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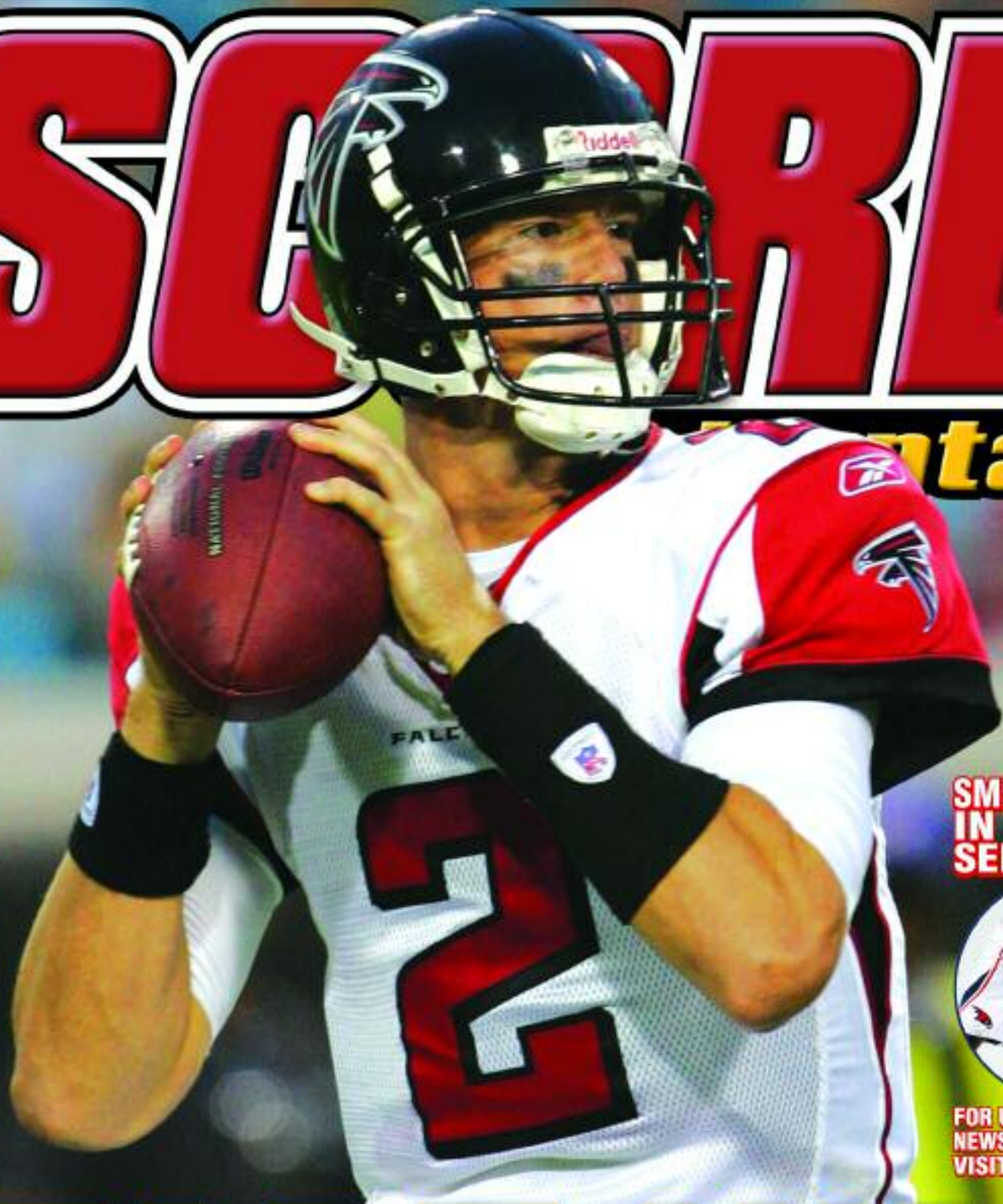


AUGUST 13-19, 2008

ATLANTA'S WEEKLY SPORTS TALK NEWSPAPER

VOL 4 NO 33

SCORE



**SMITH STAYING
IN ATLANTA
SEE PAGE 17**



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AUG 15 SF 7:30pm FRI	AUG 16 SF 7:00pm SAT	AUG 17 SF 1:30pm SUN	AUG 18 SF 4:30pm MON	AUG 19 @NYM 7:00pm TUE	AUG 20 @NYM 7:00pm WED	AUG 21 @NYM 7:00pm THU	AUG 22 @STL 8:00pm FRI	AUG 23 @STL 3:35pm SAT	AUG 24 @STL 2:00pm SUN	AUG 25 @STL 7:00pm MON	AUG 26 @FLA 7:00pm TUE	AUG 27 @FLA 7:00pm WED	AUG 28 @FLA 7:00pm THU	AUG 29 @WAS 7:30pm FRI	AUG 30 @WAS 7:00pm SAT	AUG 31 @WAS 1:30pm SUN
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IN YOUR FACE...

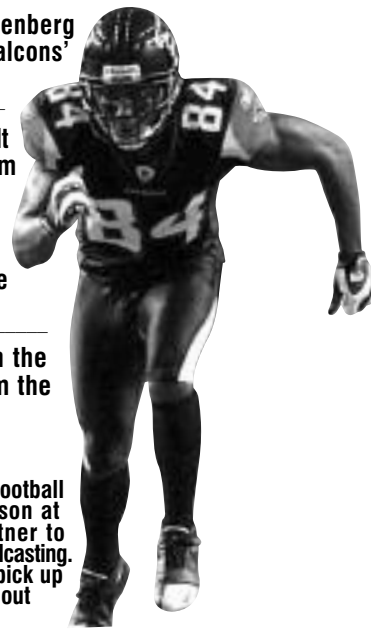


SLAM IT HOME: Hours after Josh Smith signed an offer sheet with the Memphis Grizzlies, the Hawks matched the deal to keep the restricted free agent in Atlanta. Smith was the Eastern Conference's leading shot-blocker last season and played an instrumental role in the Hawks' playoff run. And who could forget his 2005 Slam Dunk Championship? Photo courtesy of Scott Cunningham.

WHAT'S ON THE INSIDE

WWW.SCOREATL.COM

- 5** In his "Sitting in the Cheap Seats" column, I.J. Rosenberg explains why he believes Matt Ryan should be the Falcons' starting quarterback this season.
- 12** 790 The Zone's Chuck Oliver has an idea: take Vanderbilt out of the Southeastern Conference and replace them with Southern Mississippi.
- 15** Check out our Falcons beat page for results from the team's first preseason game! Roddy White (pictured) caught the first touchdown pass of 2008.
- 22** Tad Arapoglou says it "doesn't get any better than the Summer Olympics" and lists the top highlights from the first week of action.



A SCORE UPDATE: Score will open up with a strong Friday night high-school football doubleheader on Aug. 29 when we broadcast the Harrison at Peachtree Ridge game on 790 The Zone and then partner to webcast the Marist at St. Pius rivalry with Georgia Public Broadcasting. Both games will start at 7:30 p.m. and you will be able to pick up the webcast by going to Scoreatl.com and GPB.org. Check out Score next week for more information.

TEAM PAGES | COLUMNS

COVER DESIGN BY DAVID GAUDIO; COVER PHOTO COURTESY OF JIMMY CRIBB/ATLANTA FALCONS.

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NFL rookies and a 1970s Kellogg's 3-D set

At this time of year, it's all about the rookies. With the first set of NFL preseason games in the books, football fans, fantasy players and collectors comb the sports blogs daily to try and gain some insight on who will return big dividends this year. Save yourself some time. Check out Zindler's List and see what the current market value is and who has the greatest potential to cash in.

Darren McFadden, RB, Oakland Raiders: One of the top draft choices and should see a lot of action from the start of the season. Tremendous potential. Autographed helmet: \$280.

Matt Ryan, QB, Atlanta Falcons: First quarterback taken in the draft. The Falcons and the rest of the football world expect big things from him. We'll get to see it first-hand. Autographed football: \$50.

Jonathan Stewart, RB, Carolina Panthers: He will have to split carries with DeAngelo Williams, but this guy was a workhorse at Oregon. Could be a sleeper. Autographed football: \$75.

Felix Jones, RB, Dallas Cowboys: The other Arkansas running back will be returning kicks this year for the Cowboys and splitting carries with Marion Barber. Explosive speed. Autographed football: \$80.

Limas Sweed, WR, Pittsburgh Steelers: The Steelers have a great eye for wide-receiver talent, so don't be surprised if this little talked-about second-round draft choice out of Texas becomes a household

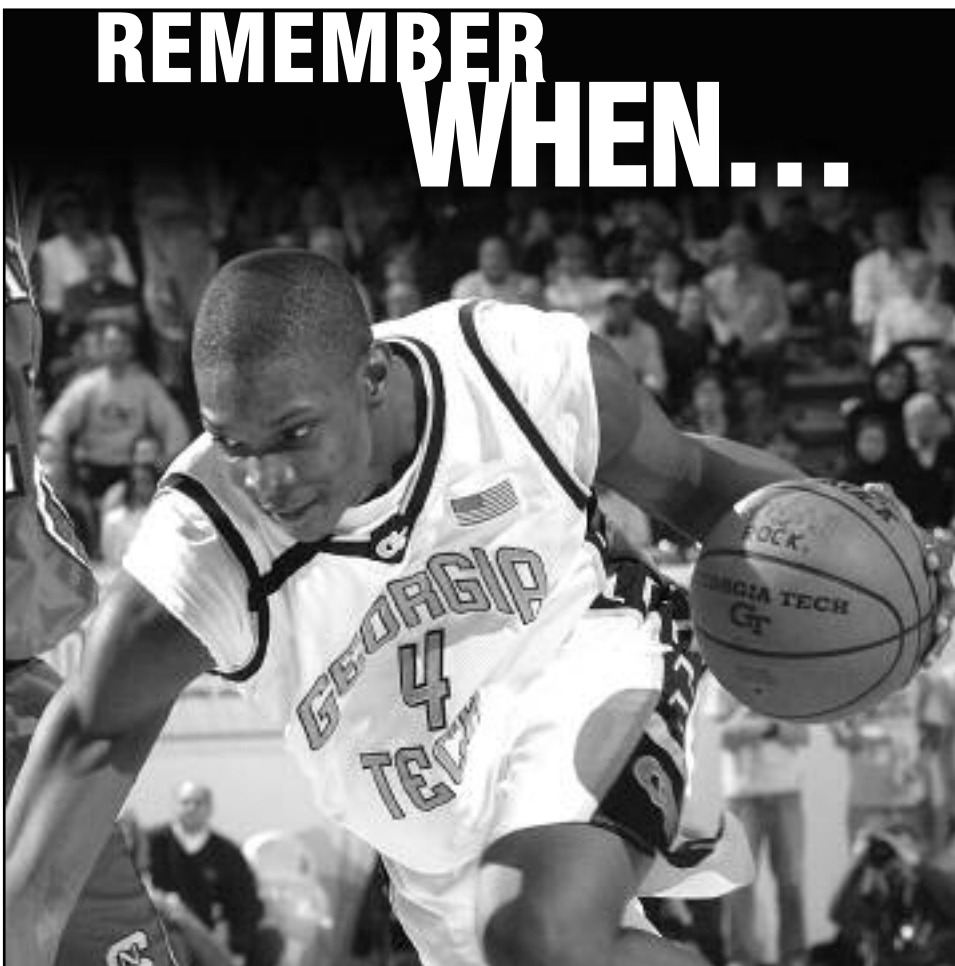
name. Could be the deal of the draft. Autographed jersey: \$75.

FROM THE MAILBAG ...

Dear Dean: I have some 3-D baseball cards from the early and mid 1970s. If I remember correctly I think I got them out of cereal boxes. Are they worth anything?

Dear Psychedelic 70s: Kellogg's issued 3-D baseball cards throughout the 1970s and the early part of the 1980s. They typically inserted one card per pack of cereal. Usually at the end of the year, Kellogg's would also run a mail-in offer where complete sets were available direct from the company. The 1971 cards are the scarcest issue, as this was the only year the company did not make sets available to the public. The only year the cards were issued in a non-3-D format was 1973. Values for the cards depend on player, year and condition with the early 1970s cards being most valuable. The cards have a heavy plastic coating to give the 3-D effect and are very prone to cracking. Here is a list of what several of the sets are worth: 1970 set (\$250); 1971 set (\$1,000); 1972 set (\$100); 1973 set (\$85); 1974 set (\$60); 1975 set (\$100); 1976 set (\$150); 1977 set (\$50). Kellogg's also produced football card 3-D sets in 1970 and 1971, which are very popular with collectors.

Want to know what your item is worth or have a question about a particular sports item? E-mail me, Dean Zindler, at dzindler@scoreatl.com.



REMEMBER WHEN...

CARRYING THE TORCH: Chris Bosh played just one season at Georgia Tech before jumping to an NBA career, but the current Olympian is representing the Jackets well so far in Beijing. Bosh had nine points, eight rebounds and three steals in Team USA's opening-round win over China on Sunday. Photo courtesy of Georgia Tech.



Next Event! AUG 29-31



The ongoing, emotionally charged battle between Rockstar Makita Yoshimura Suzuki teammates Ben Spies and Mat Mladin for the AMA Superbike championship could be decided at Road Atlanta. The Suzuki Superbike Showdown presented by Rockstar will feature championship points-paying Superbike races both Saturday and Sunday.

This is the 10th Encore of Superbike racing at Road Atlanta, home of the original doubleheader format, and all three podium positions in each of the six races should be wide open, full throttle battles among representatives from Honda, Yamaha, Kawasaki, Ducati and Suzuki.

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After impressive preseason opener, Ryan proved he deserves to start at QB

It's too early to make any predictions for Matt Ryan.

But one thing is for sure: Come Sept. 7 when the Detroit Lions pull into town for the first game of the season, Ryan should be the Falcons' starting quarterback. No question about it.

While his performance in Saturday night's exhibition game was just his first NFL action, Ryan proved he is a quick learner and can handle himself right now on this level. Sure, the mistakes will come, but against Jacksonville over the weekend, Ryan completed nine of 15 passes for 113 yards with a 25-yard touchdown pass and, while he fumbled two snaps, he was able to fall on the ball and physically handle two sacks on separate plays.

Ryan appears to be on the road to becoming ready and Falcons head coach Mike Smith said after the game, "I thought Matt looked really good. We wanted to get Matt in there early and designed to get him in there against a very, very good and efficient defense. He did good and competed very well ... no interceptions and had a 105.7 quarterback rating. I think for a rookie, first time out; that is a pretty good outing."

Instead of some crazy spread offense, which a coach like Bobby Petrino would run, the Falcons put Ryan in a position to succeed against the Jags and gave us a glimpse of what we can expect on that side of the ball this year. The Falcons are not asking Ryan to be their savior but are instead relying on the big legs of Michael Turner and company while setting up a lot of quick, short passes to keep Ryan from spending lots of time in the pocket. His touchdown throw to Roddy White, while to the wrong shoulder of the receiver, was a strong throw, which White turned and grabbed, again proving a quarterback is mostly only as good as his receivers.

Ryan certainly piqued the interest of Falcons fans on my Sunday radio show on 790 The Zone, as we received more than 20 calls about the team over a two-hour period. The listeners also wanted to talk about D.J. Shockley, who came in late and came close to leading the team to a winning score. But while his career at Georgia makes Shockley a local favorite (and I know I would like to see him succeed in this league), he is playing for the third quarterback spot on the roster.

