

Beyond the White and Gold

College vs. pro: college wins another point

By John Parsons
Senior Staff Writer

Over the last couple of weeks, a pair of situations have developed in the sports world that prove yet again that college sports are better than the pros.

I'm talking about the resignations of Matt Doherty at Carolina and Jerry Krause from the Chicago Bulls.

The difference here is that Doherty got forced out after just three years while Krause lumbered through the halls of the Bulls' front office for 18 years.

Nobody really likes either of these guys. Both have terrible people skills.

Doherty once bounced a basketball off Joe Forte's head to make a point in practice (I'm not sure what point that would be).

Krause never smiled for anything. He wouldn't even say 'Hi' to anyone if he passed them in the hall.

So how was Krause allowed to stay around for 18 years and take credit for six Bulls' championships in an eight-year span while Doherty got forced out just as his team looked like it had a promising future?

In a word: money.

Krause could get by just by paying the players a little bit more. After all, wouldn't anybody be willing to work for a jerk of a boss for a couple extra mil', especially if you knew all the other players hated him too?

Doherty had no such luxury. He couldn't, at least not legally, slide a couple grand to a player to make amends for being a jerk in practice. His last name isn't Harrick, after all.

What this shows me is that there is far less room for you in college athletics if you aren't a people person.

Doherty couldn't, at least not legally, slide a couple grand to a player to make amends for being a jerk in practice. His last name isn't Harrick, after all.

Sure, you can get by with mediocre people skills, at least as long as you're winning.

Gary Williams at Maryland isn't mean, but he's not a happy little chatterbox either. He's got winning to speak for him though.

Mike Krzyzewski is easily the most respected coach in the ACC and it turns out that he's the best at talking to the media.

Krzyzewski comes across as polished, yet personable at the same time. Furthermore, everyone that knows him, media or otherwise, likes him.

So there seems to be a self-correcting nature to college coaches. The guys that shouldn't be there get weeded out over time, often heading to the NBA to lead the Hawks in several years of futility.

There still seems to be a problem with pro sports though. How can they get rid of all the bastards, like Jerry Krause, that populate the rankings of front office executives?

Well, they can't. They can't because the environment is completely results based.

Remember the front office soap operas that surrounded Jerry Jones and Jimmy Johnson during the Cowboys Super Bowl runs? Has anybody ever gotten along with Bill Parcells?

So what's the solution for the fan? Just stop caring, if that's possible.

I'd like to tell you that I've achieved this, but then I remember my column a month ago where those of you that read it had 15 minutes of your lives wasted by my inane Roy Keane ramblings. Speaking of which...

See, if we got rid of all the people that pissed us off, there wouldn't be anything to write about, except those lame 'he's such a model citizen' pieces that cause us to dread pre-game shows.

Knudsen

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en's College World Series berth by just one RBI hit that never came. Knudsen would like to help out in this department.

"We want to repeat as ACC Champions and make it back to an NCAA Regional," said Knudsen. "We basically just want to have another good season like we did last year."

As for Tara off the field, she's a lot like any other college student. She describes herself as not being very superstitious, with only her visor being a set part of her game routine. Like any student, she greatly values any time she gets to sleep.

"I sleep when I can," Tara said. "I like to hang out with my teammates. We don't have a lot of free time in season, so I spend most of my free time resting."

Knudsen says she will stay in softball as long as possible. She's considering going into coaching when her playing days are over.

"I haven't found anything that I'm more passionate about than softball," she said. "So I'd like stay in the sport."

Crossword Solutions, from page 19

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Baseball star Murton swings under the radar no longer

By Al Przygocki
Senior Staff Writer

Matt Murton is an unlikely star. Without the dashed hopes of a Major League team that drafted him or any of the fanfare that seems to be a prerequisite for playing baseball at Tech, the quiet redhead just put his head down and went to work. Three years later, he's turned himself into one of the best outfielders in the country and a probable first round pick in this year's draft.

It's a wonder that the scouts could have missed the McDonough native after looking at his high school career and his top notch AAU experience. A three-year letterman in basketball and an honor roll student, he broke a slew of school hitting records at Eagles' Landing High School. In summer ball, he played on the East Cobb Yankees team that won the Connie Mack World Series in 2000, and the year before he won the Home Run Derby at the same event.

