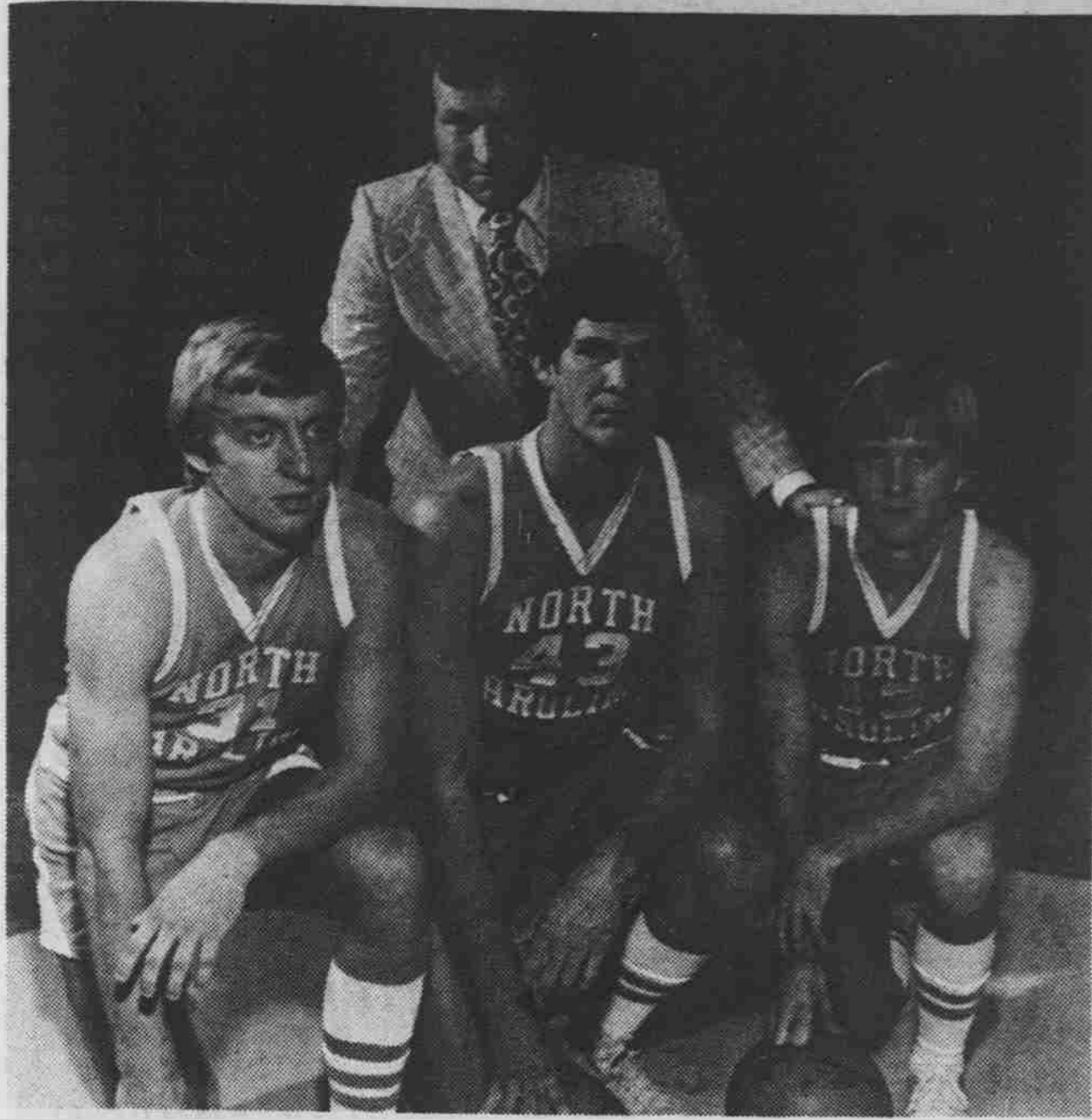


Senior players: a trio to remember



Senior basketball players Brad Hoffman, Ed Stahl and Mickey Bell were never superstars; instead, they were three integral members of a highly talented team. And that's how they should be remembered, as a team.

It would be easy to sing the praises of that team — how they were written off in mid-season as an unfortunate blemish in Dean Smith's otherwise flawless career, and how they recovered to surprise everyone and became Atlantic Coast Conference champs — but that song is so over-sung around here that even the verses have become as familiar as the chorus.