The Falcons have made a decision on their quarterback of the future and Ryan is that guy, signing a \$72 million deal after going No. 3 in last April's draft. That's why I think it is so important for Ryan to get most of the first-team snaps throughout the rest of the preseason.

Also, the AJC's Falcons beat writer Steve Wyche was at the game and got some insight on something important that didn't

show up Ryan's stat line, writing, "The most positive thing about Matt Ryan was how he treated his teammates on the field. In one instance, Justin Blalock drew an illegal procedure penalty when the team was in scoring position. Instead of ignoring things or sending off bad body language, Ryan raced right up to the left guard, patted him on the back and told him not to worry about things. Things like that go a very long way in getting teammates to respect you and protect you."

This should excite Falcons fans and at least begin to make believers out of those that



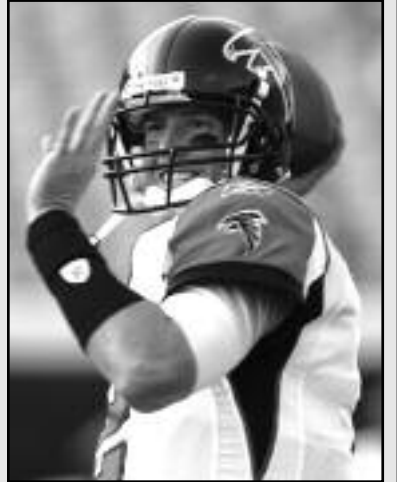
STATE REPRESENTATIVES: Both Chaunte Howard (left) and Gil Stovall are former collegiate athletes from the State of Georgia who are competing for the U.S. in the Summer Olympics. Howard, from Georgia Tech, will be in the high jump on Aug. 20, and Stovall, from UGA, swam in the men's 200-meter butterfly on Tuesday. Photos courtesy of Georgia Tech and UGA.

WILL SOMEBODY TELL ME ...

Sorry, while it seems like the rest of the mainstream (mostly liberal) media loved the opening ceremonies and is ready to forgive China for being a human rights disaster, I didn't get it. Money will buy anything and, from a technical side, I guess it was impressive. But what did it have to do with the Olympics and, for that matter, what did it have to do with China? I guess it did show that the Chinese can march in a straight line, which makes sense considering they now have the



ON THE COVER



Before Saturday's preseason game against Jacksonville, many wondered if rookie Matt Ryan would be ready to step in as the Falcons' starting quarterback. Now, far less people are wondering. Ryan threw for 113 yards and completed his first touchdown in NFL competition, a 25-yard strike in the second quarter. Head coach Mike Smith was pleased with Ryan's performance, stating, "I thought Matt passed the test in terms of poise and execution. I thought for the first time in an NFL game he was very impressive." The above photo and the cover shot of Ryan are each courtesy of Jimmy Cribb/Atlanta Falcons.

SPORTS RADIO 790 THE ZONE CATCH I.J. ON SUNDAYS

'The Falcons have made a decision on their quarterback of the future and [Matt] Ryan is that guy ... That's why I think it is so important for Ryan to get most of the first-team snaps throughout the rest of the preseason.'

felt the team should not have taken Ryan with the third overall pick. Remember that the quarterback position in the NFL is the hardest spot to play in any sport and certainly the hardest position to fill with talent. I always like to say: Name me 10 quarterbacks in a league of 32 teams that you consider very good. Not easy, huh?

Well, the good news is it was a good first performance and, more importantly, displayed a team that struggled so much last year—both on and off the field—but one that is finally beginning to show a heartbeat.

biggest army in the world. But where was the meat? While we in Atlanta were torn apart by the international media when the Olympics were here in 1996, at least our opening ceremonies had one of the most memorable moments ever, with a shaking Muhammad Ali standing high atop the stadium holding the Olympic torch. Lately, I have spent some time reading about past Olympics and back in 1936, when the Germans held the Games in Berlin, they also put on quite a show. We all know now it was nothing but propaganda. I am not comparing what we saw last Friday to Berlin and

certainly not suggesting China will lead us down the same path the Germans did afterwards. I'm just saying don't get so caught up in fancy lights, fireworks and loud drums. The proof of whether this county has really changed and deserves the respect of the civilized part of this world will come later. And by the way, it's nice to see our President having a good ol' time in Beijing. I'm sure glad he's focused on our economy, which is just humming along.

We found out why Rosenberg isn't so fond of mainland China. In college, after stepping out of his football uniform, our publisher was considered one of the top intramural ping pong players in the nation but was knocked off by a Chinese national in a championship event. It was reported later that the national had an expired visa, causing one of the great intramural ping pong controversies ever. I.J. has never gotten over it. Meanwhile, between the ping and the pong or the pong and the ping, Rosenberg can be reached at ijrosenberg@scoreatl.com and 404-256-1572. Just don't email him that we mentioned this; otherwise, Rosenberg may start outsourcing our work to China, leaving us all out on the streets.



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SCORE LIST

BY TAD ARAPOGLOU

- 1 **BROADWAY BRETT:** Now that Brett Favre is with the Jets, count on them to win the Super Bowl. Never mind their weak group of DBs or that they're in the same division as the Patriots. With Favre there – fuhgedabowdit. Super Bowl champs.
- 2 **FIRST LOOK:** You can't make much of preseason, but there were some things to be excited about in the Falcons' loss. Matt Ryan's efficient passing, Brent Grimes's coverage, Curtis Lofton's tackling and Roddy White's hands all impressed me.
- 3 **STILL HERE:** The Hawks have had their struggles over the past decade, but would Josh Smith REALLY have wanted to go to the Grizzlies? The team with 10 seasons of 28 or less wins in 13 years of existence? Glad you're staying, Smoove.
- 4 **YOUNG GUNS:** Saturday was a prime example that the Braves' future can still be promising with Brian McCann and Jair Jurrjens. McCann blasted his 21st homer and had four RBIs, while Jurrjens won his 11th game, tops among rookie pitchers.
- 5 **SUMMER GLORY:** What a spectacular opening ceremony for the Olympics, far and away the Summer Games' best ever. As for the actual Games, Dunwoody's own Sada Jacobsen represented well as Georgia's first medalist this year (saber fencing).
- 6 **BACK ON TRACK:** Speaking of the Olympics, it's great to see the "Redeem Team" tearing it up. I don't know if I've ever seen as many exciting dunks in one game as the U.S. had in their 101-70 win over China. The gold will be coming home.
- 7 **VIKINGS AT 2:** On ESPN.com's preseason high-school football rankings, Lowndes came in at No. 2 overall behind Trinity (Texas). The defending 5A champs joined Camden Co. (No. 21) and Northside-Warner Robins (No. 47) in the top 50.
- 8 **FIRST PANTHER?:** The AJC reported that Henry County QB Drew Little may be interested in playing at Georgia State in 2010. Said Little, "They told me it'd be a good chance to be the first recruit ever there. They're definitely on my list."
- 9 **FORE SHAME:** Two rounds of golf in one day with no Tiger Woods – yeah, I think I'll pass. I can't even remember a time where there was so little interest in the PGA Championship as last Sunday. Oh wait, yeah I can: before Tiger.
- 10 **CAN'T SINK IT:** By this weekend, "The Dark Knight" will likely be the second-highest grossing movie ever (passing \$461 mil) ... but it will never beat "Titanic" at No. 1 (\$601 mil). Makes sense; Celine Dion is scarier than The Joker anyway.

DUE UP

HOTTEST THINGS TO SEE AND DO OVER THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS

BY JOSH BAGRIANSKY

- WEDNESDAY 13** **2008 Summer Olympics. NBC.**
Watch as the world's best athletes battle for the gold all day! Scheduled medal events include men's and women's swimming, wrestling, and women's gymnastics, among many others! For a full schedule, check out NBC.com.
- THURSDAY 14** **Chicago Cubs vs. Braves. 640 AM/94.9 The Bull. FSN South.**
With so many vets banged up, it's time to get a look at that great young talent that we hear about. The Cubs have had a good season thus far – can they win their first World Series in 100 years? First pitch is at 7 p.m.
- FRIDAY 15** **USA Basketball vs. Spain. NBC.**
You won't see a better international basketball game than this. Check out LeBron James and the Americans as they battle Spain, which is also among the favorites and features Pau Gasol. Coverage starts at 10:15 a.m.
- SATURDAY 16** **Indianapolis vs. Falcons. 92.9 Dave FM. WATL.**
Finally, a new season and new era of Falcons football has arrived! Get out to The Dome and cheer on the Dirty Birds in their first home appearance of the season against the 2007 champions. Gametime is 7:30 p.m.
- SUNDAY 17** **Sharpie 500. ESPN.**
Bristol Motor Speedway always makes for one of the most exciting races of the year. And with The Chase just around the corner, this race takes on extra importance for drivers hovering around 10th in points. Coverage begins at 7 p.m.
- MONDAY 18** **Braves vs. San Francisco. 640 AM/94.9 The Bull. SportSouth.**
The season won't last much longer, so make sure to find time to get out to Turner Field while you still can. Check out the Giants and Braves in a Monday Matinee. First pitch is scheduled for 4:30 p.m.
- TUESDAY 19** **Little League World Series. ESPN.**
This event never disappoints. Watch for continuing coverage on ESPN and ESPN2 as some of baseball's finest "young talents" on the planet go at it. Coverage continues all day Tuesday and throughout the week.

WHOS HOT

THUMBS UP TO
FINALLY RE-SIGNING



Josh Smith

The star forward worried local fans by signing an offer sheet with the Memphis Grizzlies on Friday, but the Hawks matched the offer hours later to keep him in Atlanta. Smith's new deal is worth \$58 million over the next five years.

Matt Ryan

The Falcons lost their first preseason game but the team's top draft pick looked sharp in his first NFL action. Ryan went 9-for-15 with 113 yards, a touchdown and no picks. No other quarterback threw for more than 64 yards on either team.

Tom Glavine

The 22-year veteran has completed his rehab and will reenter the Braves' starting rotation. Glavine, who has missed more than two months of action with an elbow injury, will get the start on Thursday against the Chicago Cubs.

David A. Talbot

Incarcerated quarterback Michael Vick asked Talbot to help him navigate bankruptcy ... and last week, Talbot was accused of helping swindle more than \$500,000 from church members in New Jersey. The drama never ends with Vick.

Quintin Banks

The top-ranked Bulldogs will likely be without the services of Banks for six weeks after the No. 2 strong safety went down with a knee injury last Saturday. With Donovan Baldwin suspended, the loss of another talented safety is tough.

Chuck James

After allowing three runs in four innings last Wednesday against San Francisco, James suffered his fourth straight MLB loss. James was sent back down to the minors and currently has a 2-5 record with a 9.10 ERA in the Majors in 2008.



WHOS NOT

THUMBS DOWN TO
A ROUGH YEAR

CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

2,033 Rushing yards conceded by the Falcons last season (26th in NFL, last in NFC)

88.2 Opposing quarterbacks' rating against the Falcons last season (eighth-worst in NFL)

25.9 Points per game conceded by the Falcons last season (fourth-most in the NFL)

HARRINGTON STILL 'FOCUSED'

Padraig Harrington is now a force in the world of golf. After he won the British Open for the second time last month, I wrote that he looked like a focused man. That focus took him to a third major last week. Harrington outlasted the field and is now halfway to the career grand slam. He will go for three in a row at the Masters. I hope Tiger is there.



Sergio came close again. A bad shot at 16 and a short miss at 17 did

him in. I do think he will win a Major before his career is over but his close calls are becoming legendary. His career reminds me of Greg Norman in a way.

And congratulations to Atlanta's Stewart Cink on making the Ryder Cup team. This will be Stewart's fourth Ryder Cup appearance. Brian Katrek can be heard on 790 The Zone's "On The Green with Brian Katrek" Sundays from 8-9 a.m. and can be reached at bkatrek@790thezone.com.

SANITY AT LAST

"I wanted to win that game. It's funny, Jack [Del Rio] said, 'Hey, I love you, man, for not trying that field goal.' There's no need in the preseason to plan for overtime."

- Falcons head coach
Mike Smith

THE SPIN

NEWS - NOTES - QUOTES

FROM THE ATLANTA SPORTS BEATS BOTH ON & OFF THE FIELD

SCORE

Owen wins award for ninth time and Little League baseball team eliminated

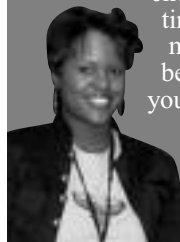
TIME TO SPEAK UP

The USA men's basketball team is probably not going to stage a political protest during these Olympic Games. Today's athletes are not built like yesterday's athletes. Their priorities are perhaps a little different. Team USA's silence on Darfur has many people angry, but their anger is misdirected. It should not be directed at Kobe Bryant or LeBron James; it should be directed towards the Chinese government.

Since when do we need other people to be angry for us? Yes, LeBron and Kobe are way more popular than most Americans can ever hope to be, but that doesn't mean if they don't speak out then no one should. I've spoken with many people who have voiced their displeasure with Team USA's reluctance to speak out against the Chinese government, but not one of those people has done anything of substance to voice their displeasure about the situation in Darfur. The truth is, we should all be outraged and we should all be doing something, anything. The truth is, none of us are.

It's easy for us to rationalize our inactivity by hiding behind the fact that we're just one little person working in a cubicle in an office for a small company. "No one is going to listen to us anyway." That's a sad excuse. You don't have to be a millionaire to change the world, nor do you have to have an established name. While we all sit around waiting on the popular people to do something, nothing is getting done. Every other week we have to pick something new to be outraged about. This week we are supposed to be outraged that a basketball team comprised of young millionaire athletes isn't outraged about things going on halfway across the world. Could they use their voice to do more? Certainly, but so could you and I. Instead we're sitting around pointing fingers at others who choose to do nothing. Next time we want to pass judgment, we should remember the old adage "when you point a finger at someone there are three pointing back at you".

C.C. can be reached at cfelicec@yahoo.com.



OHHH YEAHHH! This Saturday, the Falcons finally return to the Georgia Dome ... and so do the gorgeous cheerleaders! Consider this for a moment: the New York Giants may have won the Super Bowl last year, but they don't even have cheerleaders. Would you really want to root for a team that doesn't have beautiful dancers on the sidelines? We wouldn't. Photo courtesy of Jimmy Cribb/Atlanta Falcons.

CHECK THIS OUT!

Summer is coming to an end, and it's time to make the most of the warm weather. Close out the summer the right way by running in the 6th Annual Adams Realtors 5K Run For the Park on Aug. 30. The race takes place in Grant Park, and all proceeds go to the Grant Park Conservatory's efforts to help restore the park. All participants also get t-shirts, food and prizes, with ages ranging from 10 and under to 65 and over – and all ages in between! Register before Aug. 23 for just \$20, or after Aug. 23 and on race day for \$25. Check-in starts at 7 a.m. and the race starts at 8 a.m. Don't forget, the run is only a part of the fun at Grant Park, which plays host to the Summer Shade Festival all weekend, featuring food and musical performances.

HERE'S THE SCOOP ...

Compiled by Scott Janovitz

After polling all golf coaches in the division, it was announced last week that Oglethorpe University men's golf coach Jim Owen was named 2008 SCAC Men's Golf Coach of the Year. The 2008 award marked the ninth time Owen has earned the honor in the last 11 years. He now joins a short list of SCAC coaches to have won nine or more COTY honors in the same sport. Thanks to his great coaching, the Petrels won their league-high seventh SCAC men's golf title at this year's Spring Sports Festival and went on to place sixth at the 2008 NCAA Division III men's championships. Owen is the brother-in-law of Georgia State announcer and *Score Atlanta* writer Dave Cohen.

