENT TO IMPROVE ...

Prior to his fifth season in the league, Ryan decided to improve his level of strength

and conditioning. In the offseason, he added seven pounds of solid muscle after working with Falcons Director of Athletic Performance Jeff Fish to become a more physical player.

"I've been working hard on that and getting with Jeff Fish now that we're back to make sure that I'm ready to go," said Ryan. "(I'm) ready to be strong in December and January. I want to be able to play my best football at that time. That's one of the things I've tried to figure out and analyze myself: how do I get myself to be playing my very best when your very best is needed? I'm still working on getting there."

While some critics have doubted Ryan due to his 0-3 playoff record, there have been many other quarterbacks to have struggled in the playoffs early in their careers. Peyton Manning, for example, began his playoff career 0-3 as well.

Falcons general manager Thomas Dimitroff has been impressed with the franchise centerpiece's offseason regime and commitment to improvement.

"Matt's approach to this offseason has been admirable," said Dimitroff. "He has

really set out to strengthen himself physically and understands the importance of being strong and having endurance down the stretch. He's put more time in here this offseason than anyone."

The biggest difference in Ryan's offseason routine was one very simple adjustment.

"It's weight training, getting in there and training with weights," said Ryan. "It's learning to condition myself in the way that we play football and in a way that is productive to how we are playing football."

CRUNCH TIME ...

While the added muscle will help Ryan year round, he geared his conditioning program towards one very specific time of the year. The 6-foot-4, 227-pounder is focused on improving performance during playoff time.

"The main focus was trying to be in the best possible shape to really play at a high level in November, December and January," Ryan said. "It's a league where one team and one quarterback are happy at season's end. We haven't been that one team yet. But we're primed and ready to be a great football team."

Ryan's coach, Mike Smith, has been with him in Atlanta since the start of his NFL career. The two came here in 2008 and ushered in the start of a new era in Falcons history. In its first season together, the pair combined to turn the franchise around and make the playoffs. The 11-5 record was one of the biggest surprises in the NFL that year. But it was just the beginning for the pair.

And, as they enter their fifth season together, Smith is pleased with his quarterback's effort to improve despite quite a bit of early success.

"I don't know if they've taken a before and after picture, but you can definitely see the noticeable difference with Matt," said Smith. "If you're stronger at the beginning of the season, you're going to be stronger at the end. It's very important for us, because we feel like we've got to be more consistent and play better at the end of the season."

There is no doubt the Falcons front office is pleased with its signal-caller. While some quarterbacks see their performances go up and down like a thermometer from season to season, Ryan's play has been as consistent as the temperature in the Georgia Dome. And to Dimitroff, Ryan has proven his wares.

"There's no doubt in my mind that Matt is an upper-echelon quarterback," said the Falcons GM.

THE NEXT STEP ...

In Manning's sixth season, the Colts finally won a playoff game under the former No. 1 overall draft pick. Ryan is entering his fifth in Atlanta and arguably has the best surrounding cast he's had. With Julio Jones in his

second season and Roddy White in the prime of his illustrious career, Ryan has a lot of toys to play with. White is perhaps the best wide receiver in the league and now has Jones to draw attention away from him. As a rookie, the Alabama product caught eight touchdowns, a number that led all rookies. Jones was also second amongst rookies behind A.J. Green in receptions and yards.

Joining the receiving duo is future Hall of Famer Tony Gonzalez at tight end and Harry Douglas at wide receiver. With Ryan's arm and a corps of ample receiving options, the Falcons seem poised to have success stretching the field this year under new offensive coordinator Dirk Koetter.

"Defenses are going to have to respect that and realize that we can do it at anytime," Gonzalez said. "It's going to open things up underneath. The more those guys can stretch the field — you put them on the outside and let them run and let me work the middle with Harry (Douglas) on the other side, it's a good combination. It's a good place for us to be, and with the way Matt's throwing the ball, it's a beautiful thing."

Falcons fans can agree, especially after watching Ryan efficiently throw for 23-of-31 and 299 yards in the 40-24 season-opening win over Kansas City, that watching Ryan direct the talented offense is a thing of beauty.

Photos courtesy of Jimmy Cribb/Atlanta Falcons. Black can be reached at sblack@scoreatl.com.



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WHO'S HOT

THUMBS UP TO EFFICIENT PASSERS



Matt Ryan

The Atlanta quarterback had a great – but meaningless – preseason. In Kansas City, though, he was the man against the Chiefs in their usually inhospitable building. Ryan threw for three scores and ran for another. Boom. If the O-line can handle their business up front this fall, look for big numbers from No. 2.

Jarvis Jones

Oh my, this is one bad man. Jones singlehandedly ruined Missouri's first game in the SEC and won about a gazillion player of the week awards in the process. In Columbia he had a pass breakup, an interception, a sack and a forced fumble to go with eight tackles. Probably flew the team plane back, too.

Kris Medlen

Yeah, we know it's back-to-back "Hot" for Medlen, but he's been that good on the mound for the Braves, and we need him to keep up the good work for another couple months (hopefully). How macho has he been? The Braves haven't lost a game he's started since May ... 2010.

Nationals Debt

The sad truth is that the Braves have little chance of catching Washington for the NL East crown. That means "Wild-card City." With the new format in baseball, the Braves will likely host the do or die game just to make the "real" playoffs. Worse yet, they'll have to burn a quality starter in the play-in game.

Helmet-to-helmet

It's fall and football season in Georgia. That's a good thing, but if skull-to-skull injuries continue from so many violent collisions, the health of the players and the health of the game itself are in jeopardy. As players get bigger, faster and stronger, these hits get more dangerous. Coaches, we gotta stop this stuff now.

Grimes' Injury

The Falcons defense will have to get by for the rest of the season without their uber-athletic cornerback, Brent Grimes, who will miss the rest of the year after exploding his Achilles tendon against Kansas City. Worse for Grimes, he was expected sign a multi-year contract in the offseason when his current franchise tag goes away.



WHO'S NOT

THUMBS DOWN TO ATTRITION

SCORE LIST

BY BRIAN JONES

1 GREAT START: The Falcons opened their 2012 season on the right foot with a 40-24 win over Kansas City. Matt Ryan accounted for four touchdowns and Stephen Nicholas tallied 12 tackles and one interception. Now the Falcons have another tough test ahead of them on Monday night when they face Peyton Manning and the Denver Broncos. It will be a very compelling game for the Falcons and I think it will come down to the wire. Man, I'm so glad football is back.

