

The ACC was lauded universally as the best conference in the land when this season began. Prognosticators were giving the conference seven bids to the NCAA Tournament, and as late as Dec. 19, there were seven ACC teams in the top 25. Now, the league would be lucky to earn five bids to NAAs, and the ACC Tournament likely will determine the final two spots. Here is a breakdown of all 11 teams competing in Washington, D.C., this weekend. The "Prognosis" section analyzes the season the team is having and its chances in the MCI Center. "NCAA Dreams" tells for what — if anything — each team is playing.

NORTH CAROLINA



No. 1
(26-3, 14-2)

Prognosis

The two biggest question marks for UNC this season were winning on the road and winning close games. The last two weeks have settled both of those concerns emphatically.

NCAA Dreams

The Tar Heels have all but secured a No. 1 seed in the friendly confines of the Charlotte Coliseum. The ACC Tournament might be, as Roy Williams called it, a "glorified cocktail party" for UNC, but the senior class wants this ring.

CLEMSON



No. 9
(15-14, 5-11)

Prognosis

Despite winning three ACC games in a row late in the season, the Tigers will have a tough task in the MCI Center. Sharrod Ford has been heating up of late, including a 24-point performance to win at Maryland.

NCAA Dreams

Clemson has never won the ACC Tournament, and don't expect it to happen this year. The Tigers will be happy to take an NIT selection — college basketball's consolation prize. Such is the life in the cellar of the toughest league in the country.

DUKE



No. 3
(22-5, 11-5)

Prognosis

Duke still is reeling from UNC's blistering comeback Sunday, but don't count the Blue Devils out. If Duke can stay out of foul trouble — and J.J. Redick can score in both halves — it can capture the crown.

NCAA Dreams

With losses to Maryland (twice) and Virginia Tech, Duke played its way out of a chance at an NCAA No. 1 seed. A strong showing at the Tournament (and possibly a sixth title in seven years) would seal a No. 2, and at worst a No. 3.

FLORIDA STATE



No. 10
(12-18, 4-12)

Prognosis

The Seminoles have floundered at the bottom of the league all season. But FSU did put a scare into UNC, and if Adam Waleskowski gets hot, they could be dangerous — emphasis on could.

NCAA Dreams

The Seminoles are not even in NIT contention at this point, they have been so bad. Winning the ACC Tournament would give them an NCAA berth, but if that happens check for pigs flying around the MCI Center rafters.

GEORGIA TECH



No. 5
(17-10, 8-8)

Prognosis

Many thought Ga. Tech's midseason struggles were because of B.J. Elder's injury. But last year's NCAA finalists have been just as inconsistent since the sharpshooter returned to the Jackets' lineup.

NCAA Dreams

The win against Clemson was just as important as the struggles of the teams around them. A win against Va. Tech on Friday should put them in the NCAA Tournament, if the Yellow Jackets aren't in already — anything else will improve seeding.

MIAMI



No. 6
(16-11, 7-9)

Prognosis

Guillermo Diaz and Robert Hite can score with the best of them, but the supporting cast is pathetic. If the 'Canes can bomb away from 3-point land, they can surprise some teams. If not, hello, South Beach.

NCAA Dreams

The Hurricanes have had their share of ups and downs this season, nearly toppling some of the ACC's top squads — but it's a long road to at least two wins and a potential berth in the NCAA Tournament.

MARYLAND



No. 8
(16-11, 7-9)

Prognosis

The Terrapins beat Duke twice but also were swept by Clemson (that's right, Clemson). The Terps have the potential to repeat last year's surprise run to the title, or they could bow out in the first round.

NCAA Dreams

Maryland's dreams might have gone up in smoke in Blacksburg, Va. A repeat run to the title is about all that will save the Terrapins from an embarrassing trip to the NIT — the first time Maryland will miss the NAAs since 1993.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE



No. 7
(17-12, 7-9)

Prognosis

The 'Pack is yet another team that is impossible to predict this year. Julius Hodge has put up fine numbers, but his teammates have disappointed. Tony Bethel and Ilian Evtimov must step up.

