

SCORE

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CAN'T MISS THIS WEEK

- 4** You can find our columnists on this page as The Fletch and the Dimon Club entertain and inform Atlanta sports fans.
- 5** Josh Bagriansky reviews the Falcons' season and decides that things aren't so glum in Flowery Branch.
- 7** Fletcher Proctor breaks down the recent GHSA changes, notably the split in Class A.
- 9** Monster trucks are back! Monster Jam returns to the Dome with perhaps the widest assortment of vehicles in city history.



SHOT OF THE WEEK...



PERFORMANCE REVIEW: Uncle Arthur has some thinking to do as his football team is doing well, but not well enough. The Falcons have made the playoffs three out of four years, but have yet to win a postseason game in that time span. Photo courtesy of Jimmy Cribb/Atlanta Falcons.

TEAM SCOOP AND VOICES

COVER DESIGN BY DJ GALBIATI

COVER PHOTOS COURTESY OF JIMMY CRIBB/ATLANTA FALCONS

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INSIDE AT SCORE

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THE FLETCH



Parker's argument contains several holes

By Fletcher Proctor

Late last week ESPN New York writer and First Take hack Rob Parker, decided to rip the city of Atlanta for being the "worst sports town in America." He noted that the city didn't deserve a Falcons win against the Giants in the NFL playoffs because the city's fans are awful.

WEAK SAUCE ...

At one point he wrote "If the New York Yankees are the standard for excellence in baseball, Atlanta is the epitome of the bottom of the barrel when it comes to fan support."

Parker notes that the Falcons fans are some of the worst fans in the country. "They just don't get it. They are both missing in

action and simply not passionate enough to appreciate their team winning in the NFL playoffs and moving on to the next round." Hmm, that is weird. Ever since Arthur Blank bought the team, it seems as though the Georgia Dome is constantly packed. And I listened to sports talk radio the day after the game: if he wants passion, tell him to turn the radio on.

After Parker mocks Atlanta fans saying, "at some point, they might ask a friend -- filled with sweet tea -- at a pork-saturated barbeque, 'Are the Falcons playing today?' Pathetic," I'd ask him to make sure no other NFL fanbases are tailgating Sundays either. Oh, they are? Would we consider them pathetic too?

He demanded that fans should have been calling for heads to roll after the Braves collapsed down the stretch but "most probably didn't even notice." Did he want Gonzalez fired after his FIRST YEAR with a club that featured several players suffering injuries and relying on rookies in several huge positions?

He ended his column by bashing Atlanta for losing two hockey teams, blaming the fans and not the Spirit Group who openly admitted that they didn't know a whole heck of a lot when they originally were awarded the Thrashers. Apparently our "lame fans" didn't deserve a hockey team nor did they deserve a win over the Giants in the playoffs. I forget, Mr. Parker, how are the Islanders doing these days? Would anyone notice if they left? Step away from hockey for a minute. How many BASEBALL teams has New York City lost? You know, America's National Pastime? Two? WOW, has a city ever had that happen before? Oh, Washington DC has as well? Gosh, let's just gloss over those two markets if we could.

COLLEGE CENTRAL ...

College football loves Atlanta because

of the fan support. The NCAA keeps putting Final Fours in Atlanta I guess because it is a terrible sports town. (How many Final Fours has New York hosted recently, I forget.) I guess the awful fans at the Highlight Factory didn't help the Hawks make it to the second round of the playoffs last year, right? I guess the fans are to blame for the Georgia Dome nearly blowing its roof last year when the Falcons hosted the Packers.

I am tired of this column, which gets drudged up every so often when lazy sports writers cannot think of an original idea so they recycle a dead horse story to get people fired up. Oh, just make fun of the south. They are ignorant down there and this will probably go over their heads. Actually, Mr. Parker, you sound ignorant when you say a team shouldn't win a game because the fans are lame and don't deserve it. You are simply an attention seeker and you accomplished your goal: I know your name now. But it is a name I will avoid because you come up with angles like this. Congrats, you got my click on this article. You will get no more.

Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.

THE DIMON CLUB



Hawks come out firing; Falcons face changes

By Ricky Dimon

Hold on to a 14-point fourth quarter lead in Chicago. Finish off Miami before a desperation Chris Bosh three-pointer at the end of regulation. Do that and the Atlanta Hawks would be the talk of the league right now. Do that and the Hawks would be at the top of almost everyone's NBA power rankings.

As it is, Atlanta is still a stellar 7-3 as of Wednesday afternoon. Larry Drew's squad is fourth in the Eastern Conference behind division leaders Chicago, Miami and Philadelphia and just 1.5 games back of the NBA leaders (the Bulls and Thunder are 9-2). The Hawks' five-game stretch from Monday, Jan. 2 to Saturday, Jan. 7 could have been legendary. They almost went a combined 4-0 against

Chicago and Miami (instead they were a respectable 2-2 with the losses coming by two points at Chicago and in triple OT vs. Miami) in addition to an overtime win at Charlotte.

On paper, this team should be no better than the one that made it out of the first round last year but still didn't come close to digging itself out of mediocrity and breaking into the game's elite. Seemingly no big acquisitions were made and super sixth man Jamal Crawford left for Portland.

The sum of Atlanta's individual parts, though, has never been greater that it is right now. Contributions are coming from all over the place, which is obviously essential on a team that has no stars (Joe Johnson, I don't

think so). Josh Smith has done it all during the current three-game streak. Jeff Teague is averaging double-figures in points to go along with 5.6 assists and 2.1 steals per game. Tracy McGrady dialed up his 2002 self (well, almost) in both games against the Heat. Vladimir Radmanovic is 11 for 20 from three in his last three games. Ivan Johnson (who?) emerged from obscurity with 13 points in the loss to Miami.

Ten games does not a season make (not even in a lockout-shortened season). But it's not too early to start getting seriously excited about the Hawks.

CHANGE COMING ...

The Atlanta Falcons' 2011 campaign was decent but far from fulfilling. Their 10-6 record was three games worse than last year's effort and they went from NFC South Champions to a wild card team feared by nobody in the playoffs. It is by no means grounds for a franchise-gutting overhaul, but it is time for a change. And that's exactly what the Falcons will get.

On Monday, Just one day after Atlanta got manhandled by the Giants to end the season, the coordinator whom it did not necessarily want to lose walked out the door. Defensive leader

Brian Van Gorder bolted for the same position at Auburn University. One day later, the coordinator with whom much of this city did want to part ways followed suit. The Jacksonville Jaguars took offensive mind Mike Mularkey off the Falcons' hands, hiring him as head coach.

Maybe the Jags aspire to muffle up fourth-and-inches situations. Maybe they don't want to take any shots down the field (well, they probably don't since their offense has nothing other than NFL leading rusher Maurice Jones-Drew. In that case maybe Mularkey will work out for them). Maybe they want to go 5-11 again. Maybe they want to finish 32nd in the league in scoring instead of tied for 28th. Whatever the Jags have in mind, Falcons' fans certainly aren't complaining.