2 GROWN MAN FOOTBALL: Missouri got introduced to SEC football by the Bulldogs on Saturday. Georgia dominated the Tigers 41-20 thanks in large part to Jarvis Jones, who racked up eight tackles, two sacks, two forced fumbles and one interception. The Bulldogs will face FAU on Saturday which should be a tune-up for Vanderbilt. The Bulldogs will beat the Owls with ease, but let's hope they put their foot on the gas from start to finish.

3 BOYD OUT: Milton boys head basketball coach David Boyd resigned on Tuesday after Milton officials investigated him for alleged recruiting violations the last few weeks. Under Boyd, Milton has won two of the last three state championships and there is no word on who will take his place. This is unfortunate for Milton, but they are doing the right thing. If the program was doing things that are against the rules, then it deserved to be looked into.

4 GRIMES OUT: The Falcons will have to face Peyton without Brent Grimes because he tore his Achilles tendon and will miss the rest of the season. Grimes suffered the injury on Sunday against Kansas City and was placed on injured reserve on Tuesday. This is a blow to the Falcons' defense, but they still have Dunta Robinson and Asante Samuel at corner. Despite quality depth, Christopher Owens and Dominique Franks have to step up.

5 ANOTHER FRIDAY: Next week is the fourth full week of high school football and Score will have you covered. The GPB television game will be Lovett at St. Pius X while GPB.org/sports will broadcast the West Forsyth at Alpharetta. You can go to GPB.org/sports to watch both games and if you want to keep up with the rest of the high school games, visit ScoreATL.com for the live high school scoreboard.

CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

BY FLETCHER PROCTOR

274 Rushing yards Virginia registered against Georgia Tech in its 2011 24-21 victory

137 Rushing yards Virginia registered against Georgia Tech in 2010, a 33-21 Tech win

168.5 Rushing yards Georgia Tech has allowed this season per game in a 1-1 start

.322 Dan Uggla's batting average for the month of September through Wednesday

.215 Dan Uggla's batting average through Wednesday for the 2012 season

756 Rushing yards for Cedartown's Nick Chubb, the most in the state after just two games

1,508 Rushing yards all of last season for Chubb, who posted 206 carries as a sophomore

43 Straight home wins for Buford before Gainesville beat the Wolves 19-15 last Friday

20 Straight regular season wins at home for North Gwinnett before Norcross' visit

39 Straight regular season wins for Calhoun, which hosted Carrollton Friday

TRIVIA QUESTION

What is Chipper Jones' career batting average against the Mets?

Answer on Page 10

SANITY AT LAST

"Very simply, an allegation was brought to my attention, I sat down with Mr. Jones, we discussed it, and we felt like there was probably enough merit to investigate, so we investigated the situation."

- Fulton County Schools athletics director Dr. Steven Craft on why Milton investigated its boys basketball program, which resulted in the resignation of coach David Boyd.

MOVING FORWARD

Milton principal Clifford Jones and Fulton County athletics director Dr. Steven Craft addressed the media Tuesday, revealing that Milton had self-reported allegations of what the Georgia High School Association is terming "undue influence" in regard to its boys varsity basketball program.

"As a result of the investigation, we have had a coaching change in our boys basketball program," said Jones. "It is unfortunate news, but we are moving forward. We are moving forward with integrity and excellence within our program to put our school where it needs to be."

"We acted very quickly and decisively on the findings," said Jones. "We take every al-

legation seriously. We are working together to try to move forward so that we can support our student athletes, their families and our school. We want to build a program of integrity and excellence and we're going to move forward in that vein. It's our job to act on those allegations, and when we find something, we want to make sure we hold our program and our values up to that standard."

How does Milton move forward? A Fulton County Schools spokesperson said that Jones had already begun the process of naming a new coach. The school hopes to have someone in place by next month when the season begins.



UNDUE INFLUENCE

Milton self-reports, Boyd resigns

By Fletcher Proctor

The 2011-12 Class AAAAA boys basketball state champions will try to defend their title without head coach David Boyd after the championship coach resigned from Milton Monday.

Milton principal Clifford Jones and Fulton County athletics director Dr. Steven Craft addressed the media Tuesday, revealing that Milton had self-reported allegations of what the Georgia High School Association is terming "undue influence" in regard to its boys varsity basketball program.

"As a result of the investigation, we have had a coaching change in our boys basketball program," said Jones. "It is unfortunate news, but we are moving forward. We are moving forward with integrity and excellence within our program to put our school where it needs to be."

LEGALESE ...

Undue influence is a GHSA term mentioned in by-law 1.71 that is defined as "the use of in-

fluence by any person connected directly or indirectly with a GHSA school to induce a student of any age to transfer from one school to another, or to enter the ninth grade at a member school for athletic or literary competition purposes, whether or not the school presently attended by the student is a member of the GHSA."

Craft clarified the law further.

"If you look at the rule under the bylaw, there's five or six different things that could happen that the GHSA could determine to be undue influence. There is the allegation (of recruiting) that we will turn in to the GHSA to let the GHSA determine ... but there is the allegation of undue influence."

The process moved quickly according to both Jones and Craft after the allegation was brought forward within the last few weeks.

"Very simply, an allegation was brought to my attention, I sat down with Mr. Jones, we discussed it, and we felt like there was probably enough merit to investigate, so we investigated

the situation," said Craft.

Fulton County handled the investigation without the assistance from an outside agency before turning over the findings to the GHSA for a ruling.

"We acted very quickly and decisively on the findings," said Jones. "We take every allegation seriously. We are working together to try to move forward so that we can support our student athletes, their families and our school."

While Milton's self-reporting wouldn't help or hurt in the GHSA's ruling, Craft and Jones both agreed that it was simply the right thing to do.

"We want to build a program of integrity and excellence and we're going to move forward in that vein," said Craft. "It's our job to act on those allegations, and when we find something, we want to make sure we hold our program and our values up to that standard."

MOVING ON ...

Boyd resigned after leading Milton to two state titles (2010, 2012) and another berth in the finals. According to Milton's website, Boyd's overall record is 573-186 and his resume includes six state titles as a head coach, including

titles at Milton, Tucker, Berkmar and Campbell. Boyd's squads have also claimed 12 region titles and eight state quarterfinal appearances. No timetable has been set on naming a replacement and no interim coach has been named.

"We're moving forward and we don't have anyone as of yet," said Jones.

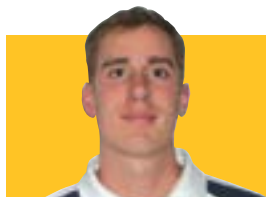
Craft would not comment on whether Boyd would have been fired had he not resigned. Jones told the players yesterday about the resignation and sent a letter home to parents of the players.

