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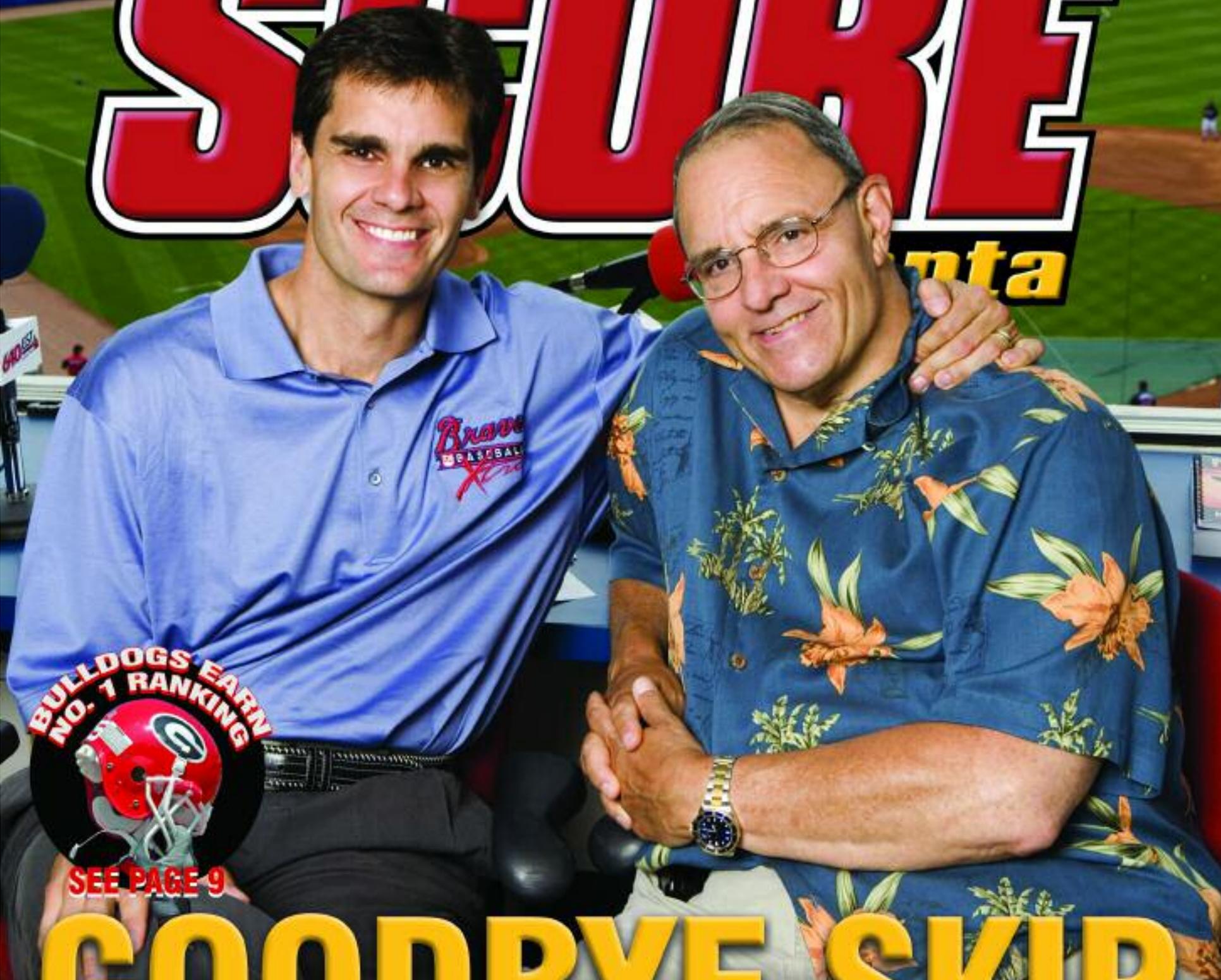


AUGUST 6-12, 2008

ATLANTA'S WEEKLY SPORTS TALK NEWSPAPER

VOL 4 NO 32

# SCORE



**BULLDOGS EARN NO. 1 RANKING**  
**SEE PAGE 9**

# GOODBYE SKIP

## Voice of the Atlanta Braves passes away at 68

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<b>AUGUST 12</b> 7:00 PM	CHICAGO <b>Braves Keychain Giveaway</b> Presented by DHL to the first 45,000 fans	TUESDAY 7:00 PM	<b>AUGUST 13</b> 7:00 PM	CHICAGO <b>Chipper Jones T-shirt Giveaway</b> Presented by Delta to the first 10,000 fans	WEDNESDAY 7:00 PM	<b>AUGUST 14</b> 7:00 PM	CHICAGO <b>NASCAR Night</b> Showcars and NASCAR themed displays	THURSDAY 7:00 PM
<b>AUGUST 15</b> 7:30 PM	SAN FRANCISCO <b>Publix Friday Night Fireworks</b> Spectacular post-game fireworks display	FRIDAY 7:30 PM	<b>AUGUST 16</b> 7:00 PM	SAN FRANCISCO <b>College and Military Discounts</b> 2-for-1 tickets with student or service I.D.	SATURDAY 7:00 PM	<b>AUGUST 17</b> 1:30 PM	SAN FRANCISCO <b>All-Star Sunday</b> Kids get to run the bases after the last out <b>Alumni Meet and Greet</b>	SUNDAY 1:30 PM
						<b>AUGUST 18</b> 4:30 PM	SAN FRANCISCO <b>MasterCard Grand Slam Value Plan</b> 4 tickets, 4 hot dogs, 4 Cokes, parking pass and program starting at \$55	MONDAY 4:30 PM

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**IN YOUR FACE...**



**LAST CALL:** Enjoy this action photo of Braves pitcher Tim Hudson while you can because it will be the last time you see the team's ace in uniform until at least August 2009. The loss for the Braves is paramount not just this year, but for next year as well: in his four seasons with the Braves, Hudson is responsible for 54 wins. Photo courtesy of Paul Abell/Atlanta Braves.

**WHAT'S ON THE INSIDE**

[WWW.SCOREATL.COM](http://WWW.SCOREATL.COM)

**5** In his "Sitting in the Cheap Seats" column, I.J. Rosenberg remembers time spent with longtime Braves broadcaster Skip Caray, who passed away last Sunday.

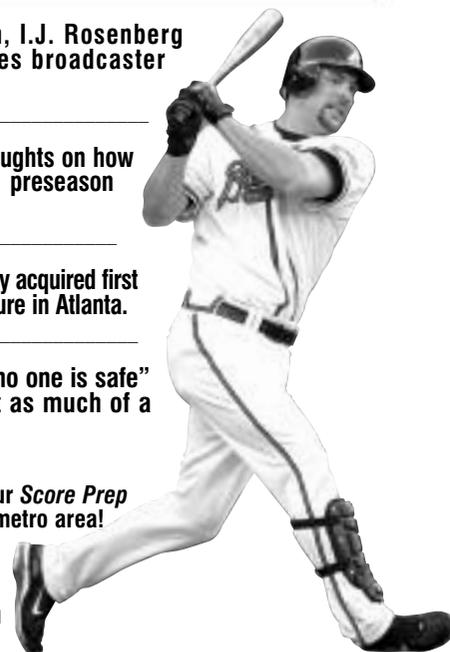
**9** Bulldogs beat writer James Butler offers his thoughts on how Georgia football will stack up after its first No. 1 preseason ranking in school history.

**10** Braves beat writer Fletcher Proctor spoke with newly acquired first baseman Casey Kotchman (pictured) about his future in Atlanta.

**13** Falcons beat writer Erik Horne explains why "no one is safe" as a starter – the younger players have just as much of a shot as some of the veterans.

**A SCORE UPDATE:**

We're only three weeks away from the return of our *Score Prep* editions, covering high-school sports all over the metro area! *Score* is currently looking for intern writers to cover some of the schools in our five editions, as well as graphic design interns to help create layouts. If you are interested, contact Tad Arapoglou at 404-256-1572 or tarapoglou@scoreatl.com.



**TEAM PAGES | COLUMNS**

COVER DESIGN BY DAVID GAUDIO; COVER PHOTO COURTESY OF TURNER SPORTS.

- 6 SCORE LIST-DUE UP** **7 SPIN-C.C.** **8 GOLF**
- 11 DREAM** **12 OLIVER** **15 FALCONS** **16 BRAVES**
- 17 HAWKS-THRASHERS-'BACKS** **18 UGA-TECH-STATE**
- 19 RECRUITING** **20-21 CALENDAR** **22 AD INDEX**

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EMMITT THOMAS — HALL OF FAME



It was a long time coming but certainly worth the wait. By the time Falcons assistant coach Emmitt Thomas had learned that he was selected as a finalist for the 2008 Hall of Fame class, he had been retired as a player for close to 30 years.

"I'm very excited (and) honored," Thomas said when he was named a finalist last summer. "I thought the window of opportunity had closed for me since I had been retired so long."

Thomas played defensive back for the Kansas City Chiefs from 1966-78 and was selected to five Pro Bowls (including the 1968 AFL All-Star Game). In his illustrious career, Thomas picked off 58 passes, the ninth-most in NFL history. He played in Super Bowls I and IV, and even intercepted a pass in Super Bowl IV. The Chiefs will retire his number (18) in a special ceremony in October.

After retiring as a player following the 1978 season, Thomas became an assistant coach for five NFL teams from 1981-2001 before landing with the Falcons in 2002. When Bobby Petrino abruptly left the team in Week 15 of 2007, Thomas was named interim head coach and gained his first victory as a head coach in Week 17, as the Falcons defeated Seattle 44-41.

All in all, Thomas has three Super Bowl rings — one as a player (Kansas City, Super Bowl IV) and two as a coach (Washington, Super Bowl XXII and XXVI).

CONGRATULATIONS TO THOMAS, WHO BECAME THE FIRST FALCONS PLAYER OR COACH TO BE INDUCTED INTO THE HALL OF FAME ON AUG. 2.

SCORE *Babe of the Week*



Next Event! **AUG 29-31**



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

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

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REMEMBER WHEN...



**YOUNG LEFTY:** Former 49ers quarterback Steve Young became a legend after filling the shoes of Joe Montana, leading San Francisco to the Super Bowl XXIX title in 1994. Falcons fans are hoping Matt Ryan can even approach the amount of success Young had after taking over as starter. Photo courtesy of Scott Cunningham.



## Caray brought bliss to Atlanta baseball fans through bad times and good

It was winter 1995, a cold night, when I jumped out of my car at WSB radio and ran through the chill into the building of the biggest AM station in the south. I was nervous. At the time I was the Braves beat writer for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* but this was my radio job, as the host of the station's hot-stove league show. I had done radio for years but this was different; this time I would be hosting a show where my sidekick was Skip Caray.

Yes, me the host, with Skip in the other seat. I had spent several hours that day writing a script for the show, sitting down in the control seat and laying it all out perfectly.

A few minutes later Skip walked in, looked at me and said, "What's all that?"

I said, "Just preparing."

He laughed, in a way putting me at ease and on cue as I opened the show, introduced Skip and off we went, working together for the next three years, including a Braves pre-game segment we did together. It was a fabulous experience with a man I had tremendous respect for, one who became a friend. Someone I will miss very much.

Skip Caray passed away quietly Sunday morning in his sleep at the age of 68. He had been a Braves broadcaster since 1976, but poor health over the last few years had slowed him down considerably and affected his work schedule.

What I loved about Skip the most was that he always told you what was on his mind and never sugarcoated anything. At times his brutal honesty would cause him trouble. But whether they put a several-second delay on the broadcast, which they did a few years ago when the team switched AM stations, he never changed. He was Skip.

And while many will remember him for his great voice ("The wind, the pitch"), the fact that his dad Harry was the voice of the Chicago Cubs, or that his son Chip has been successful in the business, Skip's knowledge of the game alone was incredible. He didn't need many notes; he could remember anything and he wasn't afraid to be critical, though he was also very gracious.

He also got a kick out of saying where a fan was when he caught a foul ball.

"Hey, that foul ball was caught by a guy from Warner Robins."

Of course, Skip had no idea where the fan was from but the bit never got old to neither his partner on the air at the time nor the viewers listening.

Like his father in Chicago, the listeners on radio and viewers on television loved Skip and showed their faith a few years back when Turner tried to take both Skip and Pete Van Wieren off the TV side. The phone calls and letters came pouring into Turner headquarters and the two were back on the tube.

Skip certainly had his rugged side. He was at one time a drinker and on his call-in show on WSB before the game back in the late 1990s he would become very short with

listeners. He was very protective of his father, who some listeners liked to call in and criticize, and Skip would give them a good verbal lashing.

But Skip carried all of us Atlantans through the good and the bad of Braves baseball. He was there in the 1970s and 80s when about the only entertainment we had was Skip, and he was there to call the 14 straight division championships, including my most memorable moment when Sid

Hawks, the old Atlanta Crackers and some network coverage. But in the end, Skip was ours; he was a Braves great and an Atlanta legend that someday deserves a spot next to the other great voices in the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown.

Yes, I'll never forget those few shows when Skip was by my side, though it wasn't long before they moved him into the main seat and we just talked baseball.

All of us, Braves fans, baseball fans and



**MO-MENTUM:** Hawks GM Rick Sund (left) poses with new Hawks forward Maurice "Mo" Evans in a press conference to announce the signing. Atlanta took a huge step by finally ending their playoff drought last season, and Evans will be a key addition to the club as he has reached the postseason on four occasions. Last year, he played for the Orlando Magic as the team reached the Eastern Conference semifinals. Photo courtesy of the Atlanta Hawks.

**SPORTS RADIO 730 WJLA CATCH I.J. ON SUNDAYS**

**'And what many didn't get to see from Skip was the size of his heart. While he could be sarcastic and a curmudgeon, he quietly, without fanfare, did so much for so many and was always there for a friend.'**

Bream slid across home plate scoring the winning run in the seventh game of the league championship against Pittsburgh. Who will forget Skip yelling, "Braves win, Braves win, Braves win!"

It still gives me the chills.

And what many didn't get to see from Skip was the size of his heart. While he could be sarcastic and a curmudgeon, he quietly, without fanfare, did so much for so many and was always there for a friend.

In all, Skip called more than 4,000 Braves game, along with a stint with the

friends, will miss you. Your voice was big, and your heart bigger. And Skip, this foul ball is for you.