Additional good news is that we can now enthusiastically discuss potential coaching replacements rather than be forced to dwell on the disaster in New York. Defensive coordinator: Jack Del Rio? Mike Nolan? Todd Grantham? Offensive coordinator: Mike Martz? Brian Billick? Brian Schottenheimer? Who knows, but this is already a lot more fun than stewing over 24-2.

Dimon can be reached at rdimon@scoreatl.com.



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FALCONS REVIEW



Future looks good for young and talented group

By Josh Bagriansky



Sometimes, one bad loss can make everyone forget about a season full of positives. For some, that is exactly the case with this season's Atlanta Falcons, who saw their season squashed in convincing fashion for the second straight year after getting thoroughly dominated in a 24-2 loss to the New York Giants in the NFC Wild Card round.

But while the season ended with a thud, there were still plenty of bright spots for a team and organization that is quickly showing itself to be a consistent, stable, and on-the-rise franchise in the NFL.

SLOW START ...

The Falcons entered the season as one of the favorites in the NFC after going 13-3 last season, so many forget that they had to fight tooth and nail just to get themselves into playoff position this season.

After dropping all four of their preseason games, Atlanta started the season off 2-3, getting blown out in Chicago in Week 1, losing an extremely frustrating game in Tampa that saw them miss constant opportunities to win and suffering a 25-14 loss to Green Bay in which they were shutout for the game's final 42 minutes.

But just like they've typically done under head coach Mike Smith, the Falcons jumped up off the mat and kept fighting. The result was three straight victories, including an impressive win over the Detroit Lions on the road, which marked their opponents' first

home loss of the season. That win confirmed the emergence of the Falcons young defense, which turned out not to be the liability that many feared, as Brent Grimes mostly held the NFL's top receiver in Calvin Johnson in check, while the front seven continued to cement themselves as one of the NFL's better run defenses.

The offense also began to hit its stride down the stretch, scoring more than 31 points in blowout wins over Carolina (31 points), Jacksonville (41) and Tampa Bay (45).

When all was said and done, the Falcons had won seven of their final 10 matchups, helping them recover from a sluggish start to the season and garnering them back-to-back playoff berths for the first time in franchise history.

DANGEROUS PLAYERS ...

With a ton of weapons all over the field, the Atlanta offense only got better this season, and while there were a few chinks in the armor on display throughout the year (especially in the loss to the Giants when the Falcons twice failed to convert on fourth-and-inches situations), the potential is there for the attack to become one of the league's most vaunted units.

Coming into the season, everyone already knew the team had an elite wideout in Roddy White, perhaps the best tight end of all time with Tony Gonzalez, a fine, grind-it-out running back in Michael Turner, and a more than reliable Matt Ryan under center. But the

addition of rookie Julio Jones only further scared defenses and will surely have them shaking in their boots come next Fall.

Despite spending minimal time with teammates and coaches last summer thanks to the NFL lockout, Jones hit the ground running and never looked back.

The Alabama product, who general manager Thomas Dimitroff felt was worth dealing a slew of assets for in order to move up in the draft and select, was simply fantastic.

First, he impressed in preseason, when the 6-foot-3, 220-pound wideout showed off his hands, speed and ability as a blocker. Then, he exploded onto the scene in Week 3 against Tampa, catching 11 passes for 127 yards.

Two weeks later, Jones officially cemented himself as one of the league's budding young stars, making an unbelievable 50-yard touchdown catch as he fell to the ground in Indianapolis, before catching a pass over the middle and rumbling 80-yards for a score soon after.

Although injuries would somewhat hamper Jones' season, forcing him to miss four games, he still finished with nearly 1,000 yards receiving, eight touchdown receptions, and netted big plays of 20 yards or more in 10 of the 13 games in which he appeared.

With White turning into more of a possession-style wideout, the Falcons now have an elite one-two punch on the outside to go alongside plenty of other weapons. A few tweaks are necessary, especially up front where Atlanta was quite inconsistent all year. But if the team can continue to make strides this summer, next year could see the Falcons break out offensively.

OVERACHIEVERS ...

There was plenty to be worried about defensively when the season began. After all, John Abraham was a year older, the secondary still lacked a true shutdown corner, and much was going to be asked of young and unproven players to pick up the slack.

If you had told most fans at the beginning of the season that free-agent acquisition Ray Edwards wouldn't have the desired effect and that top secondary man Brent Grimes would spend much of the second half of the season hampered by injury, expectations certainly wouldn't have been too high.

But just like they always do, the Falcons made it work. Despite being gashed in a few games by dynamic offenses such as the Saints (45 points), the Falcons turned in dominating performances against lesser opponents such as the Jaguars, Titans, Vikings and Colts. Meanwhile, they held the NFC-favorite Green Bay Packers to 25, their third-lowest

output of the season.

In the end, the numbers will say that Atlanta's defense was average. And on the whole, that is probably a fair assessment. But with such a young core, the defense will only get better.

Linebacker Sean Weatherspoon was simply fantastic in his second year as a pro, showing off his ability as a playmaking linebacker with 115 tackles and four sacks. With one of the league's most steady middle linebackers in Curtis Lofton alongside him (147 tackles on the season and remember he's only 25-years old), Atlanta has a solid foundation to build on at the linebacker position.

Up front, aging John Abraham turned in some more fine performances this season, but he will likely need to be replaced over the coming seasons. But there is reason for optimism with second-year man Corey Peters blossoming into a fine defensive tackle this season, effectively eating up space in the middle and even picking up a fumble and rumbling in for a score.

The secondary may need some more pieces, especially at cornerback. But Grimes has clearly shown he is a starting-caliber corner over the last three seasons, with his work on Johnson in Week 6 being a perfect example of what he can do. Meanwhile, strong safety Thomas DeCoud (26) led the team in interceptions and made a plethora of bone-crushing hits over the middle, and free safety William Moore (26) checked in with 54 tackles and a pair of forced fumbles and interceptions, himself.

MOVING ON ...

The debacle at the Meadowlands last week hurts, especially after the way the team closed out the season. And, with offensive coordinator Mike Mularkey off to Jacksonville to coach the Jags and defensive coordinator Brian VanGorder taking the same position at Auburn, expect plenty of changes schematically for next season. But in terms of personnel, the Falcons clearly have a nice core that only needs tweaking, rather than overhauling, in order to take the next step in 2012-13.

Now, following a season in which the Falcons showed their resilience after a poor start, and great improvement on both sides of the ball, it's important to remember that while the last two postseasons have ended in disappointment, the team is built in a manner that should yield many more chances to correct its playoff woes in the years to come. In a league full of so much unpredictability and uncertainty every season, that's no small feat.

Photo courtesy of Michael Benford/Atlanta Falcons. Bagriansky can be reached at jbagriansky@scoreatl.com.



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WHOS HOT

THUMBS UP TO
PLAYOFF TEAMS



Perennial playoff contenders

Have Dimitroff and Smith built a Super Bowl team? Not yet, obviously. Have they made NFL football meaningful every January in Atlanta? Absolutely. We all want the Super Bowl ring, but it just ain't that easy. Ask the Steelers of the early 1970's and the Cowboys of the early 1990's. This Falcon regime is moving forward.