"Delivering a message like this is hard," said Jones. "It's hard on our student-athletes, it's hard on our community, but we're going to move forward. Milton will have the ideas and ideals of integrity and excellence as the basis of this program moving forward."

The Eagles will try to move forward without Boyd, as well as without Evan Nolte (Virginia), Shaq Johnson (Auburn) and Charles Mann (Georgia), who helped Milton capture the 2011-12 state title. Junior Jalyn Patterson was expected to star for the Eagles this year under Boyd, whose last two point guards have gone on to accept major conference scholarships.

Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.

ALPHARETTA VS. WEST FORSYTH



Quarterbacks on display in GPB webcast

By Fletcher Proctor

The Alpharetta Raiders posted a clean 6-0 mark last year in Region 6-AAAAA play, while the West Forsyth Wolverines managed a 5-1 mark with the lone loss coming at the hands of Alpharetta. The Wolverines entered the showdown at Alpharetta 5-0 only to fall 27-14. This year, Frank Hepler's squad hopes to avoid a repeat of history and take down Jason Dukes' squad to win the first-ever Region 6-AAAAA crown.

WOLVERINE ATTACK ...

West Forsyth enters the game with an incredibly talented backfield, led by three-year starter A.J. Erdely.

"A.J. is very gifted physically, and we knew that when he first walked onto our campus," said assistant coach Adam Clack.

Erdely accounted for 176 yards in the season-opening win against Gainesville while also throwing for two scores. He racked up 260 yards against Flowery Branch.

Jake Wiecezorek joins Erdely in the backfield and can turn in a big play at any moment. Last season, Wiecezorek recorded three scores in less than five minutes in one game. He ran for 98 yards and a score against Gainesville, but he had to leave the Flowery Branch game with a back injury.

"We definitely want him to get his touch-

es," said Clack.

If Wiecezorek cannot go against Alpharetta, Erdely has other weapons in the passing game with tight end Ty Anderson and receiver Tanner Bridges on the outside.

Defensively, the Wolverines are led by Bret Anderson and Josh Davis on the line. Mohamed Camara (South Carolina) and Conner Vandebos offer a nice punch from the linebacker position while Jacob Hill anchors the secondary.

POTENT RAIDERS ...

Alpharetta has a dual-threat quarterback of its own in Josh Dobbs. The future Arizona State Sun Devil passed for 326 yards and one score while running for two more in a 38-9 win over Harrison. Dobbs has Carlos Burse, Daniel Clements and Rodney Morris on the outside to help with the offensive attack. The Raiders put up 28 points in a loss to Milton to open the season, but allowed 430 yards on the ground. The defense stepped up against Harrison, limiting the Hoyas to just 121 total yards.

In this battle of the quarterbacks, it may be which defensive quarterback steps up and makes the most plays to stop the opposition. Look for Camara and Alpharetta's Naim Mustafaa to play a major role in this game's outcome.

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LOVETT VS. ST. PIUS X



GPB-TV matches top 5 programs

By Stephen Black

The Battle of the Lions will be fought once more. For the first time since 1983, the Lovett Lions and the St. Pius X Golden Lions will butt heads on the gridiron Friday night at George B. Maloof Stadium off I-85.

Prior to their last meeting in 1983, the teams played 12 times with the Golden Lions carrying an 8-4 record despite dropping four of the last six games played. The two programs have each won a state title as St. Pius X won the state championship in 1968 while Lovett won it in 1970.

MEET THE LIONS ...

Class AA No. 4 Lovett is headed by coach Mike Muschamp, who has been at the Buckhead school since 2005. Muschamp has done a tremendous job with the Lions in guiding his program to the playoffs in each year he has been at Lovett.

The Lions started the season with impressive wins over Woodward Academy (7-3) and Blessed Trinity (24-7). Both games showed how good Lovett is this season, as each is a potential playoff team.

The Lovett defense has been stellar so far in 2012. An opportunistic unit, the Lions have picked off five passes and recovered three fumbles despite giving up 21 first downs and 204

rushing yards.

Quarterback Willie Candler leads an offense that has turned the ball over just twice. Candler has rushed for 116 yards and a score while throwing for 97 yards and another score. Spencer Lee, meanwhile, has added 91 yards on the ground while Grant Haley has totaled 38 yards and two scores.

GOLD STANDARD ...

Class AAA No. 3 St. Pius X also started the year 2-0 with wins over Westminster (21-3) and North Oconee (50-14). North Oconee came into the game last weekend ranked No. 8 in the Score/GPB Class AAA poll, but left Atlanta wondering what happened.

The Golden Lions defense intercepted four passes against the Titans, including two by Michael Sikorski, who returned one of them 72 yards for a score right at the halftime whistle. St. Pius X led 36-0 at the half. Coach Paul Standard's offense was ignited by Ryan Braswell, who rushed for 83 yards and three touchdowns.

Standard has guided the program since 2001 and has seen the Golden Lions make the postseason nine times, including each year since 2006.

Black can be reached at sblack@scoreatl.com.

PREP NOTEBOOK



Lassiter stands out on diamond, trail

By Stephen Black

Mill Creek won the Class AAAAA-AAAAA cross country meet at the Berry College Clara Bowl Invitational in Rome last Saturday. Marietta came in second in the race with St. Pius X, racing out of its Class AAA standing, coming in third as Austin Sprague won the individual event in 15:53. The Hawks won the event largely due to finishing three racers in the top nine and four in the top 17. North Hall won the boys Class A-AAAA race with three top five finishers, led by Witt Nix in third place. Westminster came in third with three top 30 finishers, including Jordan Flowers in ninth. Chapel Hill and Cartersville rounded out the top five. Reilly Friedman of Galloway finished first in the individual at 16:20 and Mt. Paran's Joey Carr came in second at 16:34.

Walton won the girls Class AAAAA-AAAAA race at the Clara Bowl with four harriers finishing in the top 17 including Alexa Womack, who led the team by coming in fifth. Despite not having any runners finish in the top 10, Harrison came in second place with two top 20 runners in Elyse Bray and Emily Duvaris. Morgan Ainslie of Lassiter won the individual

race in 19:06. St. Pius X won the girls Class A-AAAA event with four finishers in the top 21 overall, including Devon Dabney at 21:02. White County came in second and North Hall finished third. Jenna Gearing won the race with a time of 19:40 while Pinecrest's Jessica Zalzman finished second.

Rome wasn't the only site for racing last Saturday as the Winder-Barrow girls won the Mountain Eagle Invitational in Clarksville, while Hart County won the boys race at the same event. Finally, the Union Grove boys won the Panther Invitational Saturday in Fayetteville while Starr's Mill finished runner-up.

