

# Tech's Georges-Hunt shines in dark season

Posted: 7:47 p.m. Monday, March 2, 2015

By [Ken Sugiura](#) - The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Georgia Tech coach Brian Gregory is a realist about the Marcus Georges-Hunt All-ACC campaign. There's plenty of competition. Further, playing for a team that is 3-14 in the league doesn't exactly bring out the voters.

"He'll get my vote, but they don't let me vote for my own guys," Gregory said Monday. "I think he's put himself in that position in that category."



Tech will complete its star-crossed regular season Tuesday night against No. 19 North Carolina at McCamish Pavilion (7 p.m., ESPNU). Whatever the outcome, Georges-Hunt can show again his considerable value to a team that has leaned heavily upon him.

"You just try to go out and just give it all, leave it all out on the court," Georges-Hunt said of playing at a high level in a down season. "You can't really look down on yourself. You just go out and play as hard as you can until you pass out, for your teammates."

Notably, the junior forward has improved in ACC play compared to the non-conference schedule. His averages for scoring (12.9 to 14.8), field-goal percentage (42.1 to 43.9), three-point field-goal percentage (14.3 to 37.8), rebounding (5.2 to 6.1) and assists (1.4 to 2.2) are all higher in his 17 ACC games compared to the 12 games against non-conference, and mostly lesser, opponents.

The 14.8 points/6.1 rebounds/2.2 assists combination in ACC play is impressive. From the 1997-98 seasons through 2013-14, only three players averaged 14 points, six rebounds and two assists in a single season in ACC games, according to sports-reference.com, including Tech's Iman Shumpert in 2010-11. This season, Pitt forward Jamel Artis has also accomplished the feat thus far.

Said Georges-Hunt, "Fourteen and six, it doesn't really sound bad at all."

He has particularly picked it up in the past 11 games, following Tech's blowout loss at Virginia. Since that time, he has scored in double figures in each game, averaged 16.5 points, 6.4 rebounds and 4.1 assists while shooting 50.8 percent from the field and 41.9 percent from 3-point range.

"(I) just picked it up and played even more aggressively," he said.

Part of the improvement has been his development of a mid-range jump shot, which has given him another option instead of driving to the basket, where he has absorbed considerable punishment.

He has been resilient in the face of Tech's soul-crushing string of defeats and his missed shots in last-second situations.

"I think there's been some tough situations where lesser guys would have lost some confidence or whatever," Gregory said. "He's not one of those kids."

Georges-Hunt has become, without question, the best player that Gregory has brought to Tech. He has been the rock of Gregory's first recruiting class. Forward Robert Carter transferred after last season. Guard Solomon Poole, who joined the class halfway through the 2012-13 season, was dismissed from the team during the 2013-14 season. Guard Chris Bolden showed improvement this season but was suspended for six games for violations of the Tech student-athlete conduct policy.

"He's definitely the leader on the team," forward Robert Sampson said. "He tries to bring us together when we're down, tries to keep our cool during games when the game changes."

Gregory's admiration is obvious. There are players that do only what is asked of them, he said.

"Then there's guys that do everything you ask of them and then go that extra mile, and Marcus is one of those guys," Gregory said. "And he does it in every aspect, athletically, academically, socially, the whole bit. You count on one hand the guys that, through a career, you can say that about. It just doesn't happen very often."