The Olympics began last week and it didn't take long for a Georgia athlete to contribute to the American medal count. On Saturday, Dunwoody native Sada Jacobsen earned the silver medal in the women's individual saber final. Jacobsen lost 15-8 to fellow American Mariel Zagunis, who also won gold at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. Jacobsen took home the bronze four years ago. An American also took home the bronze in this year's individual saber competition, making it a U.S. sweep.

After conquering the world by defeating a team from Japan in last year's Little League World Series, the All-Stars from Warner Robins found themselves eliminated from contention last Wednesday. In

thrilling fashion, WWLL fell 16-14 to Alabama in Gulfport, Fla. Trailing 11-5 and down to their final out with no one on base, the central Georgia team exploded for nine runs, giving themselves a 14-11 lead. Yet, three Alabama homers in the next inning ended an improbable comeback as well as Warner Robins' hopes for a repeat. The loss came in the Southeast Regional semifinal. The team was only two wins away from making another trip to Williamsport, Penn.

GAMEDAY COMING ...

If Clemson and Alabama coming to the Georgia Dome to start the college season wasn't exciting enough, the game just got a big-time boost, as it was announced last week that ESPN's College GameDay will be in town for the action. The college-football highlight show will broadcast from Atlanta's Centennial Olympic Park on Aug. 30. The game itself will be televised on ABC.

The U.S. Golf Association, for the first time in 80 years, mandated an equipment scale back on Tuesday of last week. The new rule will reduce the size and shape of the grooves in club heads by 2010. In their current form, the deeper, sharper grooves on irons allow the elite players to control their shots out of deep rough with great accuracy, which has reduced the importance of driving accuracy. The rule change will thus put a new premium on consistently hitting fairways.

INJURY UPDATES ...

In other college-football news, it was announced last week that Auburn defensive back Aairon Savage will miss the entire 2008 season after undergoing knee surgery. Savage, a junior from Albany, Ga., started at safety for the Tigers last season and finished the year with 26 tackles. According to Savage's brother, the player dislocated his kneecap and tore his ACL and MCL in last Monday's practice. As a result of the injury, Savage is eligible to receive a medical red-shirt and could return in 2009 with two years of eligibility remaining. In other Tiger news, former Carver-Columbus standout quarterback DeRon Furr has left the program. Furr enrolled at Auburn last January, but became disgruntled after multiple position changes. His next football destination was not known at press time.

Falcons rookie linebacker Robert James will also be forced to miss the entire upcoming season due to lingering symptoms from a prior concussion. After a specialist determined he was not recovering from the concussion as well as expected, the Falcons waived the fifth-round draft pick from Arizona State. The news is particularly significant considering all the recent publicity concussions in football have received. Recent studies have linked such head trauma to depression and other mental illnesses in former NFL players.

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ON THE GREEN
COURTNEY CAPPS



Harrington makes history at Oakland Hills

I don't know about most of you, but I have never done anything where people start a conversation by telling people that I am the first to ever do ... whatever. Padraig Harrington's list on Sunday, after closing out The 90th PGA Championship, included being the first European to win back-to-back majors, the first European to win the PGA in 78 years, and the first European to ever win the PGA as a medal (stroke) play event (it was a match-play tournament in 1930 when Tommy Armour won).

Harrington blushed a little and was clearly thrilled as the moderator read that list of firsts during the champion's press conference last Sunday evening, but he absolutely beamed when it was announced that he was the first Irishman to ever win a PGA. This is a man clearly proud of his heritage. He enjoys being Irish - and who can blame him since we all enjoy "being Irish" every year on March 17.

Thanks to a little help from Mother Nature, one of the toughest golf courses in America became a little more playable on Sunday, and gave players a chance to play aggressively after heavy storms interrupted play on Saturday. Much of the field had to play more than 18 holes on Sunday, some as many as 36. As it is with most majors, the excitement started on the back 9 of the final round. This was no exception as Harrington, Sergio Garcia and Ben Curtis battled to the very end. Charlie Wi was in the picture until bogeys at 13 and 15 put him too far behind to catch up. Once again, it was Harrington's ability to come up with a clutch shot from a tough position that carried him to victory. His 10-foot par putt at 16, followed by a great 5-iron and an eight-foot downhill slider for birdie at 17, followed by a 15-foot

downhiller at 18 made for one of the all-time great finishes in a major. Padraig Harrington now joins Ernie Els, Phil Mickelson and Retief Goosen on the list of active players with three majors. (That Tiger guy still has a slight lead with 14.)

Now Harrington has seven months to enjoy his trophies and be badgered by questions about a "Paddy Slam" if he wins The Masters and U.S. Open next year, but in between, he will be taking a lot of confidence into the Ryder Cup and FedExCup playoffs. I get the feeling he will be enjoying every minute between now and then.

OPEN NOTE TO SERGIO ...

Sergio: believe it or not, there ARE those of us out here that recognize and enjoy your talent, and don't need to ask idiotic and repetitive questions in the hopes of getting an emotional response to know that you are disappointed that you didn't win. Some of us can look at a person and know that they are a little down after losing a tournament that means so much. That kind of lazy "journalism" belongs in a tabloid, not in a major championship press conference. You did an excellent job controlling your emotions and responses in front of that bunch of jackals, knowing that if you gave them what they wanted, they would do everything they could to make you look foolish. Personally, I applaud your walk-out at the end. There was no reason to continue with that childish line of questioning. Best of luck in the playoffs and Ryder Cup, and we'll be looking forward to watching you play here in Atlanta at THE TOUR Championship.

Capps can be reached at onthegreen@scoreatl.com.

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ON THESE DAYS IN **ATLANTA SPORTS** AUGUST 13-19

Compiled by Erik Horne

2007 - Though Barry Bonds was in Atlanta for the first time since breaking Hank Aaron's home run record, it was Bobby Cox who was making history on Aug. 15. In the fifth inning, Cox ran onto the field to argue a third strike called on Chipper Jones and was effectively ejected from the game. It was Cox's 132nd career ejection, breaking the Major League record originally set by Hall of Famer John McGraw.

2003 - On Aug. 16, the NFL held its breath when Falcons quarterback Michael Vick went down with a broken fibula in a 13-10 preseason loss to the Baltimore Ravens. Vick suffered the first signifi-



THAT HURTS: The Falcons' hopes of a second straight NFC South crown were shattered when Michael Vick broke his fibula in the 2003 preseason.

Photo courtesy of Scott Cunningham.

cant injury of his NFL career when he was tackled in the first quarter by Baltimore's Adalius Thomas. Vick wouldn't return until more than three months later in a Nov. 30 loss to the Houston Texans.

1998 - Braves pitcher Greg Maddux reached a career milestone with his 200th career win in an 8-4 victory over the San Francisco Giants on Aug. 18. Maddux scored his 16th win of the season with help from nine doubles, which accounted for all of the Braves' hits, including two each from No. 1 and 2 batters Walt Weiss and Gerald Williams. In the win, Maddux dropped his league-low ERA to a minuscule 1.65.

1983 - Calamity struck when Braves outfielder Bob Horner broke his wrist sliding into second base in a game against the Padres on Aug. 15. The Braves won the contest 4-0, but Horner would be ruled out for the season, robbing the team of its No. 2 RBI threat behind Dale Murphy. Without Horner, the Braves eventually lost the NL West crown by three games.

1958 - On Aug. 17, the Milwaukee Braves tied their longest winning streak of the season with a 4-1 win against the Philadelphia Phillies. The Braves won their seventh consecutive game behind a five-hit complete game from Lew Burdette and outfielder Wes



MORE PAIN: The Braves' hopes of a second straight NL West crown were shattered when Bob Horner broke his wrist against San Diego in 1983.

Photo courtesy of the Atlanta Braves.

Covington's 22nd homer of the season. The Braves' 4.5-game lead over the Pittsburgh Pirates was extended to eight games during their seven-game streak.

1938 - In a trade with the Washington Senators on Aug. 17, the Boston Bees/Braves sent seldom-used second baseman Tom Kane to the nation's capital for infielder Jim Hitchcock. The deal gave the Bees some insurance on the left side of the infield, as the Auburn University product appeared in 28 games, working primarily as a backup to short-stop Rabbit Warstler and third baseman Joe Stripp.



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TRIDENT LACROSSE LAX REPORT


ALAN VAZQUEZ

Growing popularity of lacrosse leads to changes in gear for today's player

As kids pour in to the lacrosse eco-system, there are many changes in the way the lacrosse establishment views the game and its future. As lacrosse moves from being defined by a rather small base of advocates to a truly national sport with a broad base of demographic appeal, everything is changing. The game is growing quickly in non-traditional areas with little organic experience and college coaches must blend not only the most talented lacrosse players but also the best athletes, forcing the shift toward new metrics and techniques. Naturally, suppliers are following suit. Some are already ahead.

Larger, national brands are showing their power and value. When you consider the fact that Adidas Group (www.adidas-group.com) owns the Adidas and Reebok lacrosse brands, and you consider the major investment Adidas Lacrosse has made in the lacrosse industry, you can see some of the

changes. The power of a brand like Adidas is astonishing when considering a shopper who is new to lacrosse. Reebok has begun their launch into lacrosse. Nike has already gotten involved in lacrosse, and it is widely speculated that Nike will also launch a lacrosse equipment line. UnderArmour has developed a lacrosse-specific distribution channel and has become highly visible through branding and marketing as well.

Certain types of equipment are changing by design or preference. As the demographics of those who play, coach, and administer lacrosse changes, so is the equipment itself. I can think of three major examples where changes in equipment design or preference are driven largely by the new, mass market of lacrosse:

- The move to safer helmets. Helmets that offer better protection are being sought by the best programs. Riddell, long a favorite

of the football community, entered the market years ago offering the same perspective – sturdy, form-fit helmets that can be purchased by teams and customized and reconditioned for re-issue, etc. For a while, players who had experienced concussions commonly switched to Riddell helmets, but few others. As more and more players and teams enter the market, the design and name-brand recognition of Riddell has made a big impact.

- Training equipment. As the game changes, we are seeing very broad adoption of generic strength and conditioning programs that are “tweaked” for lacrosse. As a result, a high-school athletic director may opt to purchase equipment once used predominantly for football that can now be used for any sport including lacrosse. So “speed stations” are popping up everywhere. And the services of strength and conditioning programs like XPE are also growing. Again, the move toward the

athlete as opposed to the lacrosse player only is responsible for this shift.

- Performance gear. Along with the broadening appeal of lacrosse, there is more competition. Whether it leads to a need for cold-weather or warm-weather gear, the mass adoption of compression-style dry-fit garments has never been higher. It's no longer a game of t-shirts and soccer cleats.

As you can see, there are not only plenty of choices, but the world's most recognized brands that are available to us. While we may not notice it from day to day, we (the southeastern U.S.) are helping shape not only the game, but the industry that serves the game.

Alan Vazquez is the co-owner of Trident Lacrosse and can be reached at alan-vazquez@tridentlacrosse.com. For more information about Trident Lacrosse, visit tridentlacrosse.com.



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Dream return to court for practice and DeSouza suffers another injury

Last Monday, the Dream were back at Philips Arena for a full week of afternoon practices. With more than two weeks before their next game, head coach Marynell Meadors will treat much of the early part of practices like another preseason, as players fight for their spot in the rotation.

"I think when we come back we are going to look like a whole new team," Lennox said. "We have five games left to give it all we've got."

The Dream return to game action starting on Friday, Aug. 29, with a home game against the Connecticut Sun at 7:30 p.m. The Dream were blown out by the Sun in the season opener back in May, but nearly beat them just over a month later

before falling 109-101 in overtime. They follow up that game with a road matchup in Indiana the following night at 7 p.m.; the Dream defeated the Fever in Indianapolis on July 16 for one of their three victories on the season.

DESOUZA GOES DOWN AGAIN ...

It's been a rollercoaster ride of a season for Erika DeSouza. She got off to a great start, averaging 11 points and nine rebounds in the first three games of the season. Then she suffered a right-leg injury that kept her out until just before the Olympic Break, which seemingly opened up the door for her participation in the 2008 Summer Olympics for her native Brazil.

After returning to the floor in an 81-75 defeat against the Washington Mystics, DeSouza was looking like her old self again in the New York game, scoring nine points and grabbing 11 boards in 31 minutes. But she felt soreness after the game, and soon it was discovered that she had re-injured the leg.

The injury forced DeSouza out of the Olympics, but she still made the trip to Beijing to support the Brazilian team. Her status is uncertain for the rest of the season.

IN THE COMMUNITY ...

The Dream have kept busy during the Olympic Break. Each player enjoyed six days off since the July 27 loss to New York. But

the vacations were staggered over the two-week break, so that players were always in town to make appearances in the community.

First-round pick Tamera Young joined Allison Bales, Katie Feenstra, Chioma Nnamaka and Ann Strother to sign autographs at Six Flags over Georgia on July 31. Also, several players passed on their basketball knowledge and spent time with kids ages 6-17 last week at Camp Twin Lakes. Attending the camp were leading scorer Betty Lennox, Jennifer Lacy, Iziame Castro-Marques, Kristin Haynie and Chantelle Anderson. The camp is a non-profit organization for children with illnesses.

Bagriansky can be reached at jbagriansky@scoreatl.com.

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A request for the SEC: Replace Vanderbilt with Southern Mississippi

It's time for Vanderbilt to be shown the door in the SEC.

Don't take this the wrong way, Vanderbilt fans. I love me some Bobby Johnson and I respect darn near everything about your program. When I use the words "love" and "respect" (terms I reserve for college football discussions only), I'm talking about what you do off the field as a remnant of what "student-athlete" is supposed to mean and also the way you plug along on the field, normally playing tough defense and a ball-control offense in the way the entire conference used to do it decades ago. But I want you out and I want Southern Miss in.

LONG TIME COMING ...

Vanderbilt's days as a relevant football

program are over and it's been that way since the Commodores helped form the Southeastern Conference in 1932. They've yet to win a conference title despite being a member institution for each of the league's 75 seasons. The team hasn't had a winning season since 1982 and its only bowl victory came in the Gator Bowl ... in 1955. (Author's note: We're gonna stretch the definition of "magical" and apply it to that 1982 season. How a season can be magical and also include a loss to Air Force in the Hall of Fame Bowl is God's own private mystery, but that's what we're going with here. Work with me, people.)

Following the magical 1982 season, there have been six full-time head coaches at Vanderbilt. With the exception of Gerry

DiNardo's 19-25 mark achieved from 1991 through 1994, none of the six has averaged more than four wins a season. When Gerry DiNardo's coaching tenure is thought of as the veritable salad days of your program, you've got major problems. Bobby Johnson has brought a bit more respectability to Vandy over the past six seasons and they will normally play you hard. But even Johnson is only averaging a shade over three victories per year.

THREE YEARS AGO ...

For probably the greatest indictment of Vandy's situation, look back at the 2005 season. Vanderbilt took the field that September with a quarterback who would win SEC Offensive Player of the Year hon-

ors and was later taken 11th overall in the NFL draft. It also had future first-rounder Chris Williams on the line and All-SEC pick Earl Bennett catching passes. The defense had future NFL players scattered hither and yon on the depth chart and the team's kicking game was solid. It's very realistic to say that when the Commodores kicked it off that season, they did so with the most talented roster the program had built in probably 35 years, if not longer. And it equaled five wins and nary a bowl invite at the end of the season.