VOLLEYBALL ACTION ...

No. 3 St. Pius X advanced to the Gold Bracket of the Lovett Block Party for the first time in team history after defeating Holy Innocents', Northgate and Etowah. The Golden Lions lost to Class AAAAA No. 1 Whitewater to open the tournament before falling to second-ranked Woodward Academy in the semifinals. Class AAA No. 1 Blessed Trinity improved its

school-record best start to 23-0 with wins last week over West Hall (25-10, 25-16) and East Hall (25-6, 25-19). The winning streak by the Titans is also the best in school history. Coach Paul Stevens' team has dropped just three sets all season, none to teams from Georgia.

DIAMOND NOTES ...

Class AAAAA No. 4 Lassiter beat No. 1 Kennesaw Mountain in a Cobb County showdown on Monday. The visiting Mustangs sprinted to a 5-0 lead but saw the Trojans score nine unanswered runs. Mackenzie Kaylor was 3-for-3 with a two-run homer and three RBIs for Lassiter while also closing out the final four innings with a scoreless relief pitching appearance. Malea Bell was 2-for-4 with a homer for Kennesaw Mountain.

Class AA No. 1 Wesleyan lost to Woodward Academy 4-0 last Friday. The War Eagles have now won their last four games after starting the season 4-5. Meanwhile, Class A No. 2 Mt. Pisgah has won eight straight games, including three last weekend at the Veterans Invitational in Walkinsville. In the tournament, the Patriots beat Winder-Barrow (9-1), Class AAAAA No. 5 Union Grove (7-1) and Class A No. 6 George Walton Academy (11-4) in convincing fashion.

Several individuals have started the season on fire. Lakeside-DeKalb currently possesses two of the top hitters in the state as Marie Collop is batting .600 and Aubrey Blackstock is hitting .595. Collop has 28 RBIs and 21 runs while Blackstock has scored 28 times and driven in 20 runs. Finally, Archer's Kanani Cabrales has four home runs this year and owns a .483 average with eight doubles and 18 RBIs.

Photo courtesy of Sonny Kennedy. Black can be reached at sblack@scoreatl.com.



**WEST FORSYTH
WOLVERINES**Head Coach **Frank Helper**

#	Name	Gr.	Pos.
2	Hunter Belue	12	FS
3	Momo Camara	12	LB
4	Tanner Bridges	12	WR
5	Drew Wesolowski	10	CB
6	Kendall Phillips	10	CB
7	Alef Chaul	12	LB
8	Ryan Guthrie	10	FS
9	Hampton McConnel	10	WR
10	Jake Wieczorek	12	RB
11	AJ Erdely	12	QB
12	Hunter Bradbury	11	CB
13	Timmy Hartshorn	11	K
14	John Conway	11	QB
15	Aubrey Mcbrayer	12	LB
16	Austin Mcewen	11	WR
17	Nick Walker	11	CB
18	Jacob Hill	12	CB
19	Dalton Lloyd	12	CB
19	Kris Gordon	10	CB
20	Trevor O'Brien	10	RB
21	Brian Porter	12	RB
22	Cole Staton	11	RB
22	Mason Bond	10	CB
23	Matt Lyon	11	RB
24	Jacob Allen	10	RB
25	David West	10	RB
25	Will Brown	12	DB
27	Austin Bell	10	FS
28	Alex Funderburk	11	FS/LB
30	Stephen Gallagher	12	FS
31	Chris Bissett	10	CB
32	Austin Rothenberger	11	RB
33	Conner Vandenbos	12	LB
34	Josh Gordon	12	FS
35	Gabe Pierce	11	RB
36	Zach Mitchell	11	CB
38	Kyle Chapman	10	RB
40	Justin Pratley	10	CB
41	Luke Johnson	10	CB
42	Alec Coburn	10	DE
43	Dillon Coats	11	LB
44	Austin Cook	10	RB
44	Austin Sanders	10	LB
45	Hunter Stewart	10	DE
46	Alex Eskew	11	LB
47	Brett Anderson	11	DT
48	Will Wyman	10	TE
48	Damien Alva	10	FS
49	Josh Salo	12	LB
49	Austin Ciunowicz	10	WR
50	Cody Mixon	12	OG
51	Will Wages	11	LB
52	Frankie Buenesada	11	LB
53	Andrew Marshall	11	C
54	Will Salisbury	11	LB
55	Travis Baugus	10	C
56	Evan Echols	11	DE
57	Will Bass	12	OG
58	Trevor Powalowski	10	OLB
60	John Salo	11	OG
61	Alan Pearson	10	OG
62	Noah Bartholomew	11	OG
63	Tyler Mallon	10	OG
64	Jake Smith	10	OT
65	Dustin Bean	10	OG
66	Zach Strong	10	OT
67	Gerrado Salazar	11	DT
70	Carson Adams	10	OT
71	Mitch Toure	10	OT
72	Branden Singleton	11	OT
73	Zach Bradbury	12	OT
74	Tyler Brannon	10	DT
75	Jayce Ratliff	11	OT
76	Stetson Godwin	10	DE
77	Matt Leeman	10	OT
77	James Thomas	12	OT
80	Blair Madryga	10	K
81	Aaron Rothenberger	10	TE
82	Casper Larsen	12	WR
83	Kyran Ochocki	11	WR
84	Nathan Schmitz	10	WR
85	Josh Davis	11	DE
86	Jesse Vogt	10	WR
87	Hunter Harrington	10	DE
87	Ryan Miller	10	TE
88	John Delf-Montgomery	11	TE
89	Ty Anderson	12	DE
90	Thomas Bartholomew	12	DE
99	Darryl Armstrong	10	DT

