



Seahawk Sports

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SPORT NOTES

Kevin Farmer

Rae Carruth, Ray Lewis, Cecil Collins and Eugene Robinson - what do these people have in common?

Besides being highly paid professional football players, they all have had brushes with the law in the past year. The offenses vary from Robinson's arrest for soliciting a prostitute the day before he played in Super Bowl XXXIII, to Collins being involved in a stalking incident which resulted in the Miami Dolphins running back being thrown in jail in Louisiana... to the most serious of all charges when both Carruth and Lewis were implicated in murder plots.

These individuals are four more in an unfortunately growing list of athletes whose "star status" in the eyes of the general public somehow has them believing they are "above the law."

One should thank O.J. Simpson for that, I suppose. It seems to be forgotten that before they were highly-paid famous jocks these players were human beings. And as such they should be held accountable for their actions just like everyone else.

Each professional sports league has intervention and drug treatment programs for those whom they have under contract. I think however, that these devices are consistently overused in an effort to assist their employees to "skirt" the laws of society at large. There is indeed something wrong with this picture. Why doesn't somebody wake up to the double standard?

Latrell Sprewell chokes his coach and gets fired from the NBA. He goes to see a shrink, is let back in, and now he plays for the New York Knicks as a sixth man. He is second in team scoring.

Excuse me, but the way I remember it, aren't people are supposed to go to prison for things like assault and attempted murder? Maybe that's just me.

Bottom line: if you play a sport, professional or not, you are viewed as a role model (even if Charles Barkley begs to differ). What you do inside or outside the arena is reflected or outright imitated by fans and the public, especially children.

And when someone in the real world gets convicted of a serious crime, often they will point to a famous athlete who has been caught in the act: "He did it and got off scot-free! Why can't I?"

I will tell you why. They are jocks. You are not. It smacks of double standard, but there wouldn't be a double standard if the athletes would set a better example.



James Flint/The Seahawk

Swimmers end season with victory over ECU

The regular season ended for UNCW's swimming and diving teams with a double win against East Carolina University last Saturday. The men's team won their third consecutive meet, 134-108, while the women's team pumde the Pirates 146-97 for their eighth win of the season. The Swimming and Diving teams will go to the CAA championships February 23-26.

Full meet results are listed on the Scoreboard, page 20.

Townsley Balack, foreground, prepares to swim the 200 meter backstroke in last Saturday's meet against ECU.

Baseball season underway this weekend

by AMANDA BREEDLOVE

Staff Writer

Regardless of what the groundhog may have said, spring is definitely on its way. That fact was never seen more clearly than last Tuesday at Brooks Field when the Seahawk baseball team hosted Coastal Carolina University in their long-anticipated season opener.

In the week prior to their first game, head coach Mark Scalf echoed the sentiments of the entire team: "I think we're prepared to play, I don't think we've had the opportunity to cover all phases of the game as often as we wanted, but I don't think there's any doubt we're ready. I think everyone's anxious to play."

The baseball team has hit the field to practice every day the weather has permitted since January, working to sharpen the skills they will need to meet the challenge of teams in the nation's third-ranked conference, the CAA.

Though last year saw the graduation of standouts such as Benji McIntosh (last year's second-leading hitter), Bryan Mazur (starting left-handed pitcher), and pitcher Lee Grant, the team is not hurting for talented players.

"We'll be counting on the outfield, Mike Foucht, Kevin Hairr, Justin Wishon, Jamie Hemingway, and senior catcher Daniel Marsh, who we feel is the best in the league," Scalf said.

"We have four or five key guys that we can count on for pitching, Chris Coughlin, Anthony Kozol, Jack Temple, Matt McDonald, and Eric Johnson — guys we're counting on to pitch lots of innings."

Senior pitcher Jack Temple said, "I feel good about the upcoming season; we've got a lot more depth, a strong offensive club with solid pitching coming in. I think we're much improved, we have a much stronger defense and we've worked pretty hard in the off-season to get where we are now."

The baseball team is not only loaded with experience this season, but reinforced with plenty of new talent coming in. There are 15 freshmen on the roster, the largest number ever, who will fill strategic roles on the team.

"We feel like we've had as good a recruiting class this time as we've ever had," said coach Scalf. "We're very fortunate to have them all. We hope our younger players are able to step up and fill in."

One of the most important skills for any baseball team is to be able to drive in runs. The team is counting on their starting lineup to build offensive momentum this season. They are also looking to the potential of newcomers like Russ Simmerman, David McKenna and Matt Wright to round out their offense.

Coach Scalf admits that one of the biggest challenges for this team will be to overcome inexperience in younger players and be prepared to meet a high level of competition. However, the team is well aware of what they are capable of.

"We're working very hard to take one day at a time," Scalf said. "Whether it's a game or practice, our coaching staff encourages the players to make daily goals and to accomplish something everyday."

"If they come to the park every day mentally and physically prepared to play, then we'll win our fair share and have the opportunity to meet the goals we've set."

UNCW will have the chance to make a strong start this weekend, February 12 and 13, when they host UNC-Greensboro for two showdowns at Brooks Field. Game time is 1 p.m. on both days.