Your Atlanta Hawks

The Hawks are doing quite well in this labor-shortened NBA season, thank you. They've already played three games in a brutal three-day stretch and took two out of the three games. While the players may be exhausted, it's a lot of fun to find the hometown team winning basketball games almost every night.

McEachern girls hoops

Behind head coach Phyllis Arthur, the Lady Indians are ranked fourth in the country in the ESPN RISE 50. McEachern advanced to the Class 5A finals in March, but is now reaching new heights thanks to freshman UNC commit Te'a Cooper. Also, Norcross, the team that beat McEachern in the 2011 finals, is ranked No. 13 in the same poll.

In-state college hoops

Both Tech and Georgia started off the conference portion of the schedule with records in the neighborhood of .500, but both teams face tough rebuilding years. Go ahead and vent now. While Atlanta will host the Southeast Regionals in March, we just won't have any hometown representation.

Call-in show criticism

If one more "know-not-much-at-all" calls in to one of our local sports talk stations or types on a blog saying that the Falcons need to throw more screen passes, the world may truly come to an end. The Score Atlanta staff knows the Falcons' locker room. These guys are passionate and true professionals.

The Winnipeg Jets

While it was disappointing to lose the Thrashers, did you even know the franchise has adopted the name of the previous team in Winnipeg? Or, do you know what their uniform colors are? Did you know that they are not on track to make the NHL playoffs? Probably, no, no and no. Atlanta simply doesn't miss the NHL.



WHOS NOT

THUMBS DOWN TO
MONDAY MORNING QBS

SCORE LIST

BY RICKY DIMON

- 1** **HIGHLIGHT SHOW:** The Hawks hosted Charlotte at the Highlight Factory on Thursday night and fans have many more opportunities to see them in action as they look to continue their early-season hot streak. Atlanta wraps up a four-game homestand at Philips Arena against Minnesota (Saturday), Toronto (Monday) and Portland (Wednesday) before coming back home for a Jan. 21 date with Cleveland.
- 2** **PRO BOWL BIRDS:** The Falcons won't have the same Pro Bowl representation as they've enjoyed in recent seasons, but they now boast two players on the NFC roster instead of one. Wide receiver Roddy White was named to the squad on Wednesday as a replacement for injured Lions' wideout and former Georgia Tech star Calvin Johnson. Atlanta tight end Tony Gonzalez will also be playing in Hawaii on Jan. 29.
- 3** **NOT GETTING EASIER:** The men's basketball team at Georgia Tech pushed Duke last Saturday, but all it got to show for it was an 81-74 setback. Having lost four in a row, Brian Gregory's squad is 7-8 as of Wednesday afternoon. After a two-game trip to N.C. State and Maryland, the Jackets will return to Philips Arena on Thursday to face Virginia—widely considered to be the third-best team in the ACC.
- 4** **DOG DAYS OVER?:** As for Mark Fox's Bulldogs, they are winless in the SEC (0-2) and that may not change after a tough road test at Vanderbilt on Saturday. Georgia, however, will follow with a three-game homestand that should give the squad every opportunity for a conference victory. Prior to a Jan. 24 date with Kentucky, the Dawgs will host Tennessee (on Wednesday) and Ole Miss (next Saturday).
- 5** **TEBOW TIME:** The Falcons may be out of the playoffs, but Fox (and CBS, for that matter) won't care. Green Bay hosts the Giants in a marquee Sunday afternoon game, now hyped even more after Jason Pierre-Paul absurdly guaranteed a New York win. The AFC divisional round features New England vs. Denver (Tom Brady vs. Tim Tebow) on Saturday night. Ratings will be great. The game itself? Probably not.

CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

BY FLETCHER PROCTOR

- 1** UGA basketball players (Nemanja Djuricic) to reach double-digits in a recent loss to Florida
- 2** The Falcons' point total in the team's playoff loss to the Giants
- 3** Playoff appearances in the last four years for the Falcons
- 4** Straight losses for the Georgia Tech basketball team after beating Alabama A&M
- 5** Gold Gloves for Dale Murphy, who was not voted into the Hall of Fame
- 6** Rank of Falcons rushing defense under former DC Brian VanGorder
- 7** Wins by the Atlanta Hawks in their first 10 games
- 8** UGA's ranking in USA Today's early preseason top 25
- 9** SEC appearances in the BCS title game for an 8-1 record
- 10** Career touchdown catches for UGA TE Orson Charles, who will enter the NFL Draft

TRIVIA QUESTION

The Falcons have earned winning records in four consecutive seasons. How many other NFL franchises can make the same boast?

Answer on Page 14

SANITY AT LAST

"We're not about being in the playoffs. This organization is about greatness."

- Falcons owner Arthur Blank on the disappointing end to the season.

MY TWO CENTS

Let's not get too upset with the Falcons. Yes, they were embarrassed in the playoffs again but, hey, at least they got there. For a city that was formerly used to losing teams and rare playoff appearances, we sure have gotten spoiled. Now that the perennially-awful Thrashers are gone, our sports teams are all winners. The Falcons and Hawks are contenders every year, while the Braves are back to being playoff-caliber. And all three teams have relatively young cores.

I expect Arthur Blank and company to make the necessary adjustments to get the Falcons to the next level. Mike Smith is the best coach the franchise has ever had and Matt Ryan may eventually

become the best quarterback we have ever had. I see no end in sight for the Falcons and I think they'll make the Super Bowl sooner rather than later.

Also, be glad Mike Mularkey is gone. The playcalling against the Giants was some of the worst I have ever seen at the NFL level. Let's just leave it at this: no matter who we hire to replace Mularkey it will be an improvement.

