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JANUARY 28 - FEBRUARY 3, 2011

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SCORE

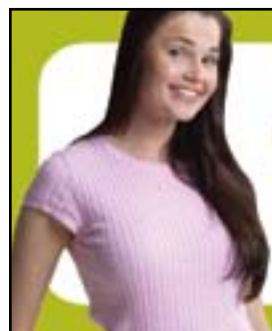
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COVERAGE!

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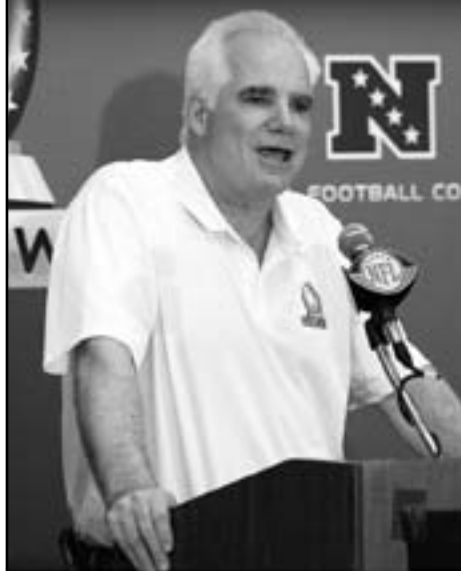
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SCORE **SCHOOL LISTING**

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COBB: Allatoona, Campbell, Harrison, Kell, Kennesaw Mountain, Lassiter, Marietta, McEachern, Mt. Paran Christian N. Cobb, N. Cobb Christian, Pebblebrook, Pope, S. Cobb, Sprayberry, Walker, Walton, Wheeler, Whitefield Academy
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FAYETTE: Whitewater, Sandy Creek, Starr's Mill
NEWTON: Eastside

SHOT OF THE WEEK...



COACH KAHUNA: Falcons coach Mike Smith and staff were chosen to head the NFC squad in the annual Pro Bowl in Honolulu. It's good to see Coach "Smitty" get recognized for the solid job he's done thus far in Atlanta.
Photo courtesy of AtlantaFalcons.com.

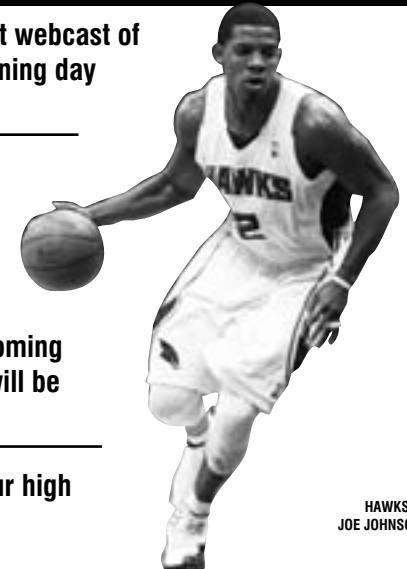
CAN'T MISS THIS WEEK

4 The Fletch discusses GPB's recent webcast of Walton-Wheeler and previews signing day coverage.

5 In our cover story, Ricky Dimon looks at where potential Georgia high school seniors may be signing on Wednesday.

7 Brian Jones breaks down the upcoming Miller Grove-Mays game, which will be webcast on GPB.org.

8-9 Check out our prep coverage in our high school sports section!



HAWKS G
JOE JOHNSON

TEAM SCOOP AND VOICES

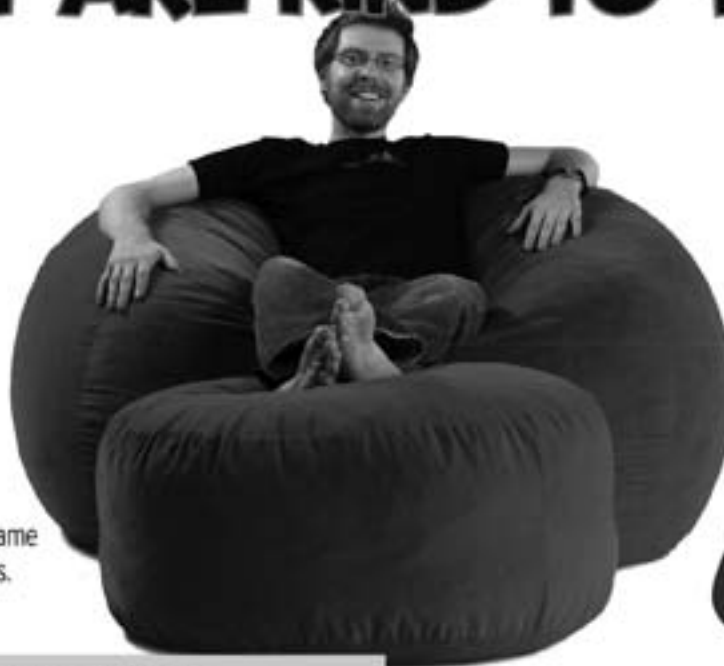
*COVER DESIGN BY DJ GALBIATI
 COVER PHOTOS COURTESY OF WESTMINSTER HS,
 JON BARASH, BRETT HEINECKE, KELL HS*

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INSIDE AT SCORE

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

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THE FLETCH

ATLANTA'S ONLY SPORTS MEDIA COLUMN

SCORE



Walton-Wheeler broadcast a success for GPB; recruiting coverage heats up

Georgia Public Broadcasting's Two for Tuesday high school basketball coverage started this past Tuesday as Wheeler traveled to Walton for a pair of tremendous matchups. The Wheeler boys entered the contest ranked No. 2 in the state, while the Raiders had just fallen out of the rankings. I had the play-by-play call along with Score Atlanta's own Bob Houghton providing color commentary. This is our second year as a team doing basketball, and thus far the tandem has been clicking full-steam ahead. Be sure to see this week's slate by checking the schedule on www.gpb.org/sports as well as www.scoreatl.com and www.gaprepnews.com.

XL CHANGES DATE, TIME ...

Speaking of GPB on Tuesdays, GPB Sports Central XL has packed up the moving vans and moved from Wednesday nights 8-9 p.m. to its new slot, Tuesdays from 2-3 p.m. The decision was made to change time slots because more people would watch during the day opposed to at night during primetime television time. Sports Central XL also will preview that night's basketball game, creating a sports synergy that will last all day Tuesday. Sports Central XL will also air a special recruiting show this Wednesday, February 2 for National Signing Day, featuring Score Atlanta's The Official Visit co-hosts Fletcher Proctor and Scott Janovitz as well as Sports Central XL regulars Alex Ewalt and Mark Harmon.

BLUE CHIP EXPERTS ...