**ALPHARETTA
RAIDERS**Head Coach **Jason Dukes**

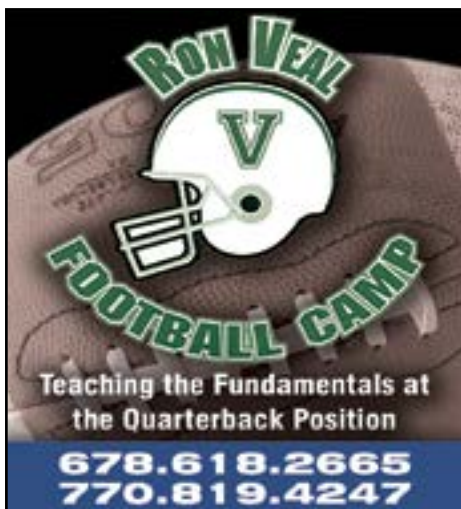
#	Name	Gr.	Pos.
1	Andre Harton	11	WR
2	Sefohn Perry	12	RB/DB
3	Michael Downing	12	DB
4	Evan Troutt	12	DB/P
5	Tre Whitaker	12	DB
6	Vito Priore	10	QB
7	Chase Stratton	11	DB
8	Rodney Morris	12	WR
9	Jared Clark	10	RB
10	Noah Brasch	11	LB
11	Josh Dobbs	12	QB
12	Ryan Kopec	10	WR
13	Tyler Daily	10	DB
14	Austin King	10	QB
15	Rustin Suter	10	WR
17	James Marbaugh	10	WR
18	Blake Rowlinson	12	WR
19	Austin Pulmano	11	WR
20	DeAndre Watkins	11	DB
21	Devin Mayers	10	DB
22	Lem Cobbs	10	RB
23	Adam Schildhammer	12	WR
24	Matt Moore	10	DB
25	Julian Macon	12	RB
26	Tate Rehklau	10	DB
27	William Downing	10	DB
28	Dylan Goss	12	WR
29	Pourya Alae	11	DB
30	Julian Adams	12	DB
31	Marvin Jenkins	12	DB
32	Michael Shannon	10	WR
33	Jay Youngblood	11	DB
34	Alex Turner	11	RB
35	Brandon Williams	11	DB
36	Nick Johnson	10	RB
37	Danny Gustave	10	LB
38	Pathik Shah	12	DB
39	CJ Washington	10	RB
40	Justin Albano	10	LB
41	Dorian Lee	10	LB
42	Bryce Grauss	11	LB
43	Jonathan Johnson	10	RB
44	Shadman Ibmamasud	10	LB
45	Percy Smallwood	12	DL
46	Afani Maduka	10	LB
47	Shane Ogelsby	10	LB
50	Tyler Hayward	10	OL
51	Tyler Keely	12	OL/TE/DE
54	Alex Behrend	12	LB/C
55	Chris Wagner	11	LB/C
56	Austin Hoffman	10	DL
57	Jake Behrend	10	LB/ DL
58	Andrew Butcher	10	DL
59	Nick Torrance	10	OL
62	DeAndre Wise	12	C
67	Cary Shirley	10	OL
69	Jacob Arnold	11	OL/ DL
70	Dylan Jones	10	C
71	Quinn Tucci	10	OL
72	Zack Mikos	11	OL
73	Brandon Walters	11	OL
75	Arman Qureshi	10	OL
76	Ethan Hunsinger	10	DL
78	George Adeosun	12	OL
79	D'Von Issac	12	OL/ DL
80	Mason Bolen	11	WR
81	Carlos Burse	12	WR/ATH
82	Nesean Crofford	10	WR
84	Jacob Cohen	10	WR
85	Brayn Monue	11	WR
86	Daniel Clements	11	WR
88	Brian Abedi	11	WR
90	Khan Cobbs	9	DL
91	Jack Boles	12	DL
92	Elijah York	12	DL
93	Jalin Johnson	11	LB
96	Malua Young	10	DL
97	Brian Barbu	12	P
98	Thomas Waller	11	K
99	Naim Mustafaa	Sr.	DL

**LOVETT
LIONS**Head Coach **Mike Muschamp**

#	Name	Gr.	Pos.
1	Spencer Lee	12	LB/RB
2	John Jameson	12	LB/RB
3	Ellery Haycook	12	DB/RB
4	Nick Sear	10	LB/RB
5	Luke Hart	12	LB/Q
6	Conrad Kinzey	12	LB/WR
7	Willie Candler	10	DB/Q
8	Jack McGranahan	11	LB/WR
9	Jackson Lourie	12	DB/WR
10	Grant Haley	11	DB/RB
11	Jack Stevenson	10	DB/Q
12	Will Carr	11	LB/WR
13	Mitchell Marino	12	DB/WR
14	Nicholas Cancelliere	11	LB/RB
15	Brant Wells	12	LB/RB
16	Chris Torie	11	DL/Y
17	Wes Haley	10	LB/RB
18	Winn Martin	12	DB/WR
19	Brendan McGowan	12	K
20	Jack Stevens	11	DB/WR
21	Linzy Scott	11	DB/WR
22	John Neal	11	DB/RB
23	Nick Boden	12	LB/WR
24	Ty Newberry	11	LB/RB
25	Tyler Shiflett	11	DB/WR
26	Foster Coleman	11	DB/WR
27	Garrett Chapman	11	DB/RB
28	Grant Towles	11	DB/WR
29	Arthur Winborne	12	DB/WR
30	Will Poplin	10	LB/WR
31	Jake Fulwiler	10	LB/WR
33	Eli Mercer	10	LB/RB
34	Jay Harris	9	DB/RB
35	Bennett Diaz	10	LB/RB
36	Alec White	10	DB/WR
37	Griffin Marshall	10	DB/WR
38	Andrew Siegel	12	DB/WR
39	Tommy Duffy	10	DB/WR
40	Alston White	12	LB/RB
41	Justin Garr	10	DB/WR
42	James Wilby	12	LB/TE
43	Eddie McCrady	11	DB/WR
44	Alex Port	12	DL/RB
46	Will Russ	10	LB/Y
47	Jack Barnes	10	DE/Y
48	Murphy Lee	10	DB/WR
50	Mac Warren	12	DL/OL
51	Eric Thomas	10	LB/OL
52	Bennett Gwynn	12	DL/OL
54	Tej Suber	11	DL/OL
55	John Coletti	12	LB/OL
56	Charlie Ingram	11	LB/OL
57	Corey Erdoes	12	LB/OL
58	Michael Corsini	10	DE/OL
59	Cros Saint	10	DE/OL
60	Deen Brooks	11	LB/OL
64	Forrest Bell	12	DL/OL
65	Preston Hill	12	DL/OL
66	Wesley Anthony	12	LB/OL
68	Patrick Keough	11	LB/OL
72	Carson Rich	10	DL/OL
73	Samad Ajao	11	DL/OL
74	Nathan Ofiutt	10	LB/OL
75	Jordan Pakula	12	DL/OL
76	Campbell Jones	10	DL/OL
77	Will Ewing	12	DL/OL
78	James Foster	11	DE/OL
80	Jack Herbert	10	DB/WR
81	Mathew Byers	11	DB/WR
82	Mac Budd	10	DB/WR
83	Jeremy Garr	10	DB/WR
84	Hardie Jackson	10	DB/WR
86	Craig Rollins	12	LB/Y
87	Jack Chambers	10	DB/WR
88	Will Geraghty	10	LB/WR
89	Alex Sayles	10	DB/WR

