

Football from page 43

yard or more passes against UNC, gave up more than 300 passing yards a game, are last in average passing yards allowed in the ACC by more than 30 yards, and are about as dependable as Fat Bastard saving a drumstick for you.

People have been saying Tech made the big plays when they needed to against UNC, but when you get as many chances as Tech did to make one, you're eventually going to do something good. Changes are going to have to be made in time for Clemson, which features the number one offense in the country.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Grade: B

The punting tandem of Dan Dyke(45.0 avg. yards-per-punt) and Chris Morehouse(44.2 avg. yards-per-punt) have been perfect. Sophomre Luke Manget has hit on 5-8 field goals, including a 50-yarder. There hasn't been anything spe-

cial yet about the special teams, but they also haven't done anything terrible. I'll take a special teams that I don't notice any day.

“It will be hard for George O’Leary’s Yellow Jackets to stay focused against winless Wake Forest next Saturday, but that shouldn’t be a hindrance because Wake is as bad as their winless record.”

LOOKING AHEAD

It will be hard for George O’Leary’s Yellow Jackets to stay focused against winless Wake Forest next Saturday, but that shouldn’t

be a hindrance because Wake is as bad as their winless record. I know my eyes aren’t focusing on the Demon Deacons though. A showdown in Death Valley against fifth-ranked Clemson looms in the horizon, and my bags are packed. Will the Tigers’ QB Woodrow Dantzler spark memories of Joe Hamilton with his do-everything style? Will Tech’s secondary be allowed back on campus after facing the nation’s number one ranked offense? Could Tech play that mystical complete game they’ve been searching for? I think they can, and Dantzler and the Tigers could be in for a surprise.

At this point in the season, a projection for how things might pan out by the end of the season is indeterminant. Still within reach is a third consecutive Gator Bowl bid. At the other end of the spectrum, a washed-out season and a December date with one of the Hawaii bowls is also possible. For now, we’ll just have to wait to see where they come in after the curve.



By Daniel Uhlig / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Receiver Kelly Campbell evades a Tarheel tackler on his way to 94 yards on eight receptions, including a 16 yard reception in the second quarter.

Football Forecast	WEEK SEVEN										
	Kischuk (13-2) 62-17	Freyman (10-5) 59-20	Shaw (11-4) 59-20	Guest (Watson) (14-1) 57-22	Baucom (10-5) 54-25	Hinkel (10-5) 54-25	Dykes (10-5) 53-26	Graybeal (9-6) 53-26	Uhlig (10-5) 52-27	Cutri- Kohart (11-4) 51-28	Flagg (9-6) 50-29
Florida State at Miami	MIA	F\$U	F\$U	F\$U	F\$U	F\$U	F\$U	F\$U	F\$U	F\$U	F\$U
Maryland at Virginia	UVA	UVA	UVA	UVA	UVA	UVA	UVA	UVA	UVA	UVA	UVA
Vanderbilt at Wake Forest	WAKE	VAND	WAKE	VAND	VAND	VAND	VAND	VAND	VAND	WAKE	WAKE
N.C. State at Clemson	CLEM	CLEM	CLEM	CLEM	CLEM	CLEM	CLEM	CLEM	CLEM	CLEM	CLEM
Tennessee at Georgia	TENN	UGA	TENN	TENN	TENN	TENN	TENN	UGA	TENN	TENN	UGA
Auburn at Mississippi St.	MSU	AUB	AUB	AUB	AUB	AUB	AUB	AUB	AUB	AUB	AUB
Ohio State at Wisconsin	WISC	OSU	WISC	OSU	OSU	WISC	WISC	WISC	WISC	OSU	OSU
Oregon State at Washington	WASH	WASH	WASH	WASH	WASH	WASH	OSU	WASH	OSU	WASH	WASH
Akron at Bowling Green	AKR	AKR	AKR	AKR	AKR	AKR	BOWL	BOWL	AKR	BOWL	AKR
Oklahoma at Texas	TEX	TEX	TEX	TEX	TEX	TEX	TEX	TEX	TEX	TEX	TEX
Michigan at Purdue	MICH	MICH	MICH	MICH	MICH	MICH	PURD	MICH	MICH	MICH	MICH
LSU at Florida	UF	UF	UF	UF	UF	LSU	UF	UF	UF	UF	LSU
Penn State at Minnesota	MINN	MINN	PSU	PSU	PSU	PSU	PSU	MINN	MINN	PSU	PSU
Albany State at Tuskegee	TUSK	TUSK	TUSK	TUSK	TUSK	TUSK	TUSK	TUSK	TUSK	TUSK	TUSK
Bowie State at Morehouse	MORE	MORE	MORE	MORE	MORE	MORE	MORE	MORE	MORE	MORE	MORE

