



## Georgia Tech advances on one-two sophomore punch

By [Carroll Rogers](#)  
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ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. -- Georgia Tech coach Paul Hewitt knew sophomores Glen Rice Jr. and Brian Oliver were key when it came to where the Yellow Jackets would go this season.

On Friday, with both showing off their growth spurts on the same night, they helped land Tech in the finals of the Legends Classic.

Rice and Oliver each put up the first double-doubles of their career to lead the Jackets to a 71-61 victory over Texas-El Paso. Tech (4-1) advanced to play No. 9 Syracuse in Saturday's finale at 8 p.m.

Athletic, aggressive and all over the place, Rice came through with a career-high 19 points to go with 11 rebounds, five assists, a steal and a block.

Oliver scored eight of his 15 points in the final 5:48 to go with 12 rebounds.

Both played with plenty of extra incentive. Rice was playing in front of his father, Glen Rice Sr., with a chance to play Michigan, his father's alma mater, in the next round. Oliver played in front of 20 family and friends at Boardwalk Hall, 30 minutes from his Glassboro, N.J., hometown.

"I thought the key to our game, giving us a chance to win, was how mature these two guys played, especially in the second half," Hewitt said.

Rice made seven of nine free throws, including a pair with 40.1 seconds left. Oliver scored eight of Tech's 10 points in the game-defining stretch to go up 63-54 with 3:34 to play, where the Jackets could nail it down from the free-throw line. They made eight of 10 free throws from there.

Glen Rice Sr. played it cool for much of Tech's game, but even he was out of his fifth-row seat, with a "wow" on his lips, when Iman Shumpert left a ball for Rice on the break that Rice slammed home two-handed for the start of a three-point play.

That conversion fueled an 11-0 run to open the second half and put Tech on top for the first time since 11:40 remained in the first half and seemed to boost Tech's confidence. The Jackets withstood a 13-6 run from UTEP and a frightening collision that left Shumpert flat on his back at midcourt with nine minutes left to advance.

Shumpert and Randy Culpepper collided at midcourt, when Shumpert stretched out to catch a long outlet pass. He was eventually able to get up and walk off on his own power.

He came back in the game at the 7:43 mark. To that point, he had been content to spend his energies defending Culpepper, the Conference USA player of the year. But he turned it on offensively, alternating drives with a pair of Oliver 3-pointers to put Tech up 61-54 with 4:26 to play.

“Shumpert did a nice job of deferring,” said coach Tim Floyd, in his first season at UTEP after resigning amid controversy at USC. “We tried to take him out of the game and his touches. And he was more than willing to stay within himself for the team.”

Shumpert limited Culpepper to 13 points on 6-for-16 shooting, including 1-for-6 from 3-point range.

Shumpert took only three shots in the first 16 minutes of the game, but finished with 13 points, four assists, one turnover, one block and five steals. He helped set the defensive tone to start the second half, which was Hewitt’s main message at halftime.

The Jackets trailed 37-31 at halftime, after they were out-shot from the floor 53.8 percent to 33.3 percent.

“We can’t go out there acting cool and doing certain things that we do, playing lackadaisical at times,” Oliver said. “We have to come out there and leave everything on the floor.”

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