Recruiting is getting bigger and bigger in the local media scene. In addition to Score Atlanta's The Official Visit (Monday 7-9 p.m.) on Sports Radio 790 The Zone, the station is also talking more recruiting on Pollack & Bell. Surely much to the chagrin of Mike Bell, ESPN experts such as Tom Luginbill have made appearances recently. I have appeared on the Ford

Football Show the last few Sundays to discuss recent recruiting movement, and the station may decide to once again give recruiting updates throughout the day as it did last year with Scott Janovitz.

680 The Fan, not to be outdone, has had the AJC's Chip Towers seemingly on every show every few days, and according to his blog online, Towers has been appearing on radio shows throughout the state. Even local papers such as the Gwinnett Daily Post and the Marietta Daily Journal are starting to run recruiting stories on a semi-regular basis, trying to get a scoop on some of the recruiting services such as Rivals and Scout.

ON THE SPIRIT ...

The AJC's Jeff Schultz presented a well-written column/blog last week about the Atlanta Spirit Group and their apparent lies over the potential sale of the Atlanta Thrashers. While Schultz did a very nice job of laying out several points from a recent suit brought up by the Thrashers' owners against its former attorneys, I must apologize to Schultz for not caring. He brought up some interesting revelations and evidence that the ASG was trying to sell the franchise, but I just don't give a rip. And before you say, "Oh you just don't like hockey," let me respond by saying, "that's bull-hockey." I DO like the NHL. Going to hockey games is 10 pounds of fun in a five-pound funbag. But the Thrashers have failed for so long that I have stopped caring about them.

I despise hockey season locally because 680 The Fan will force hockey down my throat, and I just don't want to listen to a bad product. Even the year the Thrashers made the playoffs, a four-game sweep ended hockey in Atlanta one week later than usual. So sorry, Jeff Schultz, but I don't really care if the Atlanta (dis)Spirit(ed) Group was trying

to sell the team and then lied about it. I wish they would sell it to folks that cared about the team, even if that meant moving the team. I would not miss them.

MAKING CUTS ...

Last week on Score Atlanta Sports Sunday, when talking about the recent trend of college teams oversigning recruits, former Furman wide receiver Josh Cole made a plea that mirrored a recent plea in the AJC by Schultz to end the practice of "oversigning" on National Signing Day. In a typical year, a team can give out no more than 25 scholarships to a signing class, but you also (in an ideal world) would only give out 25 as a true max and would dole out just as many open spots as you have available to meet the 85 scholarship player max. Cole revealed that the scholarships are in fact a one-year agreement, but it is assumed that schools will renew the scholarship every year for four or five years.

That is not the case anymore it seems. Schools in the SEC in particular are oversigning and forcing the older players to sit out due to "medical hardship" or transfer to let the younger, better players play. Others are being asked to grayshirt, ie, sit out a year to count towards next year's class. The oversigning is basically hoarding and if it is costing a player his education because the new freshman can run .1 second faster. That is a shame. But then, I guess the whole "student-athlete" term is being washed away to just "athlete" a little more every day.

UGA INSIGHT ...

Finally, if you missed last Sunday's Score Atlanta Sports Sunday on The Zone, our managing editor Stephen Black called in to discuss the Georgia Bulldogs and his insight rivaled any insight provided by either the AJC's Georgia beat writer or the Athens

CAN YOU BELIEVE... ...HE SAID THAT?

All I'm saying is that he can finish the game on a hurt knee ... I played the whole season on one."

This was on Maurice Jones-Drew's Twitter feed in regards to Jay Cutler, who missed most of the second half with what has now been determined to be a torn MCL in his knee. A quarterback needs his MCL in order to plant and throw, MJ-D. I didn't realize UCLA's pre-med degree specialized in visual diagnostics where you can just LOOK at a player and see what is wrong or NOT wrong with him. Oh and PS, you missed the last two games of the season yourself when your team needed YOU to make the playoffs. Quitter!

Banner-Herald's Bulldog writer. Black not only offered his first-hand account of the recent Georgia/Mississippi State basketball game, but he provided a list of five names that the Georgia Bulldog football program is checking out to be the next offensive line coach. The shortlist Black went with included names that Georgia "insiders" Buck Belue from 680 and David Pollack of 790 had not offered on their respective radio shows. Proud members of the Bulldog Nation should give Black a long look online and in this paper when seeking Georgia news.

Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.



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SIGNING DAY
SPECIAL

SCORE

RICKY DIMON



Local high school football stars to make final college decisions Wednesday

The biggest day in college football's off-season is just around the corner. National Signing Day will take center stage Wednesday when high school seniors can sign binding National Letters of Intent.

As always, plenty of the top prospects in the state of Georgia have already made verbal commitments to their schools of choice. However, the drama will not be limited to the recruits who are still uncommitted. Case in point: former Calhoun star Da'Rick Rodgers had given his word to the Georgia Bulldogs, but on National Signing Day in 2010 he gave Mark Richt the cold shoulder and signed with SEC rival Tennessee.

STILL UNDECIDED ...

Two of the state's most highly-touted 2011 recruits have not yet decided as National Signing Day rapidly approaches. Carver-Columbus running back Isaiah Crowell and Thomas County Central defensive end Ray Drew are still weighing their offers—or if they have come to decisions, they are not tipping their hands.

Crowell has narrowed his choices to Auburn, Alabama and Georgia. The Bulldogs appear to be using the same tactics to lure Crowell as Tennessee employed to snag Rogers last year. Rogers flip-flopped to the Vols after they got a commitment from Calhoun quarterback and good friend Nash Nance. Perhaps Richt took notes, because he recently offered a scholarship to Carver-Columbus defensive back Quintavious Harrow, Crowell's best friend since kindergarten.

"People are going to have their opinions about why Georgia offered Quintavious," Carver-Columbus head coach Dell McGee told the AJC. "All I know is that he is getting a free education at a great institution along with the opportunity to play football in the best conference in the nation. To me, that's priceless."

Landing Crowell would also be priceless for the Bulldogs. He ran for 1,721 yards and 18 touchdowns on 147 carries last season and led Carver-Columbus to the Class AA semifinals. In a quarterfinal win over Thomasville,

Crowell erupted for 305 yards and five touchdowns on just 20 rushes.

Crowell has said from the beginning that he will wait until National Signing Day to make his decision. Added McGee: "Isaiah will do what is the best for Isaiah."

Drew is reportedly considering Auburn, Clemson, Georgia, LSU and Miami (Fla). "It's going to be very interesting," said Scott Janovitz, who hosts "The Official Visit" on 790 the Zone. Janovitz spoke with Drew on Monday and is reporting that the Bulldogs are recruiting the five-star prospect as an outside linebacker instead of a defensive end. Janovitz called Georgia's pitch "a tremendous blunder," because "Drew wants to play with his hand in the dirt." In other words, Drew prefers to stay at defensive end and that could spell doom for UGA's hopes.

One of Crowell's teammates also remains up for grabs. Georgia is in the mix for Carver-Columbus defensive tackle Gabriel Wright, but Auburn reportedly has the lead ahead of Tennessee.