Six point gets a late start this week. Yup, it's 11:30 and I am just now beginning to write in this mile-long freaking box. It would have all been wonderful if my writers had picked up the volleyball story. I guess no matter how well a week is going, I still have to write at least one story. I hope you enjoy it. Don't get me wrong, I like volleyball, and fortunately I was actually at a game, so I could write somewhat intelligently about it. Whatever. On the grand excitement list this week is the fact that I am all alone in first place. Oh joy. Jody and Christina can eat my dust, from three games back. This week is scary, though. Too many tough games. I wish people would get me their picks. Otherwise I'm likely to flip a coin for their picks. Then again, who knows? Last week, we had a nickel flipped for the guest spot went 14-1. Hopefully, that will bode well for Nate Watson, who has dropped the ball and neglected to send me his picks. He now gets... THE COIN. I'll figure out which one based on what I might have in my pocket. Chris Young (the administrator, not the football player), has begged to be next week's guest. He's around here all the time, so I'd venture a guess that he might actually get his picks in to me. I guess it'll be his birthday and all. Man, halfway through the box and my brain's already running on neutral. We can all be glad that the Olympics are now over. What a pain. I'd rather watch Jerry Springer re-runs with the mute button on. It's all good, though. Right now I'm listening to The Offspring, which is most excellent, except that they're so angry. It makes me want to appear on Extreme Championship Wrestling. Yes,

I'm that angry. Almost as angry as Alan Back. Actually, I'm not angry at all, I'm beating everyone in Football Forecast, and that's good enough for me. Not only that, but I think I may actually be one of the first section editors out the door tonight, unless, of course, this stupid Macintosh were to crash and I'd forgotten to save my work. I think Macintoshes are the computer of Satan. It's such a shame that an otherwise unpopular type of computer can stay in business with parlor tricks. Sure, they may be technically okay, but nobody would buy them if they weren't so damn pretty. Are you buying a computer or a work of art? It's a computer! You make the call - would you like affordable, upgradable, compatible and efficient, or would you like pretty? Give me a break. And every time they come out with a new color, it's time for a new advertisement. Is this a line of personal computers, or a box of Trix. It's like the new Volkswagen Beetle. For roughly the price of a new, quality, mid-size sedan, you could own a little go-kart with a vase to hold cheesy fake flowers. What a load of crap. They advertise those things every time there's a new color too. Like I'm sitting here, waiting on a car or computer purchase, and all of the sudden, this stylish new computer that matches my wallpaper, or a new car that matches my favorite outfit, hits the market. Spare no expense! Sure, I had no desire to pick the damn thing up before, but the color! "It's what happens when white sees a ghost." Oh, hold me back. Hold me back from vomiting. It's almost as bad as trying to pick someone to cheer for in the Tennessee-Georgia game.

this space provided as a public service announcement

UNC from page 44

54, 59, and 78 yards! “It’s unbelievable...disturbing...we let them right back in it with long passes...safeties aren’t making the plays that they have to make...we just have to get better at that,” O’Leary spoke of his second-rate secondary.

The defensive backs and safeties allowed deep passes all day long that resulted in momentum shifters and

crowd pleasers. Neither is this inability to stop the long ball new to the Tech defense; they saw that kind of play against Florida State and Navy. In order for Tech to be able to survive a great passing team, adjustments must be made in the secondary or Tech won’t be so lucky when it gives up four passes of at least 50 yards.

The run defense fared somewhat better than the pass defense; North Carolina could only accumulate 89

“We let them right back in it with long passes... safeties aren’t making the plays... we just have to get better at that,”

George O’Leary
Football Head Coach

yards rushing on the day. However, the defensive line could not cover the holes that the Tar Heel offensive line opened, allowing for ample running room up the middle. North Carolina could every advantage of it, too, with a 46-yard touchdown quarterback draw by Curry. All of the rushing that North Carolina did was up the gut, but Tech’s defense did the job when the Tar heels tried to run laterally.