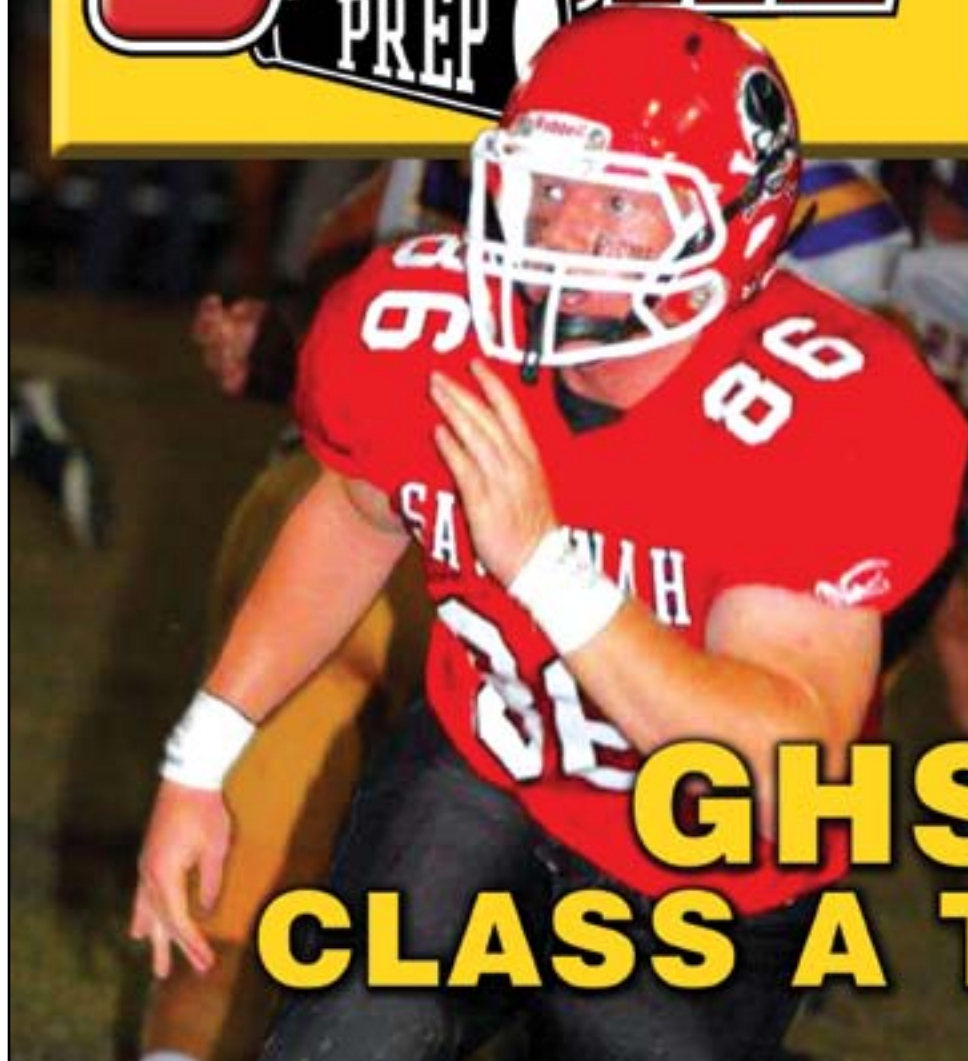
So don't fret, Falcons fans. While the playoff nosedives are getting old, playoff berths will continue to come.

Black can be reached at sblack@scoreatl.com.



SCORE

PREP



GHSA SPLITS CLASS A TO END RIFT

Public and private schools divided in Class A

By Fletcher Proctor

Every few years the GHSA executive committee is required to ratify a proposal offered forward by the reclassification committee, grouping member schools into various regions within classes based upon geographic location and enrollment size. The reclassification for the next two years was an arduous process that initially saw a sixth class added to the previous five, but the drama was just beginning.

After the reclassification committee submitted a draft that featured plenty of movement and created new region rivals, a small faction of Class A public schools, mostly from South Georgia, banded together and began planning a defection. Eventually, the GHSA executive committee convened and voted to split the Class A playoffs into two "tournaments," with a public school bracket and a private school bracket.

Beginning with the 2012-13 year and extending through the 2013-14 school year,

the GHSA will award seven state championships in its sports.

A SIXTH CLASS ...

The biggest result of reclassification is that the biggest just got even bigger. With population booming in northern Gwinnett County as well as South Georgia, Class 6A will make its debut, with many of the familiar faces from 5A stepping up. Schools such as North Gwinnett, Norcross, Mill Creek, Brookwood and Grayson will be a part of the new Class 6A and most will remain region rivals with the teams they have faced over the past few seasons. Down south, Valdosta and Lowndes will move to Class 6A along with Colquitt County, but those teams, already in a brutal football region, will face some stiffer competition next year when perennial power Camden County joins Region 1-6A. Chattahoochee and Lovejoy will also play in Class

6A after playing in Class 4A last year.

In Class 5A, a mixture of current Class 5A holdovers will be mixed with schools that have stepped up in enrollment from the old models 4A and even 3A. Stephenson and ML King remain in 5A but Kell is back in 5A and Allatoona makes the jump up from 3A.

Buford, long a Class 2A power in multiple sports, will see new competition in the new Class 3A, including facing new regional foes. Buford will be in a region with East Hall, West Hall and North Hall. The football, softball, basketball and baseball powerhouse will meet old rivals Blessed Trinity and Decatur as well as new opponents such as St. Pius X and Peach County in the playoffs.

SEPARATE CHAMPIONSHIPS ...

The main drama, though, was saved for the smallest classification in Georgia, Class A. Led by representatives from Clinch County, Wilcox County and several other schools, a group that aimed to call itself the Georgia Public School Association (GPSA) was testing the waters of defecting from the GHSA to form a third high school athletics association, potentially with help from GISA. The group

felt that private schools in Class A featured advantages through GOAL as well as the ability to recruit students, something that is frowned upon by public schools in the GHSA. The group received a victory in Tuesday's meeting when an overwhelming vote of 36-12-1 was rendered on the topic of splitting Class A's playoffs into a private school division and a public school division. The two types of schools will be allowed to face one another in the regular season but will be divided up in the postseason. How the division will take place for the two 16-team tournaments will be decided upon in the coming weeks. This past football season four private Christian schools reached the semifinals; however, prior to this season, public schools had won nine of 10 Class A football championships.

This current reclassified model will be in play for the next two school years and then the reclassification committee will once again be called upon to slot the schools in regions across the state.

Photos courtesy of Brian Phillips and Birk Herrath. Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.

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MONSTER JAM



Georgia Dome hosts monster truck frenzy

By Fletcher Proctor

If 12-foot high, 10,000-pound, thundering Monster Trucks with 66-inch wheels don't get your heart pumping and your adrenaline racing, you may not have a soul.

The Advance Auto Parts Monster Jam is returning to the Georgia Dome this Saturday, and some of the rawest beasts of the Monster Truck circuit will make their way to a custom-designed track on the Georgia Dome floor. These damage-seeking supercharged machines will soar over some obstacles and smash through others while delighting fans of all ages in what is sure to be the biggest lineup of Monster Trucks ever at the Georgia Dome. It will take an eight-person crew three days to construct the course, with dump trucks taking 200 loads of dirt onto the Georgia Dome floor. Nearly 3,500 cubic yards of dirt will be used for the large fiberglass animals. Forty crush cars and four crush vans will also be wheeled out for certain destruction.

TRUCKS A-PLENTY ...

Fans will be treated to 16 different USHRA Monster Trucks including Grave Digger, Madusa, Maximum Destruction, Monster Mutt, El Toro Loco, Stone Crusher, Monster Magic, King Krunch, Grave Digger The Legend and Iron Warrior, among others. World class drivers Dennis Anderson, Lupe Soza, Adam Anderson, Neil Elliot, Chuck Werner, Joe Miller, Steve Sims, Madusa and Mike Vaters will be just some of the men behind the wheels of these incredible machines.

For new fans not quite familiar with what goes on at the Monster Jam events, the trucks will face off in two different forms of competition: stadium racing and freestyle. Stadium racing is just what it sounds like: two cars racing side-by-side up to 70 MPH with the first truck to cross the finish line with the least number of penalties being declared the winner. While the racing is incredibly ex-

citing, the true fun is in the freestyle competition, which allows drivers a certain length of time to show off tricks on an open floor. Some tricks include stunts such as wheelies, while other tricks see the trucks soar over cars lined up in a row. Fans are the judges in the freestyle competition. Points in the freestyle competition are awarded by the number and variety of tricks, hitting the most obstacles on the track, the height of jumps, saves and Sky Wheelies, while points are deducted for roll-overs, reverses and stops.