### TURNING IT AROUND ...

I spent both Friday and Saturday attending the Falcons scrimmages and was very impressed by the numbers that turned out to watch both. The team worked out Friday night at Mill Creek High School and more than 10,000 crammed in to watch them before 13,000 showed up at the Georgia Dome Saturday afternoon. The key here is that the



**Legendary baseball announcer and beloved member of the Braves family Skip Caray passed away on Sunday at his Atlanta-area home. Caray, who would have celebrated his 69th birthday on August 12, began his Atlanta Braves broadcasting career in 1976. It's safe to say Braves games will certainly never sound the same again. Caray was inducted into the Braves Hall of Fame in 2004. He is survived by his wife Paula, his sons Chip and Josh, daughters Shayelyn and Cindy, and seven grandchildren. The above photo and cover shot are each courtesy of Turner Sports.**

tide is changing for this team; fan support is growing again as we begin to get a good look at a lot of new faces. One player that is going to be a popular guy very quickly is tailback Michael Turner, who I think is the best back we've had here since Jamal Anderson back in that Super Bowl season of 1998. Nothing against Warrick Dunn, but Turner is a prototype NFL back who runs close to the ground with a lot of power. Also, receiver Roddy White is getting better and better, while rookie quarterback Matt Ryan is fitting in quickly and, according to some reports, could see some early playing time. To top it off, the improvements at the Dome make the indoor environment a lot more palatable. The new seats are done in Falcons red and black and the concourses are much improved, as owner Arthur Blank continues to put his money where his mouth is. (Georgia Bulldogs fans are also going to love the new red-and-black design.) All I know is I can smell football in the air and we at *Score* are going to have it all for you, from the high schools to colleges to the Falcons. And don't forget to check out our new Web Site at [ScoreAtl.com](http://ScoreAtl.com).

Rosenberg can be reached at [ijrosenberg@scoreatl.com](mailto:ijrosenberg@scoreatl.com) and 404-256-1572.

# SCORE LIST

BY TAD ARAPOGLOU

- 1 **NUMBER ONE:** The University of Georgia is on top of college football's rankings and their fans are on top of the world. With Larry Munson planning on returning to the booth, here's hoping for more classic calls in the team's hunt for the national title.
- 2 **ALL-SCARRED:** Chipper, Smoltz, Glavine and Huddy ... we've got a freakin' All-Star team on the DL! Now it's Tim Hudson who will be out—until August 2009—due to elbow surgery. Hasn't the injury bug feasted on the Braves enough already?
- 3 **TRADING PLACES:** As strange as it was seeing Mark Teixeira suit up for the Angels, nothing was stranger than seeing Manny Ramirez in Dodger blue. His choosing of No. 99 for his jersey only further proves my theory that he is actually an alien.
- 4 **FOR THE FANS:** Think Falcons fans are excited for the new season? Thousands of fans showed up at Mill Creek High and the newly renovated Georgia Dome to watch the team scrimmage last weekend. Time for some preseason action on Saturday!
- 5 **STARTING OVER:** According to the *AJC's* Todd Holcomb, 95 new high-school football head coaches kicked off their summer practices last week. Ninety-five! That's a turnover rate of 25 percent! Do I even have to tell you that's a record?
- 6 **BEIJING PEACHES:** The 2008 Olympics start this week and many stars with local ties will participate, including Dwight Howard and Angelo Taylor. I predict a total of 98 medals for the USA (and Michael Phelps might win about 60 of them).
- 7 **NEW LOOK:** With all the hype UGA is getting, it's easy to forget that there are plenty of reasons to be excited for Tech's future too – with the biggest being Jonathan Dwyer. Not sure about the new unis, though. Come on, old-gold pants? Yikes.
- 8 **HE'S BA-ACK:** Great news, everyone: Brett Favre has been reinstated! Man, I really missed him in those four months of retirement. Maybe Favre can find a way to play until he's 53 – that way Aaron Rodgers will NEVER get a chance to play.
- 9 **PRICE IS RIGHT:** A 1909 Honus Wagner baseball card sold for \$1.62 million last week, one of the highest prices ever for a card. In other news, I bought a Todd Van Poppel card for \$1.62 last week. I'm hoping it is worth something in a few years.
- 10 **ONE OF THE BEST:** I always loved Skip Caray's subtle sense of humor, my favorite being when he used to say "That's another hit off Bong" when opposing batters hit off former Braves reliever Jung Bong. We'll miss you, Skip.

# DUE UP

HOTTEST THINGS TO SEE AND DO OVER THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS

BY JOSH BAGRIANSKY

- WEDNESDAY 6** **Braves at San Francisco. 640 AM/94.9 The Bull. FSN.**  
Mark Teixeira is gone, Tim Hudson is injured, and the season is slipping away. But even though the postseason doesn't appear to be in the cards, the Braves will want to start building for 2009. Gametime is 3:45 p.m.
- THURSDAY 7** **New Orleans vs. Arizona. ESPN.**  
Finally, football is back for good! Catch a special edition of Monday Night Football as the Saints and Cardinals face off in a preseason matchup. Get an early look at the Saints, a division rival of the Falcons, at 8 p.m.
- FRIDAY 8** **Silverbacks vs. Miami.**  
It's desperate times for the 2007 USL-1 runners-up. The Silverbacks must find their form soon if they want to make a run for another postseason appearance. Cheer them on at Silverbacks Park against Miami FC for a 7:55 p.m. kickoff.
- SATURDAY 9** **Falcons at Jacksonville. 92.9 Dave FM. WATL.**  
The Falcons are back! Watch them for the first time when they face off with the Jaguars in their first preseason game. Sure it's just an exhibition, but this is your first chance to see the new-look Falcons at 7:30 p.m.
- SUNDAY 10** **USA Basketball vs. China. NBC.**  
USA Basketball was embarrassed after not taking home the gold in Athens. Now Coach K's team begins their quest for gold in Beijing with a matchup against Yao Ming and China. Live coverage starts at 10:15 a.m.
- MONDAY 11** **2008 Summer Olympics. NBC.**  
Get geared up for a combination of talent, fire and passion at the Beijing Summer Olympics. With volleyball, women's basketball and soccer all on the docket, live coverage starts at 2 a.m. and continues all day.
- TUESDAY 12** **Braves vs. Chicago Cubs. 640 AM/94.9 The Bull. Peachtree TV.**  
The Chicago Cubs are fighting for the top spot in the NL Central. Now it's time to play spoiler for the Braves when Lou Piniella's team rolls into town. First pitch is scheduled for 7:10 p.m.

## WHO'S HOT

THUMBS UP TO BEING ON TOP



### No. 1 Bulldogs

For the first time ever, a major preseason poll (USA Today/Coaches) has picked Georgia as the No. 1 team in the nation. Mark Richt (pictured) and the Dawgs also earned No. 1 rankings in The Sporting News, Lindy's and Hooters Magazine.

### Emmitt Thomas

The assistant head coach became the first Falcons player or coach to be inducted into the Hall of Fame last Saturday. Thomas has three Super Bowl rings: one as a player (Kansas City, IV) and two as a coach (Washington, XXII and XXVI).

### McCann cleared

After a nasty concussion sidelined Brian McCann for a few days, the All-Star catcher was cleared to play on Friday for pinch-hit or emergency situations. McCann is expected to be fully ready to return this week and said he "feels good hitting."

### Jarboe dismissed

Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops dismissed Joshua Jarboe, an OU recruit and Cedar Grove graduate, after a video featuring Jarboe using profanity and rapping about gun violence hit the internet. Jarboe was arrested on gun charges in February.

### Bad Dawgs

Not all news for UGA's football team was good. Long snapper Jeff Henson, safety Donovan Baldwin and linebacker Darius Dewberry were all suspended last week. All in all, five Bulldogs have been suspended for the season-opener.

### Hudson surgery

Will the injuries ever end? Tim Hudson originally thought his injury was minor and that he wouldn't miss a start. Turns out the Braves ace will need Tommy John surgery, and therefore will not pitch again until at least August of 2009.



## WHO'S NOT

THUMBS DOWN TO A LONG YEAR

## CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

**134** RBIs for Mark Teixeira as an Atlanta Brave (157 games from 2007-08)

**165** RBIs for Casey Kotchman in five seasons with the L.A. Angels (351 games)

**108** Strikeouts for Kotchman in five MLB seasons (Teixeira with Braves: 136)

## SINGH WINS; WIE MISSES

Another week without Tiger Woods on the PGA TOUR, yet another good show on a Sunday. The Phil Mickelson-Vijay Singh-Lee Westwood-Stuart Appleby show-down at the Bridgestone Invitational was one of the best final rounds I have seen in a long time. Vijay did it while looking pretty shaky with the putter. He was upbeat about his putting after the round though. Looks like the belly putter might stay.

Michelle Wie missed another cut on the PGA TOUR. This brings her grand total of cuts made to zero (0-for-8 now). At this point, the blame for this circus has to fall on the PGA TOUR. Obviously, the sponsors are not going to stop inviting an



entertaining side show to their events. And the Wie camp is not going to stop accepting the invitations no matter what it means to the future of young Michelle.

It has to fall to the TOUR to say enough is enough and put some sort of restriction on the sponsor's exemptions, or at least let the policy board or someone else approve the exemptions before they become official. I feel fairly certain that most of the people in charge have seen enough Michelle Wie shooting 80s in TOUR events. Brian Katrek can be heard on 790 The Zone's "On The Green with Brian Katrek" Sundays from 8-9 a.m. and can be reached at [bkatrek@790thezone.com](mailto:bkatrek@790thezone.com).

## SANITY AT LAST

*"I've never had any arm problems. I've never missed a game in professional baseball because of an arm issue. It's definitely unexpected to say the least. It's all new to me."*

- Braves P Tim Hudson

# THE SPIN

## NEWS - NOTES - QUOTES

FROM THE ATLANTA SPORTS BEATS BOTH ON & OFF THE FIELD

### SCORE

## Golfers to compete in Amateur Championship and UFC coming to Philips

### A TRIP TO THE BRONX

Every fan has a sports dream. It could be something as simple as watching your favorite team play their most hated rival or it could also be as extravagant as going to the Super Bowl. Last Friday (my birthday), I was able to realize my lifelong sports dream when I visited Yankee Stadium.

I'd been planning to attend a game there since I was a teenager but never put a timetable on it so there was never a sense of urgency. I thought they'd be playing in THAT stadium forever. However, since we live in a sports world dominated by corporate sponsors and luxury boxes, Yankee Stadium as we know it has just become too old. If I was going to see a game there, I had until September to do so. I decided it would be a birthday present to me and luckily they were playing a good team in the Los Angeles Angels of Beverly Hills Anaheim Orange County California, or whatever it is they call themselves these days.

The game went by rather quickly since no runs were being scored. And to think I was terrified that Sidney Ponson was the scheduled pitcher. He pitched a really good game, matching Ervin Santana pitch for pitch. When the ninth inning started, no one had scored and curiously Joe Girardi brought Mariano Rivera in from the pen. Of course the crowd went nuts because he's the best pitcher on the team. Unfortunately, the cutter wasn't cutting on this night and by the time he was finished, the Angels had a 1-0 lead (and in a game like that, one run seemed like four). Francisco Rodriguez (the last person I wanted to see), who's on pace to save something like a thousand games this season, entered in the bottom of the inning, and the rest is history.

Other than the fact that the Yankees lost and I spent, like, \$150 on memorabilia, I truly enjoyed the experience. If you have the opportunity to realize your sports dream, you should definitely take it.

C.C. can be reached at [cfelicec@yahoo.com](mailto:cfelicec@yahoo.com).



HO HO HO: Brian McCann (left) and Jeff Francoeur each played the role of Santa Claus last Wednesday as part of the Atlanta Braves' Christmas in July charity event. Braves players, coaches, broadcasters and their wives visited Atlanta-area children's hospitals to give out toys and visit with patients. Photo courtesy of the Atlanta Braves.

### CHECK THIS OUT!

Everyone has noticed the recent explosion in popularity in ultimate fighting, and it's time to check out the action for yourself. UFC visits Philips Arena on Sept. 6 for "UFC 88: Breakthrough," and the action will be live on pay-per-view! "Breakthrough" features the return of the one and only Chuck "The Iceman" Liddell as he fights undefeated "Sugar" Rashard Evans. But that isn't all to watch for at Breakthrough – the card is stacked with much more as UFC stars Rich Franklin, Dan Henderson and Karo Parisyan are all slated to be in action against top-notch opponents that should give them a run for their money. Seats are going fast for this one, so jump on your tickets right now! They start at just \$79. Visit [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com) or call the Philips Arena box office at 404-878-3000. For more information on the fights, visit [UFC.com](http://UFC.com)

## HERE'S THE SCOOP ...

Compiled by Scott Janovitz

Last week, three golfers emerged from LTPC Sugarloaf as winners, all advancing in the Nature Valley Amateur regional tournament. Now, John Dalton (Gillsville, Ga.), Luther Beck (Flowery Branch, Ga.) and Alex Caylor (Dallas, Ga.) will each get the opportunity to compete in the Nature Valley Amateur Championship to be held at TPC Sawgrass on Oct. 25. The regional tournament held at TPC Sugarloaf was one of 20 similar regional tournaments held nationwide. Dalton finished the course with a score of 76 (competing in the tournament's most challenging flight), while Beck posted a 3-under 69 and Caylor a 78.

I know most don't need me to tell them, but this Friday marks the opening ceremonies for the 2008 Beijing Olympics. The memorable event will be held in Beijing's National Stadium, or the "Bird's Nest," which was built for the Olympics and completed in March of 2008. The Bird's Nest will host the closing ceremonies as well, and the athletics and soccer finals. For opening and closing ceremonies, the world-renowned structure is set to hold more than 91,000 people.

#### SIAC HONORS ...

Last week, the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC) announced its preseason All-Conference

team for the upcoming 2008 football season. In exciting news, the local 'Cats from Fort Valley State placed four players on the All-Conference team. Running back Pierre Brown was the team's lone member to make the first team after leading the league last year in rushing with 874 yards and an average of 5.8 yards per carry. Defensive back Eddie Young, defensive end Reggie Brown, and kicker Jake Grubbs all made Second-Team All-Conference. Last week, the coaches from the conference also predicted how each team would finish the upcoming season and the Wildcats were chosen to finish third in the conference. Tuskegee was picked to finish first and was followed by Albany State. The Fort Valley season kicks off on Aug. 23 with the team traveling to Valdosta to take on the Blazers in their 2008 debut.

