

Struggling Devils host hot Jackets

BY DAVID BOYD
SPORTSATURDAY STAFF WRITER

In the past four years, homecoming has been anything but something to look forward to for the Duke Blue Devils.

The Devils (2-3, 0-2 ACC), who have dropped their last four homecoming games, hope to reverse that trend today at 1:30 as the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets visit Wallace Wade Stadium.

Duke, which lost to Navy 30-7 last week, is in desperate need of a conference win. If Duke hopes to return to a bowl game, it must start by defeating the Rambling Wreck, which spoiled its homecoming in 1991 and 1993.

"We were extremely disappointed with our football team last Saturday," said Duke head coach Fred Goldsmith, the Devils' second-year coach. "We've had to get that behind us and prepare for a very good Georgia Tech football team."

The Devils have been plagued with injuries all season. According to Goldsmith, they must be healthy if they want to compete with the Jackets.

"We've just had an unbelievable amount of injuries," Goldsmith said. "We were very blessed last year, but this year it's just been one thing after another."

"It's been hard, but our kids have kept a very positive attitude. You've just got to find a way each day and each week. We're trying to get the best team together possible to play a good football team."

Georgia Tech is coming off a huge upset of then-No. 17 Maryland. The Jackets stung the Terrapins 31-3 last Thursday as quarterback Donnie Davis led the team with 17 of 23 passing for 150 yards and one touchdown. Sophomore tailback C.J. Williams smoked Maryland for 166 yards rushing.

"I've got an awful lot of respect for the

Georgia Tech at Duke



2-2 (1-1 ACC) 2-3 (0-2 ACC)

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Site: Wallace Wade Stadium

Television: None

Series record: Tech, 32-29-1

Key players: TB C.J. Williams (Tech), QB Spence Fischer (Duke)

job that they are doing at Georgia Tech and the ability of their team," Goldsmith said. "Hopefully, we'll be healthier this Saturday and it will give us a better chance."

Georgia Tech coach George O'Leary knows that his team can't take Duke for granted. It's a game for which they have to be prepared.

"Duke is similar to ourselves as far as they've had some injuries," said O'Leary, whose team lost 27-12 to the Blue Devils last year in Atlanta. "I think they're a very good football team that is playing hard and has basically had some problems staying healthy."

According to O'Leary, the Devils are a strong anytime quarterback Spence Fischer has the ball in his hands.

"Our concern is their quarterback," O'Leary said. "He's one of the better QBs in the conference who makes the right decisions on running and throwing the ball. He gets them in the right situations."

Terps hope to find 'real' Milanovich

BY JUSTIN SCHEEF
SENIOR WRITER

Although Maryland's dream season hit an unexpected brick wall Sept. 28, the Terps hope to get back on the winning track in today's matchup at Wake Forest.

Maryland burst out of the gates with a 4-0 record and attained a No. 17 Associated Press ranking before getting wrecked by Georgia Tech 31-3. The first loss coincided with the return of quarterback Scott Milanovich, who was suspended for four games because of gambling.

Milanovich, who broke Boomer Esiason's school record for career passing yards against Tech, threw for 352 yards but no touchdowns last week. Brian Cummings, who had steered the Terps in Milanovich's absence, sat.

"Brian Cummings was not able to practice last week, so we really didn't feel it was prudent to put Brian in the game, but he's healthier and ready to play this week," Coach Mark Duffner said.

Cummings came out of the Duke game with an injured throwing shoulder and ankle. Duffner said Cummings could have played if he was needed.

Against Wake, Duffner said he was going to play both QBs, with Milanovich starting again.

Wake Forest coach Jim Caldwell said it doesn't matter who's behind center because the offense is the same. "We're going to get prepared for what they do schematically, not who's taking snaps for them," he said.

Duffner said he hopes having both signal callers available will help his team bounce back after the first loss. "Maybe a letdown occurred, but we just didn't play



Marlon Estes



Wake Forest at Maryland

Time: 6:30 p.m.
Site: Groves Stadium

Television: None

Series record: Maryland, 31-11-1

Key players: QB Scott Milanovich (Maryland), WR Marlon Estes (Wake)



4-1 (2-1 ACC)

well," he said. "We need to have more balance in our attack offensively. We have more possibilities with our offensive team with two quarterbacks."

Wake has pondered blitzing the Terps, but Caldwell isn't sold on that scheme.

"Their offense is geared to handle that pressure," he said. "They were so close to breaking a couple of those blitzes Georgia Tech came with. I don't think that anybody can do that consistently against Maryland because their offense is too strong and too organized."

