

Seminoles (who else?) class of the ACC

The biggest question in the minds of most ACC fans this football season probably will be how will Clemson fare under its new head coach, Tommy Bowden, and can he in time turn the Tigers into the same type team his father, Bobby, has at Florida State.

There's no doubt, the younger Bowden has the coaching talent and recruiting skills to improve Clemson's fortunes. But there are few coaches and programs in the same class with Bobby Bowden.

Once again, the Seminole are head and shoulders above the rest in the ACC - and barring major injury they should also be head and shoulders above the rest of the nation.

The elder Bowden returns 16 of 22 starters off last year's team which finished 10-2. They suffered just their second ACC loss ever to Torry Holt and N.C. State, but rebounded and were still in position to win the national championship before falling to Tennessee in the Fiesta Bowl game.

Quarterback Chris Weinke, another in the long line of outstanding passers at FSU, missed that Tennessee game with an injury. But reports are that he is fully recovered despite sitting out spring practice. Heading in to his junior season he has a string of 218 consecutive passes without an interception.

The brightest star on a list of many at FSU is wide receiver Peter Warrick, an electrifying receiver and runner who will be a leading contender for the Heisman Trophy.

When the Weinke to Warrick passing combo isn't lighting up the scoreboard, the Seminole can put the ball on the ground with one of the nation's top running backs, Travis Minor.

Freshman Nick Maddox of Kannapolis is being groomed as a backup and eventual possible replacement for both Minor and Warrick, carrying on the tradition of spectacular FSU offensive stars.

Leading the way for all of those superstars is one of the best blocking lines in the country, led by All-ACC picks Jason Whitaker and Ross Brannon.

And, if that offense isn't enough to beat opponents into submission, the FSU defense is. The Seminole traditionally have some of the biggest, quickest and toughest defensive linemen and linebackers in the country, and this year is no exception.

All-American tackle Corey Simon leads the way up front, and Brian Allen is one of the top linebackers in the country.

Three of four starters return from a secondary that led the nation in pass defense.

Florida State also has one of the top kicking specialists in the nation in Sebastian Janikowski, a junior who kicked an ACC record 27 field goals last year.

After a breather against Louisiana Tech to open the season on August 28, the Seminole will face perhaps their toughest ACC opponent on September 11 when they host Georgia Tech. But their biggest ACC game in fans' eyes will be October 23 when they visit Clemson's Death Valley for the first-ever father-son coaching match-up of Bobby and Tommy Bowden.

If the Seminole are undefeated at that time, Bobby will be going for his 300th coaching victory against his son.

While they're probably not quite ready to challenge the Seminole for the ACC and national championships, certainly the second-best team in the ACC and one of the top ten in the nation is Georgia Tech.

The Yellow Jackets are coming off a 10-2 season and a 35-28 win over Notre Dame in the Gator Bowl - their best season since 1990 when they shared the national championship.

The Yellow Jackets have almost everyone back from last year's team, including fourth year quarterback Joe Hamilton who is a strong contender for All-American honors.

Coach George O'Leary also returns all of his running backs except Charlie Rogers, and All-ACC receiver Dez White who caught 46 passes for 973 yards and nine TDs.

The offensive line is the most experienced in the ACC. Tackle Jon Carman (6-8, 355) will be an All-American candidate.

The Yellow Jackets lost two starting defensive ends, but both of their defensive tackles return. They also lost two of their three starting linebackers and two of their four starters in the secondary.

While Florida State and Georgia Tech are the class of the league on paper and should finish 1-2, several teams could finish from third through sixth place. Virginia, North Carolina, and N.C. State appear to be about equal, and although they're not expected to be a bowl contender Clemson's Tigers will be a more wide open team and could surprise some people.

Maryland, Wake Forest and Duke are expected to bring up the rear.

Clemson lost a host of starters off last year's team which finished a dismal 3-8 under Coach Tommy West. But Bowden has indicated the Tigers will be more wide open on offense, dumping the old power running game employed by West and several coaches before him.

Brandon Streeter, a part-time starter last year, will probably assume the full-time quarterback job, and the Tigers also return two of their top runners from a year ago in Travis

Zachery (who has been suspended for the opening game against Marshall) and Javis Austin. Terry Witherspoon is a strong running, excellent blocking fullback, and Brian Wofford will be a favorite target for Streeter's passes. Former Cherryville High running star Gary Johnson is a back-up running back.

Clemson's offensive line was completely wiped out by graduation. Center Kyle Young, a sophomore, started in four games last year.

Defensively, the Tigers return both defensive ends, one linebacker and three of their four secondary starters. Sophomore Nate Gillespie, who prepped at North Gaston, is a back-up defensive tackle.