Despite the woes of the second-

ary, it was a great win; they finally got their feet wet in the victory column in the ACC. Tech hosts Wake and Duke in the next two home games, so Tech should put a three in the conference win column soon.

Saturday’s game was what Tech needed—it was able to see what worked, and also what needed vast improvements. A win is a win, no matter how anyone looks at it. “Job well done...great team game,” O’Leary says it all.

If you like Pina Coladas, and getting caught in the rain.
And the feel of the ocean, if you have half-a-brain.
If you like making love at midnight, in the dunes of the cape.
I'm the lady you've looked for, write to me, and escape.

gte608e

JOIN THE
TECHNIQUE
tuesdays ° student services ° rm ° 137 ° 7 pm

Women’s swimming and diving program added as new varsity sport

By Gary Bridges
Assistant Sports Editor Elect

Georgia Tech has finally decided to get with the program and introduce a Women’s Swimming and Diving Team, being one of the last ACC schools to do so.

The announcement came on Thursday, September 28, 2000, with the appointment of Sharon Krueger as assistant head coach in charge of women’s swimming and diving.

Krueger, coming off a 12-year coaching stretch at Syracuse University, will handle recruiting for the Yellow Jackets and will share the day-to-day coaching operations with Jack-ets head coach Seth Baron. Her 15 years of Division I coaching will undoubtedly be a great asset..

The team currently has four members, who will red-shirt and practice with the men’s team this season. They will be the building blocks for 2001’s inaugural season, in which the coaches hope to have between 14 and 16 athletes on the squad. They hope to raise that number to around 35 within the next four years. The addition of scholarships to the program will certainly help.

Baron plans to make the team competitive at the highest level.

“The challenge is hard, but it is not impossible,” he said, “I am looking forward to the day when both the men’s and women’s teams win an ACC Title and place in the Top 25 at NCAA’s.”

Some may ask why, in these Title IX days, men’s swimming and diving had no female counterpart?

It’s simple: the male swimming and diving program has had 82 prior seasons, and 82 years ago there were no ladies at Tech.

“Adding a women’s swimming and diving program continues our pursuit of meeting the needs and interests of our female student body,” Dave Braine, director of Georgia Tech athletics told said, “We already have one of the finest aquatics facilities in the country, which is to be enclosed in the near future. There is no reason why we can’t develop one of the finest swimming programs in the country.”

The outlook for the women’s swimming and diving team is certainly bright; the squad has outstanding coaches and facilities and will surely find success in the future as it grows and matures.

“I am looking forward to the day when both the men’s and women’s teams win an ACC Title and place in the Top 25 at NCAA’s.”

Seth Baron
Head Swimming Coach

Volleyball Ky Bell



By Dale Russell / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Junior Ky Bell garnered ACC Player of the Week honors for her 42 kills, 31 digs, and 11 blocks against rivals Virginia and Maryland.

V-Ball

from page 42

14 digs (tied with Eveland). Bell also led with seven block assists on the night, all contributing to her selection as ACC player of the week. Eveland’s 54 assists added to her scorecard and helped earn her ACC rookie of the week honors.