Last year's Little League World Series Champions from Warner Robins are back at it again, beginning their attempt at a repeat late last week. The team's Little League All-Stars took part in the Southeast Regional Tournament on Saturday and beat the team from Tennessee by a score of 7-3. Despite returning only two starters from last year's championship run, the team remains confident in their chances for '08. With Saturday's victory, Warner Robins is just two games away from returning to

Williamsport, Penn. The little-league squad took on a team from St. Petersburg, Fla., on Monday, but results were not available at press time.

#### HOOPS NOTES ...

After an unsuccessful 15-game NBA debut with the Golden State Warriors during the 2005-06 season, former Georgia Tech standout Will Bynum then moved his game to Israel to play for Maccabi Tel Aviv. Last week, however, Bynum was given a second chance at life in the NBA, as the 25-year-old signed a deal with the Detroit Pistons. The 6-foot, 185-pound guard averaged 10.6 points per game to go along with three assists last season in the Israeli League. Most recently, Bynum showed off his skills with Detroit in the 2008 NBA Las Vegas Summer League. During that span, Bynum averaged 11.8 points, two rebounds, and 3.2 assists per game. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

If you enjoy getting high (no, get your mind out of the gutter) in front of a large audience, then boy do the Hawks have good news for you. That's because on Aug. 23, all those interested will get the lucky chance to tryout for the 2008-09 Sky Squad. Auditions will be held at Philips Arena and you must be at least 16 years of age to tryout. For more information, go to [AtlantaHawks.com](http://AtlantaHawks.com).



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# ON THE GREEN



## COURTNEY CAPPS

### Final major of the year at Oakland Hills

Just in time for the final major of 2008, it looks like a number of golf's remaining stars are remembering how to make their way to the top of the leaderboard. If last week's WGC-Bridgestone Invitational is any indication, this week's PGA Championship could be quite a ride.

Over the past weeks, since Tiger Woods stepped out of the scene for his knee surgery, names like Harrington, Mickelson, Appleby, Goosen and Singh have been rediscovering some of their former confidence that was beaten up by Tiger's dominance. Now they have another chance to prepare for 2009 when Woods returns to take another shot at the world's No. 1.

The hottest male golfer on the planet, Kenny Perry, will also be on hand to challenge for the Wanamaker Trophy. This will be his first start in a major this year as he skipped the U.S. and British Opens, and did not have an invitation to The Masters. We have also watched young talents like Anthony Kim, Chez Reavie and now Parker McLachlin rise up and capture their first PGA Tour wins this year, bringing new blood into the chase for Tiger's crown.

This week, the PGA Championship moves to a suburb of Detroit, Mich., and the Oakland Hills Country Club. Oakland Hills is one of the great American courses. Dubbed by Ben Hogan as "a monster" in 1951, the course has hosted 13 major events. Like many classic courses, Oakland Hills has had to be reworked to accommodate today's players and technology.

The course is nearly a quarter-mile longer than it played in 1951, but even at

7,439 yards and a par of 70, today's players will have a fair chance of shooting good scores – and an equally good chance of bad scores. Rees Jones adjusted length and bunker positions to the modern length off the tees. Fairway bunkers will be 300 to 310-yard carries, making driving accuracy a must if players want to be able to hit shorter irons into the undulating greens.

Par-3 holes this week will average 222 yards long. The ninth hole is the longest and can play up to 256 yards. The shortest will play in the 196-yard range.

#### WHAT TO EXPECT ...

The winner this year will most likely be one of longer players in the field. Phil Mickelson is always a threat, but he will undoubtedly have to dig himself out of trouble a few times. If he can avoid the water and his Sunday cowboy act, he could add his fourth major to his belt.

Vijay Singh will have to figure out his putter. He will not be able to miss as many short putts as he did last week in Akron and win. Kenny Perry has slowed down a little from his hot streak, but he has the game and definitely has the motivation from all the criticism he took for missing the U.S. and British Opens. Watch out for Robert Karlsson, too. He has had top 10's in all three previous majors this year.

Coverage this week will be on TNT (Thursday and Friday, 1-7 p.m.) and CBS (Saturday and Sunday, 2-6 p.m.). XM 146 will be broadcasting at noon all four days.

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# ON THESE DAYS IN ATLANTA SPORTS



## AUGUST 6-12

Compiled by Erik Horne

**2007** – Amidst allegations of steroid use, slugger Barry Bonds broke the all-time home run record on Aug. 7. Bonds sent a fifth-inning delivery into the stands from the Washington Nationals' Mike Baesik for his 756th career home run, passing Braves legend Hank Aaron. After expressing no interest in witnessing the feat, Aaron was not in attendance in San Francisco but acknowledged Bonds via a video message.



**NEW KING\*:** Love him or hate him, Barry Bonds is a part of baseball history, as he passed Hank Aaron's career record of 755 home runs one year ago.

Photo courtesy of Scott Cunningham.

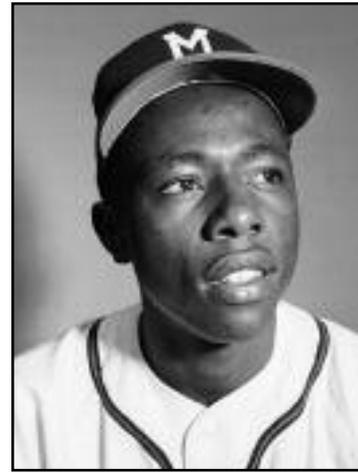
Woody Williams, stepped on second and then tagged the runner between first and second. The turn by Furcal was the first of its kind since 2000.

**1998** – On Aug. 9, Braves pitcher Dennis Martinez beat the San Francisco Giants 7-5 to pass Juan Marichal for the most wins by a Latin American pitcher in MLB history. The win gave the 43-year-old his 244th career victory after tossing only one inning of relief work, as a Chipper Jones two-run single in the ninth inning provided "El Presidente" with the milestone mark.

**1983** – Dale Murphy continued his domination of the San Francisco

Giants in a 6-4 Braves win on Aug. 11. Murphy smashed two home runs and finished with five RBIs to lead the Braves to their fifth win in their last seven games against their NL West division rivals. Murphy would finish the season with 11 homers against the Giants, nearly one third of his entire home-run total (36) for the year.

**1958** – A two-run homer from Hall-of-Famer Hank Aaron was enough to keep the Pittsburgh Pirates at bay in a 2-1 Braves win on Aug. 6. The real boost, however, came from 27-year-old rookie Carl Willey, who pitched a complete-game three-hitter, struck out feared Pirates slugger Frank Thomas twice and held



**OLD KING:** ... And long before Bonds broke his record, Aaron blasted one of his 755 career homers against the Pittsburgh Pirates in August of 1958.

Photo courtesy of the Atlanta Braves.

future legends Roberto Clemente and Bill Mazeroski to a combined 0-for-6 day.

**1938** – On Aug. 10, the Boston Bees/Braves completed their largest deal of the season, acquiring All-Star shortstop Eddie Miller from the New York Yankees for catcher Johnny Riddle, third baseman Gil English, players to be named later and cash. Those "players to be named later" would become a massive haul for the Yankees, as the Bees/Braves would concede three more players (Bobby Reis, Johnny Babich and Vince DiMaggio) to complete the six-man deal.

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## Coaches' poll tabs Georgia as nation's top team despite media skepticism

History was made last week when the HUSA Today/Coaches' Poll tabbed the Georgia Bulldogs football team as its preseason No. 1 team, marking the first time in school history that the program had received such an honor. The ranking may only be a ranking, but as of right now the Bulldogs have the top spot in one of only two polls that are a part of the BCS formula. The Harris Poll is the other human component involved in the BCS rankings, so no matter whom the Associated Press tabs as its No. 1 team, Georgia is the proverbial lead dog. Georgia fans had hoped this would be the case since the end of last season, but just a short time ago that seemed unlikely, as the media picked Georgia to finish No. 2 in the SEC East behind Florida at the SEC Media Days. Head coach Mark Richt, using the media's SEC predictions as proof, even stated that he told others his Bulldogs would not be No. 1.

ESPN's Lee Corso, when commenting on the top of the SEC before the coaches' poll came out said, "Georgia [and] Florida, you can't speak [on] one without the other."

So why are the coaches in the coaches' poll so convinced that the Bulldogs are the top team in the country when the media is questioning whether or not Georgia will even win its own division, let alone conference?

Well for one, their chief competitor in the SEC East, Florida, is a talented football team that brings back the best player in the country in Heisman Trophy-winner Tim Tebow. The Gators are ranked fifth in the coaches' poll. Another reason why there seems to be a considerable difference of opinion between those inside of the universities and the media is that the media picked according to what they thought would happen, with Georgia's arduous schedule likely scaring many off, while the coaches made their picks based upon what they see now. Apparently they feel the talent and cohesiveness that the Bulldogs offer is enough for them to start the season as the No. 1 team in America.

### ON TOP ...

The fact that some feel the Bulldogs are deserving of being ranked No. 1 in the country should not come as a surprise considering the way that Georgia ended last season. The Bulldogs closed out the 2007 campaign as hot as any team in the country, winning their last seven games of the season by an average of 15 points per game. That streak included a 42-30 victory over Florida, a 45-20 thrashing of Auburn and the 41-10 dismantling of Hawaii in the Sugar Bowl. The potency of the offense—and the team, for that matter—could be attributed to the insertion of running

back Knowshon Moreno (pictured) into the starting lineup. Moreno replaced injured backs Thomas Brown and Gregg Lumpkin and never looked back on his way to rushing for 1,334 yards as a freshman. The Bulldogs were a perfect 6-0 in games that Moreno started, meaning Georgia fans should rest easy knowing he is the clear-cut starter this season.

The schedule, however, is shaping up to be as tough as the masses are predicting it to be. Along with the fifth-ranked Gators, Georgia plays sixth-ranked LSU and 11th-ranked Auburn; the Bulldogs play both of those teams on the road. Georgia also travels to No. 16 Arizona State, while Eastern Division rival and No. 18-ranked Tennessee comes to Athens. Alabama and South Carolina got the highest number of votes of teams that are outside the Top 25. South Carolina beat Georgia last year and also has Corso's blessing.

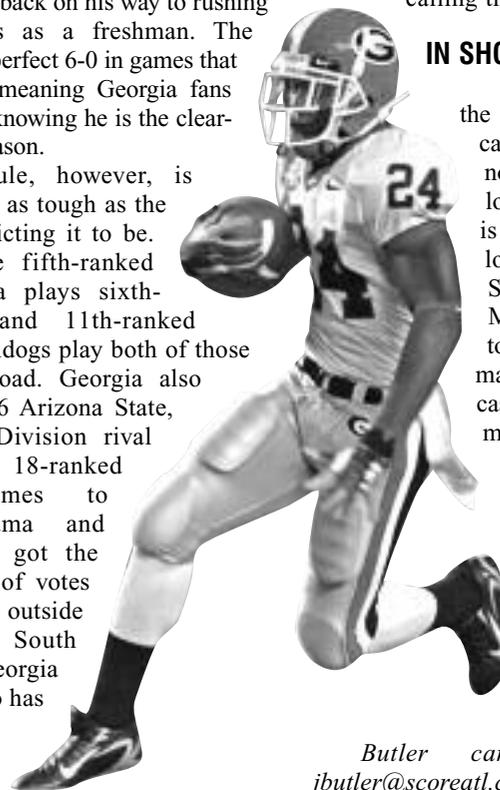
"They've got 16 guys

coming back," he said. "They could be a surprise team in the country. The only thing I question is if Spurrier gives up calling the plays."

### IN SHORT ...

Since Georgia is starting the season ranked No. 1, one can assume that they should not fall terribly far if they lose a game. This of course is barring any unforeseen losses, i.e. Georgia Southern and Central Michigan. The perceived toughness of their schedule makes this even more the case, as there are not too many who see the Bulldogs finishing undefeated. If a loss comes to the "right team" and no two BCS conference teams go undefeated, Georgia can still benefit by being the perceived top team in the country and find themselves playing for a BCS Title.

Butler can be reached at [jbutler@scoreatl.com](mailto:jbutler@scoreatl.com).



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## First baseman Kotchman brings steady glove, consistent hitting to Atlanta

In 1987, the Atlanta Braves sent veteran pitcher Doyle Alexander to Detroit in exchange for some 20-year-old pitcher that would eventually go on to ring up 210 victories, 154 saves and 3,011 strikeouts for the Braves over the next 21 seasons. At the time, the trade seemed to favor the Tigers, but looking back we can say perhaps the Braves got the better end thanks to John Smoltz's brilliant career.

Now, can lightning struck twice in Atlanta?

Last week, the Braves sent Mark Teixeira to the Los Angeles Angels in exchange for 25-year-old Casey Kotchman along with Double-A pitcher Stephen Marek. When Teixeira was dealt, several Braves went on record saying it was like "losing a brother," but the team has seemed to welcome its newest first baseman.

"It's been a warm welcome, honestly, and I'm looking forward to contributing," said Kotchman of how he is fitting in.

Though he had been starting for a team destined for the playoffs with a good chance of taking home its second World Series title this decade, Kotchman now bats third for a team whose playoff chances are slim.

"I try to see the positive in any situation and to try and do anything other than that is not good," he said. "To leave my teammates [in L.A.], we were all real close, but you come here and you meet new ones and you look forward to the future."

### FILLING IN ...

Kotchman was leading the Angels with 107 hits at the time of the trade and his 12 home runs this season were a career high. He also had 54 RBIs for the Angels, and the Braves might remember two of those in the form of a two-run home run against Atlanta earlier this season. Kotchman will also bring a vacuum-like glove to the right side of the infield and possibly even be an improvement over Teixeira's fine defense. For his career, the Braves' new first baseman has a .997 fielding percentage and has just five errors in the past 300 games at the position.

It would be unfair to ask Casey Kotchman to replace Mark Teixeira on the Braves roster, however. True, they both play first base, but while Tex was a constant threat to go deep, Kotchman is more of an on-base guy with a higher average and a better glove on defense. Though Kotchman is a lefty at the plate (as opposed to the switch-hitting Teixeira), he hits for a higher average against lefty pitchers and he can crush the ball off right-handers as well. And the front office and Bobby Cox don't expect the power numbers of Teixeira from Kotchman; they just expect him to be Casey. Said Kotchman of his role with Atlanta, "I think it's the same as with any team. You're showing up and you're ready to play and you're trying to win."