Southern Miss, welcome to the party. Oliver can be heard on 790 The Zone's "Afternoon Saloon" weekdays from 4-7 p.m. and can be reached at king@790thezone.com.

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Future of women's tennis resides in Marietta

For most people, realizing what they want to do when they grow up is a long process, what some don't even figure it out until they are adults. For 16-year-old tennis phenom Melanie Oudin, the decision has been made - and she's already a success.

Just one week after Oudin appeared in Sports Illustrated as one of the top 15 teens in American sports, the Marietta native won her first professional tournament in Lexington, Ky. Oudin, who trains at the RSC Academy under esteemed coach Brian de Villiers, has become the No. 2 Junior girls player in the world and was recently the top seed at the French Open Junior championship. Then, after winning seven of 10 ITF events, Oudin turned pro and has shot up to No. 232 in the professional ranks.

"It's not that much different than Juniors," Oudin said of turning pro, "only there's money now if you win. I don't think about that, though. I play like I've always played because I love it."

Now that Oudin is a pro, her day has become drastically different than the typical 16-year-old's life. A normal day starts with Oudin waking up at 7:30 a.m. then training from 11:30 until 4:30 p.m. with fitness training continuing into the evening. This is where Oudin, who is only 5-foot-5, works on improving her game so she can compete with taller players.

"I'm quick, that's one of my strengths, so I hit all types of shots in practice," she said.

Her coach de Villiers notes that she works hard and has wanted to go pro since she was nine years old.

"You see the ones willing to put in the work, make the sacrifices and reach the goals," he said. "She is one of them."

AIMING FOR THE OPEN ...

Due to Oudin's age, she can only play in 13 tournaments this year and 17 next year. But this restriction hasn't stopped her from seeking a wild card for this summer's U.S. Open, the grand slam event that Oudin has called her "favorite."

"New York is pretty cool itself and the event is nicely set up," she said.

According to de Villiers, pros can only gain entrance into qualifying rounds if they are ranked in the top 200-220, and Oudin is right on the cusp of that special number. If a wild-card spot doesn't come, the player and coach will still head to NYC for the U.S. Open juniors, likely Oudin's last event as a junior player.

As for the future, the sky is the limit. Oudin says that she would love to compete for the Fed Cup and while she hasn't thought about the Olympics in 2012. "That would be awesome," she replied when asked about the upcoming Games. Her coach knows she will be successful, as de Villiers says of Oudin, "I've always had a long-term plan for her and it has started clicking."

If things keep clicking, Oudin may be the one to carry the mantle of best American player into the next decade.

Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.



MAKING A RACKET: The 12-and-under tennis team from the Foxworth neighborhood in Johns Creek recently won the USTA Georgia State Championship in the Advanced Gold Division, and will now move on to the regional tournament in Mobile, Ala. From left to right: Drew Akins, Melissa Gray, Derrick Bhole, Paige Elliott, Blake Davis, Olivia Durrence, Jay Klustner, Emily Gale, Sarah Doverspike and team captain Pam Klustner. Photo courtesy of Julie Davis.

OUR MAN ON RECRUITING



SCORE
SCOTT JANOVITZ

Sweeting chooses Tech and Central Florida adds to list of Georgia recruits

It was yet another busy week along the Georgia recruiting front, as seven more players from the state made their college destinations known.

The action began last Thursday when the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets landed Roderick Sweeting, their first commitment from a defensive back in the Class of 2009. The 6-foot, 170-pound Luella corner chose Tech over offers from some of the country's finest football schools, such as Ohio State, Tennessee, Virginia Tech, Alabama, Clemson and Auburn. According to Rivals.com, Sweeting is a three-star recruit and the 61st-ranked cornerback in the country. On the field, Sweeting is a very fast player who is not afraid to mix things up. He does, however, need to improve his ability to read offensive plays. Sweeting also needs to gain some weight and become a better tackler.

The Blazers from UAB also used Thursday to enhance their 2009 recruiting class, landing a verbal from Warner Robins running back Rashad Wynes. Though he chose UAB, Wynes was not without other options, passing on offers from Boston College, Indiana, Kentucky and Louisville. On the field, the 6-foot-1, 214-pound three-star recruit is a powerful runner with good vision, quickness, and ability to laterally change direction with ease. And while Wynes does lack elite speed, he displays excellent hands out of the backfield, especially for a player his size.

The next Georgia recruit to commit was Stephenson inside linebacker Nigel Mitchell-Thornton, who committed to the University of Tennessee over a hoard of schools, includ-

ing Oklahoma State, N.C. State, Nebraska, Maryland and Georgia Tech. On film, the 6-foot-2, 228-pound 'backer shows a great ability to quickly read plays and has impressive closing speed. Mitchell-Thornton is a sure tackler and an excellent pass-rusher, and is also more than reliable against the pass. He is a three-star recruit according to Rivals.com and is no doubt a big-time pick-up for the Volunteer football program.

ANOTHER KNIGHTED ...

In what can be considered a surprising development, the Knights from University of Central Florida have torched the Georgia recruiting trail early in this year's cycle, landing five players from the Peach State alone.

Most recently, the Knights landed a commitment from Stephen Hill, a rangy, athletic receiver from Miller Grove High School. The three-star commitment is a big target to say the least, standing at 6-foot-5, 190 pounds. Hill chose the Knights over offers from UAB, Mississippi State and North Carolina. According to

Rivals.com, Hill is a three-star recruit and the 92nd-ranked receiver in the nation. On the field, Hill lacks elite speed but is good at going up and bringing down jump balls. He does, however, need to do a better job at getting to the ball at its highest point. However, he is a very physical player that does a good job taking on tacklers rather than trying to outrun them.

On Saturday, the Connecticut Huskies joined in on the recruiting fun, as Collins Hill quarterback Michael Box joined the pack. Box is a two-star recruit according to Rivals.com. He chose the Huskies over an offer from Chattanooga. Though Box has not been a highly recruited athlete up to this point, at 6-foot-3, 190 pounds, he has perfect size for the position.

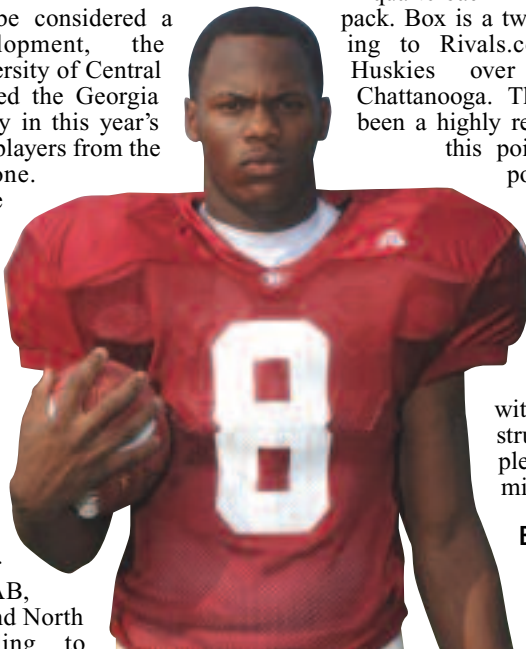
In addition, Box puts good touch on his passes, has decent arm strength and shows the ability to pick up some extra yards with his feet. He does struggle, however, completing passes down the middle of the field.

MORE DEFENSE ...

Days after Box made his choice, Tristian Johnson joined the group of Georgia players off the market, giving his verbal pledge to the Wildcats of Kentucky. The 6-foot-3, 222-pound LaGrange defensive end chose the 'Cats over offers from East Carolina and Kent State. Kentucky offensive coordinator Joker Phillips recruited Johnson for the Wildcats and certainly did a fine job: "When I called him today, he was real happy to hear I had made my decision," Johnson told CatsPause.com. "I think he knew it was coming, but he said he was real excited about having another LaGrange guy up there." According to Rivals.com, Johnson is a three-star recruit and the 52nd-ranked defensive end in the nation.

Dean Haynes was the last Georgia recruit to make his decision known last week, as the Northwest Whitfield corner chose the Wolfpack of N.C. State after considering offers from East Carolina, UAB, Middle Tennessee State and Appalachian State. Linebacker coach Andy McCollum was in charge of recruiting the 6-foot, 180-pound Haynes for the Wolfpack. According to Rivals.com, he is a two-star recruit.

Janovitz can be reached at sjanovitz@scoreatl.com.



BLAZIN' THROUGH: Warner Robins' Rashad Wynes, a three-star running back on Rivals.com, recently verbally committed to play football at the University of Alabama-Birmingham. As a junior in 2007, Wynes scored a total of 10 touchdowns (six rushing and four receiving). Photo courtesy of Avery Sports Photography.

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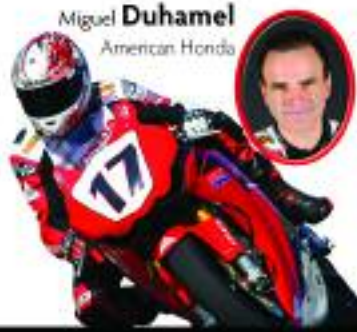
The ongoing, emotionally charged battle between Rockstar Makita Yoshimura Suzuki teammates Ben Spies and Mat Mladin for the AMA Superbike championship could be decided at Road Atlanta. The Suzuki Superbike Showdown presented by Rockstar will feature championship points-paying Superbike races both Saturday and Sunday. Tickets on sale now by calling 800.849.RACE or visiting roadatlanta.com.



This is the 10th Encore of Superbike racing at Road Atlanta, home of the original doubleheader format, and all three podium positions in each of the six races should be wide open, full throttle battles among representatives from Honda, Yamaha, Kawasaki, Ducati and Suzuki.



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The 2007 race saw a record crowd and the closest finish in its history with Audi taking a 0.923-second victory over Porsche.

NEWS FROM THE FALCONS




ERIK HORNE

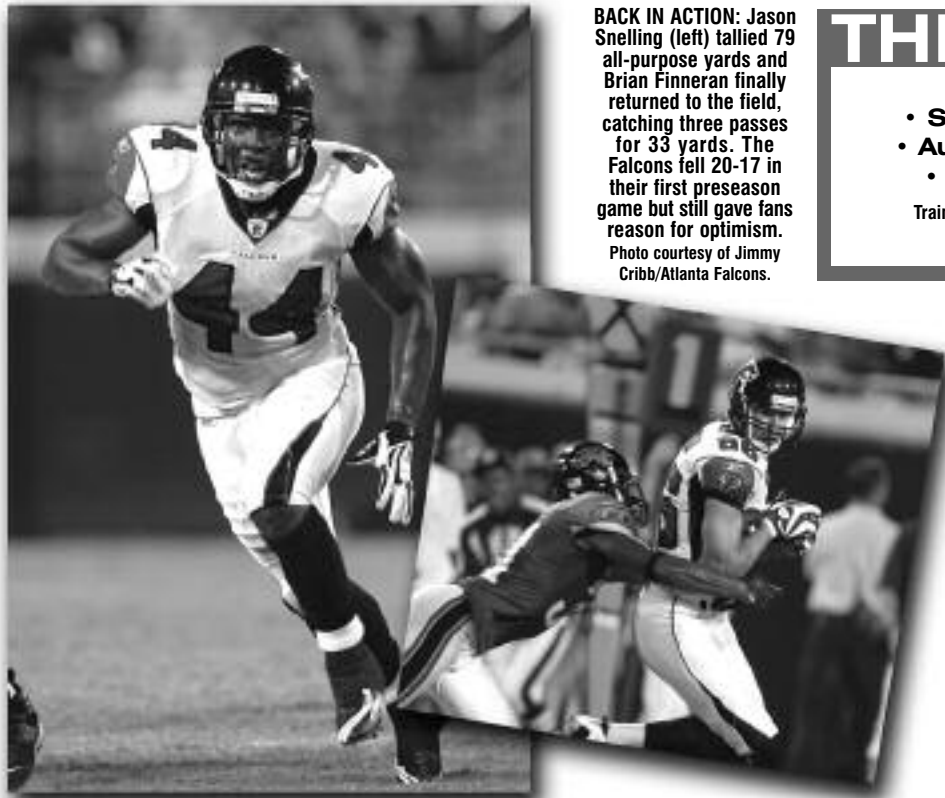
Shocking early appearance shows Ryan's readiness against Jacksonville

OFF THE FIELD

With Todd Weiner slowly coming back to health, as insurance the Falcons recently signed free agent offensive lineman Doug Datish to a contract and placed linebacker Robert James on the injured reserve. Datish was on the injured reserve for the Falcons in 2007 after suffering a broken wrist in preseason. Datish was originally drafted by the Falcons in the sixth round last season.

James, a fifth-round selection in 2008, was originally waived by the Falcons, then placed on IR. To replace James, the team has signed linebacker Mickey Pimentel, formerly of the Kansas City Chiefs. A University of California alum, Pimentel (6-foot-2, 238 pounds) was signed as a free agent by the Panthers in 2007 before being released and picked up by Kansas City. Cornerback Chris Houston was held out of practice on Friday before preparations for the Jacksonville game. While he went through stretches and individual position drills, Houston did not participate in 11-on-11 drills.

For the second consecutive year, the Falcons have teamed up with the American Red Cross to promote blood donations until Sunday, Aug. 17. Fans who donate blood at select locations (www.atlantafalcons.com) will be eligible to win a signed Falcons helmet from head coach Mike Smith or two tickets to a Falcons preseason game against the Indianapolis Colts or the Tennessee Titans.



BACK IN ACTION: Jason Snelling (left) tallied 79 all-purpose yards and Brian Finneran finally returned to the field, catching three passes for 33 yards. The Falcons fell 20-17 in their first preseason game but still gave fans reason for optimism. Photo courtesy of Jimmy Cribb/Atlanta Falcons.

THE SCHEDULE

- Preseason**
- Sat. vs. Indianapolis, 7:30 p.m.
 - Aug. 22 vs. Tennessee, 7:30 p.m.
 - Aug. 28 at Baltimore, 7 p.m.

Training camp at Flowery Branch will continue until Aug. 15. Log onto www.atlantafalcons.com for details.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

9 CMP
15 ATT
113 YDS
1 TD
0 INT



MATT RYAN QB

THE TWO-MINUTE WARNING ...

The Falcons took a loss to the Jacksonville Jaguars last Saturday 20-17, but head coach Mike Smith (pictured) saw a few impressive showings from his team's first preseason test. Most of the pub was for rookie quarterback Matt Ryan, and deservedly so. Prior to Saturday's game, Ryan was seen at Friday's practice at Flowery Branch working a bit with the second team, but no one could have expected Smith to go to the Boston College product as early as he did, against Jacksonville's first-team defense.

Ryan accounted for more than a third of the Falcons' 343 total yards, and more than half of the passing yardage. Even more impressive was his poise against a notoriously aggressive Jacksonville defense that ranked ninth in the league in sacks last season with 37. Ryan capped his night with a 25-yard touchdown strike to Roddy White, as well as a 105.7 quarterback rating.

"I thought Matt looked very good," Smith said of Ryan. "We wanted to get Matt in there early by design to let him play against a very good and efficient defense. We got him in there and I thought he competed well. For a rookie in his first time out, that's a pretty good outing."

Ryan also had a bit of luck on his side, as the rookie was credited with two fumbles, only to have Falcons fall on the loose balls both times. Other than that, not much went wrong for the new face of the Falcons.

