

Defense improved, offense explosive

Tar Heels are capable of winning ACC

by Mark Whicker
Sports Editor



Ike Oglesby



Lou Angelo



John Bunting



Rusty Culbreth

Ten starters returning on defense, 13 coming back in all. A veteran backfield, defensive backs on the mend, increased confidence from last year's 8-4 Peach Bowl team.

On the surface, it is easy to understand why Carolina's football team has been picked by some to finish in the Top 20, and no lower than second in the conference.

Yet there are several unanswered questions that could impede the Tar Heels' progress.

Can Coach Bill Dooley build an offensive line out of inexperienced, although promising, players? The veteran line that opened the holes for Don McCauley's 1,720 yards was completely erased by graduation?

Will Carolina solve its punting problems?

Can Paul Miller stay healthy enough to quarterback the offense?

Is that siege of injuries in the defensive backfield finally over?

To start with, UNC's running game is still strong without McCauley, now with the Baltimore Colts.

Ike Oglesby, Don's understudy last season, bolted for 562 yards and six touchdowns last season. Coaches say that Oglesby is more of a threat to go 20 yards at a clip than McCauley was, but when it's third and three McCauley was more reliable.

"All I know is that Oglesby has a chance to be a fine running back if he continues to improve," Dooley comments. Ike missed the Blue-White game with a broken hand last spring.

Geoff Hamlin may be the most underrated backfield man in the ACC. The Canadian fullback blocked strongly and ran for 195 yards. Wingback Lew Jolley contributed 176 ground yards and also led receivers with 20 catches and five scores.

Behind these runners are tailbacks Mike Shuster and Phil Daly, both sophomores, fullbacks Billy Hite and Tim Kirkpatrick and wingback-tailback Bill Sigler, an overshadowed senior who filled in for McCauley as a sophomore.

Miller's back spasms kept him out of the spring game, when sophomores John Klise and Nick Vidnovic passed well. When he played, Miller completed 48 of 80 passes for eight scores, and ran for two more, including his "hidden-ball" move in the 59-34 win over Duke.

Dooley promises more passing this year, and with Earl Bethea suddenly blossoming into a fine receiver the promise may stick on the scoreboard. Bethea, a redshirt sophomore, was the outstanding lineman in the Blue-White game.

Behind Bethea is equally promising Earl Chesson, who made the TD catch that beat Duke's freshmen last year.

Tight end is a safe position. Johnny Cowell and Ken Taylor played a lot last year behind Tony Blanchard and will split time this season.

In the offensive line, the coaches liked the work of center Bob Thornton (6-4, 229), guard Ron Rusnak (6-1, 222), and tackle Reid Lookbill (6-3, 217). At the other tackle, junior Jerry Sain and sophomores Joel Bradshaw (260) and Bob Pratt (245) will contend.

At guard, senior Jim Papai has had some experience and may team with Rusnak unless sophomores Bill Newton and Bill Arnold come on strong. Robert Walters, the free spirit of the redshirts last season and the unofficial Ehringhaus barber, is contending Thornton at center.

Defensively the Tar Heels should be much improved over a unit that gave up only 179 points in 12 games and an average of less than 100 yards rushing a game.

Although strong tackle Flip Ray graduated, Eric Hyman, who started two years ago, is ready to take his place. The 240-pound Hyman brings mobility to a veteran line that includes tackle Bud Grissom and ends Bill Brafford and Gene Brown.

Bill Chapman and Wes Norton, who scored with a blocked punt in the Blue-White game, are relief ends while Robbi Vanden-Broek is an experienced reserved tackle.

"Show me three better linebackers on one team than John Bunting, Jim Webster and Ricky Packard," challenges Dooley. "And John Anderson came in and did a great job in the spring."

Bunting could be an All-America candidate. Packard, despite only 183 pounds, "is at the right place at the right time," according to his coach. And Webster, after two injury plagued years, is ready to hit with his old authority.

Anderson won the Chuch Erickson Award for outstanding hustle in spring drills and will take Bill Richardson's place at one inside linebacker.

Behind them are two-year veteran Mel Riddie, converted quarterback Mike Mansfield, promising Steve Early, and sophomore Terry Taylor. This may be the best department on the squad.

Richard Stille, Rusty Culbreth and Greg Ward were out of spring drills due to various injuries, and as a result the secondary was embarrassed a few times in the Blue-White game.

Culbreth's knee injury knocked him out of the season in the second game when he was making a convincing claim for an all-conference spot. All three are recovered and ready to join Lou Angelo (five interceptions) to shore up Carolina's deep defenses.