Chattahoochee scored a series of thrilling playoff wins en route to the Class 4A state championship, and there has already been plenty of offseason drama for a number of Cougars. Wide receiver Kane Whitehurst has not been anywhere on Arkansas' radar screen, but that all changed when Bobby Petrino came to take a look not at Whitehurst, but at teammate Barron Dixon. While Dixon is headed to Mississippi State, it is Whitehurst who is now set to become a Razorback. Quarterback Timmy Byerly is also garnering late interest from BCS schools. Michigan and Mississippi State have joined the sweepstakes for Byerly, who has offers from Middle Tennessee State and Furman.

TECH MISSING OUT ...

Janovitz is most interested in three storylines heading into Wednesday: UGA's proficiency with in-state recruiting, Tech's failure to sign local players, and the success of SEC schools such as Alabama, Kentucky, South Carolina, Tennessee and Vanderbilt in diving into the talent-rich pool of Georgia prospects.

Richt has received almost 20 verbal commitments from Georgia products, including Valdosta High School teammates Jay Rome and Malcolm Mitchell. Damian Swann, a do-it-all athlete for Grady who stars at cornerback, is also bound for Athens.

Only 11 in-state prospects have given verbal commitments to Georgia Tech. Head coach Paul Johnson, known for needing very specific types of players for his triple-option offense, has once again placed a significant focus on North Carolina and Alabama. While he is expected to sign Wayne County's Tre Jackson and Chris Milton of Charlton County, his top two recruits (Vad Lee and Airyn Willis) hail from North Carolina.

"They have really not done a good job recruiting what is the fourth-best state in the country for football talent," Janovitz said of the Yellow Jackets. "They have either missed on guys they should have offered or they offered and did not recruit hard enough."

At South Carolina, Steve Spurrier already has the same number of Georgia players—11—verbally committed to take their talents to Columbia. Among Spurrier's coups are Stephenson safety Kadetrix Marcus, South Gwinnett linebacker Edward Muldrow, McEachern tight end Rory Anderson and Pepperell offensive guard Kyle Harris.

Several top recruits in the state are headed to other SEC schools. Alabama's Nick Saban has received commitments from Griffin defensive end Xzavier Dixon and Cook County linebacker Shannon Brown. Derek Dooley is set to welcome Gaines-

ville linebacker A.J. Johnson, Kell defensive back Brian Randolph and Clark Central offensive lineman Alan Posey to Tennessee. Even Kentucky has thrown itself squarely into the fray. The Wildcats are looking forward to signing M.L. King wideout Demarco Robinson, Grady running back Marcus Caffey and Whitewater running back Josh Clemons on Wednesday.

NOTHING IS FINAL ...

While only a few marquee names remain technically "undecided," the truth is that nobody's college destination is set in stone. Rogers waffled last season, and Janovitz says every school should expect at least one or two commits to back out at the last moment. Tennessee benefited with Rogers, but the Vols should be prepared for a taste of their own medicine in 2011. Johnson committed at the beginning of last season, but recent visits to rival SEC schools have put his situation in doubt.

So you think you know where everyone is going? Well, think again. Fasten your seatbelts, because the quest for the 2011 BCS National Championship—and beyond—is about to begin!

Dimon can be reached at rdimon@scoreatl.com.

2011 GEORGIA PROSPECT RANKINGS

NAME	HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
1 Stephon Tuitt	Monroe Area	Notre Dame
2 Ray Drew	Thomas Co. Central	Not Committed
3 Isaiah Crowell	Carver	Not Committed
4 Jay Rome	Valdosta	Georgia
5 Damian Swann	Grady	Georgia
6 Sterling Bailey	East Hall	Georgia
7 Gabe Wright	Carver	Not Committed
8 Quan Bray	Troup	Auburn
9 James Vaughters	Tucker	Stanford
10 Xzavier Dickson	Griffin	Alabama

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SCORE LIST

BY BRIAN JONES

1 GONE BOWLING: It's not the end-of-season game the Falcons wanted to play in, but nine players and the entire coaching staff will have a chance to play one more game before the season ends as the Pro Bowl kicks off on Sunday in Hawaii. I know the ultimate goal for any player is the Super Bowl, but a free trip to Hawaii? I don't see anything wrong with that at all.

2 INJURED THRASHER: The Thrashers have had some tough breaks lately, and the going will get even tougher after star defenseman Tobias Enstrom fractured finger on his right hand. Enstrom has been highly productive this season, scoring eight goals and notching 33 assists. Despite all the bad news, the Thrash are still in the eighth playoff spot.

3 GATOR BITE: Stegeman Coliseum was rocking this past Tuesday as the Georgia Bulldogs took on the Florida Gators in a pivotal SEC East contest. Unfortunately, the Dawgs came up short in double overtime, but Georgia fans have to be happy with the way the team has been playing this season and the future looks really bright for this team.

4 SHOWDOWN IN 5A: Wheeler won the state basketball title in 2009. Milton won the title in 2010. On Saturday, these two teams will square off in a Region 5-5A battle in what should be a great atmosphere. Milton is the top-ranked team in the state while Wheeler is ranked No. 2. Who will prevail? I'm not sure, but it will be a classic basketball game.

5 IT'S SIGNING TIME: This Wednesday is National Signing Day when some of the nation's best high school football players sign their Letter of Intent to play college football. All eyes in Georgia will be on Ray Drew and Isaiah Crowell to see which college they choose. Check ScoreAtl.com throughout the day to see the latest signings.

CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

BY BRIAN JONES

\$45,000 Salary each player of the winning team from the Pro Bowl earns

\$22,500 Salary each player of the losing team from the Pro Bowl earns

57 Different Falcons players since 1966 to reach the Pro Bowl

1993 Last time four Falcons players were selected to the AP All-Pro team

\$5.75M Expected salary for Tony Gonzalez who will return to the Falcons next season

3 Games the Thrashers have won in the month of January as of Wednesday

20 Combined wins the previous three months

6 Combined basketball state titles for Milton and Wheeler

54 Total players committed to play football at Georgia, Georgia Tech and GSU

53.4M Amount of viewers to watch each conference championship game last Sunday

WHO'S HOT

THUMBS UP TO ALWAYS COMPETING



Herschel Walker

The former UGA and NFL star will take part in his second MMA fight on Saturday when he goes up against Scott Carson at a Strikeforce event in San Jose, Calif. Walker won his first MMA fight exactly one year ago, defeating Greg Nagy via TKO.

Championship Sunday

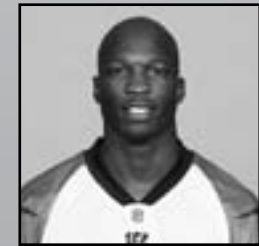
The AFC and NFC Championship games were played last Sunday and both had great endings. The Packers were able to hold off the QB-less Bears while the Steelers overcame a fierce second-half Jets. Let's hope the Super Bowl can provide the same excitement.