"I thought Matt passed the test in terms of poise and execution," Smith stated in his post-game press conference. "He most definitely has the leadership qualities and the skill set that we're looking for."

PLUSES AND MINUSES ...

Warning signs point to an undisciplined display for the Falcons, with 10 penalties luckily only accounting for 80 yards. Despite being the first game, Smith was adamant about correcting the penalty situation. Also, despite holding up better than expected, the offensive line allowed three sacks and could have used still-injured Todd Weiner at the right tackle position.

Smith also had good words for rookies Curtis Lofton and Thomas



Brown. Lofton appears one step closer to a starting spot at middle linebacker, as he tied for the team lead with six tackles and recovered a fumble. Brown, a sixth-rounder out of Georgia, may have locked down a spot on the roster with three punt returns for 67 yards.

For a moment, it was déjà vu when John Abraham limped off in the first quarter with an apparent injury, but coach Smith reported Abraham as "OK" after just tweaking his ankle. The same was said about Von Hutchins' apparent "tweak" on the first day of training camp, so it remains to be seen if Abraham will suffer any lingering effects from the Jacksonville game. Fortunately for the Falcons, if Abraham is to go down, Jamaal Anderson may be up to the pass-rush challenge. The second-year defensive end got around the corner for a sack in the second quarter, followed by a tackle for loss on third down, an encouraging sight from a player needing to live up to his first-round billing.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"We're not into moral victories, but I thought our guys played hard and with passion. I was impressed with the way our guys competed."

- Head coach Mike Smith



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ON THE BRAVES BEAT



FLETCHER PROCTOR



Braves remember Skip, Hampton gets win and Glavine back in rotation

OFF THE FIELD

With the recent passing of longtime announcer Skip Caray, the team paid tribute with several events this past week. An open memorial service was held Monday at Christ the King Church where the family received friends and fans of Caray. The team also held two events before Tuesday's clash with Chicago. The first took place Tuesday morning at Turner Field and the public was invited to hear Braves chairman and CEO Terry McGuirk, Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin and broadcasters Pete Van Wieren and Chip Caray all speak about Skip. Finally the team held a pregame ceremony with the Caray family before first pitch.

The Braves Wives, with a little help from their husbands, will be out raising money for the Atlanta Braves Foundation and Camp Erin on Saturday. Fans can purchase a sealed brown bag containing an autographed baseball from one of the wives through the fourth inning. Camp Erin is a bereavement camp designed for kids ages 6-17 who have experienced the death of a parent, friend or loved one.

This Saturday will also offer fans a chance to meet one of the Braves and get an autograph. Fans are invited to come out to the Braves Clubhouse Store at CNN Center on Saturday to meet a Brave. For more information, call the Braves Clubhouse Store at CNN Center at (404) 523-5854.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

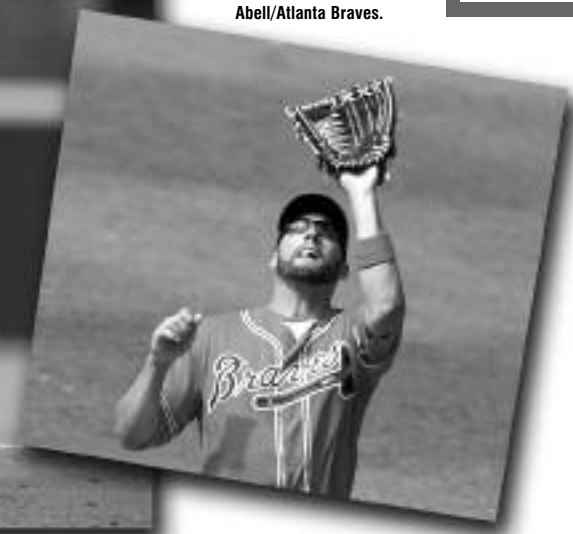
"I still have confidence that I can turn this around. I want to finish up strong."

- RF Jeff Francoeur

790 THE ZONE Tune in to Fletcher Proctor's post-game Extra Innings Show after each Braves weekday game on 790 The Zone.



UPS AND DOWNS: Mike Hampton picked up his first win in almost three years on Aug. 5, but he could not out-duel Arizona's Brandon Webb in last Sunday's loss. As for Jeff Francoeur, manager Bobby Cox elected to keep him out of the starting lineup last Saturday. Photos courtesy of Paul Abell/Atlanta Braves.



THE SCHEDULE

- Wed. vs. Chicago Cubs, 7 p.m. *FSN South.*
 - Thurs. vs. Chicago Cubs, 7 p.m. *FSN South.*
 - Fri. vs. San Francisco, 7:30 p.m. *Peachtree TV.*
 - Sat. vs. San Francisco, 7 p.m. *Peachtree TV.*
 - Sun. vs. San Francisco, 1:30 p.m. *SportSouth.*
 - Mon. vs. San Francisco, 4:30 p.m. *SportSouth.*
 - Tues. at N.Y. Mets, 7:10 p.m. *Peachtree TV.*
- All games will be broadcast on 640 AM and 94.9 The Bull. Tickets can be purchased at www.atlantabraves.com.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

**5 GAMES
9 HITS
5 RUNS
4 RBIS
1 HR**



BRIAN MCCANN C

THE SEVENTH-INNING STRETCH ...

After the Braves dropped the first game of a three-game set in San Francisco, Mike Hampton earned his first win in nearly three years on Aug. 5, as the Braves toppled the Giants 11-4. Hampton pitched seven strong innings, allowing only two runs on four hits and even helped the offense with an RBI double and a run in the win. ... In the rubber match, despite three hits from Brian McCann, the Braves fell 3-2 as Giants starter Tim Lincecum earned the win over Chuck James. Mark Kotsay provided an RBI in the loss.

VALLEY OF THE SUN ...

After losing two of three to the cellar-dweller Giants, the Braves opened a four-game set with NL West-leading Arizona. The Giants would prove to have been a tougher test, at least after Game 1. Rookie pitcher Charlie Morton shut out the Diamondbacks for seven innings and received runs from a Casey Kotchman sacrifice fly and a Mark Kotsay home run. Gregor Blanco, Yunel Escobar and McCann each chipped in two hits apiece as the Braves won 6-4. In addition to the win, Morton recorded his first major-league hit (a double). Mike Gonzalez recorded a four-out save, his fifth of the year. ... Chipper

Jones made a rousing comeback from the disabled list in Game 2 with a 2-for-4 night, including his 19th home run of the year. Jones scored three runs total as the Braves whipped the D-backs 11-6. Kotchman had his best night to date as a Brave with a 3-for-4 evening with two runs and two RBIs. Martin Prado also chipped in with three hits. ... On Saturday, Bobby Cox elected to give Jeff Francoeur the night off, and instead put the hot-hitting Gregor Blanco in the starting lineup. The Braves tallied 11 runs again in Game 3, as McCann led the charge this time with four runs driven in and two runs scored in an 11-4 victory. Escobar contributed with two runs and two RBIs, as Jair Jurrjens (pictured) won his 11th game of the year. ... In the finale, Hampton could not stop the Arizona bats early and the Diamondbacks, behind ace Brandon Webb, would salvage Game 4 with a 6-1 victory. Jones scored the only run for Atlanta. Hampton gave up six runs in four innings of work.



IN OTHER NEWS ...

Tim Hudson was scheduled to undergo ligament-transplant elbow surgery, better known as Tommy John surgery, last Friday in Pensacola, Fla., with Dr. James Andrews performing the operation. Typical recovery time for this surgery is 12 months, which means Hudson will be out until at least mid-August, 2009. ... Reliever Rafael Soriano met with Dr. Andrews in Pensacola to discuss the elbow soreness that has kept him out for most of the season. A previous MRI did not show any ligament structural damage, but the pitcher is meeting with doctors as a precaution. ... Tom Glavine threw 74 pitches in a final rehab start for Double-A Mississippi and will return to the Braves this Thursday from a torn flexor tendon that has sidelined him since June 11. Glavine was impressive in his first rehab start in Single-A Myrtle Beach, lasting four innings, but officials wanted one more rehab start before recalling him to Atlanta.



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Smith signs deal; new schedule released

After looking mostly indecisive for the first six weeks of NBA free agency, the Hawks stepped on the gas last Friday night, wasting little time to match the five-year, \$58 million offer the Memphis Grizzlies extended to free-agent Josh Smith earlier that day. The Hawks had been in negotiations with Smith over the last couple weeks, reportedly offering the 22-year-old power forward a contract worth \$9 million a year, but the two parties were far from coming to an agreement. By signing an offer sheet with the Grizzlies, however, Smith left the Hawks with only two options, forcing the team to either match the offer or let the free agent walk.

General manager Rick Sund seemed relieved to have concluded the negotiations Friday night.

"Tonight, the Hawks organization received an offer sheet from the Memphis Grizzlies for Josh Smith," the GM declared. "We are happy to announce that we will match their offer sheet. Ownership, management and the team are happy to have Josh return as a member of the Hawks. We look forward to training camp in October and we will continue to look at additional opportunities to improve our roster."

While Smith seemed happy with the money he was able to get in the deal, it is worth noting that his contract is for considerably less than what the Chicago Bulls recently signed Luol Deng for (\$71 million) as well as the \$72 million the Charlotte Bobcats are now paying Emeka Okafor.

In addition to finishing second in the

league the last two years in blocks per game, Smith has averaged 13.6 points and 7.4 rebounds in 307 career games with the Hawks.

PLAY ON ...

Last Wednesday, the Hawks released their schedule for the 2008-09 NBA season, and for the first time in six years the team will be featured on national television. On Dec. 17, Atlanta will get a crack at the Boston Celtics for the first time since the men in green bounced them from the playoffs last year and ESPN will be there for the action.

The season's opening tip is set for Oct. 29, and will see the Hawks bring their act on the road against last year's Southeast Division Champion Orlando Magic. As for the Hawks' first home game, the Philadelphia 76ers come calling on Nov. 1.

Out of the 41 home games, 24 are scheduled to fall on weekends with 10 on Fridays, eight on Saturdays and six on Sundays. From Dec. 13-29, the Hawks will play eight straight games in the friendly confines of Philips Arena. The team's longest road stretch falls between Feb. 11-25, when the team plays six straight contests away from home.

The 2008 preseason and local TV schedules will be released in the next few weeks, while training camp is scheduled to begin Sept. 30 at Philips Arena. Go to AtlantaHawks.com or call 1-866-715-1500 to order season tickets now.

Janovitz can be reached at sjanovitz@scoreatl.com.

Prospects compete in Evaluation Camp

Five of Atlanta's top prospects were in Lake Placid to compete in inter-nation exhibition games at the conclusion of an international prospect camp. Vinny Saponari, John Albert and Zach Bogosian each suited up for Team USA, while Nicklas Lasu and Niclas Lucenius skated for Team Sweden and Finland, respectively.

It was a quiet beginning for Atlanta's Prospects at the Team Competition phase of the Evaluation Camp. None of Atlanta's representatives made it into the scoring column. Bogosian did get called for a holding penalty in the second stanza, however.

The second day of team competition was another quiet one for the Thrashers youth, although there was one moment in Team USA-White's runaway victory over Finland which had to make head coach John Anderson smile. Bogosian and Saponari were part of a three-on-one breakaway early in the third period. The two Thrashers were credited with assists on the goal.

To close out the weekend, the prospects finished with a flurry of fireworks as Saponari's two goals led Team White to a 5-2 victory over Finland. His first goal came off a rebound in front of the Finnish net, soon after the game was tied at 1-1 late in the first period. Saponari started the second period where he ended the first—in the boxscore—giving USA-White a 3-1 lead six minutes into the period.

There was little to show for the Thrashers prospects in the Red, White and Blue on Day 3 of team competition, leaving the door open for the team's foreign-born players to steal the show. Lasu scored a hat trick and added an assist in the first period

alone, helping build a 4-0 for Team Sweden over Team USA-White. Sweden held on to their lead to win, but the Swedes allowed three goals through the rest of the game, making the score 4-3.

OVERTIMES FOR TEAM BLUE ...

For Atlanta's other international prospect, it wasn't as much the number of scoring opportunities but the timing of them that proved to be so critical. With the game tied at 4-4 in overtime, Lucenius fed his Finnish teammate with a perfect pass to score the game-winning goal for Finland over Team USA-Blue. The assist was Lucenius's only point of the game.

The final games of the week ended with more Thrashers playing a pivotal role as Team USA-Blue won over Sweden in penalty shots, 5-4. Already with a 1-0 lead, Lasu helped his Swedish teammates by knocking in the team's second goal of the game. Sweden gave the lead back and eventually tied the game before Team-USA Blue won in the shootout to end the competition.

The coaches will now return to their respective countries and look over their notes and tape before deciding on who will compete as a part of the 2009 International Ice Hockey Federation World Junior Championship in late December in Ottawa, Canada.

Saponari impressed the USA team coaches, scoring two goals and two assists in his four games at Lake Placid. But Lasu was the real star from Atlanta during the four games, scoring four goals and notching another assist to compile five points for Sweden.

Boral can be reached at jboral@scoreatl.com.



Silverbacks sign Sancho, trade for Paye

The Silverbacks announced on Thursday that defender Brett Sancho had been signed to a contract with the team, pending USSF and international clearance. The former Trinidad and Tobago national-team star most recently played for English Premier League squad Millwall and Scottish Division Two team Ross County. The Silverbacks believe that the 6-foot-2, 200-pound defender can help reinforce what has been statistically the worst defense in the USL. The team has scored a league-high 33 goals, but has also allowed a league-high 36. The imposing veteran played for Trinidad and Tobago from 1999-2006 and competed in the 2006 World Cup. Sancho also brings USL experience with him, as he played for the Portland Timbers and the Charleston Battery from 2000-02.

The Silverbacks also announced a trade which sent forward Nathan Knox to the Minnesota Thunder for striker Aaron Paye. Knox tallied one goal in eight games for Atlanta in 2008. Paye scored one goal for Minnesota this year in 15 games.

'BACKS PLAY THREE ...

The Silverbacks won their third game in a row on Aug. 5, with a 3-2 win over the Vancouver Whitecaps. The home win allowed the Silverbacks to rise to fourth in the league standings. Vancouver started the scoring in the 31st minute, but the Silverbacks evened things up in the 37th on

a Tony McManus goal. Silverbacks star forward Macoumba Kandji then scored in the 53rd minute and followed up with an assist in the 59th to push the lead to 3-1. That would be all the scoring the Silverbacks needed as the club held on for the one-goal win.

On Friday night, the Silverbacks hosted the Miami FC Blues at Silverbacks Park. In contrast to Atlanta's previous three games, the teams played a controlled and methodical match. Both teams pushed forward infrequently and, as a result, had very few chances. In fact, Miami only tallied eight shots (the Silverbacks attempted 17). The game ended in a 0-0 draw. This extended the Silverbacks' unbeaten streak to four games and also served to post notice that the team's defense is improving.

Unfortunately, Atlanta's unbeaten streak ended on Sunday as the team dropped a 3-2 decision at Vancouver. The Silverbacks put up a valiant effort against the first-place Whitecaps after traveling across the continent to play their fifth game in a 10-day span. Ansu Toure scored twice for Atlanta, but the team could not hold the lead.

In other news, Mac Kandji was awarded the USL Player of the Week award for Week 16, as he netted three goals during the week. The Senegalese forward is tied for the league lead in goals with 10.

