



Photo Courtesy of Associated Press

Pitts’ breakout game the difference in victory over Jets

By George Henry
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — A week after blowing an eight-point lead early in the fourth quarter, the Atlanta Falcons showed some backbone in a 27-20 victory over the New York Jets.

They can thank rookie tight end Kyle Pitts and quarterback Matt Ryan for that.

Pitts, the No. 4 overall draft choice, caught a key 39-yard pass to open a touchdown drive after the Jets had cut the lead to three with 6:55 remaining. Equally important, Ryan kept the drive moving with a 15-yard pass to Olamide Zaccheaus after left tackle Jake Matthews had been called for a false start that made it third-and-13.

From there, the Falcons needed five plays for Mike Davis to run in from 3 yards and make it 27-17 with 2:19 to go.

“Yeah, I thought a great play call by (coach Arthur Smith) to start that drive,” Ryan said. “You got some quarters-type coverage where guys were getting down low to stop some of our intermediate play-action pass game. To slip Kyle back there was a really good call.

“Great play by Kyle. It really was the jump-start for us on the last drive, got us going. Wasn’t perfect on that last drive, but we made the plays we needed to make. Great to get Mike in the end zone at the end of the game.”

The Falcons (2-3) weren’t done sweating, though, until Jacob Tuitt-Mariner sacked Zach Wilson for a 17-yard loss that set up the final field goal. Atlanta recovered an onside kick to end it.

The defense had some big moments: Jaylinn Hawkins’ first career interception; two sacks on the final drive; and holding Wilson to a 63.5 passer rating. The Jets had just 64 yards rushing.

“Thought our defense played pretty well,” Smith said. “We knocked them back in the run game, made the plays they needed to. Late stats, check-down and stuff — that’s what you got to do. That’s four-minute defense. You can pad the stats there. I thought our defense played very well.”

WHAT’S WORKING

The running game was fairly stout as Davis and Cordarrelle Patterson stepped up and combined to rush for 107 yards and 4.0 yards per carry. Patterson continued to be a threat in play-action and ended the game with seven catches for 60 yards. Davis had a 17-yard run.

WHAT NEEDS HELP

Ball security was an issue, with tight end Hayden Hurst losing a fumble at the Jets 13-yard line and Davis losing a fumble at the New York 20. Both red-zone miscues prevented Atlanta from padding the lead and kept the Jets within striking distance. Both made up for their mistakes, though, with Hurst catching a 17-yard touchdown and Davis scoring the final TD.

STOCK UP

With top wideouts Calvin Ridley and Russell Gage missing the game, Pitts was a force, catching nine passes on 10 targets for 117 yards in his breakout game as a pro. He had an athletic catch for a 22-yard gain to set up his 2-yard touchdown reception late in the first period. Pitts is a hybrid talent at his position, a mismatch for linebackers who aren’t quick enough and for defensive backs who aren’t big enough. He has a high ceiling.

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“I think there’s going to be a lot of those in the future for him,” Ryan said. “He’s done a great job of focusing on growth and development day in and day out, just trying to get better.

“There’s a lot of noise both positive and negative that can distract you from that. He’s been as good of a young guy of being able to just focus in on working hard every day and getting better, and I think he’s done that for the five games we’ve had. I expect him to continue that. I think it’s showing that he is really a talented player and can be a great player in this league.”

STOCK DOWN

Ridley missed the trip to London due to a personal matter and dropped two passes the week before in the loss to Washington. The Falcons desperately need their No. 1 receiver to be at his best in the coming weeks if they are to contend for the playoffs. Smith had no update Monday on Ridley’s status.

INJURED

Cornerback Fabian Moreau hurt his neck late in the third quarter and did not return. Smith said it was too early to give a prognosis.

KEY NUMBER

10 for 15 — the combined efficiency on third and fourth downs.

NEXT STEP

The Falcons enter their bye week and will practice lightly Tuesday and Wednesday before taking the rest of the week off. Atlanta visits Miami on Oct. 24.

NEWS

One UWG Nursing Alumnus’ Journey into Flight Nursing

By Amanda Clay
Contributing Writer

She has distinctive memories of her first encounters with the field of nursing as a child, where she would often go to visit her stepmother, an operating room nurse. The exciting environment of the hospital, along with seeing how much her stepmother enjoyed her job, were the factors that ultimately drew Britta Thomason into a career in nursing.

