

No one sure of Tech until curtain opens

By **BOB YOUNG**
Staff Writer

Until the curtain is opened on the 1984 version of the Georgia Tech football team Sept. 15 against Alabama, no one can be exactly sure what to expect from the Yellow Jackets. Even head coach Bill Curry can't speculate as to how the team will perform.

"I really have mixed emotions about this team," Curry said. "We've made some progress in areas that will be key for us this season, but not as much as I wanted to see."

The key areas, Curry said, were overall team toughness, the kicking game and defense.

Curry said that toughness, both physical and mental, were lacking in last year's squad, pointing out that the Yellow Jackets played very tough against teams such as Georgia, Auburn and North Carolina until the last quarter, where they lost all three games.

The Tech kicking game was hurt by the graduation of Ron Rice, who handled both placekicking and punting last season. It is possible that three men will step in to fill this gap. Curry indicated that sophomore David Bell would handle the placekicking, junior college transfer Mike Snow would take over the punting duties, and freshman Steve Paradise would handle the kickoffs.

"I'm not too sure how these guys will perform; none of them is experienced in varsity play," Curry said. "We'll just have to wait and see."

Although Curry was pleased with the improvement that he saw in his team's defense after spring practice, he has not been satisfied with its performance so far this fall.

"We came into the fall in great shape — the best we've ever been in," he said. "But that hasn't shown up in practices so far this fall."

When it comes to the offense, however, the expectations become much higher, due in no small part to the presence of Heisman Trophy candidate Robert Lavette.

A senior, Lavette is the only player in the nation to rank among the top three returnees in career rushing (2877 yards), scoring (192 points) and all-purpose running (4,058 yards). Lavette accomplished all this in spite of the fact that he missed

GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS

Coach: Bill Curry
1983 record: 3-8

Returning Starters: Offense (8)- SE Darrell Norton, FL Daryl Wise, TE Ken Whisenhunt, T John Davis, T John Ivemeyer, G Tony Kepano, QB John Dewberry, TB Robert Lavette
Defense (9)- OLB Pat Swilling, OLB Dante Jones, DE Ken Parker, DE Glenn Spencer, NG Ivery Lee, ILB Ted Roof, CB Reginald Rutland, CB Mike Travis, FS Toby Lantz.

Predictions: The success of the Yellow Jackets will depend a great deal on whether or not its defense will be able to stop the tough offenses that it will face. Robert Lavette will lead what should be a very exciting offense.

Prediction: Second in the ACC.

all or most of four games last season with knee problems.

What's more, Lavette seems to be able to perform at his best against the tough teams. In his two years as a starter, he has gained 361 yards against Georgia and 309 against North Carolina's tough rushing defense.

Georgia coach Vince Dooley summed up the feelings of Lavette's opponents quite well.

"I've got to face him one more time and I'm not looking forward to it," Dooley said.

But the Tech running attack is far from one-dimensional. Also in the backfield will be ACC rookie of the year Cory Collier, who rushed for 442 yards last year on only 79 carries, including a season-high 168-yard effort against Wake Forest. However, Collier's impact will be put on hold for at least six weeks following a knee injury he sustained in practice last week.

Calling the signals will be junior quarterback John Dewberry, who earned the starting spot last year when senior Stu Rogers suffered a knee injury. Dewberry threw for nearly 800 yards last season, but will almost surely surpass that mark this year, due to the more experienced receiver corps and the great improvement in tight end Ken Whisenhunt.

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Terrapins taking on a new look

By **MIKE SANDERS**
Staff Writer

The Maryland Terrapins will take on a different look this season as they try to successfully defend their 1983 ACC title.

No longer are they the seasoned veterans of ACC competition, with the likes of second-team All-Americans quarterback Boomer Esiason and guard Ron Solt leading the way. Those two are in the pros now along with standout tailback Willie Joyner and defensive tackle Pete Koch.

The accent will be on youth this season, with only 10 of the top 44 players from last year's Citrus Bowl team returning. "We're so young we might start burping our players at night," said second-year head coach Bobby Ross.

But opposing teams should take Ross' comment with a grain of salt. Nearly every returning player for the Terps gained valuable playing time last season, thus proving both that Maryland isn't as inexperienced as may seem on first glance, and that Ross has excellent foresight, a must for successful coaches.