**ST. PIUS X
GOLDEN LIONS**Head Coach **Paul Standard**

#	Name	Gr.	Pos.
2	Ryan Foster	12	WR/DB
3	Ryan Braswell	12	FB/LB
4	Branden Mitchell	11	RB/DB
5	Kevin O'Toole	11	RB/LB
6	Ian Flinn	11	TE/DE
7	Matthew Nall	10	QB/DB
8	David Spratte	12	WR/DB
9	Chandler Cooper	11	TE/DE
10	Jack Spear	12	QB/DB
11	Robby Moots	10	RB/LB
13	Harris Woodward	12	WR/DB
14	Thomas O'Leary	11	K
15	Chris Wegener	11	WR/DB
16	Berlin Sewell	12	WR/DB
17	Ryan Kostensky	12	WR/DB
18	Fred Dorsey	11	WR/DB
19	Joey Connors	10	QB/DB
20	Nick Ruffin	11	RB/DB
21	Jack McIntyre	12	WR/DB
22	Jack Pelt	11	RB/DB
23	Sam Franke	10	RB/LB
24	Nick Glass	11	RB/DB
25	David DeLany	11	RB/DB
26	Matt Pearson	12	WR/DB
27	Michael Matthews	10	K
28	Michael Sikorski	12	WR/DB
30	Robby Jackson	12	RB/LB
32	Daniel Crochet	11	RB/LB
33	Brian O'Reilly	10	RB/DB
34	Julian Holloman	10	WR/DB
35	Nick Spear	10	RB/DB
36	Jared Natsh	10	WR/DB
37	Connor Hild	10	TE/DE
38	Grant Fairvalley	11	WR/LB
39	Blayne Bentley	11	RB/LB
40	Peter O'Reilly	11	WR/LB
41	Austin Thomas	10	WR/DB
42	Dalton Wilson	10	RB/LB
45	Casey Wilson	11	LS/DE
46	Forest Whitlark	10	RB/LB
47	Brennan Fitzpatrick	10	RB/LB
48	Patrick Winkeljohn	10	RB/LB
50	Kyle Johnson	12	OL/DL
51	Ty Mascara	10	OL/LB
52	Michael Reddaway	12	OL/LB
53	Andrew Jacon	10	OL/DE
54	Luke Stokes	10	OL/DL
55	Grayson Klinger	12	OL/DL
56	Liam Boggs	10	OL/DL
57	Quincy Niopote	12	OL/DL
58	Davis Price	12	OL/LB
59	Michael Caragher	11	OL/DL
60	Joe Newton	10	OL/DL
61	Connor Foarde	10	OL/DL
62	John Demos	11	OL/DL
63	Tommy Parks	11	OL/DL
64	David Marsau	12	OL/DE
65	Matthew Doelling	11	OL/DL
66	John Garner	10	OL/DL
67	Phineas Andrews	12	OL/DL
68	Matthew Coklan	10	OL/DE
69	Gilbert Orr	11	OL/DL
70	Jordan Reticker	11	OL/DE
72	Reid Lareau	11	OL/DL
73	Brian Dugan	10	OL/DL
74	Luke Taylor	12	OL/DL
75	Colm Boyer	10	OL/DL
76	Kyle Lewis	10	OL/DL
77	Andrew Carson	10	OL/LB
80	J.P.Graves	12	TE/DE
81	Jack Gray	10	WR/DB
82	Chandler Markham	11	WR/DB
83	Riley Gessner	10	TE/DE
84	Drew Einbender	10	WR/DB
85	Chris Braswell	10	TE/DE
86	Cameron Fannon	10	TE/DE
87	Brian Lentini	11	WR/DB
88	Bradley Schwaner	12	TE/DE
89	Frank Lentini	11	WR/DB



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BULLDOG BEAT



Comings, Vasser return for FAU contest

By Chris Lionetti

After a win against SEC-rival Missouri last weekend, the seventh-ranked Georgia Bulldogs return home to face the Florida Atlantic Owls Saturday. The game will kick off at 7:35 p.m. and be televised on CSS.

Freshman running back Todd Gurley started for the Bulldogs against Missouri and now finds himself listed as the starter on the Dawgs' Week 2 depth chart. Ken Malcome is Gurley's backup while fellow freshman Keith Marshall is the third-string running back.

Being listed as the starter on the depth chart is just that for Georgia. Head coach Mark Richt has done a good job of splitting the work between his backs this season and that will continue as long as it remains successful. Gurley received 13 more snaps than the other two tailbacks last week, and fans can expect that to always be the case going forwards.

Georgia regains the services of outside linebacker Chase Vasser and cornerback Sanders Commings this week after both served two-game suspensions. Vasser was suspended for a DUI and Commings for a misdemeanor battery charge.

Entering the season, both players were

tabbed as starters at their respective positions. However, both are listed as backups at their respective positions on this week's depth chart. Richt said Sanders will see time at both corner and safety against FAU and that Vasser will play but was not sure to what extent he would see the field.

The Dawgs are a 44.5-point favorite over the Owls, who are 1-1 on the season. FAU boasts the 10th-ranked pass defense in the country, but quarterback Aaron Murray will look to keep the momentum going from last week. Expect Georgia to be up big by halftime and to see a bit of Christian LeMay in the second half.

JONES HONORED ...

Outside linebacker Jarvis Jones had nine tackles, two sacks, one interception and two forced fumbles against Missouri. For his great game, he was named the SEC Defensive Player of the Week, Walter Camp National Player of the Week and the Nagurski National Defensive Player of the Week.

Lionetti can be reached at clionetti@scoreatl.com.

TECH BUZZ



ACC welcomes ND; Tech approves

By Travis Stigall

Wednesdays are usually slow with college football headlines; however, thanks to conference realignment, this past Wednesday had the media world in a frenzy. The Atlantic Coast Conference and Notre Dame announced a partial agreement that will put Notre Dame in the conference in 2014. The one catch is that the Fighting Irish will remain independent in hockey and football. As part of the agreement, the South Bend, Ind., school must play at least five ACC schools per year.

This is a win for both sides. Notre Dame keeps its historic independent mantra in football while the rest of the sports now compete in a more stable conference than the current arrangement with the Big East. Also, the Irish will be able to keep the school's massive television contract with NBC. On the flip side, ACC Commissioner John Swofford has to be pleased with this news, as the ACC now welcomes a new member that is prestigious in both academic and athletic standards. More importantly, due to adding a 15th member, the ACC now has a \$50 million buyout to leave the conference, rendering all rumors about Florida State and Clemson bolting meaningless.

TECH'S PERSPECTIVE ...