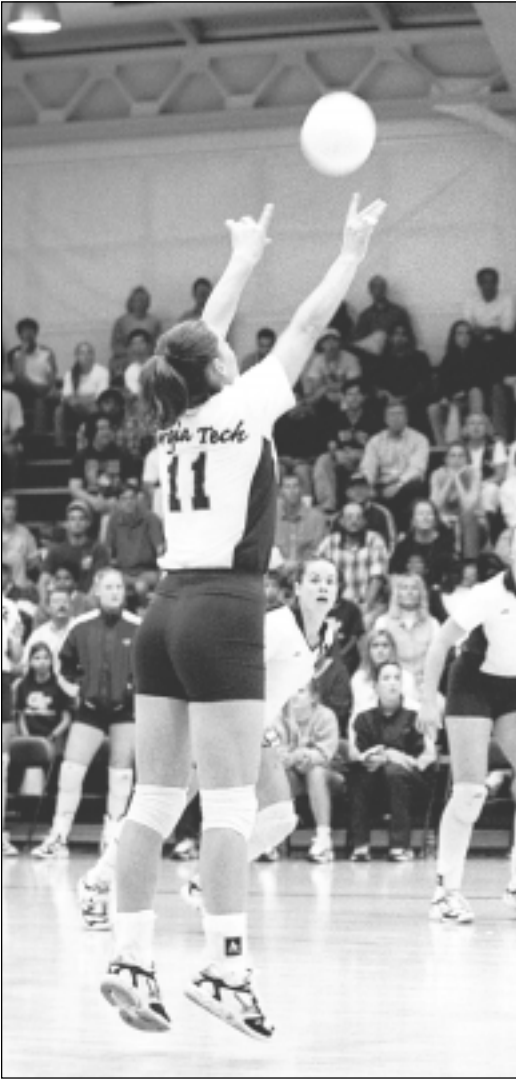
The Terrapins spread their offense out, with four players in double-digit kills and three players anchoring the defense with ten or more digs. Still, the greatest weakness, and the cause of their eventual downfall in the match, was a lack of depth. Their five bench contributors added zero kills, one assist, six digs, and a few errors on the night.

In watching the games, one key factor became apparent that is not regularly shown in the box score—the impact of Amanda Hess on the performance of the team. Her attack percentage is not headline quality, and her dig count is respectable but not exceptional.

Still, in the Virginia match, the team was able to score nearly at will with her in the game. She saw very little action in game two, where the Jackets struggled and lost. Though no significant statistics show up for her efforts here, her reliable handling of serves and above average passing skills seem to make her an invaluable asset on the floor.

Wednesday’s match with Wake Forest was a shutout win for the women, but details were not available at the time of publication. The next match is tonight at Duke, and the next home match will be against the Clemson Tigers on October 10 in the O’Keefe Gymnasium. Game time is 7 pm, and they will hopefully be competing to extend their conference record to 6-1.

Volleyball home weekend pays off with two conference victories



By Dale Russell / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS
Junior Temple-transfer Eida Mabry sets the ball for one of her two assists against the Virginia Cavaliers.

*By Rob Kischuk
Sports Editor*

Following a 1-1 trip through North Carolina last weekend, the women's volleyball team returned home this past weekend for two straight ACC home games. They brought a 10-4 record into the weekend, and a 1-1 conference record, with both of the weekend's games in conference play as well. The return to O'Keefe Gym was met with a reasonable size crowd, 1,030 strong, predominantly pulling for the white and gold. The Friday night match ended a six day drought from competition with a 7 pm match against the University of Virginia Cavaliers. The team got off to a quick start with a win in the first game, 15-6, dominating the Cavs, who spent the latter portion of the game looking shell-shocked in the face of the offensive onslaught. Despite appearances, however, Virginia was able to rally in the second game. The lead in the match changed several times back and forth, and included an emotional Yellow Jacket rally with game-point for the Cavs on the line, but in the end, Tech fell even in the match, tied at 1-1 after a 13-15 Virginia win. After the intermission, the only story going was told by the kill tally of Tech. The team valiantly quashed any threat that may have been coming by decisively defeating Virginia 15-5 in the third match and 15-8 in the fourth match, for a 3-1 victory. This match was a resounding con-

firmation of the skill of this year's team, and the chemistry of starting line-up. The team notched an admirable .365 kill percentage on the night, led by juniors Maja Pachale (.471) and Ky Bell (.441). Freshman setter Kele Eveland continued her astounding rookie season with 66 assists and 16 digs, with reserve Courtney Adler seeing limited action in one game. Eida Mabry led in the kill count with 20. For Virginia, the kills were much less distributed, with the offense falling almost wholly on the shoulders of senior middle blocker Deanna Zwarich (24 kills) and freshman outside hitter Paige Davis (22 kills). No other Cavaliers were in double digits in kills. Saturday, the ladies faced the University of Maryland Terrapins. Before a smaller yet still rowdy crowd of 763 fans, the Jackets sought to extend their conference win streak to three and their ACC record to 3-1. Much like the night before, the ladies struggled in the early stages of the match, with the Terps drawing first blood with a 13-15 victory in the first game of the match. Fortunately, the team was able to bounce back from the early deficit, and Tech ran the tables in straight sets for the victory, 15-5, 15-8, and a 15-12 game four adding some excitement and the potential for a winner-take-all game five. Bell once again contributed heavily to the victory, pitching in with 24 kills on 36 attempts and a team-high

See V-Ball, page 41



By Dale Russell / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS
Junior middle blocker Ky Bell and freshman setter Kele Eveland attempt to combine for a blocked kill.