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ON THE DAWGS BEAT



JAMES BUTLER

Banks hurt, men's basketball schedule released and Olympics underway

We are more than a week into Fall practice as Georgia's football team continues its preparation for the 2008 season. Head coach Mark Richt's team practiced last week, culminating in Saturday's two-a-day. The coaches were busy teaching fundamentals, putting in their concepts for the upcoming season and evaluating players.

One of the Bulldogs receiving praise after Week 1 has been freshman wide receiver A.J. Green. Practicing for the first time as a Bulldog, Green was widely rated one of the top two receivers coming out of high school this past year, often drawing comparisons to NFL standout Randy Moss. For the most part, those comparisons have not ended as Richt brought up Moss's name when commenting on Green. Opening the door for Green to get more meaningful reps last week were the injuries of Michael Moore, Walter Hill, Israel Troupe and Tavarres King. Green himself missed some time earlier in the week.

The Bulldogs' concern for depth at safety grew a little bit more as backup safety Quintin Banks tore his MCL to the point that it required surgery, which is tentatively scheduled for this past Tuesday. The sophomore safety could miss Georgia's first four games of the year. The loss of Banks means true freshmen will figure prominently at the safe-

ty spots for the Bulldogs. Aside from senior walk-on Andrew Williams, redshirt freshman John Knox is the most experienced player behind starters C.J. Byrd and Reshad Jones. First-year players Baccarri Rambo, Nick Williams and Makiri Pugh have been getting work at the safety spots with all three drawing praise. Pugh, however, left practice on Saturday with a serious ankle sprain.

An apparent injury that may have Georgia fans even more concerned is the sore left shoulder of running back Knowshon Moreno (pictured). The sophomore wore a green non-contact jersey for a couple of practices in order to rest the shoulder and prevent it from getting further injured. The Bulldogs are still developing backups Caleb King, Richard Samuel, Dontavius Jackson and Carlton Thomas to be ready to take some of the load off of Moreno. King, a redshirt freshman, is the most experienced, with the other three being true freshmen. But all four have considerable talent, so the fundamentals of the positions, such as pass protection, will decide how much playing time each gets.

COURT DATES ...

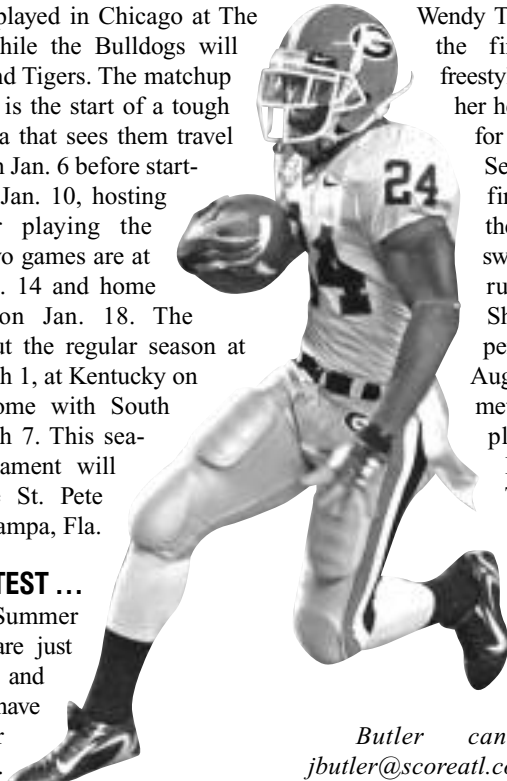
The men's basketball team released its 2008-09 schedule last week. The slate is highlighted by an appearance in the preseason

NIT. Other out-of-conference games of note include a meeting with Illinois on Dec. 26, a matchup with Virginia Tech on Dec. 9, and a game with Missouri on Jan. 3. The game with the Illini will be played in Chicago at The United Center, while the Bulldogs will host the Hokies and Tigers. The matchup against the Tigers is the start of a tough stretch for Georgia that sees them travel to Georgia Tech on Jan. 6 before starting SEC play on Jan. 10, hosting Tennessee. After playing the Vols, their next two games are at Vanderbilt on Jan. 14 and home with Kentucky on Jan. 18. The Bulldogs close out the regular season at Arkansas on March 1, at Kentucky on March 4, and home with South Carolina on March 7. This season's SEC Tournament will be played at the St. Pete Times Forum in Tampa, Fla.

WORLD'S GREATEST ...

The 2008 Summer Olympic Games are just under a week in, and Georgia athletes have already made their presence felt.

Former Lady Bulldog Kara Lynn Joyce won a silver medal as a member of the United States 4x100-meter freestyle relay team. South African and incoming freshman Wendy Trott missed qualifying for the finals of the 400-meter freestyle as she finished fifth in her heat. Despite not qualifying for the finals, former Bulldog Sebastien Rouault of France finished second in his heat in the 400-meter freestyle. The swimming competition will run until Sunday, with Sheila Taormina's modern pentathlon taking place on Aug. 22. Chris Colwill's 3-meter diving events will take place on Wednesday, Monday and Tuesday. Track and field events start on Friday and lasts until Aug. 23. Head swim coach Jack Bauerle is coaching the U. S. women's swim team and assistant Dan Laak is an assistant diving coach.



Butler can be reached at jbutler@scoreatl.com.

ON THE JACKETS BEAT



JOHNNY CROSSKEY

Tech shows promise on gridiron and Fofanah carries flag at the Olympics

Saturday marked the first scrimmage for the football team and the results were positive on the offensive end. B-back Jonathan Dwyer (pictured) established his spot as a feature back right off the bat with a 70-yard touchdown run on the second play of the morning.

Dwyer finished the day with 99 yards on 13 carries. If Dwyer is the present for Tech's running game, the future may be Louisville transfer Anthony Allen, who is sitting out the 2008 season. Running against the second-team defense, Allen rushed 17 times for 105 yards, including a 57-yard touchdown. Quarterback Josh Nesbitt continued to show his grasp of Paul Johnson's offense, but freshman Jaybo Shaw also shined, completing three of six passes for 148 yards and a touchdown to wide receiver R.B. Clyburn. He also ran for two touchdowns. Scott Blair attempted to put away doubts about the kicking game by converting two field goals, including a 52-yarder. Defensive highlights included an interception by cornerback Jahi Word-Daniels on a Nesbitt pass to Demaryius Thomas, and a Vance Walker sack.

Safety Mario Edwards, a transfer from Virginia Tech, was cleared by the ACC on Thursday to play football for this season. Edwards, who spent two years at Virginia Tech, has been practicing at free safety since

last week, where he is a potential starter. Edwards transferred to Tech to be closer to his ailing father.

An all-state performer at Westlake High School, Edwards recorded four interceptions, six sacks, two fumble recoveries and a blocked punt as a high-school senior.

PREVIEWING THE DEFENSE ...

While the defensive unit is Tech's best and the one with the greatest set of expectations, it will also have an array of new faces. Gone is linebacker Philip Wheeler, now playing in the NFL. Tech is also without Gary Guyton, Djay Jones and Avery Robertson. The rock of Tech's defense will be its defensive line, which includes preseason All-ACC performers Vance Walker and Michael Johnson. Johnson will be a starter for the first time this season and has the potential to be one of the nation's best. Darryl Richard will provide bulk and leadership up front. There are also big changes in the coaching booth where Jon Tenuta's blitz-crazy style has given way to

Dave Wommack's more conservative style. The defense will be asked to maintain consistency this season while the offense catches on. Tech's youth in the secondary, including potential star Morgan Burnett, is a major concern, but if Tech's experienced front four can get to the quarterback and stop the run consistently, the Jackets may be able to capture a number of low-scoring games.

The football team will begin the upcoming season on Aug. 28 at home against Jacksonville State at 7:30 p.m. Fans can catch the inaugural game of the Paul Johnson era on ESPN 360 and 790 The Zone.

OLYMPIC UPDATES ...

Tech played a part in the opening ceremonies of the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games. Track star Fatmata Fofanah received

her country's highest honor as the flag-bearer for Guinea at the Parade of Nations during the opening ceremony. Fofanah, a two-time All-American for the women's track and field team, will compete in the 100-meter hurdles for the Guinean Olympic Team on Sunday at 7 a.m. (local time).

Several other current and former Jackets will compete at the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games. These are the results and schedules for those athletes at press time. American Chris Bosh went 4-for-4 with nine points and eight rebounds in the U.S. men's basketball team's 101-70 victory over China on Sunday. ... Gal Nevo of Israel, part of Tech's freshman class of swimmers, came in fourth in the semifinal heat of the 400-meter Individual Medley with a time 4:14.03. He will compete in the 200-meter IM on Wednesday at 11:16 p.m. ... Chaunte Howard (U.S. women's track) will compete in the high jump on Aug. 20 at 9:50 p.m. ... Angelo Taylor (U.S. men's track) will compete in the 400-meter hurdles on Friday at 9:55 p.m. ... Onur Uras (Turkey, men's swimming) will compete in the 100-meter butterfly on Thursday at 8:18 a.m.

Crosskey can be reached at jcrosskey@scoreatl.com.



Olympic fever? Not everyone is catching it

I've never been a big fan of the Summer Olympics. I blame it on my elementary school teachers. The last day of school always involved "field day" which included the 100-yard dash, long jump, the discus (Frisbee) throw and other Olympic-style events. Although a good athlete at the time, I never won an event and therefore was never adorned with a beautiful crate-paper ribbon at the awards ceremony. The teachers always gave the awards to their favorites rather than the actual winners. I always felt like the gymnast who was given a bad grade by the Russian judge for no apparent reason. Seeing someone else get my ribbon was a bad way to start my summers.

Next to the Super Bowl halftime show, no other sports-related entertainment production is more revered than the Opening Ceremonies of the Olympics. NBC reported that over 37 million people tuned in for the Opening Ceremonies in Beijing last Friday, making it the highest rated non-USA-based broadcast in Olympic history. I guess anything is better than a rerun of Wife Swap. As one of those 37 million, I'd like to say I liked what I saw, but I'm not sure since I fell asleep an hour into the show. The drummers, fireworks and synchronized dancers were all amazing. The graphics screen surrounding the stadium was unbelievable. But as soon as the athletes started parading, my attention span began to diminish. With over 200 countries to introduce, they need to find a better (quicker) way to produce the event for television. Not to be an American snob but I don't really care about Uzbekistan or Cote d'Ivoire.

Twenty introductions into the "Parade of Athletes" I fell asleep (I think the Burkina Faso delegation did me in). Fortunately, I woke up in

time to see Team USA arrive. Thank goodness for the NBC graphics department or I would have thought it was the French team wearing those silly white "news boy" caps. In my opinion, the only acceptable head dressings for a USA team would include a cowboy hat, baseball cap, a football helmet or a LeBron James headband. What was Ralph Lauren thinking? This is the Olympics, not a regatta. (By the way, you can buy your very own Team USA Opening Ceremony's outfit for around \$1,200 on Ralph Lauren's Web site. I'm not joking.)

OLYMPIC DREAMS ...

Most of the people I've talked to say swimming is the main event in the Summer Olympics. No doubt Michael Phelps's quest for the most gold medals in Olympic history is a big reason for the swell of interest. I was at my pool this past weekend and noticed many more moms in the water than usual. For some reason, at my subdivision pool, the dads are the ones normally in the pool with the kids while the moms sit together under the umbrellas and gossip (or whatever they do). Being the curious type, I asked some of the dads about the infestation and found out that moms want to be the next Dara Torres. Forget about Phelps, Torres is the real story. At 41, she earned a silver medal for the U.S. at the Olympics in the 400-meter relay this weekend. Not to toss water on their new-found passion, but I don't think the pool moms should get their hopes up. In order to be an Olympic swimmer, I think you actually have to get your hair wet.

But that's just my opinion. Dankosky can be reached at kdankosky@scoreatl.com.

The 4th Annual
Milton Red & Silver Ball

September 6, 2008 from 6PM-Midnight
at the Alpharetta Marriott, 5750 Windward Parkway

This glamorous red carpet event includes heavy hors d'œuvres and a cash bar. Enjoy a live auction and music in your fun evening attire. Adults 21 and over, please. Tickets are \$75 per person.

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Online purchases may be made using any major credit card. You may also print the order form and mail it with your check. To donate auction items, email jtatari@bellsouth.net.

An exciting tradition to benefit Milton Athletics



Inman named men's golf coach; academic accolades for track and field

Former professional golfer Joe Inman, who has enjoyed success on the PGA and Champions Tours, has been named the new Georgia State men's golf coach. He replaces Matt Clark, who stepped down to accept the head-coaching position at UNC Wilmington. Inman inherits a program that has reached the NCAA Regionals 10 of the last 11 years. Said Athletics Director Mary McElroy, "Joe Inman is the right person to take over the Georgia State golf program and take it to the next level. He brings instant recognition and credibility in the golf community and in the Atlanta area, which raises the profile of Georgia State golf. He is a perfect fit because of his abilities as a teacher and recruiter, combined with his energy and passion for working with young people and promoting the game of golf."

Inman's 25-year pro career included four victories, one on the PGA Tour (Kemper Open, 1976) and three on the Champions Tour. He had nearly 100 Top-25 finishes on each circuit.

Seven Georgia State student-athletes, including five women and two men, were named to the Division I All-Academic Track and Field Team by the United States Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA). From the men's track program, jumper Jacob English, the Colonial Athletic Association Men's Track and Field Scholar-Athlete of the Year, and middle-distance runner Mark Steeds, the CAA Track and Field Athlete of the Year, were named to the All-Academic team. Denice Vance, the CAA Women's Track and Field Scholar-Athlete of the Year, leads the Georgia State women's contingent on the

All-Academic team. Yolanda Berryhill, the CAA discus champion, Caitlin Price, CAA champ in the 5,000 meters, and CAA relay champions Kendra Davis and LaDrica Derrico also made the team.

IN OTHER NEWS ...

Former State catcher Aeden McQueary was released by the Lake Elsinore Storm (San Diego Padres) on July 16 and was signed shortly thereafter by the Pittsburgh Pirates organization and assigned to their Single-A South Atlantic League club in Hickory, N.C., the Hickory Crawdads. Since arriving, McQueary has two hits with an RBI and four runs scored in 10 at-bats. The other former Panther in the SAL is pitcher Adam Bowling with the Kannapolis Intimidators. In 21 appearances this season, Bowling is 3-1 with an ERA of 4.15 and 46 strikeouts. ...

Georgia State athletics is hosting the 3rd Annual Golf Classic on Oct. 6 at the Eagle's Landing Country Club. For information on participating or becoming a sponsor, call 404-413-4000. ... Men's basketball season tickets for the 2008-09 season are priced at just \$150 for a reserved seat. A special price of \$100 per season ticket is available for Georgia State faculty, staff and Alumni Association members. Renewals can be completed by mail or by calling the Georgia State Athletics Ticket Office at 404-413-4020. ... Follow the Panthers online at www.georgiasstatesports.com. For basketball and football ticket information call 1-866-GA-STATE.

Dave Cohen is in his 25th season as the "Voice of Georgia State Basketball and Baseball" on WRAS-FM (88.5) and works on the football radio crew at Furman University in Greenville, S.C.