When Kotchman heard of the trade he was in Boston, so a cross-country flight wasn't necessary and he was excited to be playing close to where he grew up. Kotchman is originally from Florida and says that he watched Braves games on TV as a kid. He has played with the Angels organization ever since he was drafted No. 13 overall in 2001, but the move to Atlanta has him excited, no matter the expectations.

"I just try to get the most out of the present time and have no regrets in the future and just try to make the most out of each day," he said.

### THE NEAR FUTURE ...

Kotchman is under contract through 2011, and with his affordable salary the team might begin to rebuild and reload as early as this offseason, with Kotchman as a central building block for the franchise. At only 25 years of age, he certainly could have a long run in Atlanta and Frank Wren was excited to acquire him.

"He's going to be a key piece for our club as we move forward," Wren said recently, and you get the feeling that Kotchman's no-nonsense approach will immediately help this club. Kotchman seems focused at all times and took extra fielding and batting practice last week, as he hopes to bring a winning mentality from Anaheim to Atlanta.

"I have heard it is a great city, a great town with great fans and everything," he said. "I just look forward to getting settled in."

Proctor can be reached at [fproctor@scoreatl.com](mailto:fproctor@scoreatl.com).



**WHO'S ON FIRST:** Though the Braves lost a big bat in Mark Teixeira, keep in mind that new first baseman Casey Kotchman has an identical batting average of .281 this season (at press time). Kotchman is also a comparable defensive player to Teixeira. Photo courtesy of Paul Abell/Atlanta Braves.

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## Reflecting on highs and lows of Dream's inaugural season at the break

It's been a very difficult season for the first-year Atlanta Dream. Heading into the Olympic Break, their record sits at 3-24, the worst in the league. Fans must now wait until late August before the Dream take the floor again. In the meantime, here's a look back at the season so far.

### LOW POINT ...

The 0-17 start says it all. The disastrous opening to 2008 went down as the worst start in WNBA history. The final loss of the streak came in a frustrating 72-65 loss to the Houston Comets, who looked vulnerable heading into the game without Tina Thompson. A dreadful six-point first quarter set the tone, and a fourth-quarter comeback

fell short. The Dream notched just 11 assists and turned the ball over 18 times. They also shot 30.6 percent from the field.

The 17th defeat was a culmination of a frustrating month and a half for Atlanta. They looked to be in line for a victory several times, but the young team continuously let opportunities slip away. They blew a 13-point halftime lead against the Detroit Shock in their home opener to lose 88-76, and in their next home game they led 72-65 over Minnesota with 3:33 to play before losing 81-77. They also suffered an overtime defeat in Connecticut on June 27.

Atlanta lost games in almost every way imaginable. They were out-rebounded routinely and ranked at the bottom of the league

in most offensive and defensive categories. Clearly, this is a stretch of play that everyone involved wants to forget.

### HIGH POINT ...

Though the 2008 season will forever be remembered for the aforementioned start, the Dream managed to get the monkey off their backs with a fantastic performance at home on July 5 against the Chicago Sky.

With a balanced scoring attack that featured six different players scoring in double figures, the Dream showed the Sky their best performance of the season. Chicago refused to make it easy, leading the game by two heading into the final quarter, but Atlanta left no doubt in the fourth, outscoring their opponents 27-18 en route to a 91-84 victory, the

first in Atlanta Dream history. Jennifer Lacy and Ivory Latta paced Atlanta with 18 points apiece, while second-string point guard Kristin Haynie broke out by dishing out 11 assists.

The team and crowd rejoiced wildly as they finally enjoyed a win. It was more of the same in the locker room, as the team breathed a collective sigh of relief and celebrated a victory that was a long time coming.

"It's an amazing feeling," Haynie said. "It's a new season and we are 1-0 now."

The Dream followed up the performance with another win on the road in Minnesota. They defeated the Lynx 73-67 thanks to a furious second-half comeback.

Bagriansky can be reached at [jbagriansky@scoreatl.com](mailto:jbagriansky@scoreatl.com).

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## Bulldogs need consistency from receiving corps for shot at national title

The Georgia Bulldogs at No. 1? According to the preseason coaches' poll that was released last week, the answer is, "Yes." And while the interior of the offensive line, how the Dogs will generate a pass rush and replacing kicker Brandon Coutu (who you simply can't replace) are the main concerns for most of the Red-and-Black nation, all of those situations are manageable.

Specifically, I believe freshman Ben Jones will be the starting center at some point this season, meaning Chris Davis can shift back to his starting spot at left guard. As for the pass rush, the loss of Marcus Howard ain't easy to deal with, but remember that most of his production came in just a few games at the end of the season. The surprise answer here is that I expect Georgia's pass rush to come from the inside of the defensive line. Roderick Battle and perhaps even Jarius Wynn should be nice pieces on the outside,

but Jeff Owens and Geno Atkins have the ability to collapse the pocket from their d-tackle spots and that changes all the Xs and Os for opposing coaches. Replacing Coutu? Umm ... OK, I don't actually have an answer for that one. He was filled to the brim with ice water. But the REAL unit on the team that will determine the ultimate success or failure of the 2008 Dogs is none of the areas we've covered. For Mark Richt to hold up the crystal football in January, UGA must find some answers at receiver.

### CATCHING UP ...

Mohamed Massaquoi is a senior. One of my biggest red flags for a player is if he had some great moments as a freshman and made you believe he could really emerge and then ... he never got better. Unfortunately for UGA fans, that's the case with Massaquoi. The reality is he's the most experienced

receiver on the team and has great wheels, but has never consistently produced. Too many drops, too many games where he disappears.

So is 2008 the year for Kenneth Harris, another senior, to become a star? In fairness to Harris (and Massaquoi), this offense isn't built for someone to catch 80 balls, but last year he had ... four. Total. For the entire season. At 6-foot-3 and 215 pounds, Harris brings a different dimension to the split end position. While I think he's got some game-changing moments in him for this season, he'll be joined at SE by Kris Durham, another big target who checks in at 6-5 and nearly 200 pounds. My opinion: Durham has the best hands on the team and it's not even close. In the variety of three-wide sets Georgia will run, Durham will line up in the slot and have the opportunity to either catch a lot of balls or, at the very least, occupy the safety to make life easier on the outside for Massaquoi and Harris.

Michael Moore is suddenly a junior and has been just as underwhelming as Harris. He, perhaps along with Harris and Durham, could be passed on the depth chart by 6-foot-4 true freshman A.J. Green, who provides Matt Stafford with another large option on the outside. Fellow 18-year-old Tavarres King could also get in the mix, but unless he's a noticeable upgrade over a few of the upperclassmen, the staff won't burn his redshirt.

The bottom line is that Massaquoi needs to play like a three-year starter and he needs either Durham to get faster or Harris to focus as much on Saturdays in the fall as he does during summer workouts. This team can absolutely win the national title. And the receivers are key among the unknowns.

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

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*Jamal Lewis*



## Smith turns inexperience and injuries into training-camp position battles

No one is safe. No position or player. As opposed to previous versions of Falcons training camp, 2008 has been a stark contrast. Old timers and rookies stand side-by-side in scrimmages, interchanging first- and second-team duties and seasoned veterans are 24 as opposed to 34. Players are competing for their playing futures in daily competition, and head coach Mike Smith would not have it any other way.

"The dynamics of a football team change every day because you have so many factors," Smith said. "You have injuries, guys playing better, guys stepping up and doing unexpected things. When things do change, everybody in this organization is expecting the next guy up to be prepared to play."

### THE YOUNG GUARD ...

The most obvious dynamic that has changed with the Falcons is age. Inexperience is rampant throughout a Falcons lineup that averages 24.8 years of age, down from 26.7 in 2007. Despite the youth movement, do not forget that in addition to the 17 rookies in camp, there are the free-agent additions of running back Michael Turner and free safety Erik Coleman. Both are only 26 but are five-year vets who were immediately plugged into the first team. Rookies are not the only first-year Falcons taking advantage of Smith's policy.

"We've said from Day 1 it's going to be open competition, [it] doesn't matter who you are, we're going to play the best 53 players," Smith said. "Two years after the Super Bowl win in Baltimore, we came to camp with 13 players from that team. I've been in

a situation where young guys have an opportunity to compete. They should be excited about this opportunity and should feel good about what they can do."

Smith has stayed close to the vest with who has the edge for starting spots, especially with rookies, but the future looks promising for players such as Harry Douglas and Curtis Lofton. While the world waits for Matt Ryan to get under center, all three of the players drafted immediately behind him may have better chances of seeing first-team snaps than the quarterback.

"Harry has caught the ball extremely well," Smith said after the team's scrimmage on Saturday. "He had a couple of really nice grabs going over the middle. I think Curtis Lofton has really shown some improvement once we put the pads on. [Curtis], as a middle linebacker, is a guy that looks a lot better in pads than he does in a t-shirt and helmet."

While the offense has remained healthy, save for offensive tackle Todd Weiner, Smith and defensive coordinator Brian VanGorder have had to play the parts of mad scientists on defense. Injuries and defensive deficiencies have forced the two into several defensive combinations, from plugging in free-agent defensive tackle Grady Jackson into the starting lineup to placing rookie third-rounder Chevis Jackson in the nickel back spot due to the season-ending loss of veteran Von Hutchins.

"[Chevis Jackson] has been working in our first group as the nickel since Von [Hutchins] has gone down," Smith said. "It's going to be a big learning curve for

[Jackson], but we have to accelerate that as much as we can."

Hutchins was brought in to be another experienced body in the secondary, but his first-day fallout has pushed yet another inexperienced player into the spotlight.

### ON THEIR TOES ...

At the team's scrimmage on Saturday at the Georgia Dome, first-team defenders matched up against their first-team counterparts, and there was no distinction in the teams or units.

"I told the players beforehand 'Don't read anything into this depth chart for this game,'" Smith said. "We want everyone to have definable roles on this football team. They have to understand those roles, but at the same time they have to understand that those roles are always changing."

Role changing comes without surprise to vets such as quarterback Joey Harrington, but the seven-year pro has no problem with the open competition. He even says it has improved the

quality of play in camp compared to last season. "Everybody's going to make physical mistakes in camp and it's their job to learn from them," Harrington said. "What you can always control is your effort. I think coach [Smith] has harped on that, which is good."

Smith's feet-to-the-fire policy with his young players and open competition is yet another sign that even as a preseason matchup against his former team in the Jacksonville Jaguars looms on Saturday, the Falcons still are a work in progress.

Horne can be reached at [ehorne@scoreatl.com](mailto:ehorne@scoreatl.com).



**WHO'S IN?:** Falcons head coach Mike Smith has made it abundantly clear that this team is "going to play the best 53 players." With many young players displaying talent during training camp, the veterans are finding themselves having to compete for a starting spot. Photo courtesy of Jimmy Cribb/Atlanta Falcons.

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10/06	Chris Hatcher	Ga Southern
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# NEWS FROM THE FALCONS




**ERIK HORNE**

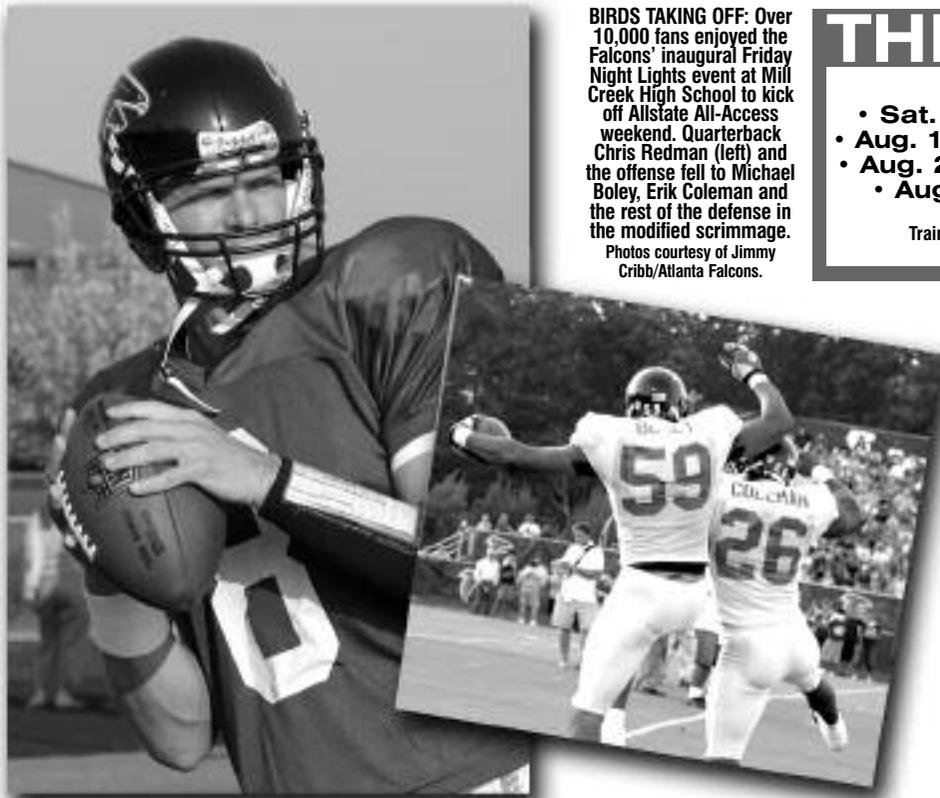
## Falcons treat fans at All-Access Weekend and Thomas inducted into Hall

### OFF THE FIELD

On Saturday, longtime Kansas City Chiefs defensive back and current Falcons assistant head coach Emmitt Thomas was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. "Emmitt is a great person and an even better football coach. Personally, we're excited for him," said head coach Mike Smith. "Going into the Hall of Fame is an honor and we are glad to have him here."

It was last season that Thomas became the first African American head coach in Falcons history. Prior to a coaching career that spanned two decades, the 6-foot-2, 192-pounder amassed 58 interceptions (fourth all-time) in his combined 13 seasons of AFL and NFL play, and he led the NFL in picks in 1966 and 1974. Thomas was also a two-time Super Bowl participant, losing to the Green Bay Packers in Super Bowl I in 1967 and winning the big game in a 23-7 victory over the Minnesota Vikings in 1970. Thomas is one of 13 undrafted free agents to be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

The Falcons are teaming up with the American Red Cross for the second consecutive year to promote blood donations until Aug. 17. Fans who donate blood at select locations ([www.atlantafalcons.com](http://www.atlantafalcons.com)) will be eligible to win a signed Falcons helmet from head coach Mike Smith or two tickets to a Falcons preseason game.