The Monster Jam event leads up to the World Finals in Las Vegas. The USHRA invites 24 of the top trucks to the event to compete in the World Freestyle and Racing Championships, much to the delight of Monster Jam's four million fans across the country.

Unlike most other sports, the Monster Jam allows the fans to come right down and meet all of the drivers and see all of the trucks up close. Fans can participate in the Party in the Pits event, where they can take pictures and snag autographs for three solid hours leading up to the event with all of the drivers and the trucks. If you've never had the chance to catch a Monster Truck competition, check out Monster Jam at the Georgia Dome. Your pulse is guaranteed to race and your eyes will widen with each smash, crash and pop.

Proctor can be reached at fproctor@scoreatl.com.

SCORE MORE



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HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL RANKINGS

BOYS

CLASS AAAAA

1. Milton
2. Shiloh
3. Wheeler
4. Mill Creek
5. Westlake
6. Tift County
7. Valdosta
8. Harrison
9. North Cobb
10. Berkmar

CLASS AAAA

1. Miller Grove
2. Fayette County
3. Chattahoochee
4. SW DeKalb
5. Lovejoy
6. Jonesboro
7. Osborne
8. Douglas County
9. North Clayton
10. Chamblee

CLASS AAA

1. Columbia
2. Thomson
3. Eagles Landing
4. Washington Co.
5. Shaw
6. Franklin County
7. Carrollton
8. Woodward Acad.
9. Walnut Grove
10. Gainesville

CLASS AA

1. Buford
2. Vidalia
3. GAC
4. Morgan County
5. Rabun County
6. Jordan
7. Dublin
8. Thomasville
9. South Atlanta
10. Early County

CLASS A

1. Wilkinson Co.
2. Whitefield Acad.
3. North Cobb Chr.
4. Wilcox County
5. Lanier County
6. Hancock Central
7. Terrell County
8. Athens Chr.
9. Mount Paran Chr.
10. Wesleyan

CLASS AAAAA

1. McEachern
2. Norcross
3. North Gwinnett
4. Parkview
5. Hillgrove
6. North Cobb
7. Marietta
8. Mill Creek
9. Alpharetta
10. Lowndes

CLASS AAAA

1. Chamblee
2. Forest Park
3. Statesboro
4. Fayette County
5. Alcovy
6. Douglas County
7. Miller Grove
8. Creekview
9. Starr's Mill
10. Warner Robins

GIRLS

CLASS AAA

1. Washington Co.
2. Columbia
3. Carrollton
4. St. Pius X
5. Westover
6. Americus-Sumter
7. Allatoona
8. Cartersville
9. Cross Creek
10. Westside-Macon

CLASS AA

1. Buford
2. GAC
3. East Hall
4. Morgan County
5. Rabun County
6. Lovett
7. Decatur
8. Dade County
9. Laney
10. Model

CLASS A

1. Wesleyan
2. Calvary Day
3. SW Atl. Chr.
4. Darlington
5. Pace Academy
6. St. Francis
7. Holy Innocents'
8. Bryan County
9. Pelham
10. Taylor County

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BASKETBALL NEWS



High school teams enter region play

By Brian Jones

Believe it or not the basketball season is at the halfway point, and it's time for the top teams in Georgia to make their move and position themselves for the fast-approaching region and state tournaments. During the winter break a lot of teams played in holiday invitationals, and while some teams played extremely well, others struggled and are glad to get into the thick of the region schedule to gain some ground. There is one defending state champion that, despite December struggles, may be in a position to make another title run.

BLUE DEVIL MAGIC ...

Before the 2010-2011 season started, many thought Milton would easily repeat as boys Class AAAAA state champions, as the Eagles returned everybody from the previous campaign. However, Norcross took down the Eagles in the state championship game in what some would say was one of the greatest upsets

in Georgia high school basketball history.

The Blue Devils had a slow start to this season, winning only eight of their first 14 games. In their defense, the early part of the schedule has been rough: Norcross faced two teams from New York and four teams from South Carolina.

The Blue Devils have been on a roll as of late, winning their last four games, including a 45-38 win over region rival Meadowcreek Tuesday. Because of injuries as well as projected contributors playing other sports such as football, the Blue Devils had their full lineup available only three times early on this year.

One team that has not had a slow start is Shiloh, currently the No. 2 team in Score Atlanta's Class AAAAA boys poll. The Generals only blemish has been against Carver (Ala.) back on Dec. 30, when they lost 74-58. The duo of Robert Carter and Trayvon Reed has been dominant, and they will be tough to

beat down the stretch.

But let's not forget about top-ranked Milton and No. 3 Wheeler. The Eagles had to forfeit their first three wins of the season (player ineligible), but have since won 11 of their last 12 games thanks to the leadership and scoring ability of Evan Nolte and Charles Mann.

Wheeler also has been impressive this season, but like Norcross, the Wildcats have had their struggles with out-of-state teams. Back in December, the Wildcats fell to Kinston (N.C.) 59-51, and they also lost to Strake Jesuit (Texas) 70-63. The Wildcats got back on track last weekend with a 70-57 win over Cherokee and an 82-75 overtime win over Etowah on Tuesday. Charles Mitchell, who has offers from Georgia and Florida State, scored 17 points in the win against the Eagles.

NO PLACE LIKE HOME ...

The Buford Lady Wolves are the three-time defending AA state champions, and after facing some of the best teams in the country over the holiday break, Kaela Davis and company are glad to be back in Georgia, where they have dominated the competition.

From Dec. 19-29, The Lady Wolves faced seven nationally-ranked teams, including Hoover (Ala.) and Riverdale (Tenn.). During that span, the Lady Wolves went 2-5 with the two wins coming against Germantown Academy (Pa.) and St. Johns College (D.C.).

The Lady Wolves finally faced an in-state

team last Friday when they squared off against No. 7 Decatur. It looked as though the Lady Wolves were going to lose their sixth game of the year as Decatur led Buford entering the fourth quarter. Davis bailed out the Lady Wolves with 16 points as Buford squeaked out a 45-41 win. The 2011 state championship game will be replayed tonight as Buford travels to Norcross to face No. 2 GAC.

WESLEYAN ROLLING ...

The Wesleyan Lady Wolves have won the last three Class A crowns and three straight Class AA titles from 2004-06. This squad, however, is being called by some the most talented ever under coach Jan Azar. Seniors Jordan Frazier, Kaelyn Causwell and Holli Wilkins are seeking a fourth ring before leaving the Wesleyan campus in Norcross, and each has appeared on the Score 44 this season. Coach Azar also has talented juniors in Brittany Stevens and Katie Frerking running the floor. Wesleyan's only losses this season have come to Our Lady of Good Counsel (Mary.) and Bolingbrook (Ill.) back in December. Wesleyan's main competition for the Class A title is Calvary Day, St. Francis, Darlington and Southwest Atlanta Christian. Holy Innocents' and Pace Academy have also made some noise thus far this season. Tony Watkins' Golden Bears have registered several impressive wins since the calendar flipped to 2012.