Thomason graduated from the Tanner Health System School of Nursing program in 2011 and worked as an ER and travel nurse for six years prior to transitioning into flight nursing in 2017.

Four years after that decision, Thomason hasn’t looked back. Currently, she serves as program director and part time flight nurse with the Area Evac Lifeteam at the Dublin, Georgia base, one of 13 bases in the state of Georgia.

“It [flight nursing] is great, I love it,” says Thomason. “I wouldn’t go back and do anything different.”

Thomason says that it can be difficult to get into the subspecialty of flight nursing, as there are only 13 bases in the state with four nurses and four medics hired to each base. Together, the medevac team transports critically ill patients to the hospital through helicopter while also providing lifesaving treatment. To be

hired as a flight nurse, three years of experience in a level one trauma center or other critical care setting is required. Although the job is physically demanding, Thomason says that it is an immensely rewarding work due to the potential to quickly make an impact for a critically ill person.

“We don’t get called for people that don’t truly need us,” says Thomason. “You have the opportunity to make an impact on someone’s life and that’s awesome.”

Flight nursing has become an increasingly crucial part of critical care medicine, particularly in rural areas that often do not contain trauma one hospitals. The sooner a trauma patient receives care at a trauma one hospital during the ‘golden hour,’ the better their prognosis will be.

“Air Evac Lifetime started in Missouri as a one helicopter company,” says Thomason. “The whole premise behind it was to have a helicopter out in a rural area that was already out there that could quickly get to patients and get them to a hospital.”

The company eventually expanded to include the 13 bases in Georgia, including one air evac base stationed in Carrollton.

Helicopter teams have played a crucial role during COVID-19 in diverting patients to hospitals outside of the state. When Georgia hospitals were

over capacity during the initial 2020 wave, as well as during this recent delta virus wave, teams would fly patients to hospitals as far out as Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee and Alabama.

These COVID-19 diversions on top of the usual stroke, heart attack and trauma patient transports have taken a tremendous toll on the healthcare workers.

“This is what is overloading the healthcare system,” says Thomason. “All those other [non-COVID-19] emergencies haven’t stopped, they are still happening and that’s the burden on the EMS and ER systems.”

“I have never seen these emergencies not being taken care of,” continued Thomason, “but everybody is working a lot harder.”

Despite the difficulties of going into nursing during the COVID-19 pandemic, Thomason wants nursing students to know that it is worth it.

“Right now is a tough time to go into nursing, but it is worth it,” she said. “Over the past year and a half since COVID-19 started, who in the world was more important than nurses and paramedics?”

“Nursing school is hard,” says Thomason. “You’re going to have a lot of late nights and early mornings, but it will go by so fast and you have so many avenues to take in nursing. The opportunities are endless.”



Photo courtesy of Britta Thomason

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NEWS

UWG Ingram Library Book Club

By Kinadi Dill
Contributing Writer

At UWG there are many options for students to get involved, such as Greek life, campus recreation or even student run clubs, like the book club. The Ingram Library Book Club which is open to all UWG students to join. Sign-ups are completed using a hybrid approach to determine exactly how students want to join.

Meetings are hosted on the second and last Tuesday of each month which are typically an hour long, beginning at 6 p.m. Meetings are held in-person or could be virtual to accommodate students and their schedules. Students who prefer to meet in person will meet in the Aquarium room on the third floor of the Ingram Library; virtual meetings are held via Google Meet.

During meetings, the group will discuss the book and talk about things they

liked or disliked, as well as share different perspectives about certain themes within the book. Books such as “In Other Lands” by Sarah Rees Brennan and “My Sister the Serial Killer” by Oyinkan Braithwaite will be read and discussed this semester, but other book selections are also included in the lineup for meetings as well.

“Our main goal is to read fun books,” said Lori Dixon-Leach, the club’s organizer and host. “These are not necessarily academic books.

For example, we have covered a lot of horror and thriller genres and part of that is because we provide a choice of books and let students who are participating one semester do a ranked choice vote for the selection of books for the next semester. This gives students a voice and allows us to see what kind of books students enjoy reading.”

