

Dennis Sanders

It began so innocently, with 20 or 30 men on a team shooting an over-sized soccer ball at a peach basket in a YMCA gymnasium and having a center tap-off after each goal.

That was basketball in its virgin era, basketball conceived and envisioned by Dr. James Naismith. It was a sport then, played by men for fun and relaxation because, at the time, it was different.

But that was long ago. She is no longer a virgin, this game of basketball, for she has been ravaged by the fixers and their point spreads, the alumni and their incessant demands for a winner, the students and their desire to attend school where basketball—or any sport—is big-time.

She has been violated time and time again, this game of basketball, by young athletes taught to win by their coaches, who feel the pressure from alumni and students alike. She has been kicked, cursed and oppressed, this game of basketball, by young athletes who have turned a game of sports into a form of war.

It is not entirely the fault of the athletes; they must do as they are instructed by their coaches, who, in turn, must somehow meet the demands of win-hungry alumni and students.

But that statement does not restore his white, virgin robe.

The First Taste: A Bitter One

My first taste of this game of basketball came in 1958 in Reynolds Coliseum, where Everett Case, the late N. C. State coach, somehow made this game seem so delightful, so warm, so easy. But even Case knelt to the demands of the hunger for a winner when he tried to recruit Jackie Moreland and was placed on probation for recruiting irregularities.

That was the first foul blow this game of basketball absorbed in the South. Perhaps not really the first, but it was the first I remember.

Tragically, it has not been the last. After the Moreland scandal, basketball tried to regain her stature as a sport, a game. But suddenly, she no longer deserved—through no fault of her own—the names "sport" or "game."

Suddenly, she was a form of war. In the early 1960's, she was victimized by the infamous point-shaving scandals, by fights on her gleaming hardwood courts, by probation placed on coaches who tried hard—too hard—for a winner. Referees called more and more technical fouls, students threw more paper cups and pennies after bad calls, there were more boos and there was more blood on the courts. This was Atlantic Coast Conference basketball, but it was no different from the basketball played anywhere else in America.

She Became A Form of War

In Maryland, less than two months ago, a referee stopped the N. C. State-Maryland game because he felt the N. C. State coach had dishied out enough foul language. That same day, in Columbia, South Carolina, a referee threatened to remove the spectators from the Clemson-South Carolina game because they were unruly, and because he was tired of dodging paper cups, pennies and foul names.

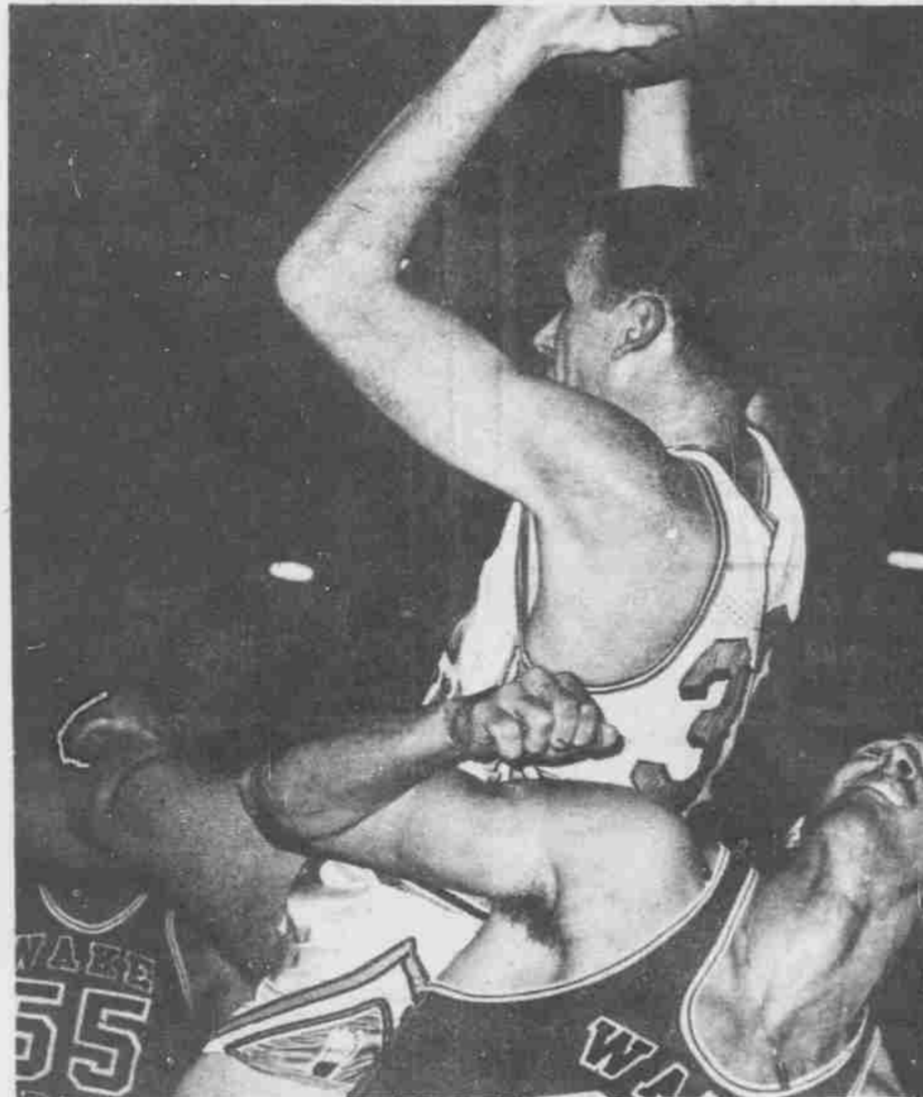
In Chapel Hill, a fight erupted after the North Carolina-N. C. State game less than a month ago. Again, in Columbia, a star performer was declared ineligible by the NCAA because he had been illegally recruited.