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SWIMMING NEWS



Marist trumps regional powers at Emory

By Stephen Black

Marist won the Catholic Schools Invitational Saturday at Emory, an event the War Eagles hosted. Other schools participating in the meet were Blessed Trinity, St. Pius X, Charlotte Catholic (N.C.), Cardinal Gibbons (N.C.) and Notre Dame (Tenn.).

Marist won the boys title and finished second in the girls standings, while finishing with 1,037.5 total points. The War Eagles were followed by Charlotte Catholic, which had 946.5. The boys 200-yard medley relay team won its race as did Connor Herman (200-yard IM), Sarah Smith (500-yard freestyle), Andrea Demick (girls one-meter diving) and Porter Harrast (boys one-meter diving). Marist's success came against quality competition, as Charlotte Catholic was the North Carolina Class AAA girls state champion last year while Cardinal Gibbons was the North Carolina Class AAA boys state champion.

St. Pius X finished third overall in the Catholic Schools Invitational with 729 points and came in third in the boys and fourth in the girls rankings. Blessed Trinity took fifth place with 280 points while finishing fourth in the girls and fifth in the boys standings. The Golden Lions boasted individual winners in Haley Durmer (girls 100-yard breaststroke), Basil Orr (boys 100-yard breaststroke and 100-yard

fly) and D.J. Boutte (boys 100-yard freestyle).

The Westminster boys dropped a home meet to Tennessee power McCallie last Friday, while the Wildcat girls defeated Girls Preparatory School in the same meet. McCallie only participated in the boys meet while GPS only swam in the girls meet.

The Wildcat relay teams did well, winning the girls 400-yard free, the girls 200-yard free, the girls 200-yard medley and the boys 200-yard medley.

MORE RESULTS ...

Brookwood held off Mill Creek in a meet between two of Class AAAAA's top swimming teams Saturday. The Broncos won the boys meet 156-153 and the girls meet 155-153. Brookwood benefited from Kelsey Gouge's performance, as she won the girls 50 free and 100 free. For the Broncos boys team, Michael Trice won the 50 free and 100 free. ... Alpharetta won a meet with Collins Hill and Mountain View. ... Class A power Wesleyan swept a meet with Chattahoochee, from Class AAAA, and Milton, Class AAAAA. ... Central Gwinnett swept a meet with Shiloh and Berkmar.

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WRESTLING NEWS



Area meets yield champions, state finalists

By Stephen Black

Several metro-area programs grappled their way into the state duals finals by finishing in the top two in area meets. Area champions and runners-up will compete in Macon this weekend for state championships.

FIRST-TIME CHAMPS ...

Forest Park won its first-ever region wrestling championship after finishing 5-0 in the Area 4-AAAA meet Saturday. The Panthers defeated Lovejoy 44-30 in the final. Both schools will compete in the state duals Saturday.

Lovett upset top-seeded Greater Atlanta Christian 39-28 in the Area 6-AA meet Saturday. The Lions profited from wins by Kyler Allen (108), James Hite (113), Jonathan Koppelman (120), Spencer Lee (132), Jack Young (145), Corey Erdoes (182), Patrick Emerson (195) and William Henegan (285) in the final. To get to the finals, Lovett defeated Westminster 42-24 while the Spartans took down Blessed Trinity 44-28.

Pope won its fifth straight region duals meet after winning the 5-AAAA championship Saturday. It is the Greyhounds second straight Area 5 championship after winning three straight 6-AAAAA titles. After defeating Paulding County 64-10 earlier in the day, Pope took care of Alexander 45-19 in the

finals. The Greyhounds trailed the Cougars 15-7 before winning seven of the next eight matches.

Lassiter edged Etowah to win the Area 5-AAAAA crown 36-34. Both squads advance to the state meet Saturday. Paul Pelletier won the 120-pound match to give the Trojans the lead with one match remaining after Etowah had taken a one-point edge. Shelton Sellars then lost his match 9-7 to Etowah's Bryce Verones in the 126-pound division, but the Trojans still held onto their lead.

MORE WINNERS ...

Archer continued its season of firsts by winning the Area 8-AAAAA championship with a dominant 55-6 win over Brookwood. It was the first region title of any kind for the third-year Gwinnett school. The Tigers beat South Gwinnett and Grayson prior to the Brookwood match. ... North Forsyth won Area 6-AAAAA with a 37-24 win over Roswell. The Raiders took down Centennial and Alpharetta on their way to the finals. ... Harrison beat Kennesaw Mountain 36-28 to win the Area 4-AAAAA championship. It is the second area wrestling title for the Hoyas.

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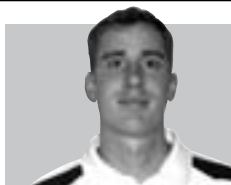
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PANTHER PROWL



Men's hoops off to a great start

By Fletcher Proctor

With all of the struggles for the nomadic Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets and the rebuilding Georgia Bulldogs, the Georgia State Panthers are quickly becoming the state's best college basketball product. The Panthers recently traveled to Richmond and took down 2011 Final Four participant VCU 55-53 in a key early CAA conference game. The Panthers used a matchup zone to limit the

Rams to just 27 percent shooting, switching between a 3-2 and a 1-3-1 to force 10 turnovers by the Rams.

Jihad Ali led Georgia State (11-3, 3-0) with 17 points while grabbing 11 rebounds as the Panthers posted a school-record 11th straight win. Leading scorer Devonta White was held scoreless in the first half, but the Panthers still led at intermission.

White would score 14 points in the second half, including a pair of three-point bombs to help Georgia State jump out to a nine-point lead. Josh Micheaux chipped in eight points, six rebounds, three blocks, four assists and a pair of steals. James Fields was clutch at the line, going 4-of-5 from the charity stripe. VCU tried to mount a late comeback but was turned away. It was the second victory in the Panthers last three games against the Rams.

PANTHERS STREAKING ...

Georgia State's 11-3 start was the best start since an 11-1 beginning to the 2000-01 season. After beginning the year 0-3, the Panthers caught fire. The streak started Nov. 18 at home against McNeese State. The Panthers gave Hunter his first official win with a 69-50 decision thanks in large

part to White's career-high 23 points. The Panthers dominated the second half, a trend that continued throughout the amazing run. Over the last 11 games, the Panthers outscored opponents by 106 points in the second half, 403-297. Over the course of the streak, Georgia State posted a 19-point average margin of victory.

HEWITT SNAPS STREAK ...

Georgia State's run ended with a loss to former Georgia Tech head coach Paul Hewitt and his George Mason Patriots in Fairfax, Va. The Panthers surrendered 61 points in a three-point loss to the Patriots. Ali led Georgia State with 19 points. George Mason made 11 of 12 from the free throw line down the stretch to ice the contest.