Murton tried to explain his lack of major league attention, saying "I was kind of underneath the spotlight in high school, because I wasn't in any situation where I was on a national level. I played with East Cobb, but not always in the national showcases. I wasn't surprised. I just took it as that's what's supposed to happen, and this is where I'm supposed to be." The left fielder further commented, "Georgia Tech is a great school, and I was looking forward to coming here. When I had a chance to come here, I was happy, and it's all worked out for the best."

The Yellow Jackets are happy he came here, too. Unfazed by the lack

of recognition, the big redhead decided to get to work and turn himself into a better player.

That hard work has paid off, and he has become the team's leading hitter, as he is either first or second in 12 different offensive categories, every thing from RBIs to stolen

bases.

These accomplishments haven't gone unnoticed this time around. Murton has been named to All-America teams in each of his three seasons, and several draft guides list him as a likely first rounder in this June's draft.

When asked if the upcoming draft weighs on his mind, Murton responded, "For me, I just need to come out and play hard every day, and I think my abilities will take over and

allow me to be in the situation that I

want to be in come June. Of course, it's something you think about here and there, but for the most part, I'm just out here enjoying Georgia Tech and playing the game of baseball."

When asked if there was a possibility that he would return to Tech for his senior season, the left fielder said, "There's always that opportunity. You never know how things are going to go. You might not get drafted where you think you might get drafted, and if it looks like it might be better to come back to school, that's definitely an option."

To get better prepared for taking his game to the next level, Murton spent time in the weight room, worked on his fielding, and never stopped working on his hitting. Another thing that Murton has done to continue to improve is to spend his summers in the Cape Cod League. The league is full of college all-stars who get the chance to play in a wood bat league against others of the same talent level. Murton has done very well up there, earning back to back league championships for the Wareham Gatemen, a league MVP award and a home run derby title, too.

Describing his summer experiences, Murton said, "The Cape Cod League is a wonderful league. The opportunity to play everyday with good competition is a plus." Continuing, the left fielder said, "The wood bats are great. In some ways, I enjoy hitting with the wood bats over the aluminum. You get a better feel. The pitching that you face is pretty solid there. It's a great com-

bination. It's a league where hitters don't always thrive, so when you get a chance to go up there and prove that you can hit, it makes it even that much better."

At Tech, Murton has become noticed not just for his hitting exploits and his bright red hair. He's also been noticed for his hitting music on Sundays.

Every hitter selects music that will be played when he is coming up to bat. Murton has two different pieces, "Boom" by POD for most occasions and "My Life is in You, Lord" performed by Joseph Garlington. The crowds enjoy clapping their hands along to the gospel song, and Murton enjoys success at the plate. In 13 Sunday games using the inspirational music, Murton has gone 22 for 47 (.468) with six home runs and 27 RBI.

"I had gotten to a point where I felt like I had to do something about Sunday. I wanted to let my light shine, and my mom and I had been talking about it, and we had come across this song," said Murton. "We started using it, and things started going well with it," he continued. Asked how the music helps him succeed, Murton replied, "It's definitely

a comfort zone. Sunday for me is a day to worship the Lord. Sunday morning, I get a chance to get to church. When I come to the park Sunday, I can just really relax, and I have a great feel of what life's all about, so I can just get in the batter's box and relax."

For now, Murton's goals are simple. It's all about unfinished business. Making the

College World Series last year was special, but Murton and the entire team are focused on getting back to Omaha and making a run at winning it all this time.

"The College World Series was incredible. Everyone always builds things up, and

then you get there and it's kind of a letdown. For us, it wasn't. It was everything they had advertised. The only thing that we were kind of disappointed with was our performance. We felt that maybe we could have done a little bit better," said Murton.

When asked about the possibility of ending his college career with a return visit to Omaha, Murton commented, "To get a chance to play in the College World Series once again and have a shot at the national championship would be a great finish to what has hopefully been a good college career."



Spring Practice

from page 28

tion in the fall," said Gailey.

Damarius Bilbo, who has worked hard this spring to become more consistent, had a breakout performance in scrimmage March 30. Bilbo consistently made good decisions in completing 13 of 21 passes for 136 yards and a touchdown. Gailey feels that one of the reasons Bilbo struggled last year was because he tried to do too much.