North Carolina came on strong last year to finish 7-5 and win its fourth straight Bowl game. The Tar Heels return only eight starters but could improve slightly if they escape the injuries that haunted them last year and get all the good bounces of the football.

Ronald Curry, a part-time starter last year, takes over the

full-time quarterbacking chores and he could be one of the best running-throwing quarterbacks in the ACC. He set a school total offense record for a freshman last year.

Coach Carl Torbush hopes wide receiver Jason Peace, who was injured most of last season, will return in top form. If he does, Peace and his former Northern Durham High teammate Kory Bailey will lead one of the top receiving corps in the ACC. Redshirt freshman Chesley Borders of Crest could also see a lot of action as a wideout.

Alge Crumpler, another Tar Heel who had his entire season wiped out last year due to injury, will be one of the top tight ends in the country. Deon Dyer returns at fullback and Rufus Brown at tailback.

On the interior line, the Heels return four seniors and two full-time starters, but most of their back-up linemen are young and inexperienced.

Bryant Malloy of Crest could see a lot of action at either center or guard. The Tar Heels' incoming linemen, including 6-4, 295-pound Riko Feemster of

Kings Mountain, are said to be one of the best classes of freshmen ever at UNC. Most, however, will probably be red-shirted this year.

Defensively, the Heels lost a host of starters, but they return one of the ACC's top tackles in Sherrod Peace, and two of the ACC's best linebackers in Sedrick Hodge and Brandon Spoon. The secondary could be a weak spot as all four starters are new.

Jason Helton of East Gaston, a senior non-scholarship player, is the Tar Heels' back-up deep snapper.

A team that could make a lot of noise in the ACC this fall is N.C. State's Wolfpack.

Despite the loss of first round draft pick Torry Holt at wide receiver, the Wolfpack could still be one of the most exciting offensive football teams in the nation.

Jamie Barnette returns for his senior year at quarterback, and he was probably the biggest reason the Pack finished 7-5 last year to earn a bowl bid.

Three area products will be big in State's passing plans.

Chris Coleman and Ryan Hamrick, both starters on Crest High's 1994 state championship team, return at wide receiver. Coleman grabbed 52 passes for 876 yards last year.

But the man who could be another Torry Holt is redshirt freshman Koren Robinson of South Point who had a field day during State's spring game, catching several passes for two touchdowns and returning a kick 100 yards for another score. With his speed and quick feet Robinson could become one of the most exciting players in the ACC.

Another Robinson - Ray - returns at tailback where he gained over 800 yards and was voted ACC Rookie of the Year last year. His yardage total could have been much higher, but he started in only six games because of injuries.

The offensive and defensive lines are question marks, but State's second and third levels of the defense will be as good as anyone's. The Pack returns all three of their starting linebackers, and corners Lloyd

See ACC, 8B

KMHS Junior Varsity Football Roster

NO.	PLAYER	POST.	HT	WGT
3	Ronald Good	WR	5-7	125
5	Antonio Crocker	LB	5-9	161
7	Brandon Roberts	WR	5-7	135
9	Tyler Adams	QB	5-7	135
10	Renaldo Tate	QB	5-10	141
11	LaDricus Gingles	RB	5-10	154
21	Adrian Parker	DB	5-7	130
22	Brandon Houze	RB	5-11	170
23	Travis Clark	WR	5-7	140
24	Michael Adams	WR	5-6	117
26	Cedric Hunter	WR	5-4	107
30	Cortney Smith	RB	5-10	160
31	Tanner Putnam	LB	5-7	130
33	Dejuan Jones	LB	5-10	192
35	Joe Bennett	K	6-1	172
40	Aquino Reynolds	RB	5-10	160
44	Adonis Matthews	DE	5-10	170
51	Nicholas Curry	LB	5-9	160
53	Brandon Pressley	DT	5-9	196
60	Daniel Mason	DE	6-1	184
61	Jonathan Dixon	TE	6-0	199
62	David Creighton	OL	5-11	167
63	Jacobi Oates	OL	5-9	255
64	Steven Blanton	OL	5-9	172
65	Tyler Allen	OL	5-8	140
66	Steve Whitlow	OL	5-9	160
67	Mason Dixon	OL	5-9	138
68	Tyler McDaniel	DT	5-8	170
70	Dwayne Robinson	OL	5-10	230
71	Thomas Martin	OL	6-0	220
72	Johnny Gillard	OL	5-10	206
73	Matt Varner	OL	6-3	261
74	Damon Armstrong	OL	6-0	260
77	Donte Adams	QB	5-7	190
78	Matt Wilson	OL	5-7	225
80	Justin Branham	WR	5-10	138
81	Jamie Camp	WR	5-8	120
82	Casey Hord	DB	6-0	142
83	Kevin Walls	DL	5-10	180
84	Matt Williams	TE	6-2	179
87	Darren Surratt	DB	5-11	150

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