**BIRDS TAKING OFF:** Over 10,000 fans enjoyed the Falcons' inaugural Friday Night Lights event at Mill Creek High School to kick off Allstate All-Access weekend. Quarterback Chris Redman (left) and the offense fell to Michael Boley, Erik Coleman and the rest of the defense in the modified scrimmage. Photos courtesy of Jimmy Cribb/Atlanta Falcons.

### THE SCHEDULE

**Preseason**

- Sat. at Jacksonville, 7:30 p.m. WATL.
- Aug. 16 vs. Indianapolis, 7:30 p.m. WATL.
- Aug. 22 vs. Tennessee, 7:30 p.m. WATL.
- Aug. 28 at Baltimore, 7 p.m. WATL.

Training camp at Flowery Branch will continue until Aug. 15. Log onto [www.atlantafalcons.com](http://www.atlantafalcons.com) for details.

### PLAYER TO WATCH

The fourth-year receiver has come full circle in his tumultuous tenure with the Falcons. White has caught everything in sight in training camp, and has shown the leadership and athletic ability worthy of a No. 1 receiver.



**RODDY WHITE WR**

### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*"Through faith, hard work and willingness to help someone else, all people have a chance to rise from the hardest circumstances and become a Hall of Famer, just like this old, undrafted, free-agent country boy from Angleton, Texas."*

- Falcons assistant head coach Emmitt Thomas

### THE TWO-MINUTE WARNING ...

After more than 10,000 fans showed up at Mill Creek High School for the team's "Friday Night Lights" event (in which the defense defeated the offense in a scrimmage), a revamped Georgia Dome was host to the finale of the Falcons All-Access Weekend on Saturday, as the team played a mock game to close out Week 1 of training camp. Two members of the defense were held out of the scrimmage. Linebacker Ike Brown (hamstring) and free-agent cornerback Glenn Sharpe were relegated to the bench. Luckily for Sharpe, his injury was from what coach Smith referred to as "getting his bell rung," as opposed to any damage on his surgically repaired knee, which he injured during his days at the University of Miami. ... During the scrimmage, defensive tackle Rashad Moore limped off with an undisclosed injury. Otherwise, the scrimmage was safe and a good chance for the team to get in the Georgia Dome for the first time since renovations.

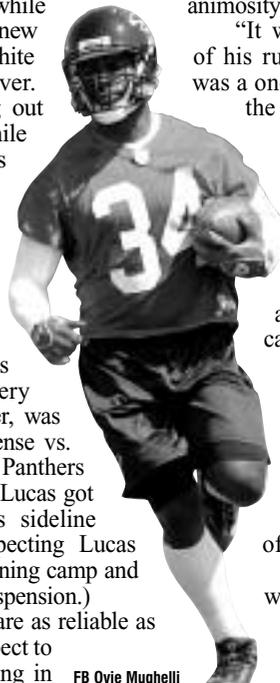
Rookies and veterans shared the spotlight in the scrimmage, with the possible highlight coming from an Antoine Harris interception in the second quarter. Harris, a second-year cornerback out of Louisville, picked off a Matt Ryan pass and nearly took it the distance of the field for a touchdown

until speedster Jerious Norwood laid hands on him inside the 10. ... Brian Finneran got back into the scoring habit with a touchdown grab of his own, while rookie Harry Douglas and new No. 1 pass catcher Roddy White were excellent at receiver. Douglas plucked everything out of the air over the middle while White had several long gains after the catch.

#### BOYS WILL BE BOYS ...

Earlier in the week, Douglas and veteran safety Lawyer Milloy were involved in a quarrel after a Douglas touchdown catch at Flowery Branch. That scuffle, however, was nothing compared to the offense vs. defense fisticuffs Carolina Panthers players Steve Smith and Ken Lucas got into last Thursday. (Smith's sideline sucker punch on an unsuspecting Lucas earned him a ticket out of training camp and a two-game regular-season suspension.)

Fights in training camp are as reliable as Swiss clockwork: you can expect to see clips of teammates tussling in



the heat of two-a-days every July and August. Douglas and Milloy, however, understand the team dynamic and have squashed whatever animosity there was between them.

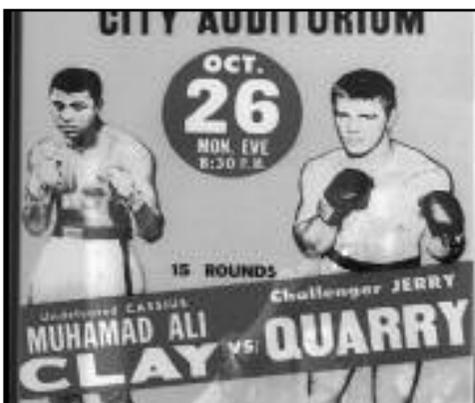
"It was never personal," Douglas said of his run-in with the 13-year veteran. "It was a one-time thing that never carried into the locker room."

Milloy, who took offense to Douglas handing him the ball after a deep catch and score over the middle, agreed with the rookie's sentiments. The safety openly admitted that he has lost a step in the secondary, but knows that one argument in training camp shouldn't carry over with increasing animosity, as the Smith-Lucas situation did.

"Some people may want to snap that day, but in order for the team to be successful, you can't create enemies in camp," Milloy said. "You're always going to have tempers flare, but at the end of the day it's football."

"Afterwards, [Milloy] told me it was a great catch," Douglas stated. "I have 100-percent respect for guys that have been in the league as long as Lawyer has."

FB Ovie Mughelli



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# ON THE BRAVES BEAT



**FLETCHER PROCTOR**

## Broadcaster Caray passes, Teixeira traded and Hudson requires surgery

### OFF THE FIELD

John Smoltz held his annual "Strike Out Hunger" food drive this past Saturday at Turner Field. Fans that donated canned items received autographs and the event was a success. The food benefited the Atlanta Community Food Bank. The next day those fans arriving early got to see current Braves taking on their offspring in a classic game of wiffle ball.

There must be something in the water in Mississippi, home of the Braves AA affiliate. Deute Heath retired the first twenty-one batters he faced this past week, allowing only a single in the eighth inning to improve to 3-4 on the season. Heath nearly threw a seven-inning no-hitter in Myrtle Beach on May 13. Two other pitchers in the Braves farm system have tossed no-hitters this season.

With the recent rash of injuries, the Braves dodged a bullet when Brian McCann was able to avoid the DL following his scary home-plate collision. McCann did miss the St. Louis series, but the three-time All-Star was back in the lineup against Milwaukee. Fellow All-Star Chipper Jones was placed on the DL and could be activated this week.

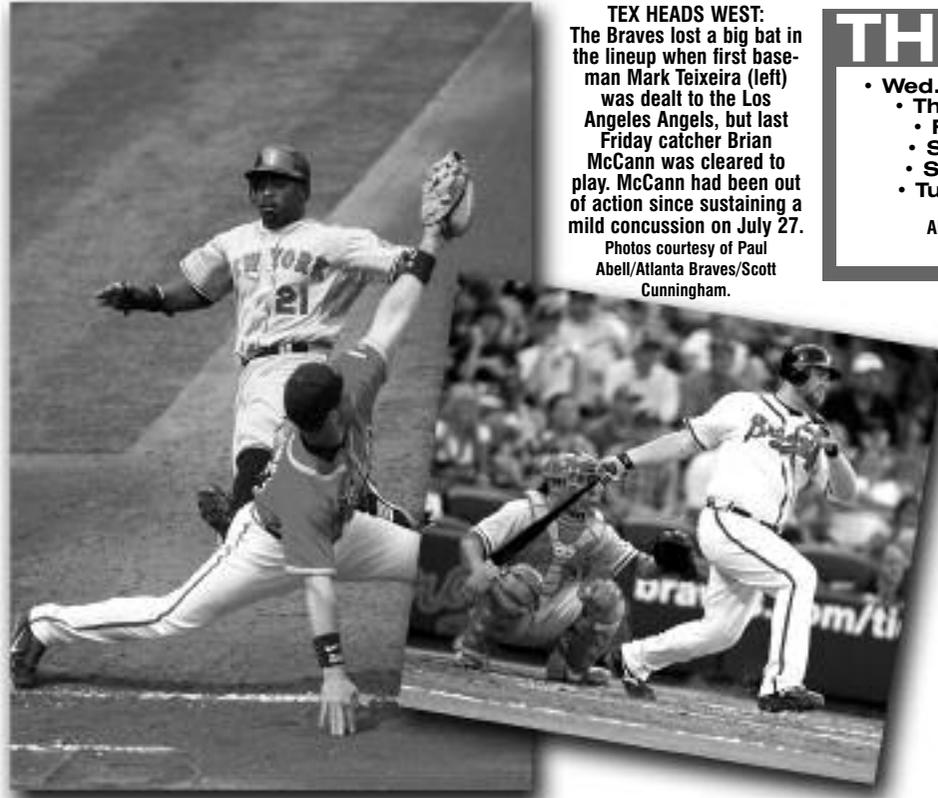
Following the game, reliever Rafael Soriano was placed on the disabled list for the third time this season with elbow inflammation. Francisley Bueno was recalled from Richmond to take his spot in the bullpen.

### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*"I'm excited to go to Atlanta and play for Bobby Cox."*

- 1B Casey Kotchman

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



**TEX HEADS WEST:** The Braves lost a big bat in the lineup when first baseman Mark Teixeira (left) was dealt to the Los Angeles Angels, but last Friday catcher Brian McCann was cleared to play. McCann had been out of action since sustaining a mild concussion on July 27. Photos courtesy of Paul Abell/Atlanta Braves/Scott Cunningham.

### THE SCHEDULE

- Wed. at San Francisco, 3:45 p.m. *FSN South.*
- Thurs. at Arizona, 9:40 p.m. *SportSouth.*
- Fri. at Arizona, 9:40 p.m. *SportSouth.*
- Sat. at Arizona, 8:10 p.m. *SportSouth.*
- Sun. at Arizona, 4:10 p.m. *SportSouth.*
- Tues. vs. Chicago, 7 p.m. *Peachtree TV.*

All games will be broadcast on 640 AM and 94.9 The Bull. Tickets can be purchased at [www.atlantabraves.com](http://www.atlantabraves.com).

### PLAYER OF THE WEEK

**5 GAMES  
8 HITS  
5 RUNS  
3 RBIS  
1 HR**



**OMAR INFANTE 3B**

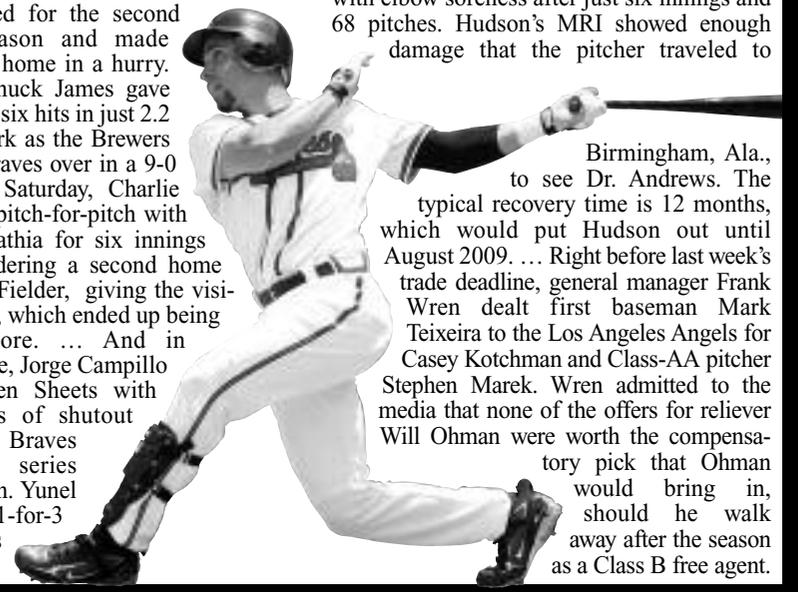
### THE SEVENTH-INNING STRETCH ...

The Braves family suffered a tragic loss Sunday as longtime announcer Skip Caray passed away in his sleep. He was 68. Skip, also known as Harry Christopher Caray Jr., had been calling Braves games for 33 seasons and was elected to the Braves Hall of Fame in 2004. "Our baseball community has lost a legend today," said Braves President John Schuerholz. "The Braves family and Braves fans everywhere will sadly miss him. Our thoughts are with his wife Paula and his children." Read more about Caray and his life on page 5.

#### CENTRAL OPPONENTS ...

Having dropped the first two games of a four-game series with St. Louis, the Braves entered last Wednesday's contest ready to start the Casey Kotchman era in Atlanta. The newly acquired first baseman perhaps tried too hard to impress his new team as he recorded an 0-for-5 night and left six men on base. Jair Jurrjens was seeking his 11th win of the year but would be denied that after allowing three runs through seven innings and receiving only two runs of support. The bullpen imploded and the Cardinals took Game 3 by a score of 7-2. ... In the finale, Mike Hampton gave the Braves five tough innings and left the game with the score tied 4-4. In the bottom of the sixth, rookie catcher Clint

Sammons, filling in for the injured Brian McCann, connected on his first major-league home run to make it 6-4. Sammons went 3-for-4 with three RBIs and two runs to help the Braves salvage a 9-4 win. Omar Infante (pictured) hit a solo shot in the second inning for his third home run of the year. ... The Milwaukee Brewers visited the Ted for the second time this season and made themselves at home in a hurry. On Friday, Chuck James gave up six runs on six hits in just 2.2 innings of work as the Brewers worked the Braves over in a 9-0 rout. ... On Saturday, Charlie Morton went pitch-for-pitch with ace C.C. Sabathia for six innings before surrendering a second home run to Prince Fielder, giving the visitors a 4-2 lead, which ended up being the final score. ... And in Sunday's finale, Jorge Campillo outpitched Ben Sheets with seven innings of shutout ball and the Braves salvaged the series with a 5-0 win. Yunel Escobar went 1-for-3 with two RBIs in the victory.