Walton Hoops

The Walton Raider boys basketball team got a huge win last Tuesday when they took out No. 2 Wheeler. It was a rare win for the Raiders against their arch rivals and, with the win, the Raiders are now tied with the Wildcats for the lead in Region 5-5A.

WHO'S NOT

THUMBS DOWN TO FLAKES



Ochocinco

The Cincinnati Bengals wide receiver announced this past Tuesday he will change his name back to Chad Johnson and is done with the "Ochocinco" phase. It may not be a bad thing because he had his least productive season in 2010 with only 831 yards and four touchdowns.

Andy Roddick

Roddick is still the most highly ranked male U.S. tennis player in the world, but he had another early exit in a grand slam tournament, losing to Stanislas Wawrinka in the round of 16 in the Australian Open. Roddick has not won a grand slam title since 2003.

Da Bears

It's disappointing to Chicagoans that their Bears lost the NFC title game. But what makes matters worse is they have fans burning Jay Cutler jerseys because they believed the controversial QB took himself out of the game. Don't worry Bears fans: the Bulls are having a good year.

TRIVIA

QUESTION

Thrashers forward Dustin Byfuglien has 41 points thus far in the 2010-2011 season. What is his career-high in points?

Answer on Page 14

MY TWO CENTS

The Walton-Wheeler hoops clash last Tuesday was a pleasure to cover. Not only was GPB.org there to do their first basketball webcast of the season, but the matchup brought together two of the best boys programs in the state. I was lucky enough to be invited along by our own Bob Houghton and Fletcher Proctor to help them out with the call. The girls game gave a great preview as to what the night held in store for us. The Lady Cats jumped out to an early lead, but the host Raiders took over late in the game behind Score 44 member Sarah Durdaller's 17 points and



five boards. The boys game then got off to a frantic pace, and each school's student section mirrored the intense action on the floor.

A lot of major college programs would be envious of the organization of the two fanbases, which hurled clever chants back and forth throughout the night. But, despite the contentious nature of the game, the fans behaved well and, for the most part, kept things classy in east Cobb. I look forward to watching the Miller Grove-Mays game live this Tuesday.

Black can be reached at sblack@scoreatl.com.

SANITY

AT LAST

"I didn't know I was close to it but I thought I had a lot of rebounds. I tried to do whatever we had to do to win. It feels good though, I am all smiles tonight."

- Georgia Tech's Iman Shumpert on his triple-double against Virginia Tech



BY BRIAN JONES

The hardwood is heating up.

A rematch of the Class 4A championship game from 2010 will take place on Tuesday as Class 4A No. 1 Miller Grove takes on Mays in the second "Two for Tuesday" webcast on GPB.org. This will be the second time these two schools have met this season. Miller Grove defeated the Raiders 69-52 the first time around, when junior center Tony Parker led the Wolverines with 28 points and 21 rebounds.

Mays looks to get revenge and it could happen with the players they have on their roster. The Raiders are looking to pick up where they left off last season, reaching the state finals with a 22-5 record. But things are not going as smoothly for Mays as they did last year, as they lost three of their first five

games this season. But the Raiders seem to be gaining momentum as the season progresses, having won six of their last seven.

The Raiders are led by Colin Cook, who is an excellent shot blocker at 6-foot-6. Cook was named to the All-Region team last season and was even named Region Player of the Year. Other players that will have to play big for the Raiders in order for a victory are Kendall Leslie and Jonathan Williams.

As good of a team as Mays is, Miller Grove is the defending Class 4A state champion and have been playing like a team that wants another championship ring. The Wolverines have played against teams from other states including Florida, New York, Oklahoma, Ohio and North Carolina, and have come out on top every time but once.

They even defeated Class 5A No. 1 Milton earlier in the year.

The reason for their continued success is the talent they have each year. Two Wolverines on the Score 44 list are Devon Propst and Henry Brooks. Propst has been a good defender averaging three steals a game and he knows how to find the open man, averaging 3.4 assists per game. Brooks has been a dominant power forward for Miller Grove, averaging 13 points and two blocks per game average this season. Brooks has gotten offers to play college ball from schools such as Georgetown, Rice, Virginia Tech and even Harvard.

Another player Mays has to watch out for is Parker, who could be the best center in Georgia. Parker averages 18.4 points per

game and leads DeKalb County in rebounds with 13.4. He is considered by many as the best junior in the state and has gotten offers from Alabama, Connecticut, Duke, North Carolina, Georgia and Georgia Tech.

Miller Grove has also produced some current local college players. Mfon Udofia is a key contributor at Georgia Tech and Donte Williams is a doing big things as a freshman at Georgia.

All the action will start at 5:30 p.m. with the girls playing first. The boys will start shortly after at approximately 7 p.m. The games will be played on Mays' home court, the Coretta Scott King Leadership Academy in the city of Atlanta.

Jones can be reached at bjones@scoreatl.com.



Raiders searching for coach; Chiefs at 20-0

As the high school sports scene returns back to normal after being unceremoniously shut down for a week due to icy weather, it's time to catch up on several events that have the locals buzzing.

HELP WANTED ...

The North Forsyth Raiders will be looking for a new head football coach following Jared Zito's resignation after four years to accept the same position at Dacula. Zito will be replacing long time successful Dacula coach Kevin Maloof, who was the head coach of the Falcons since 1991 and leaves with a record of 150-88, 12 state playoff appearances including five quarterfinals and one semifinal appearance. The Falcons compete in the ultra-tough all-Gwinnett Region 8, Class 5A which includes Brookwood, Parkview and Grayson. While excited about the new opportunity at Dacula, Zito took a few moments to reflect on his time at North Forsyth.

"North Forsyth is a great place, and it's a great program, and I think they're in a place now where someone else can come in and they can continue to rise up and do things," Zito said to the Forsyth Times. "I'll be a Raider fan forever and certainly hope they continue to improve."

Zito leaves a program he inherited in better shape than when he arrived; the Raid-

ers have qualified for the state playoffs the past two seasons after missing the playoffs the previous three. Zito leaves North Forsyth with an overall record of 18-24.

HOOPSTERS ...

Etowah head coach Bob Westbrook has his Lady Eagles in familiar territory atop Region 5-5A with a record of 16-3 (7-1). In addition to this year's success, Westbrook has passed a personal milestone of 500 career victories at the Cherokee County School.

In his usual low profile, Westbrook downplayed the achievement to the Cherokee Tribune. "It's one of those things that shows you have done it a long time, and done it successfully," said Westbrook, who took the helm at Etowah before the 2000-01 season. "The biggest thing was that you kind of want to have a really good basketball game on something like that, and we did. Wheeler pushed us, and we won 51-46."

The local feel-good story continues to play out at Sequoyah High School as the No. 2-ranked Chiefs remain the only unbeaten team in Class 4A with two close wins this week. Coach Jeremy Adams' cagers defeated Woodland-Bartow 62-59 and Creekview 60-58 to stay perfect on the season.