But it was the inexperience that showed up in all its clumsiness last Saturday, as the Terps fumbled twice in the fourth quarter and lost at home to Syracuse, 23-7.

The man with the most unenviable task this season is fifth-year senior quarterback Frank Reich. Reich must replace Esiason, who during his tenure at Maryland gave Terp fans both sterling performances on the field and brash comments during the week. Don't expect Reich to be as flashy off the field as Esiason, but he could fill Boomer's shoes very nicely on Saturday afternoons this fall.

Reich epitomizes what could be Maryland's biggest asset this season — he, like the team, appears inexperienced at first glance, but may fool quite a few people. Remember last Sept. 24 when Esiason was hurt and Reich started against Pitt? Probably not, unless you're a Terps fan. But it was Reich who calmly stepped in and took the reins, leading the Terps to a 17-13 victory.

"(Reich's) vision is good, and he throws with better touch," said Ross, comparing Reich to Esiason. "He'll play and throw with more precision, more accuracy."

Joining Reich in the backfield will be junior fullback Rick Badanjek, a 5-9, 223 lb. spark plug who has scored nine touchdowns in each of his first two seasons and who led the ACC in punt returns last season. "I wouldn't trade him for any back in the country," Ross

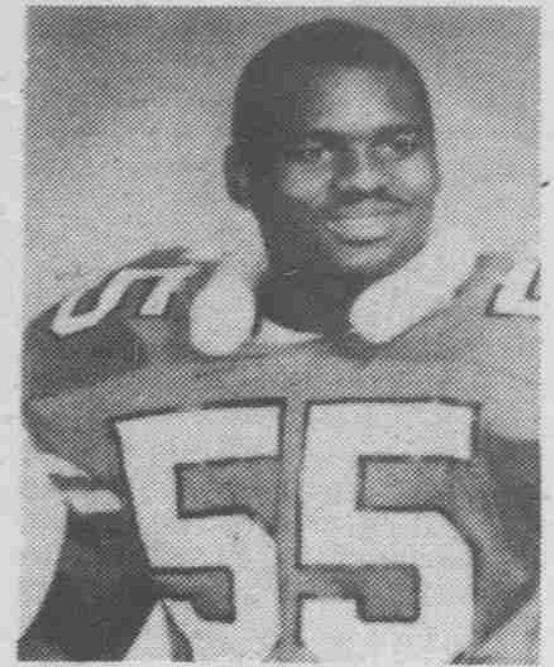
said. An excellent blocker, Badanjek should open many holes for incumbent tailback Tommy Neal and provide Maryland with a good short-yardage threat. Neal, a sophomore who carried the ball only six times last season but who gained experience as a kickoff return man (he had an 80-yard return against Tennessee), is another player who could surprise Maryland opponents.

Ross will undoubtedly mix his running and passing attacks, and when Reich drops back to throw he will be protected by a strong offensive line that averages 6-3, 270 pounds, and is led by co-captain and All-ACC center Kevin Glover. Reich's primary target will be senior wide receiver Greg Hill, who averaged 21 yards per catch last season and who holds the school record for touchdown receptions in a career with 14.

One returning player for the Terps who is no secret to anyone is placekicker Jess Atkinson, an All-ACC performer last season. Atkinson is deadly, having hit 42 of 63 field goal attempts and 91 of 93 PATs in his career.

Maryland's defense will be its Achilles heel. The defensive line is young and inexperienced and will be tested often by opposing teams. The secondary is also inexperienced, with the exception of safety Joe Kraus, and should expect to face its share of challenges.

Leading the defense will be senior linebacker Eric Wilson, an All-ACC selection last season who was named ACC player of the week three times. Wilson will provide leadership for the inexperienced defensive squad. A "hitter" with good natural instincts, Wilson had 25 tackles in one game against Wake Forest last season and another 19 against powerful Clemson.



Eric Wilson

MARYLAND TERRAPINS

1983 Record: 8-3-0
Coach: Bobby Ross

Starters Returning: Offense (4) - C Kevin Glover, G Greg Harraka, WR Greg Hill, TE Bill Rogers.

Defense (4) - LB Bobby DePaul, S Joe Kraus, MG Tom Parker, LB Eric Wilson.

Forecast: Despite huge losses, including the entire backfield, the Terrapins always seem to reload with fine young talent. Prediction: Third in the ACC.

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