Stahl, Bell and Hoffman were honored this week at the annual basketball banquet for the instrumental roles they played in bringing the ACC crown back to Carolina. They were characterized with adjectives like "inspirational" and "unselfish," and they were praised for their defense and leadership — those vital qualities of team play that receive little recognition.

It was Hoffman, Stahl and Bell who often got the assists on crucial baskets by Kupchak and Davis, or who sunk both ends of a critical one-and-one to keep Carolina in the game.

In a way, Dean Smith has stolen from UNC basketball fans whatever pleasure they might get from grieving over the loss of these three seniors at graduation. In Smith's program, everyone is replaceable with the exception of a select few.

Superstars like Larry Miller, Charlie Scott and Robert McAdoo will be remembered

long after the names Hoffman, Stahl and Bell are only used to stump the panel on sports trivia shows.

But this season's graduating seniors were part of a team as cohesive and as successful as any in recent Carolina history — a team that returned the conference title to UNC despite the odds. And they will be remembered as a part of that team.

— Robin Clark

What are super seniors?

Super seniors — it isn't easy to explain. Mainly because there are so many super seniors who are not pictured on these pages.

Super seniors are athletes who have brought this University years of sports excellence, usually four years worth of dedication and determination that won't easily be forgotten. We want these particular stories of UNC sports personalities to stand out. Hence, we didn't enlarge the field to include all the many truly outstanding competitors leaving with this 1975 class.

Choosing "senior supers" was started last year, and we still find it an appropriate undertaking. Sports has a unique position on this 20,000-person campus. It comes closest to unifying us. We wish to thank those who have contributed so much for so many.

Wo'mann' athlete gains acceptance

Women athletes are gaining in numbers. But when senior basketballer Marsha Mann entered Carolina four years ago, the woman athlete was more of an oddity than a person to be taken seriously.

Since then, the prestige of women athletes has grown to become a serious part of the Carolina athletic program. Mann had no little part in the transition.

While denying the label of "women's libber," Mann is simply a serious athlete who happens to be a woman.

Only through the dedication and perseverance found in any serious athlete could Mann have made the World University Games team, become an All-America, broken records at a national tournament, and led the Tar Heel women to a winning season.

But after all, now is the dawning of equality for women, including on the basketball court, and

Mann's accomplishments could hardly go ignored or unchallenged.

When the local media needed a token woman athlete, they came in droves to interview Mann. But her dedication to the game of basketball had deeper roots than that of tokenism. Mann liked to play basketball and happened to be very good at it.

After the Billie Jean King-Bobby Riggs tennis match, the challenge was on. Amateur male basketballers clamored for a chance to compete with Mann in one-on-one matches.

While Mann was fighting her public battles on the basketball court, there were some quiet battles raging that were to have far-reaching effects on the future of women's athletics at Carolina.

There is no doubt that the seriousness and professionalism that Mann brought to women's basketball at Carolina had a lot to do with the acceptance and even pride, in the women's athletic program here.

— Jane E. Albright



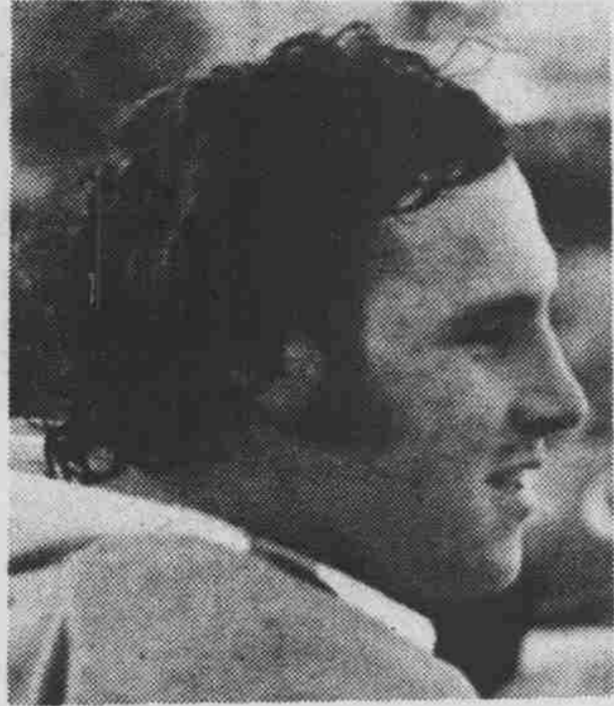
Huff brings offensive line aura

Perhaps more than any other team sport, football is one which requires certain members of a team to remain obscure throughout their career. Unlike soccer, hockey, or basketball, where it's feasible for any player to score, football is a sport where only a few people are publicized.

