

The Banner Sports

SLAP SHOTS

Monday night soccer, anyone?

By Brian Castle
Managing Editor

Last week, the *Banner* editorial board, minus News Editor Catharine Sutherland and Features Editor Erin King (both of whom haven't made enough effort to assimilate with the old guard) descended upon Mitchell's Sports Bar and Grille with friends and spouses for one of my favorite sporting activities—Monday Night Football. But it wasn't the Monday Night Football that you think it is. I'm talking about the *real* Monday Night Football—English Premier League Football. Yes, as in soccer. I could barely contain myself when I found out that last week's matchup featured my favorite team, Liverpool, and the always competitive Aston Villa. So I invited some of my valued friends to share the experience with me at Mitchell's, which has always accommodated my thirst for English football (even though it clashes with the more popular and less intelligent form of football featured on most of the televisions on Monday nights).

We had a strong showing, with Michael and Emily, Dave and Melanie, Reathel and Angie, and Jeanette, Kyle, and Wendy showing up to support the Reds of Liverpool Football Club. But we were missing one key invitee.

James, where were you man?

I invited one of my most dedicated English football friends, UNCA cross country sensation James Rogers. I thought, what better way to watch an English football game than with an Englishman? And not just any Englishman, because James is just as dedicated to the game as I am. We are at that "Football is more than a matter of life or death; it's more important than that" level of dedication.

James, where were you, man?

The game proved to be everything that it was hyped to be. Liverpool, despite playing without tenacious captain Paul Ince, trounced Villa with three second-half goals from its goal-scoring triumvirate of Robbie Fowler, Steve McManaman, and Karl-Heinz Riedle. All in all, the game was an incredible display of Liverpool's dynamic passing and spot-on finishing.

James, where were you, man?

My faith in James is now greatly depleted. All I wanted to do was to share the moment with someone who would have a greater appreciation for the importance of English football. But it wasn't to be, because James put his schoolwork ahead of his heart. I hope you get straight A's this semester, but...

James, where were you, man?

Next time, you had better take me up on my invitation to give you a little slice of home. I wasn't asking you to move furniture at my dad's store. Football and lager, mate, that's all. You really need to get your priorities straight. I don't ever want to have to ask you the question...

James, where were you, man?

P. S.—I even had a couple of really wonderful (yes, good-looking, too) ladies who were very eager to meet you. The choices we make in life...

Men's soccer still without Big South win

By Kimara Parker
Staff Writer

UNCA dropped another Big South Conference game to the Liberty Flames on Sept. 27, 3-1.

The Bulldogs are now 0-2 in the conference after the loss to Liberty, while the Flames unbeaten at 8-0.

In the first half of the game, the Bulldogs took only six shots as Liberty ripped 13 shots against the UNCA defense.

"In the first half, we really did not play that well," said UNCA freshman midfielder Arin Glass. "We really struggled."

The Flames took charge in the first half, but the goaltending of freshman Bulldog Jerry Hancock kept Liberty off the board. Liberty fired the first 11 shots of the game, but Hancock reeled in five saves in the first half to prevent Liberty from scoring.

Four corner kicks were made by both teams in the first half. UNCA had 10 fouls called on them in the first half, and Liberty was whistled for seven.

"We are a really young team and have not found our chemistry yet," said Glass.

Towards the end of the first half, the Bulldogs opened the scoring when freshman defenseman James Gisborne scored on a penalty kick. The Flames were called for a handball in the box, and the penalty kick was awarded.

"We were able to weather the initial storm and get to halftime," said UNCA Head Coach Steve Cornish. "We knew that they would come out hard (in the second half), and we knew we had to weather that storm, too."

In the first minute of the second half, Liberty's Mike Rohner rifled a shot past Hancock to even the score at 1-1. Derek Avilez and Ryan Trumbo assisted Rohner on the goal.

Liberty's second goal was scored just four minutes later, enabling them to seize control of the game.

Avilez scored on a penalty kick, following the ejection of UNCA sophomore defender Chad Miller.

"We lost one of our men (Miller) to a red card," said Glass.

A red card is given to a player who displays unsportsmanlike conduct.

Miller was called for a red card in the box on a hard foul, and a penalty kick was awarded. The penalty kick put Liberty in the lead with a score of 2-1 in the 50th minute.

"He (Miller) got ejected for two yellow cards. When you get your second yellow card, then comes your red card and you get removed from the game," said Cornish.

"Unfortunately, they scored twice in the first five minutes (of the second half)," said



(Top) UNCA sophomore Chad Miller is calmed down by a teammate after committing a foul, while an injured Liberty player is examined by a trainer. (Right) Miller is given a red card for the foul.

Cornish. "Five minutes earlier, we were winning 1-0, and five minutes later, we were down 2-1."

Miller was not able to play in the game at UNC-Chapel Hill on Oct. 1, according to Cornish.

"We were playing a man down, and it was tough to play with a man down," said Glass. "We could not step up to the challenge."

"When we lost Miller to the red card, we played with only 10 men against their 11," said Cornish.

The Bulldogs were already down, but the loss of Miller all but knocked them out.

"We were overwhelmed by their tenacity. We were overwhelmed by their commitment to challenge," said Cornish.

Hancock went on to comment on the red card placed on Miller. The foul was emotional, according to Hancock.

