

Tar Heels Open ACC Season With Convincing Victory

By JAMES GIZA
SportSaturday Editor

One sore back and two bum knees almost were enough to snap the North Carolina women's basketball team out of its early season reverie and ring in the conference season on a less than jolly note.

With leading scorer Nikki Teasley

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UNC 90

playing in pain with an ailing back and assists leader Leah Metcalf trying to go full-speed with a pair of tendinitis-riddled knees, Wake Forest looked like it had a shot at pulling off the improbable against the No. 18 Tar Heels on Wednesday.

But thanks to a game-high 23 points from guard Coretta Brown, which highlighted double-digit scoring nights from five Tar Heels, and a late 20-2 run, UNC was able to deck the halls of Carmichael Auditorium with a 90-68 win before 1,614.

Forward Chrystal Baptist finished with 16 points and 12 rebounds — both career highs — and Teasley, despite shooting 7 of 20 for the game, dropped 13 of her 18 points in the first half and added seven assists.

"They just have a lot of weapons," said Wake Forest coach Charlene Curtis.

After going up by as many as 16 points in the first half, the Tar Heels (8-1 overall, 1-0 in the ACC) saw their lead slip away as their shooting went cold and their defense got sloppy. The Demon Deacons (2-4, 0-1) started to find

open looks at the basket and frequently got to the free-throw line, where they were 13 of 25 on the night.

"We'd do some good things, and we'd get them out of their offense," said UNC coach Sylvia Hatchell. "And it would be where they would have to go one-on-one or try to take it to the basket, and we'd get a foul call. So we've got to learn to have that intensity and that pressure and not end it with a foul."

Leading 66-60 in the middle of the second half, the Tar Heels went on their

huge run to clinch the win.

Brown hit a free throw and a 3-pointer to boost the lead to 10 with 8:48 left in the game. Forward Kenya McBee, center Candace Sutton, Baptist, Brown and Teasley then combined for the Tar Heels' next 16 points as UNC increased its lead to 86-62 with 3:07 to play.

Teasley, who rode a stationary bike on the sidelines at the beginning of the second half and had ice wrapped around her back at the end of the game, played 30 minutes despite her injury

and expects to be fine for Saturday's game against Richmond.

"I'm just going to continue to get treatment and get it better, and hopefully it won't be a problem on Saturday," Teasley said.

Metcalf, who had seven assists but committed three fouls in 16 minutes, was examined by team doctors after the game. Her status for Saturday was unknown.

The Sports Editor can be reached at sports@unc.edu.

Brown's 2nd-Half Scoring Flurry Sparks UNC Win

By KELLY LUSK
Assistant Sports Editor

With this season's triple threat of guards Coretta Brown, Leah Metcalf and Nikki Teasley, the North Carolina women's basketball team doesn't have to depend on Brown as much as it did last year.

And although UNC didn't completely lean on Brown, who was the team's second-leading scorer last year, the Tar Heels did look to her to protect their lead in Wednesday's game against Wake

Forest at Carmichael Auditorium.

With 4:27 left in the first half, North Carolina stretched its lead to 16 points.

But trouble was brewing for UNC down the stretch. The Demon Deacons stole a bit of momentum and cut the lead to six with 10:28 left in the second half.

Although Brown was only 1 of 4 from the field during the first half, hitting only a 3-pointer, her hand became hot at just the right time.

Her shot from behind the arc with 8:48 left in the game sparked the Tar

Heels on a 9-0 run from which Wake Forest never recovered.

"In the first half, my shots just weren't falling," Brown said. "Nothing really changed in the second half, except my shots came together, and I found my rhythm."

Brown sank three treys in the second half and finished with 23 points to help the Tar Heels win their first conference game.

"When a team starts creeping in on our lead, it just makes our defense more intense," Brown said. "Offensively things were pretty spread out. I didn't


feel any pressure to perform."

UNC shouldn't often have to depend on Brown, but like last year, she is a consistent offensive threat.

"Even last year when she played the point, she was always a threat," said Wake Forest coach Charlene Curtis.

"If you give her open looks at all, she's going to put the ball on the floor and make the shot. She's a total offensive player."

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