The book club provides a reading schedule for new members along with the book that is being discussed. If a new member is unable to pick up their copy of the schedule and book, both will be mailed out to the student. The reading schedule provides a guideline for group members, giving them information about how many pages to read before the next meeting and specific meeting times.

“I was asked to start the club back in October 2020,” said Dixon-Leach. “It’s been a lot of fun so far and I’ve been doing it ever since. I make sure I read every book before I put it up to a vote for students, that way I can ensure it’s fun and also provide content warnings. We want the experience to be enjoyable for members, and hopefully we will be able to keep holding meetings for a long time because I really do enjoy it.”



Photo Courtesy of Ingram Library

ENTERTAINMENT

Old: The New 2021 Thriller Film

By Kinadi Dill

Contributing Writer

This past summer, various films hit the theaters, many of which fell under the genre of horror and thrillers. One of these movies in particular, titled “Old”, was released in theaters the last week of July. The film, written and directed by M. Night Shyamalan, was available to watch in theaters for two months after its release and is now available on multiple streaming platforms such as Amazon Prime Video, Apple TV and Vudu. Those who weren’t able to catch the movie in theaters can now stream the film from home just in time for the fall season when horror films and thrillers are most popular.

The movie introduces the audience to a family who are on a tropical vacation together visiting a beautiful island resort. This island, though beautiful, has a dark side to it that the family is initially unaware of. A sudden turn of events then leads the family to a secluded section of the island where they all begin to age rapidly, reducing their entire life spans into a single day despite only being there for a couple hours. The family is unable to leave the beach and other characters that are introduced into the plot also face the same dilemma.

This film is very unorthodox in comparison to other films that have been released this year due to its eccentric script-writing. There are several interesting symbols and hidden messages placed within the plot which further sets it apart from other thrillers that are in theaters right now. “Old” also encourages viewers to think deeper about why the rapid

change in age is happening to each character and what makes the secluded beach section so mysterious in the first place.

The cinematography, captured by Michael Gioulakis, sets the tone for the film. The film begins with bright colors and draws the audience into the beauty of the island with the vast blue ocean and resort palm trees. This vibrant capture of the island transitions to an aspect of the island that is much more sinister, with dark cave alleyways and a forest that never leads anyone back where they came from. The repetition of the camera panning out across the island also gives the audience an entire view of the beach. This further emphasizes the dilemma that each character is facing and the fear that begins to set in once they realize they cannot leave the island.

The soundtrack also plays a big part in the thriller aspect of this film as well. At the beginning of the movie, the music and sound effects let the audience know that everything is peaceful; that the family visiting this tropical island are excited and happy to be on vacation. It is later in the film when the conflict arises; the music and sound effects gradually become more daunting, building a sense of anxiety and paranoia as scenes take place and the film progresses.

The film “Old” is definitely a thriller. There is a lot to unpack after watching it for the first time. It’s unconventional plot, dynamic characters and concealed symbolism really add to the overall uniqueness, making it a thought-provoking experience for viewers.

Image Courtesy of Universal Pictures



ENTERTAINMENT



Image Courtesy of 20th Netflix

Wish Dragon: A fun Jackie Chan retelling of Aladdin

By Jannette Emmerick
Contributing Writer

Sony Pictures recently stepped into the arena of animation with instant classics like “Into the Spider Verse” and short film “Hair Love.” In the wake of their success and through Netflix’s streaming platform, they have added more experimental animated films including “Wish Dragon.” “Wish Dragon” centers around Din, a poor college student in Shanghai who lives in a one room apartment with his mother. He wants to rekindle friendship with his childhood friend Lina but the only problem is that she’s rich and famous now. Yet, despite her fame, Din remains optimistic and dreams of reuniting with his friend for her birthday. Din manages to receive a magic teapot containing a Wish Dragon named Long, who offers Din three wishes and the prospect of having anything he could ask for, expedites his dreams of celebrating Lina’s birthday with her. Din must navigate high society, honesty, reality and flee from gangster-esqe goons trying to steal