Fans will memorize the names and statistics of their favorite offensive players, while bragging about how impossible it is for anyone to run against their favorite defensive lineman. Seldom, however, will those players who allow the offense to operate, the offensive linemen, get more than just passing notice.

At Carolina the last few years, there has been an offensive guard who has captured the public eye. He has been the one who always seems to throw the key blocks for the Sammy Johnsons, the Nick Vidnovics and the Chris Kupecs.

His rise to that ill-defined and much overused status of "a star" perhaps began in the press box. Such phrases as "Great block by Huff", and "Huff's block set up the score" began to be heard early in his junior year.



Throughout his junior year, playing for a team that was to go 4-7 and be a major disappointment, Ken Huff continued to play his best, and suddenly, he began to be noticed. Maryland came to Kenan Stadium to take a 23-3 win from the Tar Heels, but Huff did his job, outclassing All-America Paul Vellano.

All through the year Huff played

well, and when the next fall came he was a pre-season All-America pick.

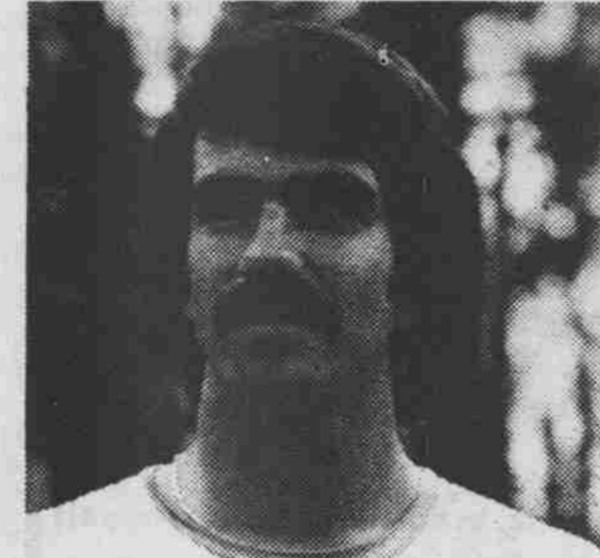
"If I feel I'm doing my job and satisfying my teammates," he once said, "that is reward enough for me. Making an all-star team isn't really all that important, although I'm sure every player would like to do it."

Huff lived up to his pre-season expectations, throwing crucial blocks for an offense which set all kinds of records. His reward came in going higher in the pro draft than any other UNC player before him.

Now he will leave Carolina and venture to Baltimore, where the process will begin again. At first he won't be noticed, while the Bert Joneses receive all the acclaim, then one day the fans will notice that it was he who threw the block, and he will be noticed again.

—Kevin Barris

Garcia winds up career a winner



Did you hear the one about the kid from Knoxville, Tenn. who played tennis at Carolina for five years and despite the many ups and downs in his career, he graduated a winner?

With all of the print that senior captain Joe Garcia has received lately, one might expect to see him taking on the winner of this weekend's Connors-Newcombe match at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas.

However, Garcia's future plans do not include a trip to Nevada. Instead, he will play for Carolina in the NCAA tournament on June 16-21 in Corpus Christi, Tex. and then play on the European professional circuit for at least a year.

During his career, Garcia, won the no. 5 singles ACC championship as a junior and was on the no. 3 ACC champion doubles team as a freshman.

The colorful Garcia was a member of a Carolina

ACC championship team each of his five years. A back injury at the start of his sophomore year gave him the extra year of eligibility as a "fifth-year" performer.

At the start of the 1975 season, Garcia was under pressure to produce. The only senior on the team, he had to make the big jump from the fifth flight to the second.

After a slow start, in which he lost four of eight matches, he won 16 of 18 contests to finish with an impressive 20-6 record.

The gritty play of the hard-hitting Garcia may not be seen in "the southern part of heaven" again, but his contributions to Coach Don Skakle's outstanding tennis teams and their winning tradition will not soon be forgotten.

—Tom Ward

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