#### IN OTHER NEWS ...

Braves ace Tim Hudson will undergo Tommy John surgery after receiving advice from Braves orthopedist Xavier Duralde and famed surgeon Dr. James Andrews to repair a torn ulnar collateral ligament. The right-hander last pitched July 23 in Florida, but left with elbow soreness after just six innings and 68 pitches. Hudson's MRI showed enough damage that the pitcher traveled to Birmingham, Ala., to see Dr. Andrews. The typical recovery time is 12 months, which would put Hudson out until August 2009. ... Right before last week's trade deadline, general manager Frank Wren dealt first baseman Mark Teixeira to the Los Angeles Angels for Casey Kotchman and Class-AA pitcher Stephen Marek. Wren admitted to the media that none of the offers for reliever Will Ohman were worth the compensatory pick that Ohman would bring in, should he walk away after the season as a Class B free agent.



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## Evans, Randolph officially sign with Hawks

With the shocking loss of Josh Childress more than two weeks behind the Hawks, the team has redirected its attention, now focusing on retooling their roster during a summer that hasn't been too kind to the franchise.

The team first turned its attention to former Orlando Magic guard, free agent Maurice Evans. Evans signed a three-year deal with the Hawks worth an estimated \$7.5 million. And while most assume Evans simply took the best offer on the table, the newest member of the Hawks refuted such a notion when I spoke to him last Thursday.

"I did have a lot of other offers and got a lot of interest this year in free agency given the year that I had and success I had in Orlando, but I really did feel like [Atlanta] was a really great fit for me as a player and money-wise it was a fair deal. There was obviously a lot more money to be made in other situations, but I really felt like this was a perfect fit as far as being able to continue to expand my game, continue to play, continue to have an impact on the team. I didn't want to go to a situation where I would be digressing or taking steps back just because the money was better."

And while many will continue to bemoan the loss of Childress, Evans is actually a more-than-capable replacement. At 6-foot-5, 220 pounds, Evans is a very good defender against smaller, quicker guards and is a very good athlete that can get to the hole on offense. In addition, unlike Childress, Evans is a good 3-point shooter, especially

from the corners, and brings valuable experience to the table; he has been to the playoffs six times in as many seasons in the league.

"I'm the type of player, if I'm out on the floor, I can make great things happen whether it's offensively or defensively," Evans said. "I can also supervise or be a leader as well, with my experience and some of the things I've been able to go through and the teams I've played on. I think I bring all of those things to the table and will try and help some of the younger guys get better as well."

### RANDOLPH RETURNS ...

The Hawks then turned their attention to former Landmark Christian basketball star Randolph Morris, who accepted an offer from the team last week that will allow him a chance to play in front of his hometown fans for the next two years. The contract, which was set at the NBA's minimum, is worth an estimated \$1.7 million. Randolph spent last year, his first in the league, with the New York Knicks. And though Morris struggled in the Big Apple last season, he is looking at his opportunity in Atlanta with great excitement.

"Few people get second opportunities and I'm happy [the Hawks] extended an offer to me so I could get another chance to start over per se because I didn't get that opportunity in New York as much as I wanted to," Morris explained last Friday.

"I'm just trying to rewrite things for myself."

Janovitz can be reached at [sjanovitz@scoreatl.com](mailto:sjanovitz@scoreatl.com).

## Junior Evaluation Camp starting in N.Y.

After a draining prospect camp, some of the Thrashers' youngsters will have the opportunity to play on the ice where USA hockey achieved its most remarkable feat, defeating the Soviet Union in the 1980 Winter Olympics.

Zach Bogosian, John Albert, Nicklas Lasu, Vinny Saponari and Niclas Lucenis will all travel to Lake Placid, N.Y., with their respective national teams as a part of the 2008 Junior Evaluation Camp. Bogosian, Albert and Saponari will each train with Team USA, while Lasu and Lucenis will practice with Sweden and Finland, respectively. For some, like Saponari, the team will be very familiar as 13 players from the bronze medal-winning Under-18 team return hoping to now make the Under-20 national team.

After just under a week of training and evaluation, the teams will begin playing each other, finishing the week playing against every other team twice. Team USA will use a split squad, Team White and Team Blue, to take on both the Swedish and Finnish teams.

Each member of the team has the opportunity to make the final roster for their nation's Under-20 squad that will compete for the 2009 International Ice Hockey Federation World Junior Championship in Ottawa, Ontario come late December.

Most of these same Thrashers will be hitting the ice once again in just under four weeks to take part in the Traverse City Prospect Evaluation Tournament. When they return in September, they will have had ample time to get used to some of their new team-

mates, having played together in three separate game situations in just under two months.

### MORE OFFSEASON GIVING ...

Late December is considered by most as the "season for giving," but the Thrashers continued their charitable work during the offseason last week. Last Friday, Eric Boulton appeared at the Agape Community Center to distribute 600 backpacks filled with school supplies, to prepare area students for the return to school in the coming weeks. The Agape Community Center, founded 10 years ago, has strived to build communities and strengthen Atlanta families in a holistic way. The Center provides tutors and programs for students in the Atlanta area, earning the organization awards and recognition in and outside of the classroom. Last year, 50 percent of students in the Center's after-school program earned a 3.0 GPA. Boulton was also on hand to personally deliver a \$10,000 check on behalf of the Atlanta Thrashers Foundation, along with 400 backpacks provided by the team.

### ADJUSTMENT TO SCHEDULE ...

For Thrasher fans who may have already gone through the recently released schedule and planned out their watching plans for the year, you may want to go back to your calendar and make one update. Originally, on Jan. 10, 2009, Atlanta was scheduled to face off against the Florida Panthers in Sunrise, Fla., at 7 p.m. The game has been rescheduled, however, and moved up to 1 p.m. on the same day.

Boral can be reached at [jboral@scoreatl.com](mailto:jboral@scoreatl.com).



## Men defeat Battery; Steinmann named MVP

The Atlanta Silverbacks won a crucial rivalry showdown with the league-leading Charleston Battery 2-1 on Friday night at Silverbacks Park. The Silverbacks then won a wild contest at Rochester 4-3 on Sunday evening. Atlanta jumped two places in the standings with the victories, passing Miami and Portland.

The win over Charleston was highlighted by aggressive play from both sides. The teams combined to commit 21 fouls, five yellow cards and the red-card ejection of Silverback midfielder Ansu Toure. Despite the ejection in the 72nd minute, Toure was a big part of the Silverbacks' success. His perfect cross in the 12th minute towards two Silverbacks in the Charleston penalty box prompted a penalty on Charleston. Mac Kandji coolly converted the penalty kick, giving Atlanta the early lead. Toure was again part of a Silverbacks score in the 37th minute. Jerson Monteiro angled a ball in front of the goal from the right side, which Toure booted into the back of the net for a 2-1 Silverback lead. In the second half, Atlanta goalkeeper Felipe Quintero made a brilliant save on a penalty kick by Charleston. The save may have been the biggest play of the game and helped preserve the 2-1 triumph. Despite finishing the game a man down, Atlanta held onto the lead for their sixth win of the season.

Kandji led all scorers with two goals in the Sunday win at Rochester. A boisterous Rhinos crowd of 6,852 watched the Silverbacks take a 3-1 lead and then hold on

for an exciting 4-3 victory. As with the Charleston game, the contest was played with much fervor and intensity. The teams combined for three penalties and six cautions.

The first goal did not come until the 42nd minute, as Kandji knocked home a penalty kick to give the Silverbacks the lead. Monteiro scored an unassisted goal for Atlanta in the 50th minute after Rochester had tied the match at one. Kandji again struck in the 52nd minute off an assist from midfielder Matt Buete to give the Silverbacks the lead for good. David Hayes would conclude the scoring for Atlanta with a penalty-kick goal in the 71st minute.

The Silverbacks played Vancouver on Tuesday; results were not available at press time. Their next game is an 8 p.m. home fixture against Miami on Friday night. Visit [www.atlantasilverbacks.com](http://www.atlantasilverbacks.com) for tickets.

### WOMEN'S TEAM HONORED ...

First-year coach Tony Anglin was named Coach of the Year and Sarah Steinmann won the Most Valuable Player award at the W-League Championship Banquet last week. Steinmann also won the Scoring Champion award (for leading the league in points) as well as the Goal Scoring Champion award after tallying 19 goals on the year. Steinmann's 19 goals are a franchise record for Atlanta. Steinmann and midfielder Lyndsey Patterson were also named to the All-Conference team for the Eastern Conference.

Black can be reached at [sblack@scoreatl.com](mailto:sblack@scoreatl.com).

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## No. 1 Georgia opens camp minus three

The Georgia football team opened fall practice this past Monday and the Bulldogs welcomed back 17 starters and over 40 lettermen from last year's 11-2 team. However, the Bulldogs were without senior long snapper Jeff Henson, junior safety Donovan Baldwin and junior linebacker Darius Dewberry. The three have all been suspended.

Henson was arrested for public intoxication over the weekend, while Baldwin was allegedly involved in a bar fight. Because it is the second discipline problem for both, their status with the team is unclear. Dewberry earned a two-game suspension after being seen overturning trash cans and causing other damage at an Athens-area hospital. The remaining Bulldogs have an allotted 29 practice sessions up until the start of the regular season. They will practice once on Wednesday, once on Thursday and once on Friday, but on Saturday they will use two of their practice sessions—one in the morning and one later in the day—as they look forward to the season with excitement.

Much of that excitement stems from the Bulldogs' No. 1 ranking in the preseason USA Today coaches' poll. Georgia was ranked No. 1, followed by USC, Ohio State, Oklahoma and Florida. Georgia led the way with 22 first-place votes, but each of the top six teams (LSU is ranked No. 6) received at least one first-place vote. USC and Ohio State received 14 first-place votes apiece. The No. 1 ranking marks the first time that the Bulldogs have ever begun the season on top of the coaches' poll.

A total of five SEC teams are ranked in

the poll's top 25. That ties the conference with the Big Ten and the Big 12 for having the most teams ranked. Alabama and South Carolina placed just outside of the top 25 at 26th and 27th, respectively, while Mississippi State and Kentucky also received votes. In all, five of Georgia's 2008 opponents are ranked in the preseason coaches' poll: Florida, LSU, Auburn (No. 11), Arizona State (No. 16) and Tennessee (No. 18).

### GO TIME ...

The 2008 Summer Olympics opening ceremony is Friday and there are quite a few current and ex-Bulldog athletes that will be participating. Reese Hoffa, Debbie Ferguson Levern Spencer, Jenny Dahlgren, Hyleas Fountain, Andras Haklits and Sultana Frizell will take part in track and field over in Beijing. Also, diver Chris Colwill and swimmers Allison Schmitt, Gil Stovall, Kara Lynn Joyce, Neil Versfeld, Sebastien Rouault, Wendy Trott, Sheila Taormina, Sarah Poewe and Troyden Prinsloo are all former, current or future Bulldogs that are scheduled to compete at the Beijing Olympics. Swimming head coach Jack Bauerle will coach the U. S. women's swim team and assistant Dan Laak will be an assistant diving coach.

The swimming competition will take place from Aug. 9-17, with Taormina's modern pentathlon taking place on Aug. 22. The men's 3-meter diving events will take place on Aug. 13, 18 and 19. Track and field events start on Aug. 15 and last until Aug. 23.

Butler can be reached at [jbutler@scoreatl.com](mailto:jbutler@scoreatl.com).

## Fans turn out for Great Jacket Encounter

Despite the intense thunderstorms that made things crazy around the Atlanta area, Saturday proved to be a gorgeous day for the Great Jacket Encounter. Hundreds of Yellow Jacket fans from across Atlanta descended on Bobby Dodd Stadium for Tech's official fan day. It was a great opportunity for fans to interact with players and coaches before the intensity of the regular season. The longest lines for autographs appeared in front of defensive end Michael Johnson, whose line had about 60-70 people, and head coach Paul Johnson, whose line reached several hundred people.

Saturday's practice was marked by a business-like crispness. Routes were run well and passes looked sharp, especially those from quarterbacks Josh Nesbitt and Calvin Booker, who both threw slant passes and deep outs with good precision. Currently, Nesbitt should get the slight edge because he is the more athletic of the two, which will be critical in this offense. In terms of the young receiving corps, Tyler Melton, a freshman wide receiver who had several catches during last Saturday's practice, has been impressive thus far.

"Tyler is a pretty good athlete," Paul Johnson said. "He runs around pretty well and can make some plays. He is like a lot of young guys in that he needs to be more consistent, but I'm excited about him and I think he can be a good player."

Practices have been relatively injury-free with only a few slight exceptions. Wide receiver Zach Fisher cramped up during last Saturday's practice and wide receiver Correy Earls suffered a hamstring injury.

### A LOOK AT THE OFFENSE ...

Paul Johnson's offense is far and away this year's biggest question mark for the Jackets. It has been successful everywhere Johnson has been and should reach new heights with Tech's superior personnel, but it's going to take time. Nesbitt looks to be a great fit at quarterback. The sophomore rushed for 339 yards on 53 carries last season and completed nearly 70 percent of his passes in high school, so the potential to run and throw the ball is there now. Sophomore B-back Jonathan Dwyer is a potential superstar and wideouts Correy Earls and Demaryius Thomas have speed and game experience. The offensive line is anchored by preseason All-American Andrew Gardner. Future not withstanding, 2008 will be a race to see who gets Johnson's offense first — the Jackets so that they can run it successfully, or the ACC so they can stop it.

### JACKETS IN BEIJING ...

Starting Friday, keep your eyes open for Yellow Jackets at the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing, China. Eight current and former Tech athletes will compete in four different sports, including Chaunte Howard, Fatmata Fofanah, Angelo Taylor (track and field), Chris Bosh (men's basketball), Onur Uras, incoming freshman Gal Nevo (swimming), Caitlin Leaver, and Jennifer Yee (softball).

Crosskey can be reached at [jcrosskey@scoreatl.com](mailto:jcrosskey@scoreatl.com).



## Verwey, Sherreard compete overseas; Campbell named new track coach

In South Australia last week, competing in a national ranking event for female amateur golfers, State's Iliska Verwey finished tied for 13th at the 2008 Rene Erichsen Salver, 11 back of the winner Natasha Krishna, with a 72-hole total of 305. Following an up-and-down round of 75 on Monday, Verwey responded on the second 18 with a solid 72. Verwey struggled through Tuesday's 36, tallying an 80 and 78, respectively. The Grange Golf Club in Adelaide hosted the event.