away his teapot. Even Long the dragon and other characters must learn the lesson of friendship and community throughout the story. The general plot may sound familiar to the Disney film “Aladdin”, where a poor boy wants wealth and the girl; he procures a magic lamp and a genie who grants three wishes. “Wish Dragon” retells “Aladdin”, holding homage to Disney’s “Aladdin” within the writing but still manages to subvert its pauper to prince predecessor. Instead, Din wishes to become a “princeling,” South-east Asian slang for rich boys. From the beginning, Din doesn’t dream of wealth like Aladdin and hesitates to lie like the Disney Prince, however Long the dragon, or the “Genie” figure serves as the morally gray figure much like Aladdin. This subversion of moral roles for the Din and Long allows the story to unfold in a different way than “Aladdin” and makes it unique while also staying true as a retelling. Produced by Jackie Chan,

“Wish Dragon” portrays a modern Eastern Asian aesthetic, integrates energetic kung fu fight scenes and utilizes a CGI cartoon style expertly through the humor and visuals. Even a simple quirk like a man using only his feet while his hands remain in his pockets becomes a hilarious yet unsettling aspect to the crisp cartoon style. Featuring Asian American actors like Constance Wu and Jimmy Wong, “Wish Dragon” presents an engaging cultural experience through an energetic family oriented story. From shrimp chips to Chinese festivals and dragons to dumplings; they even integrate “guǎngchǎng wǔ” or public square dance, which is a common square-dancing exercise in plazas or parks in China. Sony Pictures manages to animate and preserve a wholesome aspect of Chinese culture to share with everyone. While the story may seem predictable or unoriginal on the surface, a further delve into the full experience leads to a riveting and fun film celebrating culture, family and storytelling.

ENTERTAINMENT



Photo: Brittany Mersfelder, *The West Georgian*

UWG Wind Ensemble Performs Their First Concert of Fall 2021

By Brittany Mersfelder
Contributing Writer

The University's Wind Ensemble had their first performance of the year on Sept. 28 at the Carroll County Performing Arts Center. The performance was titled "Out of the Ashes" and featured a piece that was arranged by one-and-only Dr. Josh Byrd, composed by Ludwig van Beethoven. This piece was an octet, titled "Op. 103b", which featured four movements.

Rachel Breaux, 21 and flute player of the Wind Ensemble was very excited to be able to play a concert again. "This has been a very long time since we've done three concerts in one semester," said Breaux. "I really like the Puckett piece, it's very emotional. I think everyone is stocked up in terms of expressing their emotions since COVID-19 shut everything down."

"It Perched for Vespers Nine", composed by Josh Puckett, was very percussion heavy and gave a spooky, Halloween feel. The piece was well chosen for the day of the con-

cert, being close to October.

The third piece that was played was titled "Pyrotechnics" by Andrew Faulkenberry. This piece was energetic and fun. Faulkenberry is a young composer with only a handful of pieces released.

The fourth piece is titled "Rhapsody for Alto Saxophone" by Andre Waignein. The piece was a call and answer piece featuring saxophone soloist Alex Payne. The piece contained four movements, giving Payne a chance to show off his skills. Payne rocked the stage with his fellow ensemble.

The last piece performed was titled "Soul to Soul" by Quinn Mason. The piece was very beautifully written and expertly played- a well chosen piece to end the night. Dr. Byrd stated that he specifically saved this piece for last to send us off with something memorable and beautiful.

Breaux is a senior music education major and co-principal in her section. "I love the unity [of the ensemble]," said

Breaux. "[wind ensemble] is an upper-level performance group. It's usually the top players of the high school that ended up being in the Wind Ensemble. Everyone has the ability to be able to [audition]. We play a lot of cool stuff and new music. There's not a lot of directors that emphasize music from minorities or music from women.

"[Dr. Byrd] is the prime example of being a model for his students and everything he does is carefully calculated in his brain," continued Breaux. "He is incredibly intelligent and passionate about what he does. I have never seen somebody with so much passion in an itty-bitty body."

The next concert for the Wind Ensemble will be held on Nov. 12 at the Carroll County Performing Arts Center.

Director Dr. Josh Byrd will be hosting auditions for any interested students for the wind ensemble in late November, early December. If interested in auditioning, contact Dr. Byrd via email at jbyrd@westga.edu.