NCAA Dreams

NCSU watched a golden opportunity slip through its hands after its last-second collapse against Wake. State needs to at least beat Wake in the quarters, but that might not be good enough if the Deacs are without Chris Paul, who might be suspended.

VIRGINIA



No. 11
(13-14, 4-12)

Prognosis

The Cavaliers pretty much will need divine intervention to capture their first title since 1976. But winning two games will clinch a coveted spot in the NIT. Unfortunately, it will have to beat Duke to do so.

NCAA Dreams

Uva. was a hot ticket after creaming Arizona and climbing to No. 19 in the polls. But after a disastrous ACC season, the Wahos are in danger of missing the NIT and probably will have to win the Tournament to save Pete Gillen's job.

VIRGINIA TECH



No. 4
(15-12, 8-8)

Prognosis

The newcomers were known for football but have proven their worth on the hardwood this year, with a respectable record and an upset of Duke. But a lack of star power will hurt the Hokies in D.C.

NCAA Dreams

A .500 record is normally good enough in this league, but the Hokies have a sub-par RPI and probably need to get to the championship game to even think about getting a bid — and that road likely goes through North Carolina.

WAKE FOREST



No. 2
(26-4, 13-3)

Prognosis

The Deacons will ride Chris Paul as far as he will carry them — and that will be deep in the Tournament. An epic rematch with the Tar Heels could be in the works for ESPN's dream of a final matchup.

NCAA Dreams

The Deacons have all but secured a No. 1 seed, barring an early upset at the MCI Center. This team is talented and deep enough to make a run to the Final Four for the first time since the Billy Packer era — back in 1962.

Announcing our new SKY BOX:

An exclusive **VIP lounge** for watching all major sporting events. Price includes food buffet, house beer & wine, and seat in private room with new 42" **Hi-Definition Plasma TV**. Space is limited to 40 people. Call or stop by for reservations.

Also 46" Hi-Def Plasma TV in bar area

"Where all great games start, and finish!"™

460 West Franklin Street • 919.942.1800
www.carolinabrewery.com

players • team • basket • goal • three • shoot
passion • well being • score • zone • acc • roy
basketball • food • celebrate • points • fans
win • unc • tar heels • final four • thanks
roy • game • food • shot • organic • plan • net
taste • style • quality • excitement • power
forward • team • season • natural • jump
huddle • ncaa • legend • guard • game • win
carolina • celebrate • fans • alumni • coach
shoot • score • eat • passion • jump • roy

A Way of Life

81 South Elliott Rd
Village Plaza

Open Daily
8 AM - 9 PM
968-1983

PIZZA CALZONES

25 BEERS ON TAP

HOAGIES GIVE PIZZA CHANGE SALADS

Live Blue Grass and
\$2.50 pints every Tuesday

Mellow Mushroom Pizza Bakers
1502 E. Franklin St.
Chapel Hill NC 27514
969-8789
Across from the Sienna Hotel

to the tar heels...
thanks for an incredible regular season

to the fans...
thanks for watching the games with us

to the nets in St. Louis...
don't worry, we'll be together soon!

Dominic's North Carolina Sports Bar
504 West Franklin Street
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
(just beyond the Carolina Brewery)
929.6978

*It's not whether you win or lose,
it's where you watch the game!*

WATCH THE ACC TOURNAMENT AT

Join us for our Selection Sunday party!
March 13, 5pm

Domestic Pints \$2.50!

Designated drivers get free soft drinks and coffee all night.

Ram's Plaza • 1722 Fordham Blvd.
Chapel Hill • 919-918-1005

Menu Includes:

- Bacon Cheeseburger
- Texas Beef Brisket & BBQ
- Grilled Patty Melt
- Grand Champion Wings
- Ultimate Nachos
- ...and more!

STUDENT SPECIAL
FREE DRINK
with any regular sub (with student ID).
7 days/week 5pm-close
Not valid with any other offer

WEEKEND SPECIAL
Any mini sub, regular drink & soup/chili for \$5.74 + tax.

Valid at 107 N. Columbia 968-0700
M-Sat 10:30-9pm, Sunday 11-7pm