Thomason can be reached at 404-256-1572.



Raiders upset No. 2 Cats, tie for region lead

The much-anticipated rematch between the Wheeler Wildcats and Walton Raiders proved that this rivalry is pretty even — for now. Walton came away with a 89-78 win to pull even in the loss column with Wheeler in Region 5-5A.

Wheeler had won the previous matchup this season and has had a long run of success against Walton until recently. "We beat Wheeler two years ago for the first time in about 20 years," said Walton coach Joe Goydish. "(Tonight) was a big win because we knew we had to beat them to tie the region."

Senior guard Lanerry Johnson led the Raiders with a game-high 31 points. His backcourt mate Karl Cochran added 22 points in the victory.

The key to the win was the play off the bench from Rico Overall and Chevalan Pearson, who combined for 28 points. "They were huge," said Goydish. "They did a great job coming off the bench. The two guys they replaced set the tempo and (they) came in and took it to another level."

It was a big win for Walton because it kept them in playoff contention at 11-6 (4-1). The loss for Wheeler dropped them to 13-4 (5-1).

CAMPBELL WINS AGAIN ...

North Cobb continues to roll in girls hoops. They sport an impressive 15-2 (5-1) record and have won six straight games by an average of 28.3 points.

Despite the prodigious win total by the Lady Warriors, they have not reached the pedestal that the Lady Spartans of Campbell have set. Senior point guard Erica Norwood led the way in a tough 67-61 win over Hillgrove. Norwood had a game-high 28 points and Angel Foster led the team in rebounds with 12. Campbell is tied for first-place in region 4-5A with a 13-4 (6-1) record.

GRAPPLERS ...

Two wrestlers from Pope took home championships from the Cobb County Invitational last weekend. It was the first county title for both Jake Henson and Trevor Stevens. Henson battled his opponent to a 5-1 margin of victory in the 140 pound class. Stevens took a 9-8 double overtime decision in the 189 pound class. The individual victories contributed to Pope's 209.5 overall points and the team's fourth straight county crown.

Deighton can be reached at jdeighton@scoreatl.com.



Miller Grove falls; Eagles still streaking

The Miller Grove boys basketball team (17-1, 9-0) lost 70-63 Saturday night at the Marriott Invitational in Norcross, their first of the season. Dr. Krop of Miami, Fla ended the Wolverines' 38-game winning streak that dated back to last season.

That last loss came at the hands of another Florida school, Orlando Christian, on Dec. 28, 2009. While their national title hopes may be done, Miller Grove maintains its No. 1 Class 4A state ranking in the AJC High School Basketball Poll, and a top five or top 10 finish in the national rankings is still possible, according to the AJC's Todd Holcomb.

Also in Class 4A, the Tucker boys (12-4, 7-2) have dropped out of the top 10 altogether after losing 47-57 to region foe Southwest DeKalb Thursday, Jan. 20. The Tigers bounced back with a 58-44 win over Lithonia the next day, but it was not enough for the Tigers to stay ranked.

COLUMBIA REIGNS ...

The Columbia boys (16-2, 6-0) have now won four in a row and have maintained the No. 1 spot in the Class 3A rankings.

The Eagles have responded well after their last loss and came away from the Primetime Shootout in West Virginia this past weekend with wins over Jamesville-DeWitt

of DeWitt, N.Y., and Jefferson High School of Brooklyn.

Southwest DeKalb (11-2, 7-1) checks in at No. 10 in the Class 3A rankings. This is the first week the Panthers have been ranked this season and are on a seven-game winning streak, capped off by an 83-57 victory over Lakeside-DeKalb Friday night.

LADIES BALL TOO ...

On the girls side, Stephenson (13-3, 7-0) is up two spots to No. 6 in the Class 5A rankings. The Lady Jaguars handled region foe Langston Hughes Saturday night 69-23, and show no signs of slowing down.

The Redan Lady Raiders (12-1, 7-1) have continued their winning ways and are No. 1 in the Class 4A rankings yet again.

Chamblee (15-0, 8-0) held on to the three spot after a big win over Miller Grove Friday night, while Southwest DeKalb (12-5, 8-1) fell three spots from last week after a 39-48 loss to Class 5A foe Brookwood. The Lady Panthers now sit at seventh.

Sitting pretty at No. 2 in Class 3A are the Columbia Lady Eagles (12-5, 5-0) who have now won four games in a row since their three game losing streak at the end of December.

Collins can be reached at 404-256-1572.



Norcross hosts Marriott Invitational, wins

Norcross High School was the site for some of the best basketball last week as some of the nation's top teams ventured to the House of Blue for the Marriott Invitational.

While most of the tilts went in favor of the out-of-staters, the host Blue Devils came away with a victory over Sumter (SC). The Blue Devils got 23 points from junior Chris Bolden and 15 points from E. Victor Nickerson to beat Sumter 77-42. Josiah Moore contributed 13 points in the win. Norcross fared better than Greater Atlanta Christian, who fell to Sagemont Academy 75-66, despite a career-high 42 from Malcolm Brogdon. The Spartans trailed at the half and received 30 second half points from Brogdon as GAC tried to rally, but Brogdon's 17 fourth-quarter points were not enough.

LADY DEVILS IMPRESS ...

The Norcross girls participated in another invitational, the Starr's Mill Girls Night Out, and knocked off nationally ranked Hoover (AL) 49-44. The Lady Blue Devils got 15 points from Diamond DeShields and Dearica Hamby tallied 15 points and five rebounds.

Region action kicked back into high gear in Gwinnett's two Class 5A regions. Peachtree Ridge topped North Gwinnett 54-

40 to take the Region 7-AAAAA lead. Corey Heyward led all scorers with 19 points and helped the Lions put the game out of reach thanks to a 19-2 run to end the second quarter and begin the third quarter.

GRIDIRON NOTES ...

Despite all of the action on the hardwood, the gridiron world continues to spin. Dacula hired a new coach to follow Kevin Maloof, who resigned after 20 years at the school. Jared Zito was named the new coach after spending the last four years at North Forsyth. Zito's career record is 33-51 but he did take North Forsyth to the playoffs two of his four years and went 5-6 last year, losing to Grayson in the first round of the playoffs.

Finally one of the top receivers in Gwinnett is on the move. Malachi Jones, formerly of Wesleyan, has enrolled at Central Gwinnett and will play for coach Todd Wofford next year. Wofford coached Jones' brother Tai-lor at Gainesville, who is now at Notre Dame. Last season Jones tallied 45 catches for 638 yards and 11 scores. He recently appeared in the AT&T Junior Bowl representing Wesleyan.

Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTY
FULTON RICKY DIMON



Milton facing tough slate; Whitehurst to Ark.