Coming off of his performance at the British Open, Tom Sherreard's run at the English amateur came to an end last Friday in the semifinals. Sherreard won his morning round 1-Up in a close contest against Kevin Freeman. The win was good enough to propel him into the final four. Then, after

winning in his morning round, Sherreard faced off against Todd Adcock in the afternoon. Sherreard was 2-Up after four holes, but Adcock's streaky play ruled the day. After losing a ball at the 13th, the match began to slip away from Sherreard. He would go on to lose 3 & 1.

"I fell at the final hurdle," Sherreard told EnglishGolfUnion.org. "Things just ran out on me this afternoon. Nothing fell for me, but you have days like that."

### CAMPBELL PROMOTED ...

Eric Campbell has been elevated to head coach for men's and women's track and field. In Campbell's six years as an assistant coach, Georgia State student-athletes have earned 84 all-conference performances, 61 NCAA Regional qualifications and two

NCAA Championship appearances. He has helped the women's track and field team to three top-three finishes at the conference meet. In 2008, Campbell coached the male and female Colonial Athletic Association Track and Field Scholar Athletes of the Year in Jacob English and Denice Vance.

UMass, which returns 12 starters off last year's CAA Football Championship team, is picked to capture the overall CAA Football Championship in 2008. Richmond, also a 2007 CAA Football Champion, edged out James Madison for the top spot in the South Division race, according to a vote among the league's 12 head coaches and selected media representatives.

### IN OTHER NEWS ...

Jenny Lidback, a retired LPGA professional, is set to join Coach Cathy Mant's

women's golf coaching staff. Lidback brings knowledge and experience to the Panthers program. She was a 15-year member of the LPGA Tour from 1989-2003. Said Mant, "I am excited that Jenny will become part of our program. Jenny has a passion for teaching the short game and the mental game of golf, including an emphasis on course management." ... The men's soccer team will be holding tryouts for all interested candidates on Thursday, Aug. 21 at 2 p.m. at Panthersville. All persons who wish to try-out must be enrolled as full-time Georgia State students for the fall semester.

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

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## ACC makes recruiting splash in Georgia

Not surprisingly, the ACC has recruited players from the State of Georgia with great vigor this recruiting cycle, as 20 of the state's very best football players have already given their pledges to schools within the conference. Three of those 20 removed their names from the list of uncommitted players in the last week with another Georgia athlete giving his word to Vanderbilt around the same time. Here's a closer look at each.

### ACC ON ATTACK ...

The action began July 28 when Wake Forest landed a verbal commitment from Chattahoochee quarterback Brendan Cross. The 6-foot-1, 189-pound quarterback received offers from Bowling Green, Miami-Ohio and Air Force before designating Wake Forest as his future stomping grounds. After throwing for 1,400 yards and 15 touchdowns last year, Rivals.com evaluated Cross as a three-star recruit and ranked him as the 35th-best pro-style quarterback in the country. On film, Cross shows good athleticism and running ability for the position and is a threat to score with his feet on any play. He also has good accuracy, nice touch on his passes and a decently strong arm. Most noticeably, Cross has tremendous field awareness, consistently finding his third and fourth options when necessary.

Also making his announcement last Monday was Chamblee all-purpose back Warren Norman. Choosing Vanderbilt over offers from Georgia Tech and Iowa State, the 5-foot-10, 188-pound Norman is a three-star recruit according to Rivals.com and the 30th-ranked all-purpose back in the nation

for the Class of 2009. On the field, Norman does not display great lateral quickness and tends to do most of his running north/south, hitting the hole hard and looking his best once he gets into space. Most importantly, Norman is not afraid of contact and has deadly straight-line speed.

### TECH, DUKE JOIN PARTY ...

Last Tuesday, the Duke Blue Devils reaped the benefits of Georgia's fertile recruiting lands in a big way, earning verbal commitments from two Peach State athletes. Brandon Putnam, a 6-foot-3, 232-pound defensive end from Sandy Creek, chose the Blue Devils over Arkansas, UAB, Georgia Tech, and Vanderbilt. One of his newest Duke teammates, Kadeem Wise, also chose the Dukies on Tuesday over Georgia Tech, Indiana and Wake Forest. According to Rivals.com, Putnam is a three-star weakside defensive end while Wise is a two-star defensive back.

Not to be outdone by their conference competitors, the local Yellow Jackets joined in on the fun. On Wednesday, Georgia Tech picked up a verbal commitment from Newnan offensive guard Raymond Beno, a two-star recruit according to Rivals. Beno chose Tech over offers from Miami, Southern Mississippi and Wake Forest, among others. At 6-foot-1, 278 pounds, Beno is a big, physical offensive lineman who, at this stage, is more impressive in the running game than the passing game.

Janovitz can be reached at [sjanovitz@scoreatl.com](mailto:sjanovitz@scoreatl.com).



## Right faces 'ultimate challenge' this season

As a coach, one of the sayings I constantly use as an example to my players comes from the Bible (Luke 12:48): "To whom much is given, much is expected." I'm sure Georgia football coach Mark Richt has this verse stapled to the wall somewhere in the Dawgs' locker room, for this season will be his ultimate challenge as a coach.

For the first time in school history, the Georgia Bulldogs have been chosen by college football coaches around the nation as the top team going into the season. While an honor, you'll still need \$3 to go along with the recognition to buy a cup of coffee at Starbucks. While many coaches would cringe at the label, Richt has welcomed it, saying "it's the opportunity of a lifetime" for his players. The last team to go from preseason No. 1 to national champion was USC in 2004, so it can be done.

Remember that Trojan team? They had a Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback in Matt Leinart. (The Dawgs have a Heisman candidate in Matthew Stafford.) The Trojans had a great backfield that included non-starter Reggie Bush. (The Dawgs' backfield might be even better with Heisman hopeful Knowshon Moreno and freshman Caleb King.) But once again, there's a big difference between what's on paper and what actually happens. Give a good coach the player he needs and he'll make good things happen. Richt's a good coach.

### A BREAKTHROUGH YEAR ...

With 72 wins and a .791 winning percentage in his seven years at Georgia, Richt has already climbed into the elite of college football coaches. Although many coaches would be satisfied with such a record, Richt wanted more and knew he could get more out of himself and his team. In last year's game against Florida, Richt broke from his norm. Knowing that there are no boundaries for passion when it comes to playing football at the highest level, Richt encouraged his team to do the unspeakable: he told them to celebrate in the end zone after Georgia's first touchdown. It was a brilliant move that forced the team to focus on execution and the after-effects are still being felt.

Every coach dreams of winning a national championship. Not many coaches have the opportunity. Remember, there are 119 teams in FBS (or Division I-A) college football competing for the same thing. Being No. 1 going into the season is nice but Richt knows that "the postseason poll is the one that is most important." The Dawgs can see it, taste it and feel it. But can they do it? With Richt in charge, the answer is yes.

Georgia fans, get ready for the ride of your life. There will be a parade on Baxter Street in five months. This Georgia team will "finish the drill." And "Mark" my words, in 2009, fans might be getting a repeat.

But that's just my opinion.

Dankosky can be reached at [kdankosky@scoreatl.com](mailto:kdankosky@scoreatl.com).

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

**BASEBALL**

**Braves.** August 6 at San Francisco 3:45 PM. August 7 at Arizona 9:40 PM. August 8 at Arizona 9:40 PM. August 9 at Arizona 8:10 PM. August 10 Arizona 4:10 PM. August 12 vs. Chicago 7 PM. August 13 vs. Chicago. August 14 vs. Chicago 7:10 PM. August 15 vs. San Francisco 7:35 PM. August 16 vs. San Francisco 7:10 PM. August 17 vs. San Francisco 1:35 PM. August 18 vs. San Francisco 4:35 PM. August 19 at New York Mets 7:10 PM. August 20 at New York Mets 7:10 PM.  
**Prospect Watch.** Ongoing - Buckhead. Baseball pitching and hitting lessons by a former college and minor league coach. For information call 404-869-7966 or visit www.eteamz.com/tryouts.  
**Adult Baseball League Metro Atlanta.** Ongoing. MSBL 18+, 28+, 38+, and 48+. Sunday League contact info is 770.785.2588, e-mail info@AtlantaMSBL.com. MSBL 18+ Saturday League contact info is 770-436-8114, e-mail AtlantaMABL@aol.com. MSBL 18+ Midweek Wood bat league contact info is 770-436-8114, e-mail AtlantaMABL@aol.com. MSBL 18+ Fall League contact info is 770-436-8114, e-mail AtlantaMABL@aol.com. For more information about our Atlanta Adult Baseball League, please visit our website at www.AtlantaMSBL.com.  
**TNT Sports.** Ongoing. Baseball pitching and hitting lessons by Rob Blair, former college coach, Snellville. To set up a free pitching or hitting analysis call 678-344-5876.  
**Jack City Baseball.** Ongoing. Baseball pitching and hitting. Instruction with former pro Keith Whitner. 18-y looking for high school players. The new location is inside Velocity Sports in North Gwinnett. For more information call 770-633-0948 or visit jackcity.net.

**FOOTBALL**

**Falcons.** Aug. 9 at Jacksonville 7:30 PM.  
**Collins Hill Athletic Association.** Ongoing. Accepting applications for qualified coaches in all age groups. For information email Craig Deneau at deneauc@charter.net.  
**Grayson Athletic Association.** Ongoing. Football coaches needed for eighth grade and all age groups. For information call Duane Davis at 678-300-0282 or visit www.gaasports.org.  
**Flag Football.** GSL -- Georgia Sports Leagues. Georgia's Largest Flag League. Registration ongoing. We offer 7-Man, 8-man, Youth and Co-Ed styles of play around Atlanta. We play ALL year round. For information please contact (678)799-0159 or email mark@georgiasportleagues.org. Visit www.georgiasportleagues.org.  
**Georgia Force Home School High School Football Program.** If you are a home school student or a student that attends a Christian school in the Gwinnett or Hall county region and would like to participate in high school football, please contact Scott Willis at 770-531-1499 ext 401 or email at appstmtrn@aol.com The Georgia Force High School football program participates in the GFL (Georgia Football League) and is accepting players from the ages of 13-18 years old. We currently offer a JV and Varsity program. For more information, please go to our web site at www.forcehighschoolfootball.com.



**TOP DOGS:** Just like Mohammed Massaquoi's jersey, the Georgia Bulldogs are No. 1 -- according to the USA Today coaches' poll, that is. So how did Mark Richt feel about the top ranking? "I don't know if that is a good thing or a bad thing," he said. "It is an exciting thing, no doubt." Photo courtesy of Rebecca Hay/University of Georgia.

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

**HOCKEY**

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

**SOCCER**

**Silverbacks.** August 10 at Vancouver 7 PM. August 16 vs. Charleston 7:55 PM.  
**Challenged Soccer.** Ongoing. For mentally and physically

disabled youngsters. For information call Ken Higgins at 770-985-0434.

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

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

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

**TENNIS**

**Technique Clinics.** Ongoing - Bitsy Grant Tennis Center. Tuesdays (serve/volley) and Saturdays (forehand/backhand). Fees: \$18. For information call 404-790-4772 or email jimhines01@yahoo.com. 2 PM on Saturdays, 6:30 PM on Tuesdays.

**Tennis camps for kids.** Ongoing weekly. Lost Mountain Tennis Center. For information call 770-528-8525.

**LACROSSE**

**Lacrosse.** Ongoing. Registration for 1st-8th grades. For information call 404-216-5870, email jasona@bagatawaylacrosse.com or visit www.bagatawaylacrosse.com.

**PlayLaxGwinnett.** Ongoing. Players, coaches, referees needed for play at Gwinnett Sports Center. For information call Chris Chico at 678-429-0094 or email chris@kicks-sticks.com.

**Double Stixx Lacrosse.** Ongoing - Leagues, Travel Teams and Tournaments for youth, high school and adult's boys and girls. More information about the best lacrosse programs in Georgia can be found at www.doublestixxlacrosse.com or by contacting Chris Smith at chris@doublestixxlacrosse.com or 404-550-5322.

**RUNNING**

**Decatur Dash 5K.** Aug. 9. Atlanta, 7:30 AM. 404-995-5620.  
**Falcon 5K/1K.** Aug. 9. Flowery Branch, 7:30 AM. 770-967-8083.  
**Jim Herrin Memorial Stampede 5K/10K/Mile.** Aug. 9. Warner Robins, 7:30 AM. 478-972-2609.  
**Summer's End 5000.** Aug. 9. Winder, 8 AM. 770-868-2917.  
**East Cobb Rotary Dog Days Run 5K/Mile.** Aug. 9. Marietta, 7:30 AM. 678-795-0115.  
**Dennis McCormick Road Race 5K.** Aug. 9. Suwanee, 7:30 AM. 770-962-8425.  
**Run For Love Evening Run 5K.** Aug. 9. Tifton, 7:45 PM. 229-382-4264.

**CAMPS**

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

**VOLLEYBALL**

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

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

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

**SWIMMING & DIVING**

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

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

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

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

**YOUTH REGISTRATION**

**Soccer - Soccer Alley.** Ongoing - 3265 Roswell Road - Atlanta. For information call 404-266-0762 or visit [www.starsoccerclub.com](http://www.starsoccerclub.com).

**Tucker Youth Soccer.** Ongoing - 2803 Henderson Road - Tucker, Ga. For information call 770-414-0538 or visit [www.tysa.com](http://www.tysa.com).

**Track and Field - Peachtree City Flash Youth Track Team registration.** Ongoing - Riley Field - Peachtree City, Ga. For ages 6-14. For information call 770-631-3552 or email [ptcf@bellsouth.net](mailto:ptcf@bellsouth.net).

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

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

**Youth Soccer Training.** Ongoing. Start age 3 and up. For information, call 678-714-7454 or e-mail [info.indoor@atlantasilverbacks.com](mailto:info.indoor@atlantasilverbacks.com). [www.atlantasilverbacks.com/indoor](http://www.atlantasilverbacks.com/indoor).

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

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

**SOFTBALL**

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

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

**Open Recreational Softball.** GSL -- Georgia Sports Leagues. Georgia's Best Sports Leagues. Registration ongoing. We offer "Men's" and "Co-Ed" styles of play in Doraville/Dunwoody area. Monday, Wednesday & Sunday league play available. Next season starts in February. We play ALL year round. For more information please contact (678)799-0159

or email [mark@georgiasportsleagues.org](mailto:mark@georgiasportsleagues.org). Visit [www.georgiasportsleagues.org](http://www.georgiasportsleagues.org).  
**Capitol City Officials Association.** CCOA is accepting ongoing registration for the upcoming GHSA High School season in fast-pitch softball. We hold weekly training meetings. For more information, contact Irvin Seabrook at 404-957-3331 or e-mail [lr\\_v\\_seabrook@yahoo.com](mailto:lr_v_seabrook@yahoo.com).