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BASKETBALL

- Dream.** Aug. 29 vs. Connecticut
- Top of the Key.** Ongoing. Personal basketball lessons with Olympian Debbie Miller-Palmore, boys and girls ages 8-18. For information call 770-465-1502.
- Southern Xposure.** Ongoing. Cobb County Christian School - Marietta. AAU and YBOA tryouts for 9-and-under and 8-and-under teams. For information call 404-447-3992 or email pharper333@yahoo.com.
- Peach State Basketball.** Ongoing. Basketball skill development training for college caliber high school players throughout the off-season. Players can use these sessions to continue improving all year long. Contact Brandon Clay at 404-422-3946 or visit www.peachstatehoops.com for more information.
- Suwanee Sports Academy.** Ongoing. Basketball training and development for boy and girls grades K-12. Rising Stars, Future Stars, Suwanee Basketball League, On Court Player Development, nationally-recognized year-round comprehensive player development program. For more information contact Mike Brown at 678-541-0176 or visit www.ssasports.com.
- Mark Price Shooting Lab.** Ongoing: Personalized professional shooting instruction through one-on-one coaching and state-of-the-art technology at Suwanee Sports Academy. For more information, contact Mike Brown at 678-541-0176 or visit www.ssasports.com.
- SSA's On Court.** Check out Suwanee Sports Academy's On Court, the nation's premier off-season development program at the nation's premier basketball training facility right here in Gwinnett County! For more information, contact Michael Brown at 678-541-0176 or visit www.ssasports.com.
- Open Recreational Basketball.** GSL -- Georgia Sports Leagues. Georgia's Best Sports Leagues. Registration ongoing. We offer "Top Gun," "B," "C" and Co-Ed styles of play around Atlanta. We play ALL year round. For more information please contact (678)799-0159 or email mark@georgiasportleagues.org. Visit www.georgiasportleagues.org.
- Just Skills Of Atlanta.** 8-week basketball fundamentals program for boys and girls ages 5 to 17 at Bogan Park in Buford and Lenora Park in Snellville. Spring programs start the week of March 24th, Summer programs start the week of June 3rd, Fall programs start the week of August 11th. Please visit www.justskillsofatlanta.com for more information or call 770-296-2580. Sessions are filling up now for spring, summer and fall. Ask about our free introduction day to see what Just Skills Of Atlanta is all about.

BASEBALL

- Braves.** August 13 vs. Chicago 7 PM. August 14 vs. Chicago 7:10 PM. August 15 vs. San Francisco 7:35 PM. August 16 vs. San Francisco 7:10 PM. August 17 vs. San Francisco 1:35 PM. August 18 vs. San Francisco 4:35 PM. August 19 at New York Mets 7:10 PM. August 20 at New York Mets 7:10 PM. August 21 at New York Mets 7:10 PM. August 22 at St. Louis 8:15 PM. August 23 at St. Louis 3:55 PM. August 24 at St. Louis 2:15 PM. August 26 vs. Florida 7:10 PM. August 27 vs. Florida 7:10 PM.
- Prospect Watch.** Ongoing - Buckhead. Baseball pitching and hitting lessons by a former college and minor league coach. For information call 404-869-7966 or visit www.eteamz.com/tryouts.
- Adult Baseball League Metro Atlanta.** Ongoing. MSBL 18+, 28+, 38+, and 48+. Sunday League contact info is 770.785.2588, e-mail info@AtlantaMSBL.com. MSBL 18+ Saturday League contact info is 770-436-8114, e-mail AtlantaMABL@aol.com. MSBL 18+ Midweek Wood bat league contact info is 770-436-8114, e-mail AtlantaMABL@aol.com. MSBL 18+ Fall League contact info is 770-436-8114, e-mail AtlantaMABL@aol.com. For more information about our Atlanta Adult Baseball League, please visit our website at www.AtlantaMSBL.com.
- TNT Sports.** Ongoing. Baseball pitching and hitting lessons by Rob Blair, former college coach, Snellville. To set up a free pitching or hitting analysis call 678-344-5876.
- Jack City Baseball.** Ongoing. Baseball pitching and hitting. Instruction with former pro Keith Whitner. 18-y looking for high school players. The new location is inside Velocity Sports in North Gwinnett. For more information call 770-633-0948 or visit jackcity.net.

FOOTBALL

- Falcons.** August 16 vs. Indianapolis 7:30 PM.
Georgia. August 30 vs. Georgia Southern 2 PM.

- Georgia Tech.** August 28 vs. Jacksonville State 7:30 PM.
- Collins Hill Athletic Association.** Ongoing. Accepting applications for qualified coaches in all age groups. For information email Craig Deneau at deneauc@charter.net.
- Grayson Athletic Association.** Ongoing. Football coaches needed for eighth grade and all age groups. For information call Duane Davis at 678-300-0282 or visit www.gaasports.org.
- Flag Football.** GSL -- Georgia Sports Leagues. Georgia's Largest Flag League. Registration ongoing. We offer 7-Man, 8-man, Youth and Co-Ed styles of play around Atlanta. We play ALL year round. For information please contact (678)799-0159 or email mark@georgiasportleagues.org. Visit www.georgiasportleagues.org.
- Georgia Force Home School High School Football Program.** If you are a home school student or a student that attends a Christian school in the Gwinnett or Hall county region and would like to participate in high school football, please contact Scott Willis at 770-531-1499 ext 401 or email at appstrtn@aol.com The Georgia Force High School football program participates in the GFL (Georgia Football League) and is accepting players from the ages of 13-18 years old. We currently offer a JV and Varsity program. For more information, please go to our web site at www.forcehighschoolfootball.com.



SCARY SIGHT: Defensive tackle Grady Jackson is definitely one of the NFL's big boys, weighing in at 345 pounds. After being waived by Jacksonville in July, the Falcons re-signed the 12-year veteran, who led the league in tackles-for-loss in 2006 while playing in Atlanta. Would you want to try and block him? We sure wouldn't. Photo courtesy of Jimmy Cribb/Atlanta Falcons.

- Arena Indoor Football.** Ongoing. Youth and Adult Leagues. Youth 7 vs. 7; Adult 6 vs. 6. For information, call 678-714-7454 or e-mail info.indoor@atlantasilverbacks.com. www.atlantasilverbacks.com/indoor.
- Capitol City Officials Association.** CCOA is accepting ongoing registration for the upcoming GHSA High School season in football. We hold weekly training meetings. For more information, contact Irvin Seabrook at 404-957-3331 or e-mail Irv_Seabrook@yahoo.com.

HOCKEY

- Peachtree Booster Club.** Ongoing - Pickneyville Roller Hockey Rink. Fees: \$95 for 12-game season, \$30 out-of-county fee. For information visit www.pbc.sports.org.

SOCCER

- Silverbacks.** August 16 vs. Charleston 7:55 PM. August 20 at Montreal 7:30 PM. August 23 at Rochester 7:35 PM. August 24 vs. Montreal 6 PM.

- Challenged Soccer.** Ongoing. For mentally and physically disabled youngsters. For information call Ken Higgins at 770-985-0434.

- Fair Play Sports Center.** Ongoing on Saturdays. Indoor soccer for ages 4-7, 30- to 60-minute classes. For information call 770-831-3210.

- Hall of Fame soccer clinics.** Ongoing on Fridays - Clarkston Community Center. For under-6 through under-12 players. Fees: Free. For information call 404-508-1050 or visit www.clarkstoncommunitycenter.org. 5:30-7 PM.

- Competitive Amateur Soccer in Atlanta** For more information, visit www.majesticoccer.com.

TENNIS

- Technique Clinics.** Ongoing - Betsy Grant Tennis Center. Tuesdays (serve/volley) and Saturdays (forehand/backhand). Fees: \$18. For information call 404-790-4772 or email jimhines01@yahoo.com. 2 PM on Saturdays, 6:30 PM on Tuesdays.
- Tennis camps for kids.** Ongoing weekly. Lost Mountain Tennis Center. For information call 770-528-8525.

LACROSSE

- Lacrosse.** Ongoing. Registration for 1st-8th grades. For information call 404-216-5870, email jasona@bagatawaylacrosse.com or visit www.bagatawaylacrosse.com.
- PlayLaxGwinnett.** Ongoing. Players, coaches, referees needed for play at Gwinnett Sports Center. For information call Chris Chico at 678-429-0094 or email chris@kicks-sticks.com.
- Double Stixx Lacrosse.** Ongoing - Leagues, Travel Teams and Tournaments for youth, high school and adult's boys and girls. More information about the best lacrosse programs in Georgia can be found at www.doublestixxlacrosse.com or by contacting Chris Smith at chris@doublestixxlacrosse.com or 404-550-5322.

RUNNING

- Titan Twilight 5K and Little Titan Races.** Aug. 16. Bogart, 7 PM. 706-769-6593.
- Bulldog Dash 5K.** Aug. 16. Suwanee, 8 AM. 404-580-2715.
- ATC Grand Finale.** Aug. 16. Atlanta, 7:30 AM. www.atlantatrackclub.org.
- Gary Tillman Memorial Clocktower 5K/2M.** Aug. 16. Rome, 8 AM. 706-235-3035.
- Tar-N-Turf 4Mile/Mile.** Aug. 16. Morrow, 8 AM. 770-961-4006.
- 5K Peanut Run.** Aug. 16. Brooklet, 7 AM. 912-823-3668.

CAMPS

- Nike Basketball Camps.** Camps located in Snellville, Roswell, Kennesaw, Oxford and Jonesboro. For more information or a free brochure, visit 1-800-645-3226 or visit www.ussportscamps.com.
- Georgia Tech MaChelle Joseph Basketball Camp.** Ages range from 7-17. Day camps, overnight camps and team camps available. Visit www.ramblinwreck.com or call 404-894-4297 to find out which dates suit your campers best.
- Harlem Legends.** The Harlem Legends have scheduled their 2008 Shoot for the Stars Basketball & Physical Fitness Camps. The "Shoot for the Stars Youth Basketball Camps and Clinics" are a unique form of learning experiences geared towards young basketball players of all skill levels. There are two Gwinnett County camps this year. Please visit our website (www.harlemlegends.com) or call 404-837-6719 for additional camps.
- Emory Volleyball Camp.** Individual Skills Camp - June 16-19; Youth Day Camp - June 23-26; Middle School Day Camp - June 23-26; Individual Skills Camp - July 14-17. Please visit us online at www.evbvvolleyball.com for details and registration!

VOLLEYBALL

- Gwinnett Sports Center.** Registration ongoing. For information call Jerry Robison at 678-491-0203 or visit www.gsctfun.com.
- Suwanee Sports Academy.** Ongoing. Volleyball training and development for boys and girls grades 3-12. VolleySkills, VolleyStars, VolleyTraining, and On Court Player Development, a year-round comprehensive player development program. For more information, contact Mary Carnell at 770-614-6686 x108 or visit www.ssasports.com.

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VolleyStars. Beginning February 7 @ Suwanee Sports Academy for girls & boys grades 6-8 teaches individual skill development and team concepts through instruction and game play. For more information, contact Christy Howard at 770-614-6686 x106 or visit www.ssasports.com.

High School Volleyball League. Beginning February 7 @ Suwanee Sports Academy for girls grades 9-12. This league is designed for athletes who want to get in the gym but don't want to commit to club volleyball. For more information, contact Christy Howard at 770-614-6686 x106 or visit www.ssasports.com.

SWIMMING & DIVING

Swimming lessons. Ongoing - Alpharetta City Pool - Alpharetta, Ga. - 1825 Old Milton Parkway. For information call 678-297-6107.

Gwinnett Aquatics. Ongoing - 2800 Quinberry Drive and Bethany Church Road. For ages 5-18. Swim team and lessons available. For information call 770-972-4055.

Senior Water-Exercise class. Ongoing - Mountain Park pool - Lilburn, Ga. Fees: \$1 per class. For information call 770-546-4650. 10-10:50 AM.

SwimAtlanta Sugarloaf at Kid's Village. Ongoing. Swim team, lessons, lap swimming, master's program, water aerobics and scuba available. For information call 678-442-7946.

YOUTH REGISTRATION

Soccer - Soccer Alley. Ongoing - 3265 Roswell Road - Atlanta. For information call 404-266-0762 or visit www.starsoccerclub.com.

Tucker Youth Soccer. Ongoing - 2803 Henderson Road - Tucker, Ga. For information call 770-414-0538 or visit www.tysa.com.

Track and Field - Peachtree City Flash Youth Track Team registration. Ongoing - Riley Field - Peachtree City, Ga. For ages 6-14. For information call 770-631-3552 or email ptflash@bellsouth.net.

Gymnastics - Georgia Gymnastics Academy. Ongoing. For registration in Lawrenceville call 770-962-5867; in Suwanee call 770-945-3424.

Gym Elite. Ongoing. Registration for ages 2 and older. Cheerleading for ages 6 and older. For information call 770-242-0678.

Youth Soccer Training. Ongoing. Start age 3 and up. For information, call 678-714-7454 or e-mail info.indoor@atlantasilverbacks.com. www.atlantasilverbacks.com/indoor.

Flag Football. GSL -- Georgia Sports Leagues. Georgia's Best Sports Leagues. Registration ongoing. We offer Youth Flag Football for ages (6-8) and (9-12) year olds for both Boys & Girls. Games are played in the Chamblee, Doraville, Dunwoody area. Next season starts in February. For more information please contact (678)799-0159 or email mark@georgiasportsleagues.org. Visit www.georgiasportsleagues.org

Atlanta Junior Golf. Boys and girls, ages 7-18, can enjoy summer and fall tournaments throughout Metro Atlanta and Middle and North Georgia (from Dalton to Macon and from Carrollton to Athens) in one of the nation's premier junior golf associations. All skill levels are welcome, from beginner to experienced players, with more than 8,000 rounds of golf available during the summer program alone. For more information, log on to www.atlantajuniorgolf.org or call 770.850.9040.

SOFTBALL

AYSA Spring Season. Ongoing - North Park - Cogburn and Bethany - Alpharetta. Fees: If Alpharetta Residential Property Tax IS NOT PAID at the primary residence of the player, then the Non-City Resident Fee must be paid. After Jan. 13, \$10 late fee is charged.

Senior Softball League. Ongoing - Best Friend Park, Jimmy Carter Blvd., Norcross, GA. All Skill levels welcomed. Men age 45+ and women age 40+. Open practice on Saturdays and games on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays. For information call Gary Mastrodonato at 770-266-7042 or visit www.atlantaseniorssoftball.com.

Open Recreational Softball. GSL -- Georgia Sports Leagues. Georgia's Best Sports Leagues. Registration ongoing. We offer "Men's" and "Co-Ed" styles of play in Doraville/Dunwoody area. Monday, Wednesday & Sunday league play available. Next

season starts in February. We play ALL year round. For more information please contact (678)799-0159 or email mark@georgiasportsleagues.org. Visit www.georgiasportsleagues.org.

Capitol City Officials Association. CCOA is accepting ongoing registration for the upcoming GHSA High School season in fast-pitch softball. We hold weekly training meetings. For more information, contact Irvin Seabrook at 404-957-3331 or e-mail lr_seabrook@yahoo.com.

GYMNASTICS

Gymnastics Classes at Gymnastics Academy of Atlanta. Ongoing - 3126 Cobb Parkway Kennesaw, Ga. For information call 770-975-8337 or visit www.gymnasticsacademyofatlanta.com.

Gymnastics Classes at Gwinnett Gymnastics Center. Ongoing - 927 Killian Hill Road Lilburn, Ga. For information call 770-921-5630.

Atlanta School of Gymnastics in Lawrenceville. Ongoing. Classes for tots through teens. Cheerleading classes for ages 5 and older. For information call 770-277-9434.