On the other side of the ball, the Deacons will look to a talented wide receiver of their own — Marlon Estes. The senior has 30 receptions and is tied for second in the ACC and 14th in the country in pass receiving.

But Estes and Co. may not hold enough firepower to contend with the Terps' quick-strike offense.

Caldwell said, "We're still obviously struggling in trying to get another victory, and it doesn't get any easier for us this weekend."

SEC, ACC square off as wounded Bulldogs face revamped Tigers

BY AARON BEARD
STAFF WRITER

One of the most storied college football rivalries draws to a close tonight at Clemson's Memorial Stadium as the SEC's Georgia Bulldogs visit the Clemson Tigers.

The Bulldogs (2-3, 1-3 SEC), who started the season by throttling South Carolina and losing a hard fought game at Tennessee, will limp onto the field for the 6:39 p.m. kickoff. Injuries have ravaged this team, claiming its starting quarterback and tailback.

The Tigers (3-2, 2-2 ACC), on the other hand, will be coming off a high note, thumping N.C. State 43-22 in Raleigh last weekend.

"We're coming off a very hard fought game at North Carolina State," Clemson coach Tommy West said. "We probably have as many bumps and bruises as we've had at any time this year."

Clemson has been a difficult team to figure out this season. The Tigers played well against top-ranked Florida State, losing respectably, 45-26. But Clemson played poorly in its 22-3 loss to Virginia two weeks ago, the first loss to Virginia in Death Valley in the history of the series.

Against the Wolfpack, Clemson found their offense and turned up the defense, forcing Terry Harvey into six interceptions.

"Well, the thing we did was we corrected our penalties and our turnovers," West said. "I think our offense never lost confidence in the Virginia game. We moved the ball, but we stopped drives with penalties and turnovers. So it was certainly pleasing as a coach to see us not turn the ball over and over."

The injury situation at Clemson centers around starting defensive back Andy Ford, who injured his ankle in Raleigh. In

Georgia at Clemson

2-3 overall
3-2 overall

Time: 6:39 p.m.
Site: Memorial Stadium
Television: None
Series record: Clemson, 38-17-4
Key players: FB Raymond Priestner and QB Nealon Greene (Clemson)

Pack, Tide tangle in Tuscaloosa

BY JOSEPH ROLISON
ASSISTANT SPORTSATURDAY EDITOR

North Carolina State has just had one of those years so far.

Since opening 1995 with a win over Marshall, the Wolfpack's fortunes have continually declined. Home losses to Baylor, Virginia and Clemson and a demoralizing 77-17 massacre at the hands of Florida State leave the Pack smarting with a 1-4 record.

In fact, times got so bad in Raleigh that the Wolfpack's efforts against the Tigers evoked boos from the stands.

Those aren't exactly the perfect circumstances for traveling to Bryant-Denny Stadium to take on No. 16 Alabama.

But that's what N.C. State must do today in Tuscaloosa, Ala. The 3-1 Crimson Tide bounced back from a stunning loss to Arkansas three weeks ago with a 31-0 thrashing of Georgia in Athens last weekend.

"We have absolutely no momentum going into this game," Wolfpack head coach Mike O' Cain said. "We have a team that's struggling right now."

N.C. State at Alabama

1-4 overall
3-1 overall

Time: 3:30 p.m.
Site: Bryant-Denny Stadium
Television: None
Series record: Alabama, 3-0
Key players: DL Shannon Brown (Alabama), QB Terry Harvey (State)

At the beginning of the season, State was licking its chops at the thought of knocking off the Tide. However, the Pack's tumultuous start has made today's game a must-win situation. And his team's steady loss of faith in itself has only worsened State's ailments.

"The confidence level is something I'm constantly working on," O' Cain said. "We need to believe we can go down to Alabama and win."

NCSU starting quarterback Terry Harvey, who threw six interceptions against Clemson, enters the game with a slight limp.

"Terry won't be full speed because of a pulled groin," O' Cain said. "But he doesn't lack in confidence."

Confidence may not be enough to stem the Tide, though. Alabama sports a stingy 'D' that specializes in suffocating running backs and hounding quarterbacks and receivers.

Conversely, the Crimson Tide's offensive attack has been less than lethal this season. Its rushing game has been virtually nonexistent at times.

Yet O' Cain knows that playing the Tide entails much more than just doing battle with 'Bama's men on the field.

"This is a tremendous challenge, because you not only play a tremendous team, you also play a lot of mystique," he said.

Despite N.C. State's hardships, O' Cain has not abandoned his team's cause.