

State expected to lead ACC in college basketball

BY: CARL YIN

As November approaches, so does the start of the college basketball season. This year looks to be an especially competitive one, especially in the ACC.

For the first time in many years, neither Duke nor UNC heads into the season as the ACC favorite, as NC State looks to be the team to beat this year in the ACC.

Here is a preview of the three local ACC college basketball teams.

Duke

Even though Duke had only one senior, Miles Plumlee, graduate last season, they will be short a couple of key players. Austin Rivers, debatably the star of the Duke team last year, decided to forego his college career for the NBA Draft.

Andre Dawkins, still struggling with the death of his mother and sister his freshman year, has decided to redshirt this season. Lastly, Michael Gbinije late last season decided to transfer to Syracuse, mainly due to the lack of playing time he received at Duke.

However, Duke will be receiving a fair share of help from new incoming

players. After redshirting their freshman years, Marshall Plumlee, the youngest, yet the tallest of the Plumlee brothers, and Alex Murphy will begin their college basketball careers.

Duke's incoming recruiting class is small, but talented. Shooting guard Rasheed Sulaimon and small forward Amile Jefferson are both McDonald's All-Americans and will look to make an immediate impact.

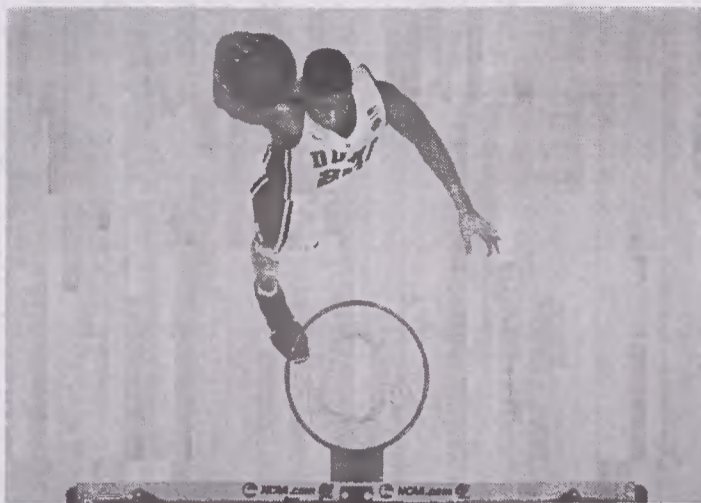
Though Duke may not have the same star power as years before, they have the experience to go far in the ACC and NCAA tournament.

UNC

After a stellar season last year, UNC comes into the 2012-2013 season without 4 of their 5 starters from last season.

Justin Watts and Tyler Zeller graduated last year, while Kendall Marshall, Harrison Barnes, and John Henson all opted for the NBA Draft last summer.

As opposed to the forward-heavy team of last year, UNC will be a very guard-heavy team this year. Dexter Strickland, Leslie McDonald, Reggie Bullock, and P.J.



Duke guard Andre Dawkins has elected to redshirt this season
Courtesy of Zimbardo

Hairston all return to create a formidable backfield for the Tar Heels.

Up front, James McAdoo needs to emerge as a star, after a great freshman year off the bench.

Incoming freshmen point guard Marcus Paige, power forward Brice Johnson, center Joel James, and small forward JP Tokoto need to make an impact and help fill the voids.

Look for Marcus Paige, a McDonald's All-American, to make an immediate impact

and maybe even start as point guard. Nonetheless, UNC will not have the same amount of talent as they did last year, and this year looks to be a rebuilding year for the Tar Heels.

However, they will still be a strong contender for the ACC, and can make a serious run in the NCAA tournament.

NC State

With a tremendous recruiting class and a strong returning class, NC State starts

off the season as the team to beat in the ACC.

In only his second year at NC State, Mark Gottfried has absolutely turned the team around. This year's team returns all but five players, two of which graduated and three of which transferred.

Of these five players leaving, only two, CJ Williams and DeShawn Painter, saw significant minutes.

Williams was a starting shooting guard who averaged 10 points a game and Painter was a second-string forward who looked to have an expanded role this year.

The incoming freshman class is one of the best NC State has ever seen. The class is made up of three local recruits, guard Tyler Lewis from Statesville, forward TJ Harris from Durham, and guard Rodney Purvis from Raleigh.

All three were McDonald's All-Americans, and will all get significant playing time from the start.

Combined with the returning talent, which includes junior CJ Leslie, NC State is clearly the preseason favorite for the ACC and a top contender for the NCAA tournament.

Sports news from outside the bubble

BY: STEVEN LIAO

Parity sweeps across the National Football League

"Any given Sunday" has become one of the biggest mantras in NFL circles.

