

WEEK ONE  
ALCORN STATE AT GEORGIA TECH

ATLANTA -- Georgia Tech ran all over Alcorn State Saturday, when 10 different players carried the ball and the Yellow Jackets ground out 439 rushing yards in a 41-0 win, but they're about to get run over by their coach.

At least on offense.  
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Head coach Paul Johnson was pleased by his defense's first shutout in nearly five years. The new 3-4 scheme that first-year defensive coordinator Nate Woody installed stoned the Braves in the opener for both teams in Bobby Dodd Stadium.

About the other side of the ball, the one where Johnson calls plays? Not so much.

KirVonte Benson ran for two touchdowns and the Jackets took control early, scoring on the fourth snap of the game when Jordan Mason went 28 yards. The redshirt freshman fullback led Tech with 85 yards as one of four players to surpass 70 yards.

Yet in Johnson's mind, Tech should've further dominated Alcorn State, maybe like when they opened the 2015 season with a 69-6 win over the Braves.

"I think any time you can win a game and win it in pretty dominating fashion, that's a positive," Johnson said. "At the same time, I was disappointed in the way we played offensively, for sure. ... For as many guys as we have returning on offense (10 starters), that was a pretty sloppy performance."

The Jackets punted just once and converted 8 of 12 third downs, but in the first half, Mason lost a fumble, quarterback TaQuon Marshall threw an interception and misfired badly several times while completing just 4-of-12 passes.

Also, Shawn Davis clanked a PAT off an upright after Tech went up 20-0 on Benson's 5-yard run in the second quarter.

"I didn't like how we played considering who we were playing," Johnson said. "We should be able to move the ball and beat those guys."

Marshall rushed for 77 yards and a touchdown and completed 9-of-18 passes for 104 yards, a score and an interception. Benson had 75 yards on 10 carries and backup quarterback Tobias Oliver had 72 yards on 12 carries.

Alcorn State quarterback Noah Johnson completed 10-of-15 passes, but never threatened Tech as he passed for just 51 yards.

The Yellow Jackets outgained the Braves 543-146 and blew the game open with three touchdowns in the third quarter.

Less than a minute after Benson scored on an eight-yard run early in the second half, Tech linebacker David Curry picked up a Marquise Forman fumble and ran 15 yards for a touchdown.

"I was going to tackle the running back, and it was just a routine scoop-and-score," said Curry, a fourth-year junior who missed all of 2017 season with a foot injury suffered in the preseason. "It's nothing special; we practice it all the time."

The Braves, on the other hand, rarely play FCS teams.

"I thought out guys played fairly well," Alcorn head coach Fred McNair said after his program took a \$375,000 payout from Tech. "Our guys stood up to the task. . . . Offensively, we didn't score anything, but defensively, we held them down."

THE TAKEAWAY

Alcorn St.: The Braves have won four straight SWAC East division titles, but the FCS program was overmatched in looking for its first win over an opponent from a Power Five conference. Although nearly as big as Georgia Tech, Alcorn State couldn't match the host team's speed or skill in any facet of the game.

Georgia Tech: This game was all along going to be more than anything about how the new 3-4 scheme of Woody looked, and the Jackets didn't disappoint. With a variety of blitzes, Tech limited Alcorn State's rushing and passing attacks on the way to the first shutout since a 56-0 win over Syracuse on Oct. 19, 2013. The Braves converted just 2-of-13 third-down chances.

PASSING GRADE

Marshall hit 5-of-6 passes for 79 yards in the second half, including a 24-yard touchdown pass to senior wide receiver Brad Stewart. "I lost my confidence in the first half after missing a couple balls and just got frustrated with myself," he said after registering a career-high nine completions. "In the second half, starting off with a few short throws helped build my confidence back up."