"We had just recently been scored on, and it was a foul that came from emotions. We broke down in the second half," said Hancock.

Liberty added an insurance goal when Trumbo scored Liberty's third goal in the 61st minute, sealing the victory. Rob Weaver and Gary Ricketts assisted Trumbo on the goal.

Cornish commended Liberty on the way they played.

"Liberty is probably the strongest team we have played so far," said Cornish. "They are very solid at the back."

"They (Liberty) work hard in midfield, and they have two very special players up front that caused this havoc," said Cornish.

Cornish was pleased that the team didn't quit.

"I thought that our players battled hard. They did not give up, and that's a good sign," said Cornish.

"It's a good sign because they could have gone in the tank, but they really did not," said Cornish.

"They tried to continue to play, and that's very important, because when we turn it around, it will be because of this commitment that they have to play."

"Liberty gave us a good lesson," said Cornish.

"The players are not used to losing, which is a good thing because we don't want them to get used to losing," said Cornish.

The Bulldogs will play again on Oct. 4, when they face Coastal Carolina at home.



PHOTOS BY ROB HAMMONDS

Cross country teams improve records

By Caroline Castle
Contributing Writer

The UNCA men's and women's cross country teams traveled to Birmingham, Ala. on Sept. 27 for the Birmingham Cross Country Classic. UT-Chattanooga won the men's meet with 54 points, while Georgia Tech won the women's meet, 111 points ahead of UNCA. "Other teams are starting to realize how good we really are," said UNCA Head Coach Stan Rosenthal.

The men's team finished fourth out of 21 teams with a score of 173. The men finished behind UTC, Georgia Tech, and University of Tennessee. The women's team placed fifth with 179 points. They finished just ahead of Emory University.

Due to rain, all of the teams participating had to run a murky course. Mandy Becker, who had the flu, was the first Bulldog to cross the finish line in 19th place (19:31), followed by Katie Harmuth in 25th place (19:43). Rounding out the scoring for the Bulldogs were Karen Monaco in 36th place (20:01), Keelin Mooney

in 41st (20:14), and Dawn Stanford in 60th place (20:40). Becker finished 1:16 behind race winner Erin Jones of the University of Georgia.

The men's cross country team had a strong finish. Senior Eddie Legair continued his strong running by coming in 23rd in the 160-racer field with a time of 25:26. Legair missed the UNCA record by 10 seconds, finishing 1:15 behind David Rop of Jackson State, the winner of the race. In 31st place was freshman Brendan McGrane with a time of 25:39. Senior James Rogers (25:51), freshman Brandon Trollip (25:53), and sophomore Jim Phillips (25:54) followed closely as a pack of three. The trio placed 38th, 40th, and 41st, respectively.

"I was really pleased with the way we ran Saturday," said Rosenthal. "We ran against some great competition and did pretty well, all things considered. Many of our men ran their best times of the year. Our women had to run in the rain, and that slowed us down, but we still competed very hard and did a great job. I couldn't be more pleased and I hope we keep it up."

"We are getting to where we need to be. Hopefully we can win the Big South Conference," said Rosenthal.

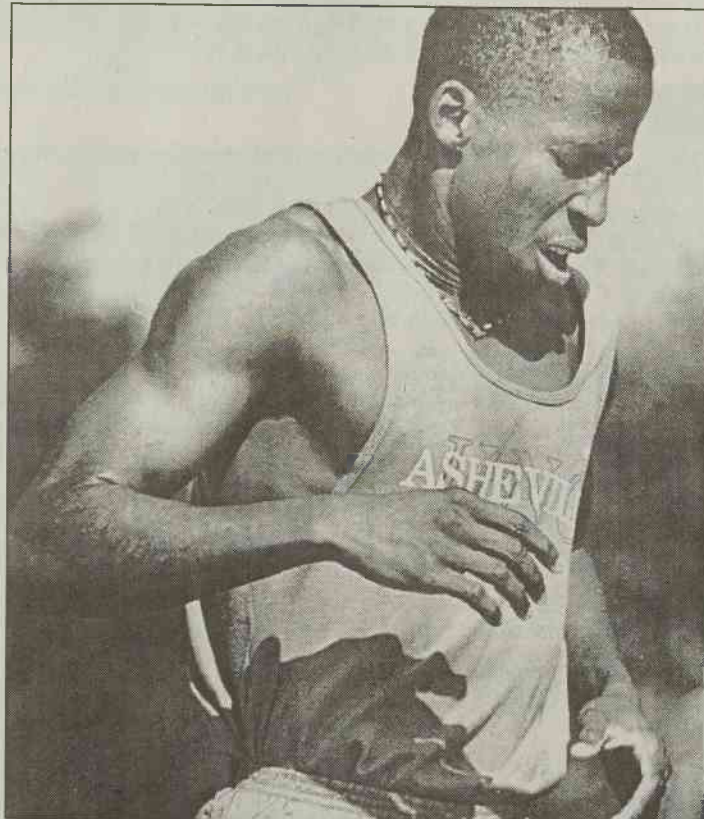


PHOTO BY ROB HAMMONDS

UNCA senior Eddie Legair after a race earlier this season against Davidson. Legair was the top finisher for the men's cross country team last weekend at Birmingham.

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