

Cheerleading: there's more to it than you think

by Shirley Hunter
Staff Writer

Some people have the misconception that cheerleading is fun and that's it, but a lot of hard work and sweat goes into being a UNC cheerleader, according to various members of the Varsity Cheerleading Squad.

The cheerleaders practice twice a week, have outside practice sessions and participate in a weight training program. Hard work, huh?

Most of the cheerleaders agree that it takes a lot of dedication to be on the squad.

And cheerleader Jeanette Everette knows about dedication. For two years, the junior unsuccessfully tried out for the Varsity squad, but now she is the only black female member. "Cheerleading is something I have to do and want to do," she said.

Everette, who has been a cheerleader since she was in the sixth grade, said "politics may have been going against me in the past during UNC tryouts, but I don't feel any pressure now that I'm on the squad."

And she said she does not want to be considered a token black. "I hope people see me as a good cheerleader who happens to be black instead of just a black cheerleader."

Unlike Everette who has had several years of cheerleading experience, junior Kenneth Thomas from Henderson, N.C., had no experience before coming to UNC.

He said that during his freshman year at the freshman convocation held in Carmichael auditorium he enjoyed watching the cheerleaders and wanted to become one.

"A friend talked me into trying out for the squad, and I made it," Thomas said.

But, he said, there are a lot of changes that should be made as far as

tryouts are concerned.

"For instance, there is too much weight put on gymnastics and tumbling. . . people shouldn't be judged so heavily on gymnastics," he said.

Thomas suggested that more emphasis be put on the person's ability to motivate the crowd.

Also, the male cheerleaders need to incorporate more dance steps into their routines, Thomas said. "In years past, the male cheerleaders didn't do a lot of routines because they were thought to be too feminine . . . but the moves can be done without looking feminine."

"If you've got a certain talent, you should be able to display it. It's the way the dances are projected that counts," Thomas added.

Quentin Alexander, a junior varsity cheerleader from Fayetteville, agreed with Thomas about the routines. "The guys should be more involved. . . . Male routines as they are now are boring."

Even though he has some problems with the structure of the cheerleading squad, Alexander, who has an extensive background in cheerleading and has won many awards, said he still loves the sport.

Byron Murphy, 19, a sophomore from Granville Falls, N.C., said he is enjoying his first year on the squad. "We lift weights a lot . . . it's hard work."

Murphy, who played football and basketball and ran track in high school, said he had to get used to cheerleading.

"It was once thought of as a showcase for pretty girls but now is a sport," he said.

For the first time in UNC history, cheerleading was put under the athletic department this year.

"This change means that cheerleaders will have easier access to facilities used by team members of other sports," said Teresa Pollard, cheerleading advisor. And a cheerleading coach may soon be hired, she added.

The Black Student Movement

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and that both the SBI and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) have folders on the BSM.

Anderson agreed that the BSM is a threat to some. "I believe many of the major issues touched upon this campus wouldn't have come up if it hadn't been for the BSM."

"We're considered controversial, but if there's no controversy there's no

change, and where there's no change, there's no progress," she said.

While the BSM's primary goal is to bring more black students into the University and the BSM, Anderson said the BSM does not want to alienate anyone from membership. "Anyone can become a BSM member by paying the \$2 dues."

BSM Gospel Choir

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of work and it is. But the choir is too much fun!"

Much of this fun exists during Tuesday and Thursday night rehearsals. A business meeting is held during the first half hour. At 8 p.m. the music begins as the director leads the choir up and down the music scale. The do, re, mi's never had so much soul!

Next comes the warm-up selection and along with it the clapping of hands, patting of feet, nodding of heads, rocking of bodies and all kinds of voiced approval. New songs are learned, old ones reviewed, and at 9 p.m. the members join hands and form a circle that expands to the walls of the practice room in upstairs Chase Hall on UNC-CH's South Campus. In the circle individual concerns about financial and academic problems are voiced as well as announcements of special blessings choir

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photo by Ralph Ward

Gwen Upchurch, president of the BSM Gospel Choir

For Cathy Matthews, being a Marching Caroline is fun

by Donna McBryde
Staff Writer

Cathy Matthews, a junior from Jamestown, N.C., is one of 24 members of the Marching Carolines, and she is the only black.

Matthews attended a predominantly white high school, Ragsdale High School, where she was a flag girl for four years and captain of the squad for two years. "I was one of the first black captains on the squad," she said.

Because of her previous experiences, Matthews said she adjusted well to the Marching Carolines.

She first tried out and participated on the squad during her freshmen year. In all, six blacks tried out that year, but three made it. Her sophomore year, three blacks tried out, and two made it. "The first day of tryouts is usually the hardest, but once you make it through that day the rest of the week doesn't seem as bad," Matthews said.

Despite what others may perceive, Matthews doesn't consider her position as one of a token black. "I feel that I have earned my position on the squad; that's the way it should be."

Many blacks do not understand Matthews' participation on the squad, she said. "They think I am trying to be 'white,' but they really don't know me."

Matthews said that during her sophomore year she met some of the blacks in the Carolina Marching Band and that has made things easier for her.

This year, things are going really well on the squad, she said.

Donna Copley, captain of the squad, said she considers it "one big happy family." "Everyone's treated equally and given the chance to voice her opinions."

She said she is concerned with the lack of blacks on the squad and feels that "those who are self-motivated enough will strive to be members of the organization."

"We try to publicize important events about the squad," Copley said. "Tryouts are usually held during the first week in April, and we put announcements in the *Daily Tar Heel*, post flyers in the dorms, send out letters to various high schools in the state . . . do what we can to promote more girls to try out."

Everything is done fairly, Copley said, and the girls are picked purely on the basis of skill. "The judges are very objective and usually they're people who have experience in flagline judging."

Matthews is the only black on the squad this year, but last year there was another one, Brette Egerton, a sophomore. "This year I decided to make a change, so I tried out for the Junior Sweet Carolines and made it," she said.

Egerton said she enjoyed working with the football recruits but still missed the Marching Carolines.

For more information on the Marching Carolines, call the band office in Hill Hall at 962-1080.