Helping is senior John Swofford, whose checkered career has finally been solidified on defense. Phil Lamm

surprised everyone in spring practice to nail down the other job.

Punting, however, was as dismal in the spring game as in 1970, and Dooley has been working with Chris Lee, Charlie Sink, and Vidnovic to find a good foot. It seems more and more amazing that McCauley was able to punt for a 38-yard average after all that running—"his only bad kicking game was the Peach Bowl," Dooley points out.

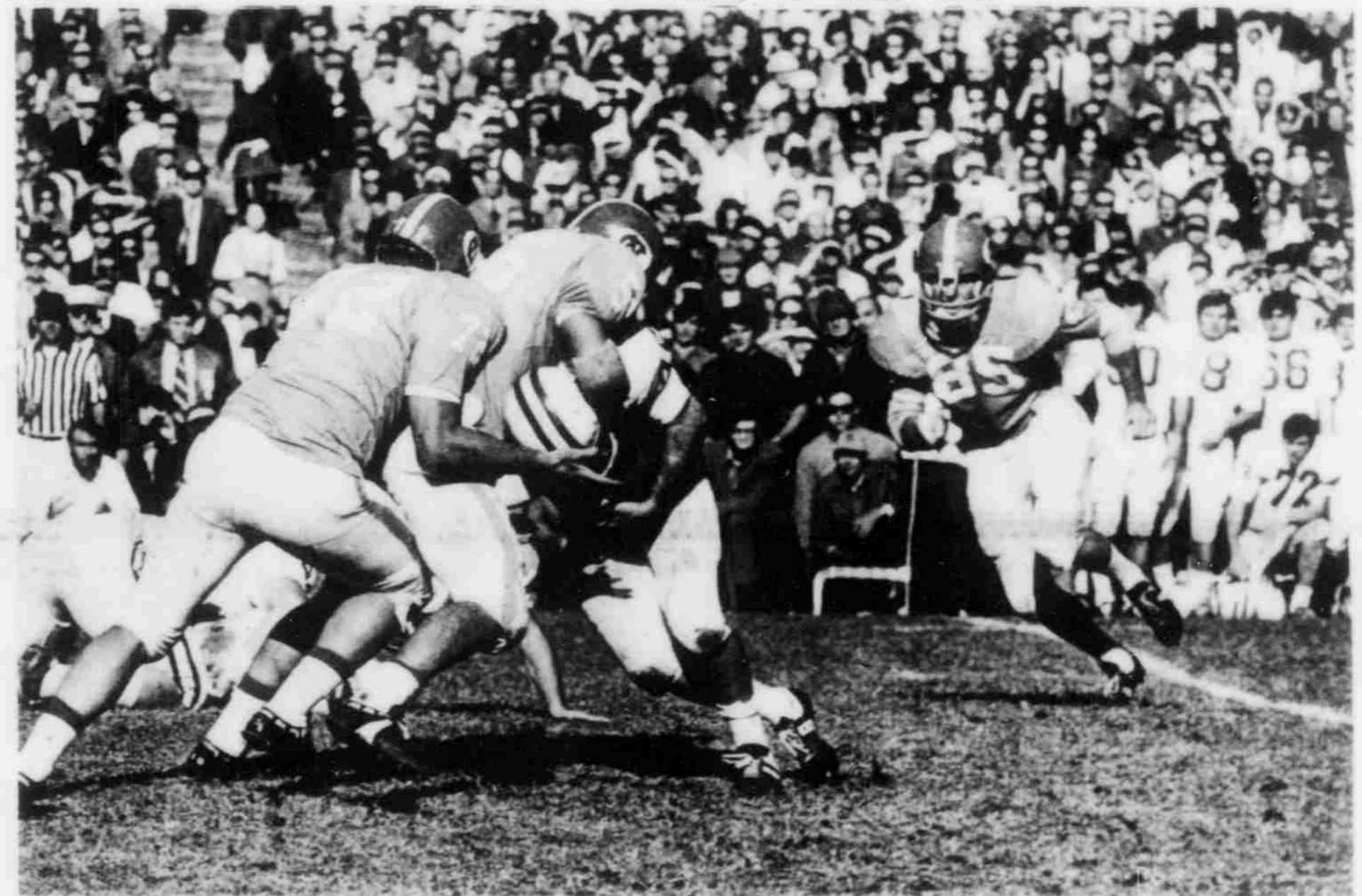
Placekicker Ken Craven booted 41 of 42 extra points and seven of 17 field goals. With more range he could be outstanding, and Dooley is also satisfied with kickoff man Bill Taylor.

It's all about blocking and defending against passes, because the Heels seem to have everything else in abundance. Dooley's new offensive line coach, Bud Moore, learned the craft from Bear Bryant at Alabama, and Dooley himself was a guard at Mississippi State.

