

# Atlantic Coast Conference Basketball Tipoff Media Day

Tuesday, October 6, 2026

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

**Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets**

**Coach Scott Cross**

**Jackson Fields**

**Nasir Whitlock**

Men's Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Scott Cross will offer opening comments.

SCOTT CROSS: Thank you all for being here. Super excited about this opportunity to coach in this great league that's had so much success over the -- really ever since I grew up as a kid ACC basketball has been great.

It's kind of surreal to be here now. I grew up watching Georgia Tech basketball when Coach Cremins had Lethal Weapon 3 in Kenny Anderson, Dennis Scott, Bryan Oliver, those guys.

It's been a great experience so far. We've had a really good summer. We've made a lot of progress. Since the fall started, I think we made another really big jump as a basketball team. Our guys have been really bought in. They've been working extremely hard.

We did a defensive boot camp two weeks ago, and it really I feel like it toughened our guys up. We made a lot of progress on the defensive side of the basketball. Looking forward to playing a couple of exhibition games and a close scrimmage to find out some areas where we need to continue to get better.

But just super thankful for this opportunity and looking forward to coaching against some of the best coaches and playing in some of the best venues in all of college basketball.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach.

**Q. Over the past five seasons you've won, what, 20-plus games. What's it going to take to give Georgia Tech their first 20-win season since 2017 and their first winning season since 2021?**

SCOTT CROSS: Great question. I mean, we have a thing we say. We say, "championships are won today" at the end of every practice, at the beginning of every practice. I think that has to be our mentality.

We have to approach every weight workout, every practice like we want to win a championship. It's not going happen in March and April if we don't win one today, so that's where our focus need to be.

We can only control the things that we can control. Do you get in the gym? Do you get extra shots up? Are you pushing yourself in the weight room? Are you working hard building great defensive habits in practice every day? Are you working on your voice? These are the things that they can control.

I think when a team plays together and they like each other and they have that team chemistry, I think you can overachieve, and you can do some great things. I do believe we've built some very good team chemistry up to this point, but again, adversity is where you really find out, you know, what you are about and how you can withstand those things.

That's why we're playing three of those games in preseason on the road. We're going to be, you know, on the road at an exhibition game against Maryland. We have one against Providence. Have a close scrimmage against Oklahoma. So all these games will be on the road in great environments for our guys. We'll expose some things that we need to improve upon.

But, again, I think it goes back to just getting better every single day.

**Q. Your time as a head coach at UT Arlington and Troy, what do you take away from those moments and the leadership opportunities you had that can help you here at Georgia Tech?**

SCOTT CROSS: I think every year you learn something new; you grow. I can remember when I was an assistant coach and, you know, dying to be a head coach. You had



all the answers. You think you knew everything. And then you get humbled very, very quickly.

You see how many great coaches that there are across the country, and you lose games probably that you look at on paper that you shouldn't have lost. You know, each year you grow watching video of how other coaches do it. You know, that year I spent at TCU was invaluable with Coach Dixon, you know, just seeing another guy that's been super successful and how he runs his program, the things he does, the things he emphasizes.

All those things have helped out over the years, but I would like to think I'm a better coach this year than I was last year and the previous year and so on and so forth.

I mean, I have been doing this since 1998. I would like to think that I'm better than I was in 1998, but there are so many great coaches.

We're entering a league with coaches that have all been super, super successful at some point in their careers and some of the best in the business. So looking forward to matching up against some of these great coaches in the ACC.

**Q. Talk about Kam Craft and what he means to this team and what the conversation looked like in persuading him to stay at Georgia Tech.**

SCOTT CROSS: So I had the opportunity to play Kam. Jackson Fields was on that team. Sunbelt versus MAC Challenge, and I can remember preparing for him a lot, and I was definitely very concerned. He was a guy we didn't want to let get any three-point attempts off. So I already knew him by preparing.

When this job came available and I saw he was on the team, he definitely was a guy that we wanted to keep in the program. He did make it known that he did want to continue his career at Georgia Tech very early on.

But he is an elite three-point shooter. I would like to think, you know, best case scenario, you know, he can be a guy like what Pryce Sanford was for Nebraska: Just an elite three-point shooter that teams are terrified of.

We're thankful we have him on the team. He's a really, really good basketball player.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you. Questions for Jackson Fields.

**Q. Coach just spoke about it here, but reuniting with coach after spending a year away, what was it about**

**wanting to be back with Coach Cross and what his leadership and his style is that speaks to you?**

JACKSON FIELDS: Well, first off, I want to give honor and thanks for my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Without him, none of this would be possible.