The Little Gym of Snellville. Ongoing. Noncompetitive gymnastics and motor-skills development classes



TALL AND SHORT OF IT: Former NBA star Ralph Sampson (left) stopped by the monthly Happy Hour event at John Hunsinger and Company realtors, and was joined there by 4-foot-11 Marilyn Pearlman (of Pearlman Associates PR firm) and John Hunsinger. Former Atlanta mayor Sam Massell was also in attendance and asked Sampson, "How's the weather up there?" Photo courtesy of Mary Burns.

and camps. For ages 10 months-12 years. For information call 770-982-0901 or visit www.tlgsnellvillega.com.

RACING

Thursday Thunder Racing Series. August 7 at Atlanta Motor Speedway.

Friday Night Drags and Show-N-Shine Car Show. August 8 at Atlanta Motor Speedway.

Speed Tech Racing School. August 22 at Atlanta Motor Speedway.

Suzuki Superbike Showdown. August 29-31 at Road Atlanta.

19th Annual NOPI Nationals. September 20-21 at Atlanta Motor Speedway.

OFFICIATING

Basketball - Duluth basketball association. Ongoing. Looking for youth officials with training provided. For information call Barry Sullivan at 770-623-1750.

Football - Lanier Football Officials Association. Ongoing. GHSA member accepting applications with weekly training meetings. For information call Tom Tipton at 770-967-3197, ext. 239 or visit www.lanierofficials.org.

Metro Atlanta Wrestling Officials Association. Ongoing. Needs officials. For information call Bud Hennebaul at 770-338-0705 or email BudHen27@aol.com.

9RCorp Sports Officials. Ongoing. Provider of sports officials for multiple sports including basketball, flag football, & softball. Looking for additional officials. For information call Dennis Reagan at 404-213-0588 or email 9rcorp@150mail.com.

Georgia Lacrosse Officials Association. Needs youth and High School officials for 2007-2008 season. Training and mentoring provided for free. Great way to earn some extra money and get some fun aerobic exercise. For more information, visit www.GALAXREF.com or call Jim Westbrook at 770-753-9059.

ATLANTA SPORTS COUNCIL

Chick-Fil-A Bowl. Dec. 31, 2008. Georgia Dome. For tickets, call 404-444-4444.

To reach the Atlanta Sports Council call 404-586-8510 or visit www.atlantasportscouncil.com.

MISC

Senior Horseshoe Pitching League. Ongoing - Gwinnett Senior Center - Bethesda Park. Includes instructional coaching. Games will be played under NHPA rules. For men and women seniors. Meets Tuesdays. For information call 770-972-2434. 10 AM.

Pool Tournament. Every Monday - Ongoing - Motorheads Bar 'n' Grill - Henry County. Cost: No cover. For information call 770-898-0008 or visit www.motorheadsbarandgrill.com. 7 p.m.

Pool Tournament. Nightly - Ongoing - Sean Patrick's Bar & Grill - Buckhead. Fees: No cover. For information call 770-650-5723. 8 PM.

East Cobb Bass Club. Ongoing - Ryan's Family Steakhouse - Canton Road - Marietta, Ga. Boaters and nonboaters welcome. Meets the first Tuesday of each month. For information call 770-364-3036 or email noeyf@aol.com. 7 PM.

Cohutta chapter of Trout Unlimited. Ongoing - Delkwood Bar and Grill. Meets the fourth Thursday of each month. For information call 770-425-5364 or email sonnyjm@cs.com. 6:30 PM.

GEORGIA BIKES! Membership. Ongoing. The effectiveness of GEORGIA BIKES! is dependent on volunteers, supporters, and members, like you, who are willing to make a and Club/Small Business: \$100.

Condor Handball Organization. The Condors feature current Men's National Team members and past National Team members and Olympians as well as the greatest American to ever play the sport, Darrick Heath. We have weekly leagues and training opportunities for men, women, and youth. For more information, contact Jeb Bell at handball@equipmentcontrols.com.

Performance Training Inc. at Suwanee Sports Academy. Ongoing. Offers speed, agility, and quickness training for athletes across multiple sports. For more information, contact Dustin Wolf at 770-614-6686 x121 or visit www.ssasports.com.

Suwanee Sports Academy. Pre-K Athletics for 2, 3 and 4 year-olds introduces the basic skills needed to play basketball, soccer, and t-ball. Also, there is a unique after school program that provides students with a weekly sports curriculum along with the after school classroom setting. For more information, call 770-614-6686 or visit www.ssasports.com.

Club Sport. Club Sport opens registration for summer leagues on May 1st with league play beginning in June. Club Sport is Atlanta's recreational sports and social group with over 10,000 participants each year on 1200 teams in 120 leagues. Each season Club Sport offers leagues in flag football, softball, soccer, sand and indoor volleyball, basketball and more. Club Sport is where Atlanta comes to play! For more information about Club Sport, upcoming events, photos or interviews with the owner, please contact Rich Alvarez at 678-994-0793 ext. 818 or visit www.usclubsport.com.

Stout Irish Sports Pub Events and Specials. Monday: Dart League and Free Pool from 11 p.m.-close; Tuesday: Texas Hold'em; Wednesday: Trivia Night and Free Pool from 11pm-close; Thursday: College Night with DJ All Night; Friday: Happy Hour Food Specials; Saturday: Game Day all day long on Stout's big screen plasma TVs; Sunday: Game Day all day long on Stout's big screen plasma TVs. Miller High Life Beers are always \$1. Beer Club: Guests join for \$120 and receive a prestigious Stout Club Mug engraved with their name on it. Each visit over the course of the year, members enjoy their first beer of choice on the house. For more, call 404.869.1151 or email www.stoutirishpub.com.



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Thoughts from the Olympics' first week

Though Kevin Dankosky may disagree (see page 19), MY opinion is that it doesn't get any better than the Summer Olympics. Watching the best athletes across the globe come together and compete for gold (and bragging rights) is an event unlike any other. Yeah, the Winter Games are pretty cool too, but they can't top the Summer ones. More nations, more events, more excitement. (And who wants to stand around in that cold weather anyway?)

At first I was hoping to be Score Atlanta's representative in Beijing this year. Then I found out that China is not exactly "driving distance" from Atlanta, so it wasn't going to work out. Oh well. Thanks to NBC and its sister channels, we are still able to get full coverage out here in the Western hemisphere. Some thoughts after the first week:

- Technically the Olympics kicked off last Wednesday, as several women's soccer games took place two days before the Opening Ceremonies. Men's soccer hit the pitch the next day. Now I know soccer is the world's top sport, but are fans that desperate for it that organizers had to start the matches BEFORE the Olympics opened? Then what I thought was a virtually unbeatable American women's squad lost 2-0 to Norway. Both goals slipped by goaltender Hope Solo in the first four minutes. Wasn't she complaining a few months ago about not playing when it matters, or something like that?

- The choreography, technology and overall atmosphere of the Opening Ceremonies were simply breathtaking. Even with all of the dancing, fireworks and artwork, my favorite part was the scroll's transformation into movable blocks reminiscent of the Great Wall - especially when it was revealed that each of the 897 blocks had been manned by individual Chinese performers. Seeing each of them wave and jump around as the crowd gasped in amazement may have been the most entertaining moment of the evening. All in all, the opening ceremonies cost somewhere around \$100 million. That's about the same budget that "The Adventures of Pluto Nash" had a few years back. Personally, I'll take the Olympics.

- There were some truly amazing stories surrounding many of the flag bearers. Holding the flag for America was track star Lopez Lamong, one of the Lost Boys of Sudan who was presumed dead at the age of six before it was discovered that he had escaped. Lamong had thought his parents had been killed as well, but was reunited with them in 2003 and became a U.S. citizen just over a year ago. As for host China, NBA All-Star Yao Ming held the flag alongside a 9-year-old boy who saved two of his classmates from a recent earthquake. Yeah, I was wiping my eyes on more than a few occasions.

- Alright, I'll ask: How is it that a nation like Finland (58 athletes; 5.3 million inhabitants) ends up with one more competitor than India (57; 1.1 billion)?

Whatever - as long as the U.S. keeps bringing the most (596), I'll take it.

BRING ON THE GAMES ...

- Somehow I seem to forget this every four years, but a fencing duel is always a lot less like a swordfight than I expect it to be. Luckily the rules are pretty simple—just poke the other guy—so it's pretty easy to follow. I tuned in just in time on Saturday to watch the American women sweep the saber fencing competition for all three medals (the first U.S. medals of 2008), which included Sada Jacobsen (silver) from Dunwoody, Ga.

- Michael Phelps is not human. He can't be. He didn't just beat the world record in the 400 IM, he destroyed it. Do you understand how far 400 meters in length is? Just watching him was making MY arms tired. He only held a slim lead after 300 meters, prompting a friend of mine to say, "This is actually pretty close." One-hundred meters later, Phelps had beaten Hungary's Laszlo Cseh by more than two full seconds. We're witnessing history here: he will become the overall Olympic medal record-holder soon enough.

- "The Redeem Team" may be a bit of a hokey nickname, but the United States' domination of the basketball scene has been a treat. LeBron James, Kobe Bryant, Chris Paul, Atlanta's own Dwight Howard ... this is how USA basketball is supposed to look. The 101-70 beatdown of China was a start, and I'm fascinated to see what happens from here. If—no, I'll say when—the U.S. takes the gold, will our top stars continue to go to the Olympics with a chip on their shoulders in the future? Or will these same studs stay home in 2012 since their goals will have already been reached? Regardless, not since the original Dream Team has an American squad been so perfectly assembled and I'm confident a new, long-lasting undefeated streak is underway. (This is assuming the Americans beat Angola on Tuesday, which took place after press time. I'm feeling OK about the prediction.)

- But we can't ignore other nations' accomplishments, so let me be the first American to praise the women's weightlifting (53 kg) champion, Thailand's Prapawadee Jaroenrattanakoon. Congratulations Prapawadee, and if people mispronounce your name here, don't worry about it. I'm an American, and people mispronounce my name all the time.

The action has only just begun, and the closing ceremonies will not take place until Aug. 24. Before then, you can catch U.S. athletes compete for the gold in every sport except team handball. And while we are certainly the favorites to win the most overall medals for the fourth consecutive time, I still wonder why this great nation just can't put together a quality team-handball squad. Drives me nuts.

Arapoglou can be reached at tarapoglou@scoreatl.com.

SAID ON THE AIR

"Upon further review the schedule is too tough and the questions too significant to keep the Dawgs at No. 1 ... That's not to say they can't get to the BCS championship game."

- CBS Sports writer Dennis Dodd on Georgia's preseason No. 1 ranking

KEEPIN' AN EYE ON

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

On Sunday, Mark Bradley wrote a touching piece on the passing of Skip Caray, and did so mostly from the perspective of his longtime partner Pete Van Wieren. The article recalls some great moments between the two broadcasters, like when Pete refused to allow Skip to tell a dirty joke during a live broadcast, forcing Skip to tell only the punch line (which was clean). "That started a whole series of punch-line-only jokes. People were sending us jokes, just to hear the punch lines," Van Wieren fondly remembered.

With the first week of Fall football practices already in the books, on Friday columnist Chip Towers gave readers an in-depth look at which freshmen have a chance to help the Bulldogs this coming season. In addition to the obvious choice of Caleb King, Towers named five less obvious players such as Justin Anderson, Tanner Strickland, John Knox, Charles White, Israel Troupe and Aaron White.

MEDIA HALL OF FAME

After a surprisingly productive 2007 season, Roddy White had yet another impressive showing Saturday night in the Falcons first preseason game, catching five balls for 47 yards and a touchdown. And in *Sports Illustrated's* most recent fantasy football rankings, White's quick ascent was recognized: "White became one of the best late-round bargains last year as he caught 83 passes for 1,202 yards and six TDs ... even if rookie Matt Ryan takes over at QB, White will bounce back with a season of 80-plus receptions, 1,100-plus yards and six TDs."

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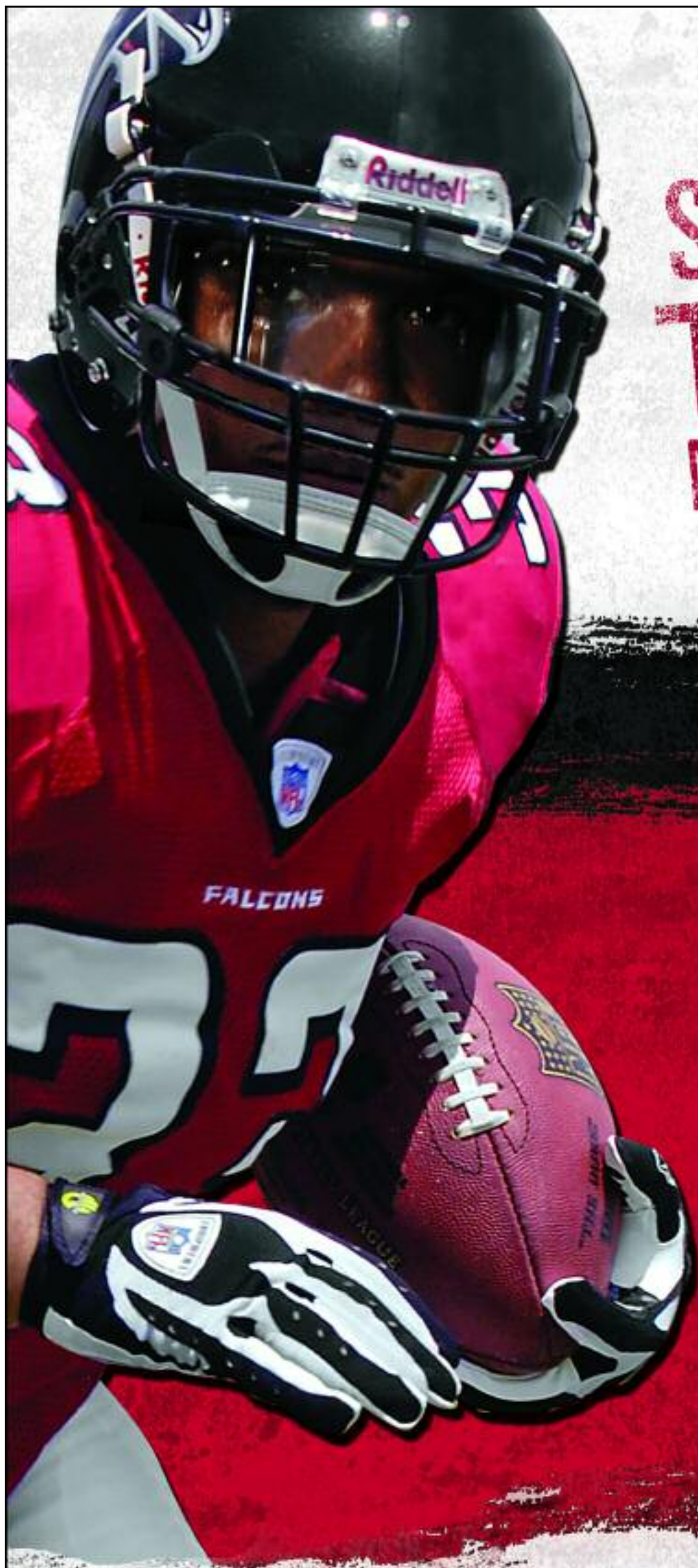
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Sun. Nov. 23	Carolina	1:00 pm*
Sun. Dec. 14	Tampa Bay	1:00 pm*
Sun. Dec. 28	St. Louis	1:00 pm*