So the brain trust is there and Dooley insists that the material is, too. The Tar Heels must contend with tough defensive lines from Wake Forest, Illinois, Notre Dame, Maryland, Clemson and State.

Of course, it's possible that Carolina could have a better team this season and a less attractive record, since the schedule is better (or worse, depending on how one looks at it).

But no matter where Wake Forest is picked in a national magazine, or how many lettermen Clemson is returning, the sheer talent built up on Carolina's team through tireless recruiting will make the Heels the team to beat this year in the ACC.



Bill Richardson (56) and Flip Ray, both departed seniors, halt a Duke runner in last year's 59-34 Carolina win. Bill Brafford (85), returning at defensive end, closes in from behind.

A punter - the search continues

In this day of wide-open offensive football, North Carolina Coach Bill Dooley still believes the foot is the biggest weapon in the game.

And the fact that Dooley has not yet discovered a "big foot" for the 1971 season is cause for major concern as Tar-Heel pre-season practice draws near.

All-America Don McCauley, who did the major share of the punting for Carolina last season, is gone. He performed well for the Tar Heels in the kicking department, averaging 38.4 yards on 48 punts. He consistently kicked the ball high in the air, thus allowing Tar Heel opponents few long returns.

"Our spring practice didn't turn up a consistent punter," Dooley says. "Chris Lee, who punted some last year, is back and he has done some outstanding punting on occasion. But he hasn't been consistent."

Others in the running for the punting job are sophomores Charlie Sink of North Wilkesboro, N.C., and Nick Vidnovic of Falls Church, Va.

"Because field position is so vitally important, kicking still is the name of the game," Dooley says. "We have records which prove that the team with the best kicking wins most of the time."

Homegrown talent

1971 Tar Babies are bigger, faster

Sticking to the formula of recruiting the best out of North Carolina and Virginia, the Tar Heel coaching staff has gathered 39 incoming freshmen that can rank with any crop in the Southeast.

Twenty-five of them are from North Carolina and Virginia. The 16 linemen average 222 pounds each, and 23 backs bring impressive running, passing and catching credentials with them.

The Tar Babies will have two bona fide passers and a fleet of quick backs. Chris

Kupec, from Cynossett, N.Y., is regarded as one of the best quarterback prospects in the country.

Another New Yorker, Hy Shapiro (from Oswego) and Fayetteville's brilliant Charles Baggett will apparently give Kupec plenty of competition for the regular signal-calling job.

Halfback Gary Cowan, from Sylva, N.C., recently won a Hall of Fame scholar-athlete award. Kip Arnall, a 165-pound speedster from Richmond, Va. and 160-pound Frank Townsend from Fayetteville come with high recommendations.

Several of the backs, of course, will be tested at other positions by freshman coach Moyer Smith, who is 9-1 after two seasons.

In the line, the top prospects include 255-pound Ronnie Robinson from Burlington—"with his size, he's also very quick," says varsity coach Bill Dooley.

Ken Huff, from Coronado, Cal., is 6-4, 245. Head recruiter Clyde Walker flew to California to get Huff's parents' signatures on the grant-in-aid, then boarded another plane to Massachusetts for Huff's signature at prep school. It may have been the longest recruiting trip to sign one prospect in Carolina's history.

Center Andy Harris from Charlotte (6-3, 200) was one of North Carolina's best prep linemen last year. His signing with the Tar Heels was a surprise since his father Dave, who is now athletic director of Charlotte's schools, was a great receiver at Wake Forest.

Lee Cliff of Alexandria, Va. and Pete Marchetti of New Philadelphia, Pa. both weigh 240, while 6-6 Charles Waddell of Southern Pines, a defensive end, played in the basketball All-Star game in Greensboro last month.

Another top line prospect is 6-5, 215-pound Andy Chacos of Bethesda, Md. He was also a sensational baseball and basketball find in high school.



Coach Moyer Smith

The Tar Babies open Oct. 4 against State in Kenan Stadium and host Wake Forest two weeks ago. The rest of the schedule is on the road, at Virginia Oct. 29, at Richmond Nov. 5 and at Duke Nov. 13.

Closer home

This year's Tar Heel football team is ample proof that coaches don't need to travel great distances to find top-rate talent.

If the team opened play tomorrow, 18 of 22 starters would hail from North Carolina and Virginia.

Fullback Geoff Hamlin of Canada, deep back Lou Angelo of Youngstown, O., split end Earl Bethea of Springfield, S.C. and linebacker John Bunting of Silver Spring, Md. are the only present starters from other states.

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