"From so many angles, this relationship will enhance the rich tradition of our league and provide new and exciting opportunities for

Georgia Tech and the ACC," Athletic Director Dan Radakovich stated. "I know Tech fans and sports fans throughout the region look forward to outstanding competition against the Irish for many years to come."

Georgia Tech and Notre Dame have a rich athletic history with each other. The two schools have met a total of 34 times on the gridiron, with the Jackets winning the last meeting 33-3 on the road in 2007. Although no one knows how often the Irish will rotate going forward, rumors are circulating that each ACC team will play Notre Dame once every three years.

HARDWOOD RAMIFICATIONS ...

Tech men's basketball is 6-2 all-time against the Irish, and like football, the last matchup between the teams was won by the Jackets. Coach Brian Gregory had only positive things to say about the new addition.

"Notre Dame is a tremendous addition to the ACC, a school of long-standing tradition of athletics, and it matches us perfectly in terms of academic prestige in this conference," said Gregory. "This also gets us into another major market - Chicago - and the ACC brand will continue to spread."

Stigall can be reached at tstigall@scoreatl.com.

PANTHER PROWL



Panthers playing with effort early

By Brian Jones

After a rough start to their season against South Carolina State, the football team looked to get better against Tennessee. The Panthers lost to the Vols 51-13, but head coach Bill Curry loved his team's effort throughout the contest.

"We fought and scratched every step of the way," Curry told georgiastatesports.com. "Are we playing the error-free football we need to, no. But we're playing with a lot of effort and we'll learn from this experience."

The Panthers had trouble stopping Vols quarterback Tyler Bray, who completed 18-of-20 passes for 310 yards and four touchdowns. Bray's go-to guy was Justin Hunter, who finished with eight catches for 146 yards and three touchdowns.

One of the bright spots for the Panthers was quarterback Ben McLane, who went 18-of-41 for 146 yards. He also scored the Panthers' lone touchdown on a 12-yard run.

"We showed much more grit and determination this game than last week, and we'll show more next week and the next week," Curry added.

Speaking of next week, the Panthers will be back in the confines of the Georgia Dome on Saturday to take on Texas-San Antonio. The

Roadrunners are coming off a 27-16 win over Texas A&M Commerce. This will be the first Saturday night home game for the Panthers as they kick off at 6 p.m.

DEVILISH AFFAIR ...

The men's soccer team took on Duke last Tuesday, falling 3-0 to the Blue Devils.

The Panthers kept it tight with the Blue Devils as both teams remained scoreless after the first half. It was a different story in the second half as the Blue Devils scored three goals in a 20-minute span. Two goals were scored by Sebastian Ibeagha and one was scored by Nick Palodichuk.

The Panthers will look to rebound against Mercer this Sunday in Macon.

MAKING HISTORY ...

Former Panthers defensive lineman Chris Bilukidi made history on Sunday as he played for the Oakland Raiders against the San Diego Chargers, making him the first Georgia State Player to play in an NFL game.

Jones can be reached at bjones@scoreatl.com

OWL OUTLOOK



Volleyball wins KSU Owls Classic

By Brian Jones

The volleyball team had quite a weekend as the Owls dominated the competition at their own tournament. KSU took on North Carolina-Central, Tennessee State, Chattanooga and Troy on Friday and Saturday at the Convocation Center and took down all four teams to win the KSU Owls Classic.

Baylee Strachan was named Tournament MVP as she tallied 38 kills and 13 blocks over the weekend. Keyaira Stevenson was named to the All-Tournament team after picking up 53 kills. It was the first all-tournament selection of her career.

The Owls lost just two of the 14 sets they played over the event, with Chattanooga and Troy each earning a set. With the four wins, the Owls improved to 8-3 on the year. They will head to Charlotte this weekend for the UNC-Charlotte Invitational.

OWLS DO CHARLESTON ...

The soccer team was on the South Carolina coast over the weekend for the College of Charleston Classic. The Owls took on Eastern Kentucky on Friday and defender Kelsey Barr scored two goals to lead the Owls to a 3-0 win.

"It was a good game," head coach Rob King told ksuowls.com. "We defended well when we needed to. We didn't really allow them any good chances and then we took our chances very well.

Frosty's goal was well placed. Kelsey's first header was very good off of a good service and her second header was a terrific goal. I'm very pleased with our finishing."

King was not pleased with the team's finishing the following day as KSU fell to South Florida 2-0. The Owls were outshot by the Bulls 13-4. The Owls will look to bounce back Saturday when they travel to Birmingham to face Samford. They will come back to KSU Stadium to host UT-Martin.

TENNIS TIME ...

The men's tennis team wrapped up play at the 45th Southern Intercollegiate Championships last Sunday and posted three singles wins.

Alexander Pena, Louis Theodor and Jorge Wilton notched singles wins in the consolation draw of Division II.

Tobi Menhofer lost in his quarterfinal match to Hunter Koontz of Virginia Tech, who went on to advance to the championship match of the Division II singles draw.

"I'm very pleased with our play in singles this weekend," head coach T.J. Greggs told ksuowls.com. "I saw some good things in doubles as well, but we have work to do."

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HAWKS HAVEN



Hawks still filling spots on roster

By Robby Kalland

After an active summer, the Hawks are getting ready to settle into their training camp that opens at the beginning of October. Atlanta is still making moves to round out its 15-man roster, and Wednesday signed Damion James to a one-year, non-guaranteed contract. Also signing recently was second-round pick Mike Scott, who officially became an Atlanta Hawk on Sept. 6. Scott will be on the final roster, but James' contract does not give him a spot on the final roster. James will merely be allowed to come to camp to try and impress the coaching staff and front office enough to make the team. James fills the need at small forward for the Hawks, and his defensive ability gives him a very good opportunity to make the squad.

NEW OFFENSE ...

As training camp approaches, Hawks fans should be excited to see how the new group will play together and what offensive system they will primarily utilize. All indications are that the Hawks will run a pick-and-roll offense a majority of the time, giving Jeff Teague the opportunity to create with the ball. Teague and Josh Smith were very effective last season when given the

chance to run pick-and-roll and expect that to be a large portion of the offense this season. The Hawks roster is made for the pick-and-roll with two very athletic big men that can also shoot in Smith and Al Horford, a great slashing point guard in Teague and a number of shooters on the outside who can spread the floor and open up seams in the defense for Teague.

For years, the Hawks have had the capability to be a good pick-and-roll team, but too often, the staff leaned on Joe Johnson and the now-infamous "Iso-Joe" offense. Without Johnson, the Hawks could possibly be a better offensive team because they no longer have that crutch to lean on. Johnson was the ultimate ball-stopper on offense, and with so many weapons on this roster, it might be addition by subtraction in getting rid of Johnson. Teague has very good vision and is one of the quickest guards in the league. He will be able to penetrate and facilitate off pick-and-rolls and pick-and-pops to either make a play himself or find an open look for one of the many sharp-shooters now on the Hawks.