With the winter storm out of the way, high school sports are back in business throughout Fulton County and the rest of the state. Wrestlers are grappling on the mats, swimmers and divers are taking the plunge into pools and the hoopsters are taking their talents to the basketball courts.

Hardwood action is heating up in Region 6-Class 5A, where Milton was a perfect 7-0 as of Wednesday. However, the Eagles will have plenty of competition as they make a push toward their higher priority, the state tournament. That's because Alpharetta and Centennial are playing stellar basketball at the moment. The two Fulton teams were tied at 4-1 in the region heading into a Tuesday night showdown, which Alpharetta won 66-57. The Raiders, who edged North Springs 81-79 last Saturday, are on a seven-game winning streak. Centennial had won five straight prior to a current two-game skid.

At Chattahoochee, both the boys and the girls teams are ranked in the top 10 of the Class 4A rankings (rankings according to GPB.org). The boys came out on top in 10 consecutive games and were 14-2 at press time. Interestingly, the Cougar girls had identical marks as of Tuesday night—14-2 and 10 in a row. Kayla Upchurch eclipsed the 1,000

career point mark in a 70-29 victory over John's Creek last Friday.

In Class 3A, Woodward had clashes with Region 5-AAA rival St. Pius on Tuesday. The War Eagle boys prevailed 61-37 while the girls fell to the Lions 44-29.

WHITEHURST TO ARKANSAS ...

Wide receiver Kane Whitehurst, who helped Chattahoochee to the Class 4A state football title last month, committed to the Arkansas Razorbacks last Sunday. Arkansas head coach Bobby Petrino discovered Whitehurst when he was actually looking at teammate Barron Dixon, who ended up at Mississippi State.

"I told Coach Petrino, 'I'm not letting you leave here until you look at Kane,'" Cougars head coach Terry Crowder explained. "I showed him some film, and he just kind of fell in love with the kid."

"I'm tickled pink for Kane. Number one, for selfish reasons, with me being from Arkansas I follow the team, so it will be fun to see him play. Number two, I can't think of a better offense for Kane to be in than with Coach Petrino and that offense."

Dimon can be reached at rdimon@scoreatl.com.



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Moving past blowout loss not a problem

The Atlanta Hawks suffered through one of the most futile offensive performances in their franchise history. But showed some resolve by coming back 24 hours later to get a win on the road.

What will likely go down as the biggest embarrassment of the season occurred against the New Orleans Hornets at Philips Arena.

Atlanta shot a miserable 29 percent from the floor, never scored more than 17 points in a quarter, and were down 30 points in the early third quarter en route to a humiliating 100-59 loss to New Orleans on Jan. 21.

"We came out and just laid an egg," Jamal Crawford said. "I'd be lying if I said games like this are easy to forget. But if you lose by 40, it's still a loss. You just have to move on."

Move on they did. Drew's squad came back with an important win the next night in Charlotte. Atlanta trailed by five at halftime, but outscored the Bobcats by 21 in the second two quarters for the win.

In a reversal of fortunes from the previous evening, they shot 51 percent behind 32 points from Joe Johnson.

ON THE DOCKET ...

A difficult back-to-back awaits Atlanta this weekend.

First comes a home matchup with the New York Knicks on Friday at Philips Arena. Mike D'Antoni's bunch has fallen off of late, having lost seven of 10 at press time to fall well behind the rest of the pack.

It's still a dangerous matchup for Atlanta. The Knicks have always given Atlanta trouble, and this is the best team they've had in a very long time. The Amare Stoudemire matchup with Josh Smith and Al Horford is always a great one to watch.

Then it's on to Dallas for an 8 p.m. tip Saturday night. The Mavs haven't been themselves of late, faltering thanks to injuries and not regaining their mojo after the return of Dirk Nowitzki. They'll be looking to get back on track.

BACK IN ACTION ...

The long awaited return of Marvin Williams is finally here. At press time, he was expected to return for Wednesday's matchup in Milwaukee. He had missed 11 games with a bruised lower back.

"I feel good," he told the AJC before making his return. "I haven't had any pain in probably a week now."

Horford also returned for Wednesday, after missing two games with a sprained ankle.

Bagriansky can be reached at jbagriansky@scoreatl.com.



Gonzalez to prolong Hall of Fame career

Pro Bowl tight end Tony Gonzalez assured last week that he will be back in 2011 to play the final season on his contract with the Atlanta Falcons. Gonzalez, who said after the playoff loss to Green Bay that retirement was a possibility, is set for his 15th year in the NFL and third with Atlanta.

Gonzalez confirmed on ESPN's "Jim Rome is Burning" what owner Arthur Blank publicly suspected at last Thursday's Buckhead Business Association luncheon. "Tony is a first-ballot Hall of Famer," the AJC reported Blank as saying. "He's played 14 years. He's 34-years old. He has a body of probably somebody who's 24-years old."

Having played in 222 career regular-season games, Gonzalez has 1,069 catches for 12,463 yards and 88 touchdowns. He hauled in 70 passes for 656 yards and six scores this season, earning Pro Bowl honors for the 12th time. What continues to irk Gonzalez is that he has never won a playoff game; he went 0-3 during his 12-year stint with the Kansas City Chiefs.

OFFSEASON RUMBLINGS ...

Atlanta's loss to the Packers means that players are now free to

play in this Sunday's Pro Bowl in Honolulu. The Packers, who beat Chicago to win the NFC Championship, are hot. While Falcons' cornerback Brent Grimes would surely trade bowls with Green Bay corner Charles Woodson, the league announced on Monday that Grimes will replace Woodson on the NFC's Pro Bowl roster. Grimes' inclusion gives the Falcons a franchise-record and NFL-best nine players bound for Honolulu.

John Abraham and Roddy White, who are making the same trip, picked up additional honors on Monday. They were named to the Associated Press All-Pro first team. Abraham tallied 13 sacks during the regular season, fifth best in the NFL. White led the league in receptions with 115 and finished second to Brandon Lloyd in yards with 1,389.

The Falcons signed linebacker Robert James, a fifth-round draft choice in 2008, to a two-year contract on Tuesday. James spent most of this season on the practice squad. Atlanta has 15 free agents, including Grimes, Eric Weems, Stephen Nicholas, Mike Peterson and Matt Bryant.

Dimon can be reached at rdimon@scoreatl.com.



Team caravan tours Braves country

The Atlanta Braves will be heading out to meet the fans across Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee for two weeks before spring training on the 2011 Braves Caravan. The caravan will make several appearances in the metro Atlanta area this week before resuming the tour north and west.

The caravan will make nearly 40 stops according to the team's website and will travel more than 3000 miles. Braves players, coaches, executives and alumni will be signing autographs and making visits for area schools, hospitals and businesses as part of the caravan. Players scheduled to appear on the tour include all-star Brian McCann, Chipper Jones, Jason Heyward, Mike Minor, Craig Kimbrel, Jonny Venters and Nate McLouth, among others. Some of the coaches include Carlos Tosca, Eddie Perez, Roger McDowell and new manager Fredi Gonzalez. General manager Frank Wren and team president John Schuerholz will also appear on the caravan. For a complete schedule, visit atlantabraves.com.