CHANGE OF DIRECTION

After Shawn Davis' missed PAT, the fourth-year junior who missed much of last season after tearing an ACL while making a tackle on a kickoff at Miami was replaced by sophomore Brenton King, who hit all four of PATs. "Brenton King is the kicker," Johnson said after the game.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
ALCN	0	0	0	0	0
GT	7	13	21	0	41

Scoring Summary -----

Team	Time	Play	Yards	Time	Score
ALCN	12:08	Jordan Mason 28 Yd Run (Shawn Davis Kick)	28	0:00	7-0
ALCN	1:20	4 plays, 68 yards, 1:20	68	1:20	7-0
ALCN	13:49	TaQuon Marshall 1 Yd Run (Shawn Davis PAT failed)	1	13:49	7-0
ALCN	4:25	9 plays, 81 yards, 4:25	81	4:25	13-0
ALCN	8:47	KirVonte Benson 5 Yd Run (Brenton King Kick)	5	8:47	20-0
ALCN	3:45	8 plays, 44 yards, 3:45	44	3:45	20-0
ALCN	13:28	KirVonte Benson 8 Yd Run (Brenton King Kick)	8	13:28	27-0
ALCN	1:23	3 plays, 77 yards, 1:23	77	1:23	27-0
ALCN	12:43	David Curry 15 Yd Fumble Return (Brenton King Kick)	15	12:43	34-0
ALCN	0:00	2 plays, -10 yards, 0:00	-10	0:00	34-0
ALCN	3:07	Brad Stewart 24 Yd pass from TaQuon Marshall (Brenton King Kick)	24	3:07	41-0
ALCN	3:17	8 plays, 97 yards, 3:17	97	3:17	41-0

Team Stats	ALCN	GT
First Downs	10	25
Total Yards	146	543
Total Plays	51	72
Avg Gain Per Play	2.9	7.5
Net Yards Rushing	77	739
Rushes	28	54
Yards Per Rush	2.8	8.1
Net Yards Passing	69	104
Comp-Att	15-23	9-18
Yards Per Pass	3.0	5.8
Times Sacked	0	1
Yds Lost To Sacks	0	3
Interceptions	1	1
Punts	0	3
Punt Average	0	10.3
Penalties	3	1
Penalty Yards	20	48
Fumbles	3	2
Fumbles Lost	1	2
Possession	28:10	31:50

Individual Stats

RUSHING

Player	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
ALCN					
P.J. Simmons	10	47	4.7	0	10
Noah Johnson	6	21	3.5	0	9
De'Shawn Waller	3	6	2.0	0	5
Trey Turner	1	4	4.0	0	4
Felix Harper	1	3	3.0	0	3
Kevon Marsh	1	0	0.0	0	0
Marquise Forman	6	-4	-0.7	0	4
GT					
Jordan Mason	11	85	7.7	1	28
TaQuon Marshall	9	77	8.6	1	28
KirVonte Benson	10	75	7.5	2	17
Tobias Oliver	12	72	6.0	0	12
Qua Searcy	1	56	56.0	0	56
Clinton Lynch	2	27	13.5	0	25
Nathan Cottrell	1	25	25.0	0	25
Joseph Macrina	2	8	4.0	0	4
Jerry Howard	3	7	2.3	0	4
Omahri Jarrett	1	5	5.0	0	5
Melvin Davis	1	3	3.0	0	3
Pressley Harvin III	1	-1	-1.0	0	0

PASSING

Player	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
ALCN							
Noah Johnson	10	15	51	3.4	0	0	--
Felix Harper	5	8	18	2.3	0	1	--
GT							
TaQuon Marshall	9	18	104	5.8	1	1	56.9

RECEIVING

Player	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
ALCN					
Raidarious Anderson	2	15	7.5	0	9
Charles Hughes	2	13	6.5	0	8
Juan Anthony Jr.	2	9	4.5	0	7
P.J. Simmons	3	9	3.0	0	9
LeCharles Pringle	1	6	6.0	0	6
Marquise Forman	1	6	6.0	0	6
Nigel Wood	1	6	6.0	0	6
Trey Turner	1	6	6.0	0	6
De'Shawn Waller	1	2	2.0	0	2
Chris Blair	1	-3	-3.0	0	0
GT					
Brad Stewart	4	49	12.3	1	24
Qua Searcy	2	36	18.0	0	25
Jalen Camp	2	21	10.5	0	13
KirVonte Benson	1	-2	-2.0	0	0