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FALCONS BEAT



Falcons win, lose Grimes for year

By Craig Sager II

When news spilled Monday that starting cornerback Brent Grimes would be out the remainder of the season with an Achilles injury, it was a loss that was too significant to look past. The Falcons will miss the Pro Bowler's pass coverage and leadership, and spent the early part of the week adjusting. The team received the news on the heels of a Week 1 40-24 victory in Arrowhead.

Coach Mike Smith is hoping that Dunta Robinson and newcomer Asante Samuel can be the remedy. Chris Owens and Dominique Franks will compete for and fill the nickel position after Robinson was moved outside with Samuel. The corner position had been a rotating weapon in Mike Nolan's defense this whole offseason with three capable starters all switching to cover the right, left or nickel.

FIXING PROBLEMS ...

One problem area for the Falcons in Week 1 was defending the middle of the field on third downs. Kansas City has struggled in years past as a third down team, but was able to go 11-for-16 last Sunday to keep drives alive on many third and longs. Smith and Nolan hope to review the film and fix this before Peyton Manning tries to dissect this defense.

Matt Ryan stole the show Week 1 and is a strong candidate for player of the week. His

23-for-31 passing for 299 yards and three passing touchdowns with a rushing touchdown also could not have been a better debut for a well-conditioned Ryan and the Dirk Koetter play-book. Ryan was 74.2-percent throwing the ball, which well surpasses his career 61.1-percent. Ryan set a fast pace, and if these exact numbers were matched each week, it would look like a 4,784-yard, 48-touchdown season. NFC South rival Drew Brees threw for 5,476 yards and 46 touchdowns while completing 71.2-percent of his passes a season ago. This 2012 Falcons offense is unlikely to flirt with that record-breaking performance, but it certainly looks to be as potent an offense that the franchise has ever had.

MR. JONES ...

Julio Jones' six receptions for 108 yards and two touchdowns put him at a pace that, if he stayed healthy, could be a Calvin Johnson-type season, although his defensive respect will indeed grow as the season progresses. Roddy White will also share the load with Jones this season. The Broncos forced five sacks against the Steelers in Week 1 and look polished on both sides of the football. This will certainly be a measuring stick for what looks like a contending Falcons squad.

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CHOP SHOP

PRESENTED BY



Medlen, Braves stretch wild-card lead

By Fletcher Proctor

The Atlanta Braves welcomed Andrelton Simmons back to the starting lineup Monday after the shortstop missed more than two months with a broken bone in his right hand. The Braves headed to Milwaukee after a trip to New York and managed 10 hits but just one run in the first game, a 4-1 loss.

The Braves carried a 1-0 lead into the bottom of the seventh inning, but the Braves turned to the bullpen after starter Mike Minor could only go 5.2 innings after throwing 115 pitches. Atlanta could not improve Tuesday, falling 5-0 as Tim Hudson allowed four runs on seven hits over 6.2 innings. Despite the futile stretch, Atlanta still held a five-game lead in the Wild Card standings over St. Louis as of Wednesday, and a six-game lead over the Dodgers.

BREAKING OUT ...

Brian McCann and Dan Uggla had been struggling of late, with manager Fredi Gonzalez deciding to bench each player for stretches to jumpstart the lineup. McCann broke out of a recent 0-for-17 dry spell with a 4-for-5 game against the Mets, and he knocked home runs in back-to-back games. Uggla has also caught fire of late, going 8-for-19 (.421) since Sept. 6.

Uggla's average bottomed out at .206 before climbing back to .215 as of Wednesday.

Kris Medlen was named the Head & Shoulders Mane Man of the Month for August after allowing just two earned runs in 35.2 innings. He posted a 0.50 ERA and a 4-0 record with 35 strikeouts.

SO LONG ...

Chipper Jones played his final game in New York against the Mets last Sunday, pinching hitting in the ninth inning and drawing a walk after receiving a standing ovation from the Citi Field crowd. While many Braves fans remember the 1999 season when Jones tore up the Mets as well as his lifetime .313 batting average with 19 home runs in 88 career games at Shea Stadium, Jones could never quite find the same magic at Citi Field. Jones managed just 11 hits in 58 at-bats (.189) in 17 career games at Citi Field, and he managed just one hit in New York this season. Both of Jones' home runs in Citi Field came last year, when he collected seven of his hits and scored five runs and drove in six runs.

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DREAM BEAT



Atlanta closes in on postseason

By Joe Deighton

The 2012 season has been a roller coaster ride for the Atlanta Dream. In late August, the team was under .500 and then proceeded to fire its head coach and suspend its star player. The month of September has looked completely different for the Dream.

Atlanta is in position to earn a playoff berth after winning five of the last six games, including a big 77-61 victory over playoff-bound Seattle on Tuesday. Turnovers were a key in the first half, as Seattle gave it away four times in the opening moments of the game and Atlanta took a 19-14 first quarter lead. They stretched the lead to eight points by halftime and doubled it in the second half. Forward Angel McCoughtry led the way for the Dream, scoring 14 first half points and finished with 23.

DEFENSE WINS ...

Atlanta held Seattle to just 32-percent shooting in the first half and 39-percent for the entire game. The Dream limited the Storm's sharpshooter Sue Bird down the stretch. Bird hit one three-pointer, but managed only five points against Atlanta's tough perimeter defense. Dream forward Sancho Lyttle came up with four key steals, contributed four rebounds and a block shot to go along with 13 points on the night.

McCoughtry also had two of the team's six blocks.

"I love the way we are playing right now," McCoughtry told swishappeal.com. "We are playing really well together and it's showing. Everything has been going wonderful and I hope we keep this great team energy up for this upcoming road trip and then the playoffs."

PLAYOFF PUSH ...

The "magic number" as of Wednesday for the Dream to clinch a playoff spot was down to one. That means a win or any loss by Chicago puts Atlanta back in the postseason. Atlanta is 17-14 through Sept. 12 and will most likely clinch the third playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. The Dream would play the Indiana Fever in a first-round matchup. Atlanta and Indiana faced each other five times this season with the Fever taking the season series 3-2. It will also be a rematch of last year's Eastern Conference finals, a series that Atlanta won 2-1.

The Dream finishes the regular season with three games on the road at Washington, Chicago and Connecticut. A win in any of those games could be a playoff clincher. Fans are guaranteed at least one more game at Philips Arena during the postseason.

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