Now, administrative leaders, student leaders and state newspapers must ask for better conduct at games, must ask fans to remain seated until all game participants have left the court, must ask, in essence, for good manners.

It is tragic. This game of basketball is no longer a game. She is a prostituted conception that has been turned and twisted into a pseudo-war. She is an arena where you can now take a young child to learn words that only soldiers used to teach. She is a hollow skeleton of what James Naismith felt would be a sport.

Why has she lost her virginity, this game of basketball? Why has she become a form of war, a refuge for bad manners, a study in the hunger for victory? Why has no one thought to say that there has to be a deeper meaning to life than a score on a scoreboard?

Because we have permitted it. Because we raped a virgin game, and made her a harlot.



No, they are not fighting. They are playing basketball. But, then, because the nature of the game has changed, maybe they are fighting, after all.

UNC Faces 'Long' Night; Wake, Miller Meet Again

By DENNIS SANDERS
DTH Sports Writer

If "Mr. Clutch" borrows the "double-clutch shuffle," he might again carry North Carolina's No. 2-ranked Tar Heels to a clutch win over Wake Forest here tonight.

"Mr. Clutch" is Larry Miller, a bullish 6-3 junior whose last-second heroics have iced at least two of the Tar Heels' 15 wins. The first was against these same Wake Forest Deacons, when Miller stole the ball, raced in for a layup,

and put the lid on a 76-74 UNC win.

The second Miller installment came when—just three days later—his last-second shot carried UNC to a 59-56 win over Duke in Durham.

The two conference wins are but two of seven the Tar Heels have earned, exactly half of the total they need to remain undefeated in the ACC and assure themselves of the No. 1 seed in the conference tournament.

Overall, Carolina is 15-1. But Wake Forest is no pat-ty, as Coach Jack McCloskey's Deacons demonstrated in that first meeting with Dean Smith's Tar Heels.

Because they rely so heavily on the offensive handi-work of All-Conference guard Paul Long and guard Jerry Montgomery and forward Jim Boshart, the Deacons have found that a bad shooting night does them no good at all.

They have beaten some impressive foes—such as Southern Conference Davidson, and they threw quite a scare into Duke before the Blue Devils escaped with a five-point win.

But they have been embarrassed at times, mostly when Long isn't scoring—which is a rarity.

Dick Grubar, soph quarterback and defensive stalwart Long's capabilities well: "He's the toughest man to defend I've been up against this season," Grubar says.

But when Grubar, and teammates Miller (23.8), Rusty Clark (14.1) and Bob Lewis (16.6) are "on," this North

Carolina team is no pushover. Fifteen teams can attest to that.

Together, Long (24) and his running mate Montgomery (20) scored 44 against the Tar Heels in that first meeting, and 6-6 center David Stroupe—an up-and-down performer—had 10.

But Miller's 23—two of which were that last layup—and 20 points by 6-11 Clark and 16 more by Lewis gave Carolina the edge.

Only when the regionally-titled game gets underway at 8:00 in Carmichael will it be known just what kind of night Wake Forest will have. But because there are Big that means something, even a bad night by the Deacons will not dull another in a long line of tough conference games. It is that kind of rivalry.

Babies Begin Home Stand; Oppose Deaclets Tonight

By OWEN DAVIS
DTH Sports Writer

The UNC Tar Babies begin a two-game home stand tonight when the Wake Forest Deaclets invade Carmichael Auditorium at 6 p.m. Carolina is fresh from a 106-81 victory over Virginia Tuesday night and now sports an 11-1 record.

After the East Carolina game tomorrow night, the Tar Babies will not appear at home again until March 3 when Duke will be the opponent.

The Deaclets of Coach Neil Johnston were defeated 83-67 by Carolina in early-season competition. Wake is led by guards Norwood Todman and Dickie Walker, both who are averaging over 20 points a game.

The Baptists have a towering front line of 6'8" center Dan Ackley and 6'7" forwards Danny Meyer and Larry Habaeger who are strong rebounders.

Inconsistency has plagued Wake this season. The Deaclets showed much strength after their UNC loss but then took a double punch with consecutive defeats to Duke and Mackin High of Washington, D.C.

Charlie Scott was the big factor in Tuesday's Virginia win in Charlottesville. Scott poured in 33 points and grabbed 24 rebounds to propel the Tar Babies to a large 25-point advantage.

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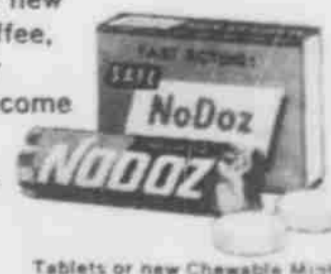
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