Mid-season report card - Football not Dean's List, not on probation

By Derek Haynes
Has better grades than the team

If someone would have scratched off George Godsey's name and put in Joe Hamilton's in my box score, I wouldn't have noticed.

If someone had told me Tech scored 42 points and allowed 28, I wouldn't have twitched a muscle.

If the North Carolina clash would have taken place last season, not even coach George O'Leary would raise an eyebrow, but this is the season of the unproven Godsey and the improved defense.

We're nearing the halfway point of the season after Joe, but it seems like nothing really has been started. Tech shows flashes of brilliance (giving FSU their only scare of the year), and flashes of hell (almost losing to Central Florida).

They've had flashes where the running game was on all cylinders, they've had flashes where no one could ask for more of Godsey, they've had flashes where the defense hasn't tasted as bad as the leftover macaroni and cheese it usually tastes like.

I'll admit, it's hard to give the Jackets grades at this point, but it's something I've been forced to do. They haven't decided to turn it on or off yet. As Tech enters the mid-way point of the season, it's time for their midterm.

QUARTERBACK
Grade: B

About the only person that could mistake Godsey for Hamilton would be...well, I'm not going to sit here all day and try to think of someone. Let's face the facts. Godsey can't move like Hamilton. Godsey can't throw like Hamilton. Godsey just isn't as exciting as Hamilton.

Thank you, Captain Obvious. But one fact stands: Godsey is not a weak spot for the Yellow Jackets. Like the quiet veteran line worker

who clocks in at six and leaves at three everyday, Godsey simply gets the job done without the fanfare. 10 TD's, only 3 interceptions, a 131.40 efficiency rating, and a come-from-behind win against Central Florida highlight his report card.

Youngster Jermaine Crenshaw played exceptionally well against Florida State in his only action of the year, and Andy Hall has seen

"They [the secondary] allowed four 50-yard or more passes against UNC, gave up more than 300 passing yards a game, are last in average passing yards allowed in the ACC by more than 30 yards, and are about as dependable as Fat Bastard saving a drumstick for you."

some time, but neither have put in enough work to receive grades.
RUNNING BACKS
Grade: C

Maybe I'm a little tough. I come from a place where individual 200-yard rushing games come more often than D's in physics, the mighty Big Ten. But the Tech running game has simply attended class. Yes, mighty Joe Burns did rush for 123 yards and a career-high 4 touchdowns against UNC, but the running game has done nothing to prove to me that Burns and Sean Gregory can

carry Tech for any sort of time duration.

I liked Sidney Ford against UNC, but the youngster went down with a concussion before I could see anymore. He provides a spark that Burns and Gregory struggle to provide.

OFFENSIVE LINE
Grade: C

Like the rest of the Jackets this year, they simply seem to be there. I haven't seen them at one help-session all year. They've allowed 19 sacks in five games against defenses possessing no mystical powers other than FSU.

Senior tackle Chris Brown and senior right guard Brent Key have played solid, but this young unit needs time to gel.

RECEIVERS
Grade: C

Kelly Campbell has played that usual Campbell style, and Will Glover has done exactly what I would expect from him. Kerry Watkin's drop against NC-State has been the one glaring mistake from the wide-outs. Campbell, according to the AJC, is now tied atop the all-time receiving touchdowns list at Tech with 14.

The player I watch: freshman Nate Curry. The speedster out of Miami, Florida caught four passes against UNC in his first real action of the year.

DEFENSIVE LINE
Grade: B

16 sacks this year, 16 sacks last year. I can't complain about that. 80.2 yards per-game? Nothing wrong with that either. 2.2 yards per-rush? Well, nothing more needs to be said about that. Sophomore Greg Gathers, a second-team freshman all-America last year, leads the team with four sacks.

LINEBACKERS
Grade: B

Sophomore linebacker Recardo



By Daniel Uhlig / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Recardo Wimbrush has had a break-out sophomore year by leading a beleaguered linebacker corps in tackles for the second consecutive year.