In the past ten years, there has been an average of less than four 3-3 teams heading into week 7. This year? Eleven. The group includes the all of the AFC East, the Green Bay Packers, and the Denver Broncos.

In fact, only two of the teams in the entire AFC have a winning record heading into week 7. Those two teams are the Baltimore Ravens (5-1) and Houston Texans (5-1).

The Atlanta Falcons are the only undefeated team left this year, but they hardly appear unbeatable, barely eking out wins the past three weeks against the Carolina Panthers, Washington Redskins, and

Oakland Raiders.

The effects of parity have been noticeable in Vegas as well.

Underdogs are 57-32-2 against the spread coming into Week 7 this year, the second highest rate in the past 35 years.

Additionally, the underdogs have outright won 40 of 91 games, the highest win total after six weeks in NFL history.

World Series approaches; A-Rod under scrutiny

The Major League Baseball World Series started on Wednesday October 24, 2012, with the San Francisco Giants taking the first game with a 8-3 romp over the Detroit Tigers.

The Giants defeated the St. Louis Cardinals in the conference title series, and

the Tigers beat the New York Yankees.

Against the Tigers, Alex Rodriguez, who received the highest-paying contract in MLB history in 2008, was benched for two games. Rodriguez also received heat for allegedly flirting with fans in the stands during Game 1 of the series.

Rodriguez's future with the team remains unclear, with his 10 year, 275 million dollar contract complicating possible transactions.

NHL Lockout continues

The NHL lockout is over one month old, but there still appears to be no imminent deal between the players and owners. The owners recently rejected three offers from the players.

NHL Commissioner

Gary Bettman said of the offers "It's clear we're not speaking the same language in terms of what they came back to us with."

The first game of the 2012-2013 season was scheduled for Oct. 24, 2012. With progress in talks fairly stagnant, it is looking more and more likely the 2012-2013 season will be a reduced season, or perhaps not even played at all.

Lance Armstrong keeps sliding

On Oct. 17, Lance Armstrong stepped down from



Lance Armstrong recently stepped down from his chair of the Livestrong Foundation
Courtesy of Wall Street Journal

his position as chairman of the Livestrong Foundation. Later that day, Nike severed its ties with him.

Armstrong was recently banned for life from cycling, and had fourteen years of accomplishments erased from his name due to strong evidence from the United States Anti-Doping Agency regarding Armstrong's doping. The evidence included 26 testimonies, including 11 from former teammates.

Despite no longer being a chairman for the cancer-fighting foundation, Armstrong will remain a member of its 15-member board.

Kobe Bryant under fire for calling out former teammates

In a recent interview,

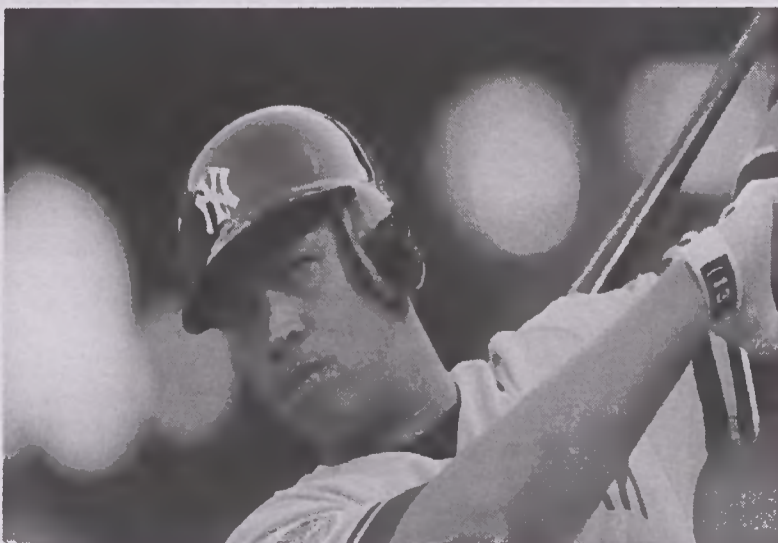
Kobe Bryant looked back on the 2005-2006 season, commenting on how poor the rest of his team was.

Bryant received a lot of heat for his comments on Smush Parker: "Smush Parker was the worst. He shouldn't have been in the NBA, but we were too cheap to pay for a point guard. We let him walk on."

Parker later responded by first admitting tremendous respect for Kobe's work ethic and basketball talents, but later criticizing Kobe's personality.

"What I don't like about him is the man that he is. His personality. How he treats people. I don't like that side of Kobe Bryant," said Parker

The entire situation has generated a mini-controversy over whether Bryant is a good teammate and leader.



Alex Rodriguez is being carefully observed after incidents in past seasons
Courtesy of WNYC