

## Some teams happier than others with NIT invitation

All the teams that appeared to be snubbed by the NCAA Tournament accepted bids to the National Invitational Tournament, except Georgia Tech.

The Yellow Jackets (18-12) were left out of the 64-team NCAA field for the second straight year, but this time they elected to turn down an invitation to the 32-team tournament.

"We have exams coming up this week, and we have decided to go ahead and take our exams," Yellow Jackets coach Bobby Cremins said. The decision was not an angry reaction to NCAA rejection, he said.

"I noticed last year when the NIT selection was made there were a lot of teams that should have been in the NIT that did not get in, so I would like to give those other teams an opportunity," he said.

Georgia Tech is the first team to turn down an NIT invitation since Louisville (18-14) in 1987 — the year after the Cardinals won the national championship.

Other so-called "bubble teams" that didn't make the NCAA field were Iowa (19-11), George Washington (18-13), Georgia (18-9) and Texas Tech (20-9). All four accepted bids to the NIT.

The first three rounds will be held at campus sites. The semifinals and finals will be held at Madison Square Garden on March 27 and 29.

The NIT includes four teams from the Big East (St. John's, Seton Hall, Miami, Providence), and three each from the Atlantic 10 (St. Bonaventure, St. Joseph's, George Washington) and the Metro Conference (South Florida, Southern Mississippi, Virginia Tech.)

Bob Frederick, chairman of the NCAA selection committee, said the committee did not feel that Georgia Tech was among the best 35 at-large teams. He said the Jackets had a record of 8-12 against top 100 teams and were 10-12 against top 150 teams.

No team seemed to be as disappointed as Georgia Tech, but Texas Tech was close behind.

"I'm disappointed for the team, especially our seniors," said coach James Dickey, whose team lost the Southwest Conference tournament final to Texas on Saturday. "We really don't have anyone to blame but ourselves."

Texas coach Tom Penders had predicted Texas Tech would join the NCAA field.

"If Tech isn't one of the top 30 teams in the country I'm going to start selling shoes," Penders said. "If they don't go to the NCAA it would be a real injustice. Other than North Carolina they are the most athletic team we've played."

### Wednesday, March 15

Marquette (17-11) at Auburn (16-12), 7 p.m.

Coppin State (20-9) at St. Joseph's (17-11), 7 p.m.

Seton Hall (16-13) at Canisius (18-12), 7:30 p.m.

Miami, Fla. (15-12) at Penn State (17-10), 7:30 p.m. (ESPN)

DePaul (17-10) at Iowa (19-11), 9:30 p.m. (ESPN)

Colorado (15-12) at New Mexico State (23-9), 10:30 p.m. (ESPN2)

Texas Tech (20-9) at Washington State (16-11), 12 a.m. (ESPN)

### Thursday, March 16

George Washington (18-13) at Ohio U. (23-9), 7 p.m.

St. John's (14-13) at South Florida (16-11), 7:30 p.m.

College of Charleston (23-5) at Providence (16-12), 7:30 p.m.

Southern Mississippi (17-12) at St. Bonaventure (17-12), 7:30 p.m.

Georgia (18-9) at Nebraska (17-13), 8:05 p.m.

Eastern Michigan (20-9) at Bradley (19-9), 8:05 p.m.

Illinois State (19-12) at Utah State (21-7), 9:05 p.m.

### Friday, March 17

Montana (21-8) at Texas-El Paso (19-9), 9:35 p.m.

Clemson (15-12) at Virginia Tech (20-10), 7:30 p.m.

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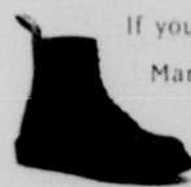
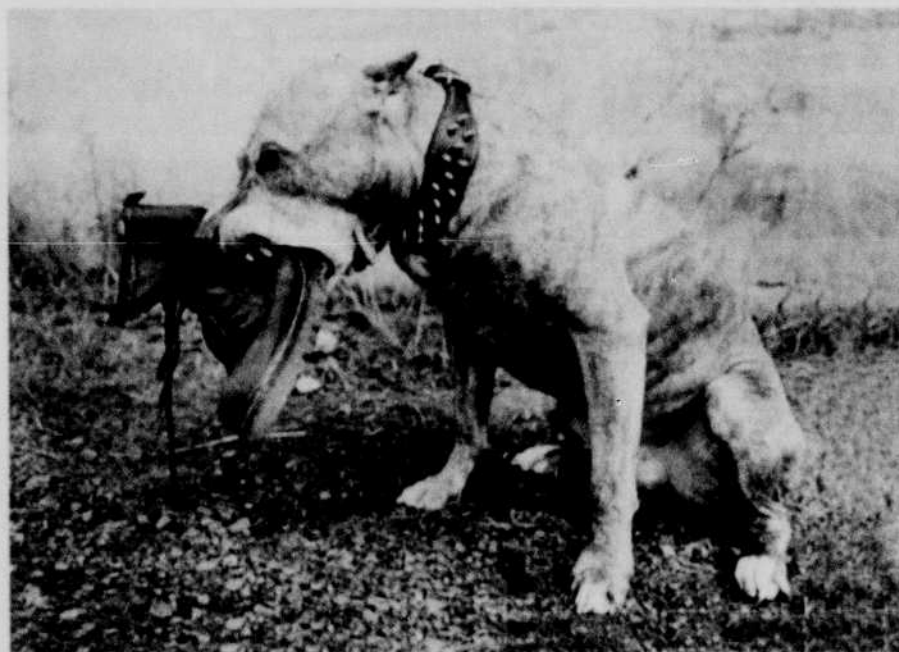
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