**GYMNASTICS**

**Gymnastics Classes at Gymnastics Academy of Atlanta.** Ongoing - 3126 Cobb Parkway Kennesaw, Ga. For information call 770-975-8337 or visit [www.gymnasticsacademyofatlanta.com](http://www.gymnasticsacademyofatlanta.com).

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

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

**The Little Gym of Snellville.** Ongoing. Noncompetitive gymnastics and motor-skills development classes and camps. For ages 10 months-12 years. For information call 770-982-0901 or visit [www.tigsnellville.ga](http://www.tigsnellville.ga).



**WHATCHA GONNA DO:** Professional wrestling icon Hulk Hogan, an Augusta, Ga., native, celebrates his 55th birthday on Monday. The Hulkster has gone through some tough times recently; his ex-wife Linda filed for divorce last November and his son is currently incarcerated. Still, Hogan is by far the most famous wrestler in history, winning a total of 12 World Titles in WWE and WCW. Photo courtesy of Scott Cunningham.

**RACING**

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

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

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

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

**OFFICIATING**

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

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

**Metro Atlanta Wrestling Officials Association.** Ongoing. Needs officials. For information call Bud Hennebaul at 770-338-0705 or email [BudHen27@aol.com](mailto:BudHen27@aol.com).

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**Chick-Fil-A Bowl.** Dec. 31, 2008. Georgia Dome. For tickets, call 404-444-4444.  
 To reach the Atlanta Sports Council call 404-586-8510 or visit [www.atlantasportscouncil.com](http://www.atlantasportscouncil.com).

**MISC**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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# THE LOCAL MEDIA REPORTER

JEFF BATTEN

## Thoughts on Skip and Olympic coverage

I'm sure I can speak for a lot of longtime Atlanta 30- and 40-somethings when I say that Skip Caray's passing paves over just that much more of the nostalgic link to our own carefree youths. I can honestly remember Skip's first year of Braves television on the old WTCG Channel 17 in 1976 and thinking that he was quite a contrast to his amiable partner, Ernie Johnson, Sr. (Ironically, Caray was a carbon copy of his irascible predecessor Milo Hamilton, with whom the Carays feuded for years.)

Caray was the tell-it-like-it-is filter between the listener and such Braves notables as Vic "The Stick" Correll, Larvell "Sugar Bear" Blanks and Ralph "The Roadrunner" Garr. He wasn't scared of the owner's wrath, as he was quick to criticize Ted Turner's team on Ted Turner's television station when he saw terrible play on the field. He would be sure to let us know when we could turn off the broadcast early, making sure, of course, that we patronized the advertisers all the same. Maybe more than any major announcer of his generation, he was able to marry sarcasm with self-deprecation and wry humor.

By his own accounts, he lived hard and when he spoke of "Cocktail Hour", as he did when the Hawks were wrapping up a TV win in the early 80s, even this 12-year-old realized the man knew intimately of what he spoke. (Tellingly, in this week's AJC, his son, Chip, candidly pointed to his lifestyle as a reason behind his death.) He could be a rabid homer and ref-baiter, and was quick to personalize the action, bestowing nicknames upon "Fast Eddie" Johnson and Billy "Whopper" Paultz. He, absolutely, ratcheted up the level of local interest in the Hawks as they were just starting to win in the late 70s and early 80s.

Naturally, everyone in the local broadcasting business has a good-natured story. Channel 11's Sam Crenshaw tells a good one in which Caray "fired himself" from his part-time job as Channel 11 sportscaster in the early 80s. He was so disappointed with his performance after one bad show, as Crenshaw tells it, that he posted a note on the news director's door that night: "You were going to do it anyway, so I'll relieve you of the burden."

He raised a half-hearted fuss about being moved off Braves television a few years back, but as Braves Fox announcer Jon Sciambi told me in a recent interview, "I see Skip all the time and every time I see him, he makes me laugh," Sciambi said. "He has really treated me ... how do I describe this ... well, I'd say like a son, but I can't say that, because he has a son. But he's been unbelievable in how welcoming and supportive he's been. I really can't say enough about the man."

I only crossed paths with him a few times and actually found him to be very pleasant. Sure, we were interviewing him about his and Pete Van Wieren's BBQ joint, but he patiently answered the same questions all over again for us and chatted about baseball when we were through. Most people I've talked to in recent years said he was very friendly with the local media. I came away glad to have met him.

He had great on-air moments, as anyone who has heard him call the Sid Bream Slide in the last few days can attest. In assessing his talent, he probably didn't make the contributions to his craft as did a Ernie Harwell, Vin Scully or Red Barber, but then that's really not a fair comparison - those men were pioneers. What he did do perfectly was entertain and keep us listening maybe just an inning longer than we would have ordinarily. And if you're old enough to remember the 1976 Braves season, that was no small feat.

### SUMMER GAMES ...

NBC long ago lost Major League Baseball, the NBA and the other summertime jewels that once allowed them to employ Dick Enberg, Vin Scully and Marv Albert. This week, though, the Peacock network gets to trot out the Summer Olympics and - for at least two weeks - its local affiliates can push aside Arena Football and Seniors Golf and enjoy the summertime viewership they've been craving since, well, four years ago.

Channel 11 is no exception, of course, and they've already shipped off signature anchor Brenda Wood and a videographer to China in search of national stories that have local angles.

"Having Brenda there is going to give our viewers a unique perspective beyond just the competition itself," said Tracy Carmony, Channel 11's executive producer for sports.

All of the local material will be compiled into a Monday-Saturday local program on Channel 11, "Olympic Zone," which will be hosted by Fred Kalil and Ted Hall immediately preceding NBC's evening coverage. In fact, Channel 11 has been tunneling up to this moment for several months, having aired quite a few pieces on the athletes training, Beijing construction efforts, and Chinese politics.

Behind the scenes, Channel 11 shooter David Brooks writes in his blog that he's shipped 14 cases of equipment to China and that, at one point, Chinese officials - intentionally or unintentionally - had prevented the massive shipments of equipment from passing the border. (Fortunately, the gear eventually made it through.) His other concern comes courtesy of the state department, which has alerted the Western media that they should assume they're being watched and monitored at all times, even in private locations.

"While the thought of sharing my hotel bathroom with a communist eavesdropper isn't too appealing, in a way I feel pretty sorry for him since I'm afraid it's going to be a pretty boring month for him," Brooks said.

Jeff Batten owns Batten Communications, Inc., the Southeast's largest independent sports production company. He also owns Complete Game Broadcasting in North Atlanta, a sports broadcasting training facility. His column appears twice-monthly in Score Atlanta. Send items of interest to jeff@completegame.tv.

## SAID ON THE AIR

*"The Bulldogs debuted on top of the coaches' poll Friday, which is nice for about 13 seconds in the SEC. Now the pressure builds. The Bulldogs will face something like eight coaches this season who have won national championships. The schedule is tougher than breakfast steak."*

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

## KEEPIN' AN EYE ON

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Last week, columnist Jeff Schultz considered the Braves' role in the coming off-season free-agency market. Surprisingly, Schultz points to what may be some upcoming cap flexibility: "The Braves might lose five of the top seven salaries from this year's payroll: Mike Hampton, John Smoltz, Mark Teixeira (already traded), Tom Glavine and Mark Kotsay." While the team's ownership has not yet proven their willingness to spend, the team should still have enough wiggle room to make a run at a big name, like Milwaukee's C.C. Sabathia.

On Sunday, Sekou Smith chronicled the many players who have left the NBA for Europe this summer, explaining each situation in particular. There is no doubt a new trend developing, as European teams have become increasingly willing to offer big dollars to lure NBA players away. What Smith fails to acknowledge, however, is that Josh Childress is the only American on the list. Perhaps then the European pull isn't as strong as many assume?

## MEDIA HALL OF FAME

"Well, the Falcons aren't fools anymore. And there's really no reason to be laughing at them now," wrote FoxSports columnist John Czarnecki last Wednesday. In regards to Matt Ryan, Czarnecki confidently writes: "Unless he goes in the tank or has a mental shutdown, Ryan is the guy." We fully agree with both of Czarnecki's sentiments. The Falcons are not only heading in the right direction, but should be better this year than most expect and, barring some sort of mental collapse, Ryan should be their guy from the start.

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## SCORE ATLANTA ADVERTISING INDEX

790 The Zone .....	1
Atlanta Braves .....	2
Atlanta Dream .....	11
Atlanta Falcons .....	1, Back page
Blue Cross Blue Shield .....	1
BP Sports .....	17
Clinical Research Atlanta .....	3
Complete Game Broadcasting .....	9
DC Memorabilia .....	15
Georgia State .....	18
Infinite Energy Atlanta Slam .....	13
Knockouts .....	11
Logoatwork.com .....	8
Man's Best Friend .....	7
Mikael's Auto Spa .....	3
North River Tavern .....	5
Personal Touch Lawncare .....	12
Punchline .....	22
Rhodes Bakery .....	17
Road Atlanta .....	4, 23
Ron Veal QB Instruction .....	22
TGS Media .....	17
Top Dog Sports .....	19
Touchdown Club of Atlanta .....	14
Tour Championship .....	2
Trident Lacrosse .....	16, 20, 21
U.S. 10K Classic .....	11
Worthmore Jewelers .....	10
XPE .....	12
Zindlers.com .....	17

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# THE ULTIMATE DRAMA OF SUPERBIKE RACING



Mat Mladin  
Suzuki



Ben Spies  
Suzuki

## AUGUST 29-31 AT ROAD ATLANTA

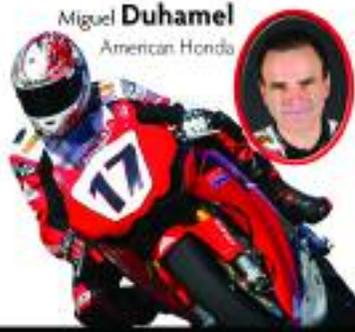
The ongoing, emotionally charged battle between Rockstar Makita Yoshimura Suzuki teammates Ben Spies and Mat Mladin for the AMA Superbike championship could be decided at Road Atlanta. The Suzuki Superbike Showdown presented by Rockstar will feature championship points-paying Superbike races both Saturday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



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



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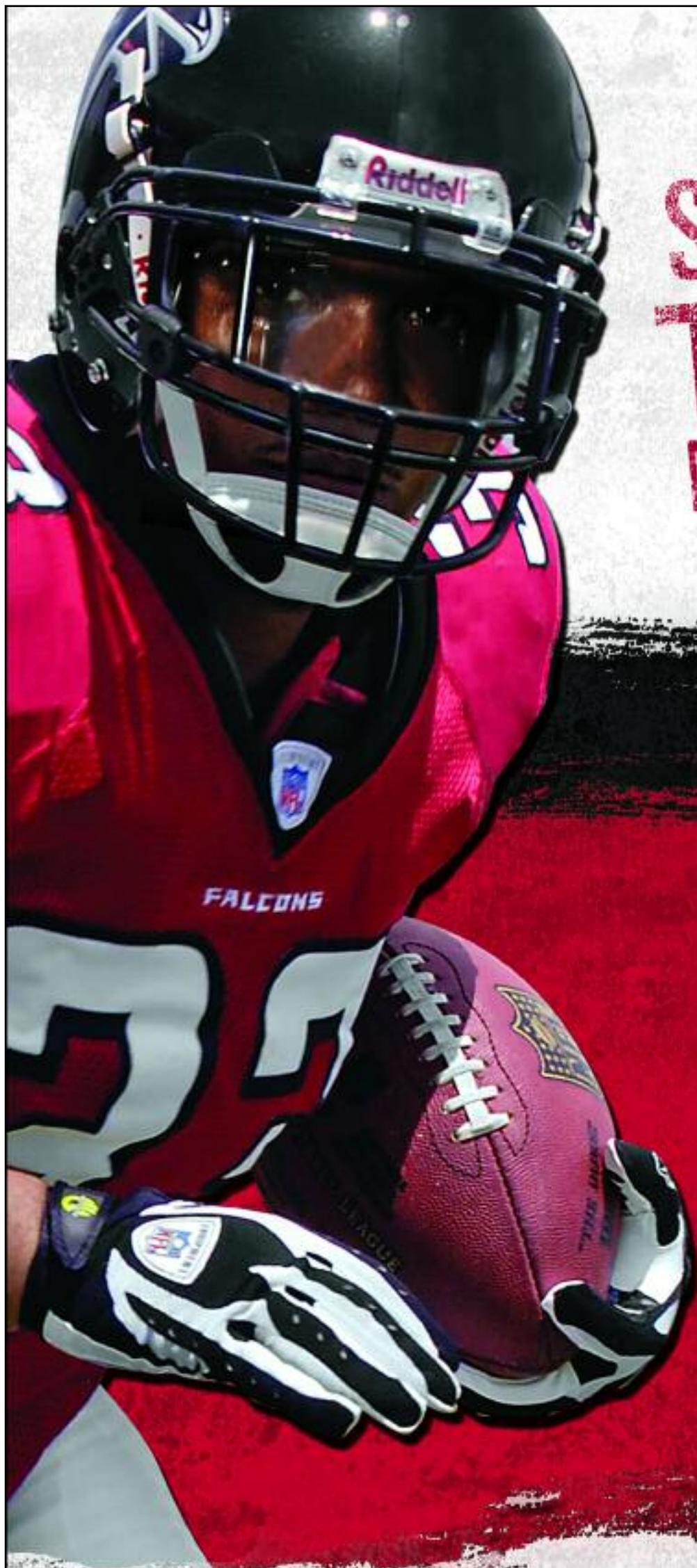


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Sun. Sept. 7	Detroit	1:00 pm
Sun. Sept. 21	Kansas City	1:00 pm
Sun. Oct. 12	Chicago	1:00 pm
Sun. Nov. 9	New Orleans	1:00 pm
Sun. Nov. 16	Denver	1:00 pm
Sun. Nov. 23	Carolina	1:00 pm*
Sun. Dec. 14	Tampa Bay	1:00 pm*
Sun. Dec. 28	St. Louis	1:00 pm*