



KRISTIN PRATT
A LITTLE SPORTS PRATTLE

Move past football to other teams

A week ago today, UNC Athletics Director Dick Baddour held a press conference to explain the late Sunday announcement that John Bunting was sacked as head coach of the football team.

Just one week. But with the intense media coverage of the decision, to me it feels like it has been much longer.

In seven days, we have seen the coverage of UNC football become a new beast that needs to be tamed.

The fallout of Baddour's mid-season proclamation has some major ramifications for UNC sports and their media coverage.

Instead of just covering games, practice, injuries and speculating about Bunting's future employment, now the media has to speculate about everything.

The chatter now and until the spring will be about how this will shape recruiting, who will be the next coach, how revenue from the sport will be affected.

Other issues are how this decision will affect the players for the rest of the season, and how else the University should have handled the situation.

The football program will be examined like some newly discovered bacteria strain for months because the change in administration will ripple through every aspect of UNC football, from the players to coaches to business.

While intense media coverage is expected for UNC revenue sports, I think the attention to the football program detracts from the attention that other UNC teams should be earning this time of the year.

No, I don't mean the basketball teams — the football fallout will not harm the amount of publicity those Tar Heels get, trust me.

I'm talking about the teams who will be participating in the upcoming ACC tournaments.

The women's soccer team defeated Wake Forest on Friday to be the only undefeated team in ACC play and extended its winning streak to 18 games this season. The team hasn't lost since Aug. 25, to Texas A&M.

The Tar Heels will be advancing to the ACC Tournament in Cary on Wednesday, looking for their 17th tourney title in 18 years.

Nov. 1 is also the same day the men's soccer team will be searching for its own conference tournament title. The men are 3-4-1 in the ACC after their victory against Boston College on Thursday.

UNC's field hockey team also will be participating this week in conference play, looking to get revenge on the ACC teams they lost to earlier this season.

While some teams are anticipating their conference post-season, some Tar Heels have made their mark already in their conference championship quest.

The men's and women's cross country team ran in Charlottesville, Va., for ACC glory. The women placed sixth, while the men ended up eighth. Brianna Feltnagle placed 11th and Pablo Durana finished 25th to lead the Tar Heels.

But the names of these athletes probably won't get as much media attention as Bunting or Baddour. And they should.

While I know that revenue sports will always get more media attention, and I realize that a change in the head coach position for football is a major deal, I think that rather than speculating about the future of the football program, more news outlets should highlight and discuss the success other UNC teams are preparing to find.

The football story might be juicy, but the future factors are not as timely. Instead, the media should pay more attention to UNC Olympic teams and their ACC tournament participation.

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Tar Heels show hope in defeat

Turnovers end inspired effort

BY BRIANA GORMAN
SENIOR WRITER

Of all of the losses and all of the missed opportunities for the North Carolina football team this season, Saturday's 24-17 loss to Wake Forest at Kenan Stadium hurt the most.

The Tar Heels were three yards away from forcing overtime with the No. 24 Demon Deacons and securing a chance to get their

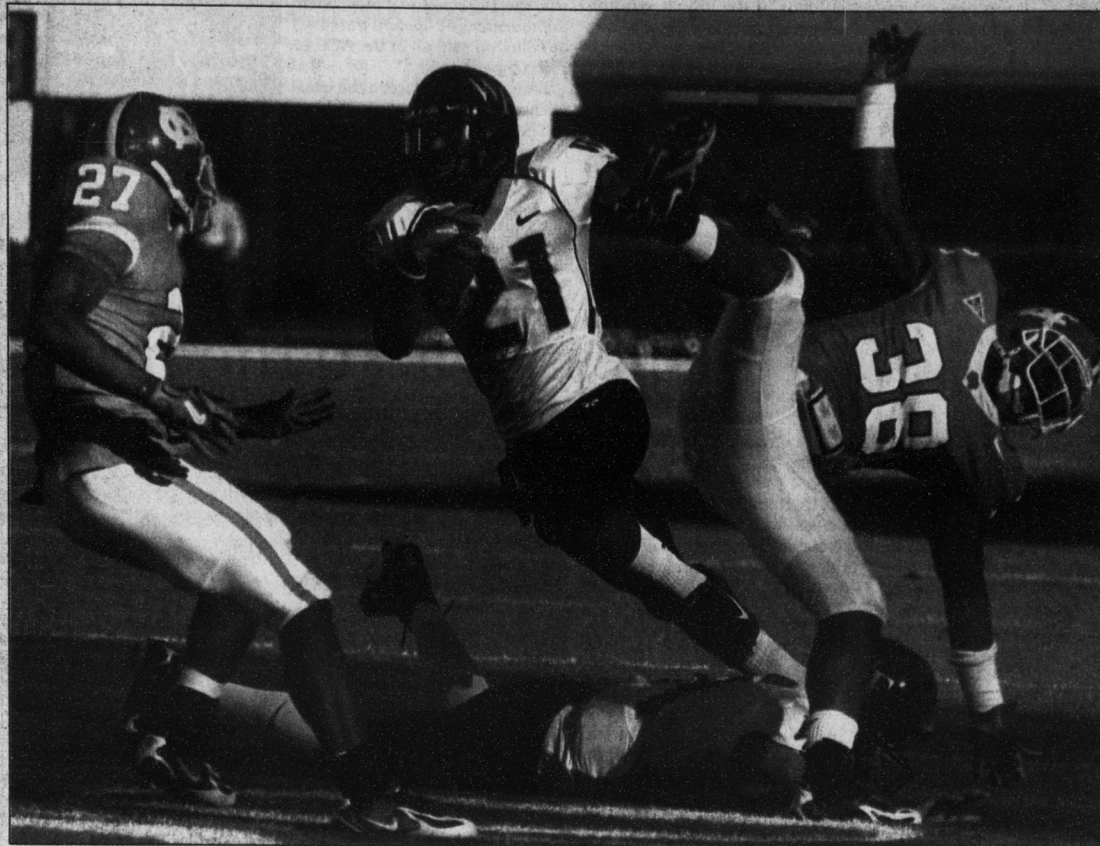
FOOTBALL
WFU 24 first win
UNC 17 against a Division I