"I'm getting the hang of it," Bilbo said. "It's getting easier. With the mental toughness catching up with the physical part of it, it's getting easier."

Gailey has said that Bilbo will get as many repetitions as they can give him because the coaching staff knows the least about him. In a scrimmage March 21, Bilbo worked exclusively with the first team offense, while Pena and Suggs split time with the second team.

"We know where A.J. is; we know

where Brian [Camp] is. We don't know where Damarius is and can be without reps, so we give him a few

"We're just not getting it done. Our pass protection has to improve for us to be a consistent offense."

Chan Gailey
Head Coach

more reps than other guys right now," Gailey said.

The spring practice has been a frustrating one for the offense. Chan Gailey has been especially tough on the offensive line. The unit gave up five sacks in the most recent scrim-

mage Saturday.

Defensive ends Tony Hargrove and Eric Henderson turned in impressive performances and Gailey was able to see firsthand how far ahead the defense is compared to the offense.

"There's no excuses," said Gailey. "We're just not getting it done. When we do get it done, we can complete passes and make some things happen. Our pass protection has to improve for us to be a consistent offense."

Another area of concern for the Jackets this spring is the secondary. Tech graduated three of four starters in this crucial area. The only returning starter is cornerback Jonathan Cox, who started every game last year.

Reuben Houston has the inside track to start opposite Cox at the other corner position. Junior James Butler and Sophomore Dawan Landry are slated to start at the safety positions.

"Landry and Butler are playing pretty well right now," said Gailey.

"Reuben has gotten better this spring, and Jonathan is a very solid player."

With Hollings out, Ajenavi (Ace) Ezimiefe, Micheal Sampson, P.J. Daniels and Jermaine Hatch have

"It's getting easier. With the mental toughness catching up with the physical part of it, it's getting easier."

Damarius Bilbo
Possible starting QB

all been getting reps. Hatch sat out last season after tearing his anterior cruciate ligament in his knee. Sampson, Daniels, and Hatch have all had bright moments this spring. Ace Ezimiefe has been hampered this spring by an injured left ankle.

The kicking duties have primarily been held by Dan Burnett. Red-shirt Freshman David Jordan and Junior Christian Schroeder have also seen action in scrimmages. Tech took a hit when preferred walk-on Kyle Keown decided to accept a scholarship to Vanderbilt. Gailey said holder Hal Higgins appears to be the front-runner for the punting job.

The Yellow Jackets have restructured their coaching staff after the departure of offensive coordinator Bill O'Brien to Maryland.

Gailey hired his former Dallas Cowboys Assistant Coach Buddy Geis to be the passing game coordinator and receivers' coach. Patrick Nix was elevated to running game coordinator and will also coach the quarterbacks. Gailey is expected to call the plays with Geis and Nix involved in developing the offensive game plan.

Tech concludes its spring practice with its spring football game Saturday, April 12, at 11 a.m. at Bobby Dodd Stadium.

TECHNIQUE
www.nique.net

Beesball quiz

Do you know who is the Jacket's leading hitter and has been an All-American for the past three seasons? Check out the answer. **Page 25.**

Pro vs. College

Which is better? Beyond the White and Gold judges the popularity contest between professional and college sports. **Page 24.**



by the numbers

69

Longest pass completion of the 2002 season for Tech's offense. The throw was by second-string quarterback Damarius Bilbo to receiver Kerry Watkins.

6.9

Number of yards per carry averaged by Tony Hollings for the 2002 football season. After nursing last season's knee injury, Hollings plans to be back in the line-up for the Jackets in 2003.

11.41

Amandi Rhett's NCAA Regional qualifying mark in the 100 meters. Rhett recorded qualifying marks in three events at the Yellow Jacket Invitational and was named one of the ACC's Women's Track and Field Performers of the Week.

23

Number of regular season games left this year for the Georgia Tech Yellow Jacket baseball team, including tonight's game against Duke University in Raleigh.