RATED ROOKIES ...

MLB.com announced the 2011 version of the Top 50 Prospects and three

Braves made the top 21. Julio Teheran was named No. 10 while first baseman Freddie Freeman checked in at No. 17, followed by lefty Mike Minor at No. 21.

The site also announced baseball's top ten prospects at each position and the three made appearances at their respective positions. For righthanded pitchers, Teheran was named No. 2. MLB.com said of the Braves rightly:

He's got a terrific three-pitch mix (fastball, changeup, curve), all of which are at least above-average.

Minor was named No. 4 on the list of top lefthanders.

His fastball has gained a few ticks, his changeup is a plus pitch and his curve has improved as well. He can throw all three pitches for strikes.

Finally, Freeman was No. 2 on the list of first basemen

He belongs on any list for 2011 National League Rookie of the Year Award candidates, and not just because he'll have the opportunity to play every day for Atlanta. His smooth left-handed swing should allow him to hit for average and drive in runs right out of the gate.

Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.



Break relieves Thrash of recent slide

The All-Star break could not have come at a better time for the Thrashers. Despite staying in the Eastern Conference playoff chase, the team has hit the skids lately by losing seven of their last eight games (at press time).

Tampa Bay beat Atlanta for an unfathomable 11th straight time last Sunday. The Lightning poured it on the Thrashers and handed them an embarrassing 7-1 defeat. After earning 46 points through the first three months of the season, Atlanta has just eight points in January.

INJURY BUG ...

The break will also give many Thrashers time to heal some nagging injuries. Tobias Enstrom broke his finger against the New York Rangers on Saturday. He missed the first game of his career on Sunday after playing a franchise record 296 straight contests. Unfortunately, he won't be able to play in what would have been the first NHL All-Star game of his career. Enstrom will miss two to four weeks.

Evander Kane was wearing a non-contact jersey at practice on Tuesday, meaning he would not play in the next game against Washington. He missed the past four games because of a mid-

body injury. It's possible that Kane could be suffering from a concussion after he took a tough hit against Florida a couple weeks ago, but that is just speculation.

Captain Andrew Ladd missed his first game of the season against Tampa with a lower-body injury. It is unclear when he will return, but it would be no surprise to see him back in the lineup after the break. Ladd is tied for the team lead with 16 goals. The team will definitely need his scoring punch when they return for the second-half of the season.

Forward Jim Slater has missed the past 11 games with a concussion. He was placed on IR and his return is indefinite.

THE REPLACEMENTS ...

Hopefully the injured players will return soon after the break, but in the meantime Freddy Modin, Nigel Dawes and Tim Stapleton have filled the void. Dawes and Stapleton have contributed an assist each in the past three games. Defenseman Freddy Meyer was also called up. He tallied his first point of the season with an assist against Tampa on Jan. 20.

Deighton can be reached at jdeighton@scoreatl.com.

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PANTHER PROWL



DAVE COHEN



Panthers drop a heartbreaker to Delaware; softball coach Heck inducted into Hall

After three very difficult CAA road games in Virginia, the Panthers were looking forward to getting back to the GSU Sports Arena to face Delaware.

It's been one of those seasons, though, where you get the feeling that the basketball gods are just not looking out for you. That was the case again against the Blue Hens as Jawan Carter hit a three-point shot that bounced-up and fell back through the cylinder as the buzzer sounded.

"We put them in a position to shoot a contested three-pointer, and unfortunately,

they made a great shot," commented head coach Rod Barnes following the tough loss. "We really played the game the way it was supposed to be played down the stretch and made some key free throws, but unfortunately, it was a tough shot at the end that cost us."

Carter scored 15 points to pace Delaware while Eric Buckner led Georgia State with 18 points and six rebounds. It was the second game this season that the Panthers have lost on a last-second three-point shot (@ UNCW) coupled with three overtime losses. The Panthers are now 8-10 overall and 3-5 in the CAA.

PANTHERETTES ...

The Lady Panthers had the bottom drop out in their 72-48 loss to Northeastern last week. After leading by five points at the half, the Huskies went on a run with 8-of-11 three-point baskets in the second half to turn a 37-35 lead into a 62-45 lead in a 10-minute span.

"Well, when the effort is not there, it doesn't really matter what type of defense you are supposed to be playing," said head coach Sharon Baldwin-Tener.

HECK YES ...

Georgia State's legendary softball coach, Bob Heck, was inducted into the Georgia Dugout Club Softball Hall of Fame in a ceremony last Saturday afternoon. Heck has been a Panther fixture for three decades, coaching 1,274 games since elevating the softball program to fast-pitch status in 1985. Entering his 23rd season at the helm, he needs just five victories to reach the 700-win plateau.

Dave Cohen is in his 28th season as the "Voice of Georgia State Athletics" on WRAS-FM (88.5) and WCFO-AM, Newstalk 1160.

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Club Sport, "Where Atlanta Comes To Play!" Registration Ongoing - Men's League plays on Sunday evenings at the Brookhaven Boys & Girls Club. For more info or to register visit www.usclubsport.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@georgiasportsleagues.org. Visit www.georgiasportsleagues.org.

Roundtable Fundamental Basketball Camp Boys and Girls. Rising 6th-10th Graders (Current 5th-9th Graders) June 7-11. 9am-2pm. St. Francis High School, Alpharetta. Contact Coach Huff sfrancisbball@yahoo.com.

BASEBALL

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.

Jack City Sports Center. Indoor T-Ball League being offered at Jack City Sports Center. 10 game season with games on Sundays. \$125 per player. Team rates available and questions can be directed to 770-513-4121.

FOOTBALL

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@georgiasportsleagues.org. Visit www.georgiasportsleagues.org.

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

Thrashers. February 1 vs. New York Islanders 7 PM. February 3 vs. Calgary 7 PM. February 5 at Carolina 7 PM. February 7 at Toronto 7 PM.

Gladiators. January 29 at Kalamazoo 7:30 PM. January at Kalamazoo 4 PM. February 4 vs. Toledo 7:35 PM. February 5 vs. Toledo 7:05 PM.

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

SOCCER

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

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.

TENNIS

Technique Clinics. Ongoing - Bitsy 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. 6:30PM 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.

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.doblestixxlacrosse.com or by contacting Chris Smith at chris@doblestixxlacrosse.com or 404-550-5322.

RUNNING

Run for the Son 5K & 10K. Feb. 5. Powder Springs, 8:00 AM. 770-590-0334.

Norcross Blue Devils Run 5K & Mile. Feb. 5. Norcross, 8:00 AM. 678-969-9078.

Etowah Soccer Wonderful Winter 5K. Feb. 5. Woodstock, 8:00 AM. 770-926-4411.