A school this year, when quarterback Joe Dailey threw an interception in the end zone on the last play of the game.

"This was definitely the toughest loss of the season because we got down there in the fourth quarter which is where we wanted to be," said Ronnie McGill, who finished with a career-high tying 29 carries for 117 yards and one touchdown.

"We got the ball down to the three-yard line, and things just didn't go our way. We had an opportunity to put it in overtime, and we just couldn't quite do it. This was a really frustrating loss."

Trailing by a touchdown, the Tar Heels (1-7, 0-5 in the ACC) got the ball back on their own 20-yard line with four minutes remaining in the game. Dailey took command of the ensuing drive, converting two fourth downs with a 15-yard pass to senior



North Carolina defenders Kareen Taylor (27) and Jermaine Strong (38) do their best to slow down Demon Deacons' wide receiver Kenneth Moore during Wake Forest's 24-17 victory against UNC on Saturday at Kenan Stadium. The Tar Heels played some of their best football of the season.

Jesse Holley and a three-yard quarterback keeper.

And it was Dailey who found true freshman Hakeem Nicks on the right sideline for a 44-yard pass to put the Tar Heels on the 3-yard line with 41 seconds left.

"We really were planning for overtime, and I thought that's what was going to happen," said Wake Forest coach Jim Grobe. "I was on the phone with (offensive coordinator Steve Lobotzke) and talking about

overtime, so we were preparing for overtime."

Even UNC coach John Bunting was looking ahead, already having decided his team would kick the extra point rather than go for a two-point conversion after the

assumed touchdown.

But on first down Dailey tried running into the end zone and slipped for a loss of three

SEE FOOTBALL, PAGE 11

Emotional week impacts players

BY DANIEL MALLOY
SENIOR WRITER

It was a week that began with John Bunting getting fired and ended with Joe Dailey throwing an interception in the end zone with just seconds to play.

In between, the North Carolina football team refocused and gave perhaps its best effort of the season — taking No. 24 Wake Forest to the brink.

"You get news like that, it's a different week," said freshman quarterback Cam Sexton, who rotated with Dailey every two series Saturday.

"There's just no way around it. We did everything we could to make it normal, but the feeling was different. ... Coming out, it was definitely different, definitely difficult."

The task was made more difficult when, just more than three minutes into the game, WFU returned a blocked punt for a touchdown.

In most cases during this now 1-7 season, UNC has fallen behind quickly and failed to respond. But

this time the offense engineered an 80-yard drive to knot the score.

The drive was emblematic of the Tar Heels' ability to rally in spite of their difficult situation.

A game after looking lifeless in a 23-0 loss at Virginia — after which Dailey said the team's biggest problem was a lack of passion — UNC came out with emotion.

"There was more want-to," defensive end Hilee Taylor said. "And our losses have been due to want-to."

Bunting tried to deflect attention away from himself, saying that the high emotion was because of the in-state rivalry.

Before the game, he wrote in the locker room: "Our focus is on us and Wake Forest."

After being fired last Sunday, the coach has experienced an outpouring of support from fans, including a big reception at the team's weekly Old Well Walk.

"I did not want any of the attention, that was so nice, but I didn't want that to detract from what our players need, which is to focus on themselves and playing and Wake

Forest," Bunting said.

Though the coaches told the team to play the final five games of the season for themselves, it was hard to move away from the issue that has been at the front of everyone's mind for the past week.