Wimbrush has decided that third-team freshman all-America honors aren't enough. Wimbrush has been a bright for the much criticized Tech defense, leading the Jackets in tackles – just like he did last year as a freshman.

Wimbrush also leads in tackles for-a-loss with 10, more than double last year's output. Daryl Smith, a freshman out of Albany, is a player that gives hope to the Tech defense in the future. Smith, currently second in tackles, is just one of the three outstanding linebackers Tech signed last year. The lone sore spot is the injury to freshman Keyaron

Fox, who broke his arm in the second quarter against UNC. No timetable has been set on his return.

SECONDARY
Grade: D

Other than senior Chris Young, the ACC defensive back of the week, and sophomore free safety Jeremy Muyres, the Tech backs have been about as pathetic as the lines in *Hollow Man*. During preseason, the improved Tech defense was much-hyped, but those remarks seem, well, hollow when the view pans to the secondary. They allowed four 50-

See Football, page 37



JOIN THE TECHNIQUE

SPORTS

Technique • Friday, October 6, 2000

Making The Grade

At the middle of the season, how does the football team stack up?
Page 43

Volleyball

Charge ahead continues with a 3-1 conference record
Page 42



Football chalks first conference victory, 42-38 against Tarheels

By Michael Tiemeyer
Knows all the numbers

"It's good to get our first ACC win." Coach O'Leary said it all with one sentence; Tech had struggled to acquire this first win with a heart-breaking loss to Florida State and a disappointment against N.C. State, but hopefully more conference victories shall follow the win over North Carolina.

Despite the score, most of the game was another drama that Tech has consistently taken part of this season—the score was tied going into halftime 14-14. Coach O'Leary commented, "It was a great football game, a hard-fought football game." Both teams did fight hard and rough, but it was Tech that was able to capitalize on its breaks.

Tech's special teams played a major role in the victory last Saturday, contributing a blocked punt, tackling punter, and great coverage on punts and kickoffs. "Kicking game really helped us out—that was the difference. That's a great momentum breaker when you're playing away," O'Leary spoke very highly of his special teams, and with good reason.

Both the punter tackling and the blocked punt resulted in two touchdowns for Tech, which proved to the margin of victory; so, the impact of the special teams are not to be taken lightly. Also, the Tech's return men gave good field position all day while the defensive coverage team did a great job of pinning North Carolina's return men down where they received the ball, giving Tech another advantage that it could exploit against the Tar heels.

Once Tech's offense got their hands on the ball, it knew exactly what to do with it—march it down the field. Forty-two points should be evidence enough of the success that Tech had against the North Carolina defense.

All day long, Tech used short passes and a persistent running game



By Daniel Uhlig / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Safety Chris Young reels in an errant Ronald Curry pass for an interception. Crunch time plays like this made all of the difference in the victory.

to take the ball down the field. Using short hook routes and some quick slants, the offense was able to utilize the aggressiveness of North Carolina's defense against it by passing over the linebackers and in front of the cornerbacks resulting in easy eight to twelve yard passes.

Godsey completed 21 of 30 passes for a total of 238 yards with two touchdown passes and two interceptions.

Tech's offensive player of the game was Joe Burns who had 123 yards rushing on 26 carries and scored a career high four touchdowns, which also hadn't been accomplished by a player of Tech since 1995. "Joe Burns...he's going to get the tough yards for you, and get out there and block and catch," O'Leary commented on his running back's play against

North Carolina.

The only thing that the Tech offense was unable to do was the same thing it has failed to do all season, deep passes for completions. O'Leary commented, "Playing the long ball is a skill that we haven't acquired yet." The quarterback and receivers seem to be out of sync when these types of plays are called, or they have not been able to understand each other's patterns and movements when the receivers are going deep.

However, North Carolina's offense was able and willing to play long ball. Curry hooked up with his receivers completing seventeen passes for 388 yards! Tech's secondary gave up four receptions consisting of 50,

See UNC, page 40



By Daniel Uhlig / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Kerry Watkins dives forward for extra yardage, on his way to averaging 10.5 yards per catch. Campbell was one of seven receivers to haul on a pass for the Jacket offense, which totaled 238 yards in passing offense.