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Club Sport, "Where Atlanta Comes To Play!" Registration Ongoing for Sand & Indoor Leagues and Tournaments League games played every day and night at the Brookhaven Boys and Girls Club. For more info or to register visit <http://www.usclubsport.com/>

Jack City Baseball. Ongoing. Atlanta Braves pitcher Vladimir Nunez is now conducting pitching lessons. To schedule a lesson, call 770-513-4121.

VOLLEYBALL

Gwinnett Sports Center. Registration ongoing. For information call Jerry Robison at 678-491-0203 or visit www.gsfun.com.

SWIMMING & DIVING

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

Dynamo Swim School. DynaBabies, Preschool, Grade School, Adult Classes. Youth Swim Team. Call us (770) 457-7946 Ext 16 www.dynamoswimschool.com

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, e-mail info.indoor@atlantasilverbacks.com, or visit www.atlantasilverbacks.com/indoor.

Corpus Christi Youth Basketball League Registration is now underway for our 29th season! Boys and girls ages 5 through 14, any skill level, are welcome. Cost: \$90 per child/\$85 for siblings. Fee includes uniforms, field trips, skills clinics, 9 games and maore! Register while space is still available Saturdays October 11 & 18, 2008, 10 AM to 12 PM. Location: Corpus Christi Church Sports Arena, 600 Mountain View Drive, Stone Mountain, GA 30083. For info, call 770-469-0395, email ccyb1@gmail.com or visit the league's website (www.ccybl.net).

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.

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

RACING

Winter Flurry Off-Season Legends Race No. 5. February 12 at Atlanta Motor Speedway

OFFICIATING

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 boys youth and High School officials for 2010 season. Games are played Spring, Summer, and Fall. Great way to earn extra money and get some fun aerobic exercise. For more information, please visit www.GALAXREF.com or email recruit@galaxref.com.

Atlanta Peachstate Football Officials Association. High School Football Officials needed. We are in need of people who want to officiate high school football in the Atlanta Metro area. No experience is necessary. We have weekly training sessions. For more information go on our web site www.apfoa.com or call Keith @ 678.592.1194.

ATLANTA SPORTS COUNCIL

Chick-Fil-A Bowl. Dec. 31, 2010. Georgia Dome. For tickets, call 404-444-4444. To reach the Atlanta Sports Council call 404-586-8510 or visit www.atlantasportscouncil.com.

MISC.

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.

GOkickball "Atlanta's Premier Social Experience". Providing social, co-ed adult kickball leagues throughout metro-Atlanta centered around having a good time, meeting new people, and playing recreational games of kickball at local parks. Registration is open now for spring season. Join the fun! For more information and to register, go to www.gokickball.com/atlanta. Special Score Atlanta 15% off discount code: "Score15".



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STEPHEN BLACK

Dawgs drop double-OT thriller; Rome and Mitchell commit

The upstart Bulldogs (14-5, 3-3 in the SEC) continue to show promise on the court, but Mark Fox's "pups" felt some growing pains Tuesday night. Fresh off an 86-64 drubbing of Mississippi State over the weekend, the Bulldogs lost a double overtime thriller to No. 23 Florida 104-91 also at Stegeman Coliseum.

Junior forward Trey Thompkins scored two of his 20 points on a last second tip-in to tie it at 73-73 and force overtime, but Florida's Erving Walker hit a running three-pointer from 30-plus feet just before time expired in the first overtime to again tie the game.

Double overtime proved to be too much for Georgia. The Dawgs saw the Gators score the first nine points in the period before finally scoring a bucket with 2:13 remaining. By then, it was too late.

"I felt like in the second overtime we were fatigued a little bit, and they got the lead and we couldn't respond," said Fox. "We didn't have one more response in us."

Junior guard Travis Leslie led the UGA with 20 points. The sell-out crowd was the fourth straight in newly renovated Stegeman Coliseum.

Next up for the men's hoopsters is a trip to No. 16 Kentucky on Saturday. Georgia defeated the Wildcats 77-70 earlier this month.

RECRUITING TRAIL ...

With signing day less than a week away, coach Mark Richt and staff are gaining momentum and assembling some quality talent for the gridiron. Valdosta pair Malcolm Mitchell and Jay Rome committed to the


Dawgs on Jan. 20 to give Richt's recruiting class a major boost.

While Rome plays a position (tight end) where Georgia has some depth, Mitchell can fill a huge need at either cornerback or wide receiver. The speedy athlete was considering other top programs like Alabama, Florida and Tennessee, but surprised many by choosing the Bulldogs.

"Jay going there and being a friend had a little bit of influence on me but it was based on what I wanted," Mitchell told the AJC. "That's what it came down to. I had to do what I felt was right."

Georgia also picked up a commitment over the past week from Colquitt County's Xzavier Ward, an offensive tackle prospect.

Sean Conway contributed to this story. Black can be reached at sblack@scoreatl.com.



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TECH TALK



THOMAS WATSON

Jackets fall at Virginia, but rebound against Hokies

Georgia Tech's defense at home has been nothing but solid. The same cannot be said when the team plays on the road. After two stellar defensive performances at home against North Carolina and Wake Forest, the Yellow Jackets went on the road to Virginia and saw their brief winning streak end when they allowed the Cavaliers to shoot 50 percent from the floor and a staggering 67 percent from beyond the 3-point line.

Virginia made seven of eight 3-pointers in the first half and connected on 10 for the game. Tech's defense around the arc is becoming increasingly worrisome and Coach Paul Hewitt is at his wit's end.

"When they see Georgia Tech on the shirt,

if they are open, it's going in. I promise you," said Hewitt in a rather tongue in cheek way. "At halftime, I was thinking, 'seven for eight.' You can put teams in a gym by themselves that wide open, and they are not going to make seven out of eight. It just shows you that have to be prepared to stop people as opposed to hoping that they miss."

The lack of defense on the road has translated into a lack of wins. The Yellow Jackets are 0-6 on the road this season and haven't won on the road in over a calendar year, their last victory coming on Jan. 16, 2010.

HOME SWEET HOME ...

Continuing their up and down play, Tech

hasn't had a winning or losing streak longer than three games this season, the Yellow Jackets came home Tuesday against Virginia Tech and the defense — and the wins — returned. During the first half, it seemed like the Yellow Jackets forgot they came home. The Hokies hit 52 percent of their shots in the first half, but in the second half it was a different story. Virginia Tech shot 24 percent and scored just 18 points. The stingy Georgia Tech defense limited the Hokies to only five points in the last 8:42 of the game. To top it all off, Virginia Tech missed 10 of their 11 3-pointers in the game. Just goes to show, eventually the ball bounces the other way.

Watson can be reached at 404-256-1572.

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TRIVIA ANSWER

41. The first-year Thrasher never scored more than 36 points in five previous seasons with the Blackhawks.

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