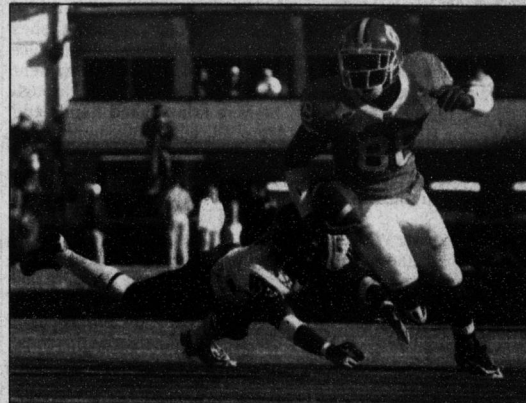
"I was definitely motivated to win one for coach," fullback Nick Starcevic said. "I think the whole team wanted to. We wanted to rally behind him and show that we really wanted to play for him."

The reason stated repeatedly by Athletics Director Dick Baddour for informing Bunting of the change midseason was to take the distracting speculation away. For at least a week, it seems to have been successful.

"Practice was almost flawless the entire week," Dailey said.

"It was a great atmosphere for the coaches even though we were all upset with what took place. But at the same time, we felt like the pressure was levitated so let's go out and have a good time."

That good time was spoiled by Dailey's interception, but in taking a 7-1 team to the limit, the



North Carolina wideout Hakeem Nicks sets his sights downfield during the Tar Heels' first game following an emotional week.

Tar Heels proved that the final portion of the season won't be conceded without a fight.

"That's been our mentality all week as players is to go out and play like (Bunting's firing) didn't happen," Taylor said.

"It's been hard to do that but at the same time we made all the good out of it that we possibly could."

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.

Women's soccer keeps on rolling

BY SAM ROSENTHAL
SENIOR WRITER

Having already clinched the ACC regular season women's soccer title and facing No. 20 Wake Forest, the No. 1 North Carolina women's soccer team could have come out flat and uninspired for Friday night's game at Fetzer Field.

WOMEN'S SOCCER
WFU 0
UNC 4

The obstacles were numerous. Rain poured down in buckets; it was cold; two Tar Heel starters were out and the Demon Deacons needed a win badly.

But it was Senior Night for North Carolina, and head coach Anson Dorrance's team showed up firing on all cylinders, as four different UNC players scored en route to a 4-0 shutout.

The Tar Heels, now 18-1 overall and 10-0 in the ACC, have won



UNC senior Heather O'Reilly had three assists in the 4-0 win.

18 straight matches since a season-opening loss to Texas A&M in double overtime. Wake Forest is now 13-5 overall and 5-4 in the ACC, and they have dropped to seventh place in a conference with no

separation between every top team that doesn't wear powder blue.

With starters Robin Gayle and Whitney Engen not in the lineup — Gayle in South Korea playing with the Canadian National Team and Engen nursing a calf injury — UNC's depth prevailed.

Junior forward Jaime Gilbert

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Bobcats end preseason at UNC

BY BRIANA GORMAN
SENIOR WRITER

Center Sean May picked off the pass at halfcourt. He whipped the ball to guard Raymond Felton who was streaking toward the basket. Felton didn't have a clear lane so he bounce-passed the ball to the waiting forward who slammed it home.

But this was not 2005 and the forward was not former teammate Rashad McCants.

NBA BASKETBALL
Charlotte 94
Atlanta 105

May and Felton, members of the 2005 men's national championship team, were back at the Smith Center again on Friday wearing the jersey of their new team, the Charlotte Bobcats, to play a NBA preseason game against the Atlanta Hawks. It was their second preseason game held at the Smith Center this year.

Even though the Hawks won 105-94 it was without another 2005 national championship team member, Marvin Williams.

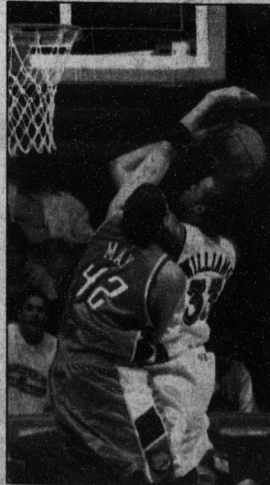
Williams broke his left hand the day before the preseason matchup and spent his time in Chapel Hill getting people to sign his cast.

"I wish I was playing," said Williams, who is expected to be out six to eight weeks. "It feels good to be back, seeing everybody."

In 2005 the team went 33-4 and won the school's fifth men's basketball national championship. At season's end four players left school early, and all four were selected in the NBA draft lottery. Williams, the No. 2 overall pick, said he talks to May and Felton all the time and speaks with McCants, who is with the Minnesota Timberwolves, a couple of times a week.

Williams, who never started a game at UNC had a mediocre rookie season. He averaged 8.5 points and 4.8 rebounds on a team that went 26-56 last season. But Williams said he learned a lot in his first season, which he thinks will enable him to have a more successful sophomore

SEE BOBCATS, PAGE 11



Former North Carolina basketball player Sean May (42) finds himself in familiar territory against former Duke Blue Devil Sheldon Williams. Williams was booed nearly every time he got the ball.