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## Balancing Act: Syracuse's offense comes together in 80-76 win over Georgia Tech

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**Mike Waters / The Post-Standard**



**Enlarge**

**Dennis Nett**

Syracuse's Scoop Jardine shoots and scores on a jumper in front of Techs Iman Shumpert in first half action against the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets in Atlantic City.. Dennis Nett / The Post-Standard

**SU Basketball 2010-11: Syracuse vs Georgia Tech** gallery (23 photos)

Atlantic City — In winning its first five games of the season, the Syracuse Orange basketball team more often than not relied on one player. Not the same player. Just one player having a stellar game.

Rick Jackson combined 17 points with 13 rebounds to lead the Orange over Canisius. Scoop Jardine scored a career-high 27 points to lead the Orange over Detroit. Most recently, Kris Joseph established a new personal-best with 22 points in Friday's 53-50 win over Michigan.

On Saturday night, the Orange finally got the balanced scoring that SU coach Jim Boeheim has sought.

For the first time this season, ninth-ranked Syracuse (6-0) had five players reach double-figures in its 80-76 victory over Georgia Tech (4-2) in the championship game of the Legends Classic at Boardwalk Hall.

The Orange's balanced offense offset a career night from Georgia Tech's Brian Oliver, who scored 32 points on 12-for-21 shooting. Oliver made six of his 11 shots from 3-point range, but it wasn't enough to overcome Syracuse's multi-dimensional attack.

"We need to have balanced scoring," Boeheim said. "We don't have a guy that's going to go out there and score 30. We need to have balance every night, and we got it tonight."

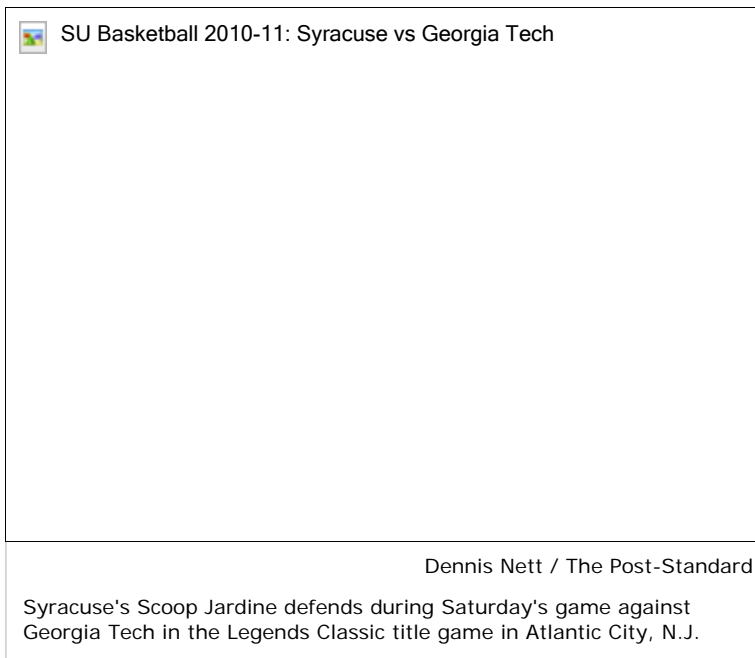
Once again, Joseph led the Orange with 19 points, but this time the 6-foot-7 junior had company in the scoring column.

Jardine scored 15 for the Orange. Dion Waiters finished with 13 points, while fellow freshman C.J. Fair contributed 10 points. Jackson added 10.

Jackson, the Orange's rugged 6-9, 240-pound senior, also hauled in 14 rebounds for his fifth double-double in six games this season. For his efforts in the low post and on the boards, Jackson was named the tournament's MVP.

"We did a great job out there," Jackson said. "A lot of guys contributed. The freshmen came in and gave us a lot off the bench. We really needed that."

Syracuse's stagnant offense got a boost from the balance. The Orange had failed to crack the 70-point barrier in four of its five games.



On Saturday, though, Syracuse made 55 percent of its field-goal attempts as it shipped the ball from one guy with the hot hand to the next guy.

Waiters kept the Orange afloat early in the game. He scored 11 of his 13 points in a 4½-minute stretch midway through the half. Waiters' flurry of baskets kept Syracuse in the game as Georgia Tech's Oliver kept hitting basket after basket.

"I was watching from the bench and I'm thinking, 'I've got to make something happen,'" Waiters said. "I knew I was going to get it going. Coach called my

number."

Joseph scored just two points in the first half as he played only six minutes due to foul trouble. He erupted for 17 second-half points.

Syracuse trailed for the entire first half until Fair hit a 3-pointer with 10 seconds left to give the Orange a 38-36 lead.

"Kris was out the whole first half, and he really came in the second half and played the best he's played all year," Boeheim said. "He was tremendous."

Oliver's 3-pointer with 17:40 remaining in the game gave Georgia Tech a 47-40 lead. The three also left the sophomore with 24 points. But the Orange took the lead with an 11-2 run and then Oliver picked up his third foul. He went to the bench for the next two minutes.

Syracuse held him to a human eight points for the rest of the night.

"We just had to get a handle on Oliver," Boeheim said. "It took us 30 minutes to do it. He moved around. They were really smart. He was in a lot of different places. He made some very, very difficult shots."

The Syracuse run that began with the 11-2 spurt eventually increased to 17-2. The most telling thing about the stretch was that seven players scored for Syracuse.

"Every night, that's what we want to see," Joseph said, "balanced scoring from everyone."

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