0.139

The opposing players' batting average against Lady Jacket's sophomore pitcher Jessica Salinger. Salinger picked up two conference wins over the weekend. She is 16-10 with a 1.15 earned run average for the season.

on deck

Event	Date
TR at Sea Ray Relays	4/11-12
BSB at Duke	4/11-13
MT at FSU	4/12
WT at UNC	4/12
WT vs. Duke	4/13
SB vs. Miss State	4/14
BSB vs. Ga. Southern	4/15-16
MT at ACC Champs	4/17-20
WT at ACC Champs	4/17-20
SB vs. UNC	4/17
TR - Men's and Women's Track	
WT - Women's Tennis, BSB - Baseball	
MT - Men's Tennis	
SB - Softball	

Knudsen knows her spot in sports



By Daniel Uhlig / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Knudsen finished 2002 with a .374 batting average, 16 homeruns and 51 RBI. She ranks in the top five in seven single season statistics at Tech.

By John Parsons
Senior Staff Writer

Last year's Lady Jackets went into the softball season with very modest expectations for the year. After all, they were coming off a 24-29 season and a 2-6 ACC record.

They eventually settled on a goal of a .550 winning percentage for the 2002 season, but shattered that goal with a program-best 52-18 record for a robust .743 winning percentage.

That success led to high expectations for this season, with the team even garnering a preseason number 19 ranking in the NFCA/USA Today poll. Much of the reason for the high expectations had to do with the breakthrough year enjoyed by shortstop Tara Knudsen.

Knudsen finished 2002 with a .374 batting average, 16 homeruns and 51 RBI. She now ranks in the top five in seven single season statistics at Tech. For her efforts she was named to the All-ACC and All-Southeast Region teams and was a third team All-American. Tarashared in these high expectations.

"I'd like to make the All-ACC team again," she said.

The season didn't start off as ex-

pected though, with the Jackets running up a 13-11 record through their first 24 games. Tara's bat was sorely missed in the lineup. She only managed to go 5-24 with a single homer in the first two weeks of the season.

"We were all disappointed because we knew we weren't playing our best," Tara said. "I was struggling at the beginning of the season, so I sat down with Coach E[arleywine]. I went back and looked at film from last year and worked my way out of it."

Knudsen is also working hard to improve in the field. She has improved a lot there over last two years, bettering her range and fielding ability. Knudsen is not satisfied just yet, though.

"I'd like to improve that more this year too," she said. "I haven't been as agile in the field as I want, so I still need to improve in the field."

With the team playing well again, having gone 16-5 over their last 21 games, the Lady Jackets are looking once again like a team that could win an ACC championship. The softball team also has unfinished business in the NCAA tournament.

Last year, they missed a Wom-

See *Knudsen*, page 24

Football seeks consistency in spring practices

By Clark Nelson
Contributing Writer

Georgia Tech opened its spring football practice March 14 looking to develop consistency and depth, especially at the quarterback position.

The Jackets must also find players to replace four starters on of-

"We expect to have a better idea of where we stand at the position, but I'm not ruling out having an open competition for the starting position in the fall."

Head Coach Chan Gailey
On the QB position



By Daniel Uhlig / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

A.J. Suggs, last year's starter at quarterback, returns for Tech, but the job is up for grabs, as Coach Chan Gailey wants more consistent play from the QB this year. Gailey said the team will focus on getting back to the basics.

of the game, not implementing new offensive and defensive strategies.

"It's going to be basic stuff, so we can find out who can play the game, who can block, who can tackle, who can run, who can catch and who can defend," he said.

Tech was decimated by injuries last season during its seven-win campaign. Injuries to the team's best offensive and defensive players forced the staff to shuffle the lineup on many occasions.

Running Back Tony Hollings and Defensive End Greg Gathers are still recovering from their injuries and will be held out of spring practice. Also missing this spring will be All-ACC performer Nat Dorsey and fellow lineman Leon Robinson. Both are recovering from off-season surgery.

Competing for the inside track on the starting quarterback position will be last year's starter A.J. Suggs, Damarius Bilbo, and fresh-

man Al Pena. Pena graduated high school in January and is enrolled in school this semester. Coach Gailey expects the competition to extend into the fall with two more freshmen arriving in Atlanta.

"When we come out of spring, we expect to have a better idea of where we stand at the position, but I'm not ruling out having an open competition for the starting position."

See *Spring Practice*, page 27