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BULLDOG BEAT



Young Dawgs drop two SEC games

By Stephen Black

Georgia took a couple lumps to start the SEC season with double-digit losses to Alabama and Florida. The Dawgs began the conference slate 0-2 and will travel to Nashville Saturday in search of their first SEC win of the season.

Despite the losses, however, the young and rebuilding Bulldogs showed some positive signs. Nemi Djurusic, a freshman forward from Montenegro, led the team with 14 points against the Gators and also tied for the team lead with six boards. Djurusic also had 10 points and again led the team with five rebounds in the Alabama game.

Meanwhile, former Georgia Mr. Basketball Kentavious Caldwell-Pope (or KCP for short) poured in a game-high 22 points against the Tide and looked like the scorer that the Dawgs have so desperately been looking for in recent years. After the Florida game, KCP was leading the team in scoring with 14.2 points per game.

With these two freshmen, the future at Georgia looks bright even if the present is cloudy and grey. Look for Mark Fox's squad to improve as the season progresses, especially when sophomore forward Marcus Thornton returns from a knee injury.

SWAMPED IN GAINESVILLE ...

Georgia started slowly and shot poorly in

getting boat-raced by No. 19 Florida 70-48 in Gainesville. The Bulldogs trailed 35-21 at the half and didn't break the 30-point barrier until midway through the second half. As if that was not bad enough, Georgia shot 1-for-9 from the free throw line.

"We lost to a really good team tonight," said Fox. "We didn't get enough stops. I don't know if we were too excited to start the game, but we missed some easy plays early and played from behind all night, which is so hard to do."

Aside from Djurusic's 14, no other Bulldog scored in double digits.

DROWNED BY TIDE ...

The Fox Hounds were a bit more competitive with the Crimson Tide Saturday in the SEC opener for both teams. Despite trailing by 12 at the half, Georgia fought back and cut the deficit to four points with 9:18 left in the game.

The big and physical Tide controlled the glass throughout the game which led to a 35-20 rebounding edge.

"Without (Thornton), we knew rebounding would be an issue," said Fox. "They whooped us on the glass."

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TECH TALK



Despite losing streak, Tech improves

By Thomas Watson

Brian Gregory's first season as head coach of the Yellow Jackets has been a roller coaster through the first 15 games of the season. After a promising victory over Georgia in Athens on Dec. 7, Tech was shocked at home against Mercer on Dec. 22 and the Jackets have allowed the upset to stretch into a four-game losing streak. Due to renovations to Alexander Memorial Coliseum, home games have been split between the Gwinnett Arena and Philips Arena, and many have pointed to the issue of no home court as a reason for a lack of success. Gregory, however, squashed that excuse in his press conference this week.

"The people in Gwinnett were tremendous in a difficult situation. I thought they did a great job, and I thought we made the best of it. The people at Philips have been tremendous as well as trying to get us some extra time on the court and different things like that," said Gregory. "I said that as good as it is, it's never going to be quite as good as playing on your home court and the tradition of the Thrillerdome, and different things like that. But we have to make the best of it, and the people who are working with us have been tremendous during this transition time."

BEDEVILED ...

The Jackets played their first ACC game in Philips Arena Jan. 7, and despite losing 81-74, Tech had a strong showing against the Duke Blue Devils, ranked No. 5 in the nation at the time. The loss dropped Tech to 7-8 on the season, 0-1 in ACC play. Glen Rice Jr. had a season-high 28 points and eight rebounds in the game, and Mfon Udofia added 19 points. At one point in the first half Duke was up 18 points, but the Tech defense didn't allow a field goal the last 4:11 to get back into the game. With 3:26 to play in the second half, the Jackets were down just two points at 68-66, but a Udofia turnover got Duke rolling and the Blue Devils never looked back.

Despite the late turnover, Gregory lauded Udofia's play thus far this season. "I think Mfon is a guy who you've really seen, from day one of the season, a guy who has really improved his overall play. To play 33 minutes against that type of pressure and so forth, I thought he handled the ball extremely well, got us into our offense."

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HAWKS HAVEN



Hawks bounce back in a big way

By Ricky Dimon

Sure, the Atlanta Hawks could easily have been 8-1 as of Wednesday afternoon. At the same time, though, they could have let a pair of heartbreaking losses send them spiraling into a tailspin.

Instead, the 7-3 Hawks responded like champions to setbacks on the road against Chicago on Jan. 3 (76-74 final after leading by 14 points going into the fourth quarter) and at home to Miami on Jan. 5 (116-109 in triple overtime). Atlanta promptly outlasted Charlotte 102-96 in overtime last Friday, destroyed Chicago 109-94 last Saturday and beat New Jersey 106-101 on Monday.

Josh Smith positively caught fire during the three-game streak. The Atlanta native averaged an incredible 24.7 points, eight rebounds, 3.3 steals and 2.7 blocks in his team's victories over the Bobcats, Bulls and Nets. Joe Johnson added 17.7 points and 5.7 assists per game in the trio of wins.

"(Smith is) taking open shots and not worrying about what people say," said Jeff Teague according to the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. "He's driving to the basket and being aggressive. When he's like that, we are at our best."

UNLIKELY HEROES ...

The old reliables have been getting it done

on a consistent basis, but these Hawks are getting contributions from all over the roster.

Ivan Johnson, a little-used reserve who played junior college ball at Cal State-San Bernardino, scored 13 points in 21 minutes in the triple-overtime loss to Miami while playing hard-nosed defense on Chris Bosh (LeBron James and Dwayne Wade did not play). Former All-Star Tracy McGrady, now 32 and thought to be worn down by injuries, came up big twice against the Heat. He scored 16 in a 100-92 road win on January 2 before adding 14 points, seven rebounds and five assists in the loss three days later. Sharp-shooting backup Vladimir Radmanovic went 5-for-5 from three-point range and poured in 17 points in last week's rout of the Bulls. He has drilled 11 treys in his last three games.

Johnson, McGrady, Radmanovic and the rest of the Atlanta squad were back in action on Wednesday (at Indiana) and Thursday (vs. Charlotte), but results were not available at press time. The Hawks will continue their home stretch from Saturday through Wednesday against Minnesota, Toronto and Portland.

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FALCONS FLIGHT



Coordinators leave; Falcons ponder moves

By Sean Conway

It's safe to say that the Atlanta Falcons' season ended prematurely for the fans, players, coaches and staff. No one wants to get blown out by the archrival New Orleans Saints 45-16 in the 16th week of the season, then get pummeled 24-2 by the New York Giants in the first round of the playoffs.

The bad news is evident. No more Falcons games to look forward to until early September. There is some good news: with three playoff appearances in four seasons, the Falcons cast aside the cellar-dweller label.

As the frustration around the water cooler and the sports bars begins to subside for fans, it's time to assess the Falcons' future.

THE OFFENSE ...

Former offensive coordinator Mike Mularkey was hired by Jacksonville Tuesday to become the Jaguars' next head coach.