Coach, we built a great relationship over at Troy, and his culture is what has stuck with me after I left Troy. Just taking the stairs motto, doing the little things right, doing the small things that win games.

That's probably the main thing, the familiarity with him as well and just me being comfortable with him on and off the court knowing I have trust in him, he has trust in me to hopefully be an extension of the coaching staff and help him out in any case he needs.

**Q. As an older player joining a team with so many newcomers, how much responsibility have you taken on to establish this new standard alongside Coach Cross?**

JACKSON FIELDS: I feel like, I mean, my maturity definitely plays a part of it, but as well as being in his system for the past three years, knowing what he expects from his players and what he expects from me as a vocal leader on and off the court.

Just keeping the guys in check and keeping us all one goal, one team and just trying to win games for sure. So, yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Jackson, you received multiple D1 offers to play football; wide receiver specifically. Why did you choose basketball over football?

JACKSON FIELDS: Funny story, actually. I was playing my senior year of high school football and I went to the doctor. They told me my growth plates in my knees and hips were still open, and I had to make a tough decision whether to continue playing football and gain about 200 pounds to be an O-lineman or get to be a tight end. I was trying to catch touchdowns and not block. I ended up switching and playing basketball.

And it's funny. Coach Cross saw me my last live period of my senior summer and gave me an opportunity to come to Troy, and I'm glad I took it, because he has changed my life for sure.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Nasir.

**Q. You're stepping up from Lehigh, Patriot League. You were All-Patriot performer. You had some really**



**good games against quality opponents. I highlighted the Houston game that you really played well in. What do you think that Coach Cross and your game as far as style, how do you think that fits in the ACC?**

NASIR WHITLOCK: I think it fits in the ACC in a lot of different ways. Coach has a lot of trust in his players to go out there and play free. That's what I kind of look for entering the portal, somewhere I can play free.

As long as you play defense for him, he'll let you play free and not have to overthink a lot of things.

So definitely wanted to be able to do that at my next school, and that's how I ended up here, and his personality I feel like it matches mine in a lot of ways just doing tough things, and also both of us coming up from the mid-major level with things to prove, so...

**Q. Coming from the Patriot League and being at Lehigh, what were some of those takeaways that you believe can help you immediately at Georgia Tech from the experiences that you gained there?**

NASIR WHITLOCK: Man, I think just a nonconference in the Patriot League, have you that underdog mentality and just not taking anybody lightly going in there and giving it your all. I think we got to do that as a team this year if we want to accomplish the things we want to accomplish, which is to win a championship and win a lot of games. So, yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Last year you had a half court buzzer beater. It turned out to be highlighted on SportsCenter's top ten. That went viral. Describe the craziness of all that.

NASIR WHITLOCK: Yeah, I got to thank God for that one. I've told everybody about that shot that I thought I was going to air ball when it left my hands, and it ended up going in all net. So it was just a great experience.

Didn't get to my phone till like an hour and a half after that. It was just blowing up with a bunch of things, like this is the start of (indiscernible) season.

I wasn't even thinking about all that. I was just trying to get to the NCAA Tournament, which we had the ability to do two games after that. So just thanking God for all that, but it was crazy.

THE MODERATOR: Nasir, you mentioned one time that you are known for not refusing -- or refusing to be outworked. Nobody is going to outwork you. Where does that drive come from?

NASIR WHITLOCK: I think that comes from just I feel like I was a little bit under-recruited in high school and just feeling like I got to work hard.

I think COVID hit around my sophomore year, so a lot of gyms weren't open, so there was a lot of parks, going outside, finding extra ways to get better while a lot of people wouldn't and couldn't due to circumstances. Along with that and just being under-recruited and feeling like I got a boulder on my shoulder, which I feel like I still do. I have a lot of things I want to prove to people, yeah.

**Q. Nasir, you're entering your final college season at a new school with a new coach and almost an entirely new roster. When you thought about what you wanted from your last college season, what made Georgia Tech the place -- what made it the place where you wanted to do?**

NASIR WHITLOCK: Man, first of all, I'm from Minnesota, so being in Atlanta ain't too bad with the warm weather and stuff. Don't get too much of that.

Yeah, I mean, you are looking at him right there, Coach Cross. After my visit, I kind of told him I was, like, yeah, Coach, I'm ready to come, but I got to talk to my mom. My mom wasn't on the visit. I said I can't do anything without my mom.

Like I said earlier, we're both coming up from the mid-major level with things to prove, and we talked about the team on a visit, what we're trying to bring in and what we were going to try to do. I know he won at Troy a lot, and that's what I want to do. I want to win, yeah.

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