

SPORTS

Playing the Field

Match-ups from across the Carolinas: Teams cap off seasons with big wins

by Jon Hoppel :: *qnotes* contributor



Charlotte Royals Garrett Jordan pushes through the defensive line during match play.

Photo Credit: Susan Fisher

Well, the end of the year is here. All your local sports teams and leagues have shut it down for the holiday season. But, just in case you missed anything, here is a recap!

Roller Derby

The Gastonia G Force wrapped up their season November 17 with a home bout versus the Rogue Rollergirls out of Fayetteville, N.C. Heading into the contest, the G Force were sporting a 6-3 record and were looking to finish their season off on a high note.

From the outset, the G Force looked to be in control. Several early jams went to the ladies from Gastonia and by the time the second half rolled around, they had a hefty 75-point lead. After that, Gastonia never looked back, building on their lead until the very end, winning the bout 202-116. In the offseason, the team will continue to hold practices every Tuesday at Kate's skating rink. So, if you think Roller Derby is your thing, please go out and give these talented ladies a look.

Rugby

On Nov. 23, the Charlotte Royals hosted their last matches of the season when the New England Valkyries and the Charleston Blockade came to town. Charlotte had an undefeated season on the line against two very formidable opponents. First up was Charleston, who were coming off an impressive showing in Atlanta's Ruck-a-Buck tournament in October, placing third place out of 7 teams. The Royals had already beaten the Blockade twice this season, both shutouts, and were looking for the three-peat.

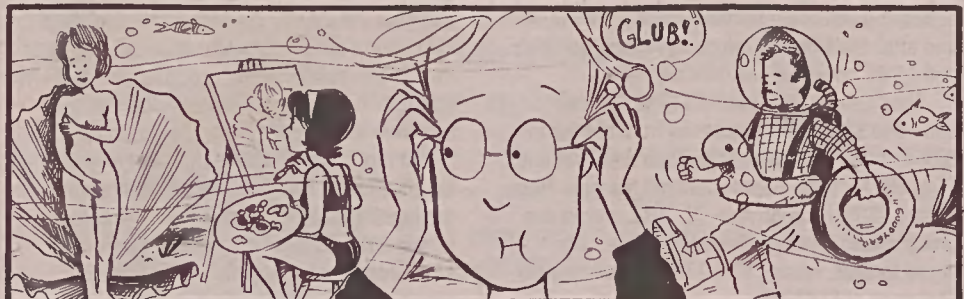
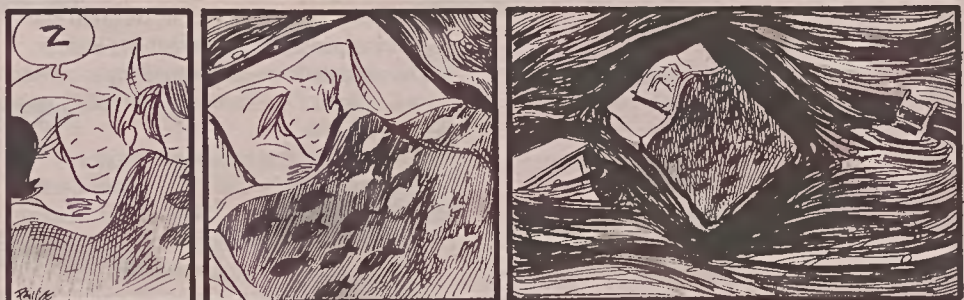
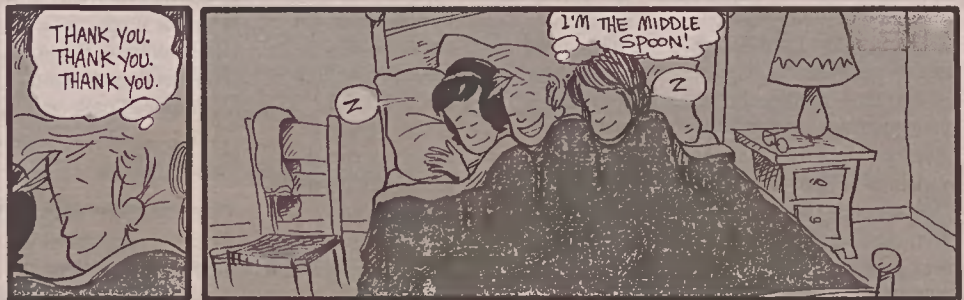
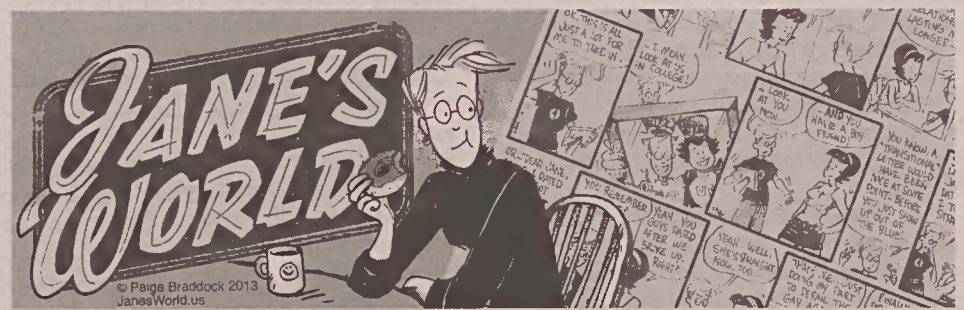
Charlotte got up early in the first half with three straight scoring plays from Outside Center Garrett Jordan and never looked back, putting a total of 5 tries on the board before halftime. Battling fatigue and injuries to several key players, the Blockade were able to stay resilient and slow the Royals scoring onslaught in the second half, but they were never able to get on the scoreboard. Final score: 47-0.

The second, and marquee game of the day, pitted Charlotte versus New England, a team that placed in the top two this past Memorial Day at Chicago's Combustion tournament. True to form, the Valkyries gave Charlotte all they could handle from the beginning by dominating possession for the first 20 minutes of the game. However, the Royals were able to capitalize on two late mistakes by New England and take a 12-7 lead into halftime. Just after halftime, momentum clearly swung in Charlotte's favor after a pass interception in their own half lead to long scoring play from Brandon Huddleston. That play seemed to take the winds out of New

England's sails and Charlotte, after converting two more penalty kicks for scores, won the game 25-7, completing their first ever undefeated season in their 10-year history.

In the final game, New England and Charleston faced off against each other for second place. Decimated by injuries, the Blockade played valiantly and kept the game close. But, in the end, it was too much to overcome and the Valkyries took the game 21-7.

Earning men of the matches for Charlotte were J.T. Wentz, Garrett Jordan and Josh Whaley. Congratulations on your unprecedented season and your continued success in the future. ::



Meetings: Third Tuesday of every month, except when there is specialized programming, plus monthly socials to promote networking and friendship

Program: A wide variety of topics of interest to appeal to the diverse LGBT community

Time: After work with a cash bar social and heavy hor d'oeuvres with dinner and program following

Membership: Visit the website for application options and benefits.

Information: Call 704-565-5075 or email businessguild@yahoo.com for more details or write to The Charlotte Business Guild P.O. Box 33371 | Charlotte, NC 28233



CHARLOTTE BUSINESS GUILD