Quarterback Matt Ryan, wide receiver Roddy White and running back Michael Turner all had great seasons statistically. Ryan threw for 29 touchdowns and set the franchise mark for yards in a season (4,177 yards). White caught 100 passes for 1,296 yards and scored eight times. Turner rushed for 1,340 yards. Rookie wide receiver Julio Jones came within a gimpy hamstring of 1,000 yards receiving and scored eight touchdowns.

The Atlanta red-zone offense was okay for a 6-10 team but needs to do more than simply pick up easy yards. The offense needs to win the tough yards in the toughest situations.

THE DEFENSE ...

Auburn's head coach Gene Chizik swooped in and hired the Falcons defensive coordinator Brian VanGorder immediately after the loss to the Giants. VanGorder, to his credit, managed the defense to a No. 6 ranking against the run and No. 20 rank against the pass. Had the Falcons been able to convert more third and fourth downs, those numbers might have even been better.

The loss of VanGorder, mentored by head coach Mike Smith since their days on the Jacksonville Jaguars staff, presents a different hiring opportunity for Smith. Mularkey enjoyed a level of autonomy being a former NFL head coach, and Smith being a former defensive assistant. Surely, Smith will look to find a candidate that can learn and assert himself at the same time.

With Mularkey and VanGorder gone, it will be interesting to see what develops in the next few weeks.

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CHOP SHOP



Braves bullpen figures to be a strength

By Fletcher Proctor

Last season, the Atlanta Braves bullpen was a strength for a squad that just missed out on the playoffs. Craig Kimbrel, Eric O'Flaherty and Jonny Venters even received a feature story from Sports Illustrated about their shutdown abilities. As good as the pen was one year ago, though, the 2012 relief corps could be even better.

Kimbrel made 79 appearances last year, saving 46 games, a new rookie record. He was named NL Rookie of the Year and figures to be the Braves closer for many years to come. O'Flaherty and Venters are dominating lefty pitchers whom the Braves want to hold on to for as long as they can. Arodys Vizcaino is a likely bullpen candidate to start the year, and last year the youngster cracked triple digits on radar guns down the stretch. The team will also have Robert Fish, a Rule Five pick from the Los Angeles Angels in the bullpen.

Another key member of the bullpen will be Kris Medlen. The former starter could get a crack at the starting rotation, but if Medlen is placed into the bullpen, Roger McDowell and Fredi Gonzalez could not ask for a better long

reliever than they will find in Medlen. Jairo Asencio, Anthony Varvaro, Cory Gearrin and Cristhian Martinez will also compete for spots in the bullpen. Peter Moylan could also return though the team did not tender him a contract, allowing him to become a free agent.

TIED UP ...

Money makes the world go 'round, and it is finances that have tied up Braves GM Frank Wren like a pretzel. According to various reports, the team explored trading Jair Jurrjens this winter as his free agent year is fast approaching. Jurrjens could command a contract deemed too hefty for Atlanta, and considering his recent stretch of injuries, perhaps not worth the big dollars. Michael Bourn was added at the trading deadline one year ago, and the centerfielder will likely demand eight figures annually to stay beyond the 2012 season. If the team struggles, the phones may get busy as the team could unload one or both of these players.

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GWINNETT GLADIATORS



Glads pick up points at Florida's expense

By Joe Deighton

It was a good weekend at the Arena at Gwinnett Center as the Gladiators picked up four points with two victories over division rival Florida. Gwinnett beat the Florida Everblades 4-3 in a shootout on Friday night. As it has been all season long, the win was a collective effort with forward Justin Milo, defenseman Dallas Jackson and defenseman Shane Sims scoring goals in regulation. Then, defenseman Brad Miller put home the game-winner in the shootout.

On Saturday night, Gwinnett thumped the Everblades 6-2. Again, the Glads were getting goals from everywhere as six different players put pucks in the net. The second win over Florida increased the Gladiators lead in the ECHL South Division by four points over the Everblades and three points over Greenville. Through 35 games, Gwinnett has 43 points. Over the last ten games the team is 7-1-1-1, a big improvement from late November and early December when it seemed like the Gladiators couldn't win a game.

KEYS TO SUCCESS ...

It would be hard to pinpoint how this team is winning if you were just looking for top goal scorers and leading point-getters. There is not a single Gladiator among the top 20 ECHL scorers. Forward Nikita Kashirsky is leading Gwinnett in points with 22 (5

goals, 17 assists). The lack of big goal scorers has forced goalie Jeff Jakatis to raise his game. Jakatis is currently tied for the ECHL lead in goals against average with 1.73.

Staying out of the penalty box has been a point of emphasis this season for Gwinnett. The Gladiators have committed the second-fewest penalties in the league with just 486 minutes. That has led to more manageable situations and more power plays than their opponents which leads to more scoring opportunities. Forward Pat Galivan leads Gwinnett with six special teams tallies.

UPCOMING GAMES ...

Gwinnett will wrap up its two-game road set with, ironically, the Greenville Road Warriors tonight before returning home to host the Road Warriors for two games Saturday and Monday. Greenville has had the edge this season against the Glads, winning two of the three matchups before last night's game. The games are vitally important as far as the South Division goes as Gwinnett leads the Road Warriors by a slim three points. Slowing down Greenville's leading scorer Brendan Connolly should be priority No. 1. Connolly has burned the Glads with two goals and two assists in three games this year.

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FEB. 15	FEB. 16	FEB. 17 10:30 AM*	FEB. 18 11:00 AM 3:00 PM	FEB. 19 11:00 AM 3:00 PM	FEB. 20 11:00 AM 3:00 PM
7:30 PM	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	7:00 PM	7:00 PM	7:00 PM

*No Pre-show activities.

**FEB.
23 – 26** **The Arena
at Gwinnett Center**

Thu.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
FEB. 23	FEB. 24 10:30 AM*	FEB. 25 11:00 AM 3:00 PM	FEB. 26 11:00 AM 3:00 PM
7:30 PM	7:30 PM	7:00 PM	7:00 PM

*No Pre-show activities.

There are 3 ways to redeem your savings:

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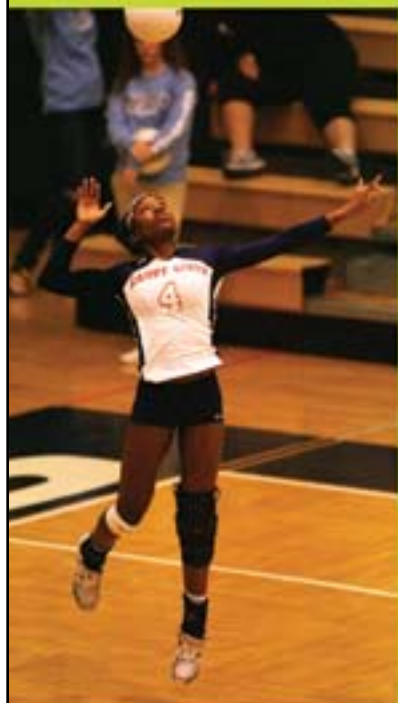


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AAAAA: MILL CREEK
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AAA: HERITAGE-CATOOSA
AAAA: MARIST
AAAAA: WALTON

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A: WESLEYAN
AA: WESTMINSTER
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