Sports Commentary

Games, sports, and dancing, the wonder of modern "sport"

By David Williams
Bound for Rocky Face

The 2000 Olympics ended last Sunday and with the end came a lot of celebration as the United States came home with some fine performances. Golds came from the men's basketball team and track stars such as Maurice, Green and Marion Jones among others. Also coming to an end was more chances for the media to blitz Jones' husband C.J. Hunter and the men's basketball team in the blatantly distasteful way they did.

If one is not familiar with Jones' situation, the overall problem stemmed from allegations that Hunter used the banned drug Nandrolone. Hunter is a world class shot putter who was ranked number one in the world last year after throwing a mark of 71 feet, 6 inches. Using the banned drug is a clear violation of IAAF and IOC rules and would result in suspension from the sport.

What is Hunter's explanation one might ask? His nutritionist Victor Conte had the answer. "C.J. was not using the anabolic steroid Nandrolone. The positive result was the product of the nutritional supplement he was taking." Thus, what he was trying to say was the banned drug was in a nutritional supplement that Hunter was taking unbeknownst to him. Some scientists have speculated that the drug shows up in improperly labeled bottles that have no record of the substance on the label.

What makes things conspicuous is these allegations would show up right in the middle of Jones' attempt at five gold medals. Hunter did not even compete this year due to an injury. Also, even though the tests given to Hunter were legitimate, people knew he would challenge the results. Yet, the media gave pretty much slammed the door on Hunter from the start.

It is highly possible Hunter could be innocent as some bans have been overturned citing the fact that a drug was found in cold medicine or some other inconspicuous substance. One reporter lauded Jones for three pages then ended the article with the following statement, "Let's just hope Hunter doesn't drop the ball out onto the track when Jones runs the 4X100". Essentially, he reduced Hunter down to a kid playing in the street hoping he doesn't get hit by a car.

More of the same kind of garbage went on as the men's basketball played their way to the gold. Close wins over Lithuania (85-76, 85-83) and France (85-75) brought the team under a lot of fire. Among the barbs thrown were that this U.S. team was not as good as the other ones. That the players were embarrassing the

United States which was supposed to dominate with its roster full of professional players.

In reality, this was a team that was thrown together very poorly and also lacking several NBA stars that declined to play. The roster was as follows broken down by position. At point guard: Tim Hardaway, Gary Payton, and Jason Kidd. At shooting guard: Steve Smith, Alan Houston, and Ray Allen. At forward: Vince Carter, Kevin Garnett, Antonio McDyess, Shareef Abdur-Rahim, and Vin Baker. The only true center: Alonzo Mourning. Players declining to play or injured that would have helped a ton: Grant Hill, Shaquille O'Neal, Kobe Bryant, Tim Duncan, and David Robinson. On top of that, there was no real practice as the guys got together at best a couple of times and ran a few drills.

The other teams have been playing together for years as evidenced by their precision zone defense and fundamental offensive skills. I personally think the U.S. did quite well in the midst of a team that was not really balanced. Defensively, a Shaq or Duncan would clog up the middle providing outlet passes to a streaking Carter or Bryant quickly making the game get out of hand. Instead, we had Mourning who is not really a center at 6'10, 260 pounds. Garnett is not much better at 6'11 220 pounds.

That combined with the bruising and dirty play the Europeans displayed led to some of the close games. In addition to this, the United States was even further weakened defensively with their shooting guards. Hardaway is on his last knees and had a bad ankle in the playoffs. Smith's knees are almost gone and Houston has never been known for defense even though all three of those guys more than made up for it with a bunch of scoring. And to imagine, Carter was a last second addition after Hill got hurt.

So in conclusion, I think the team did well sending perhaps our second or third best unit over and still winning the gold. The team was not balanced, and had to adjust to playing European rules such as a zone defense which really did not allow the U.S. to capitalize on their talents.

I think the media needs to be more supportive of all sports teams in their good efforts instead of using sensationalism to draw readers. Instead of adding a soap opera feel to the sports world with the off the field woes of a Peter Warrick, Pete Rose, or Daryl Strawberry, let's concentrate on the real matter at hand and that is the effort and work it takes to be a number one athlete. Sure, it is good to use sports to teach kids and adults lessons about life but don't badger a person or jump to false conclusions just to sell units.