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Weather: Good for football

UNC hosts Maryland in conference opener

by Susan Shackelford
Sports Editor

Any Atlantic Coast Conference football game has such a chilling uncertainty that today Bill Dooley and Jerry Claiborne no doubt feel frozen against a wall of question marks.

It's only the second ACC battle of the 1975 season, but the league is so balanced, as indicated by Wake Forest's shocking upset last week over N.C. State, that today's 1:30 p.m. game carries in Kenan Stadium carries more importance. And the anxiety level may



go even a notch higher for UNC, which has lost to Maryland so soundly the last two seasons — 23-3 in '73 and 24-12 in '74.

Dooley, the UNC head coach, wonders whether his young offense and shallow defense can continue making the big plays after a win over Southern Conference opponent, William and Mary, two weeks ago in Kenan.

Claiborne, whose club was upset last week at Tennessee (26-8) while UNC had an open date, ponders his Terrapin injury list, which includes star quarterback Mark Manges, four other offensive starters and Jim Brechbiel, a pre-season All-America candidate at defensive back.

Shoulder separation

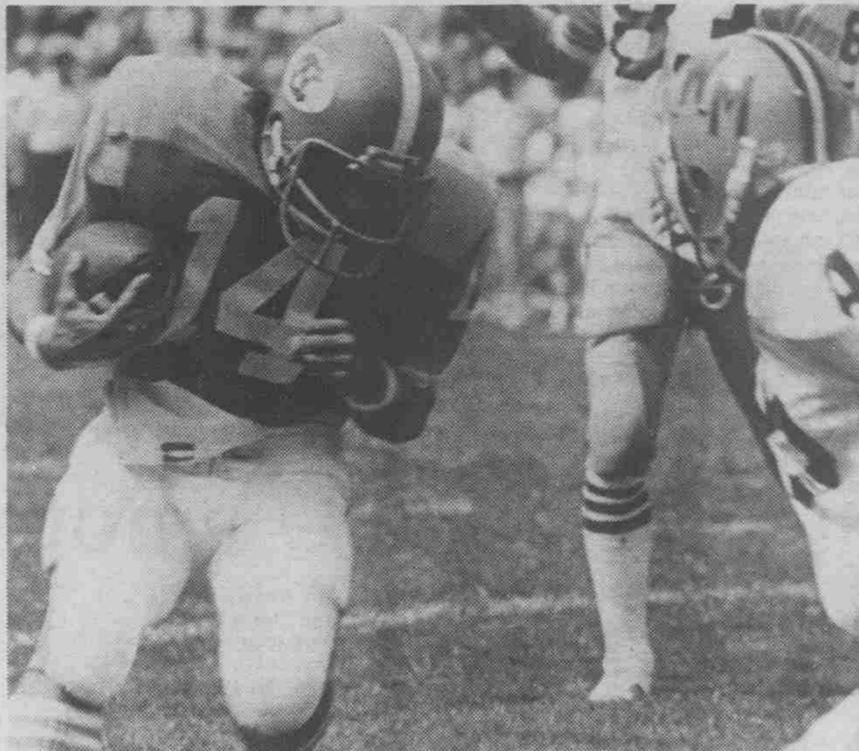
Manges, considered a better option player than his backup Larry Dick, suffered a shoulder separation against Tennessee, while tailback Rick Jennings sprained his ankle in the Terps' opening win over Villanova.

Brechbiel, who suffered a pinched nerve against Villanova, played only a little last week but may get more action today.

Rounding out the injuries are tight ends Bob Raba with his broken hand and Vince Kinney with his sprained ankle.

Their injuries, said Dooley, don't give the Tar Heels a great advantage. "I know Manges is a great athlete, but I was really impressed with Dick. He was 12 for 18 passing in the second half and moved the offense against Tennessee. And James Franklin, replacing Jennings, is a great inside and outside runner."

On defense, Dooley said he is looking for



Senior quarterback Billy Paschall carries against William and Mary

almost anything. "They will use so many styles — the blitz, overshift or eight-man front. Tennessee didn't have a sustained drive against them. Mistakes in their kicking game hurt Maryland," he said. "Tennessee did not dominate Maryland; Maryland's own mistakes hurt them."

UNC offense

Going against the Terp defense, which contains last week's ACC defensive lineman of the week, tackle Joe Campbell, Carolina's attack is led by quarterback Bill Paschall and running backs James Betterson and Mike Voight. The Tar Heels also hurt themselves

against William and Mary with an overabundance of offsidings and illegal motion penalties.

The Carolina defense, which Dooley called a "bright spot" against William and Mary, is a crucial factor. If it can sustain its first game strength, the weakened Maryland offense might get too big a test, too soon. Maryland's averaging 441.5 yards total offense, but the Heels own three interceptions, two recovered fumbles, a blocked punt and a deflected punt.

Leading the Carolina defense are tackles Rod Broadway and Dee Hardison, halfback Russ Conley and linebackers Bobby Gay and Billy Murphy.

Russ Conley confident of UNC secondary

by Ford Worthy
Staff Writer

Russ Conley is out to discredit the critics.

"They picked us to have an off season last year," recalled the junior defensive cornerback for UNC. "And last year they were wrong. This year they say we'll finish either fifth or sixth in the conference. They may just be wrong again."

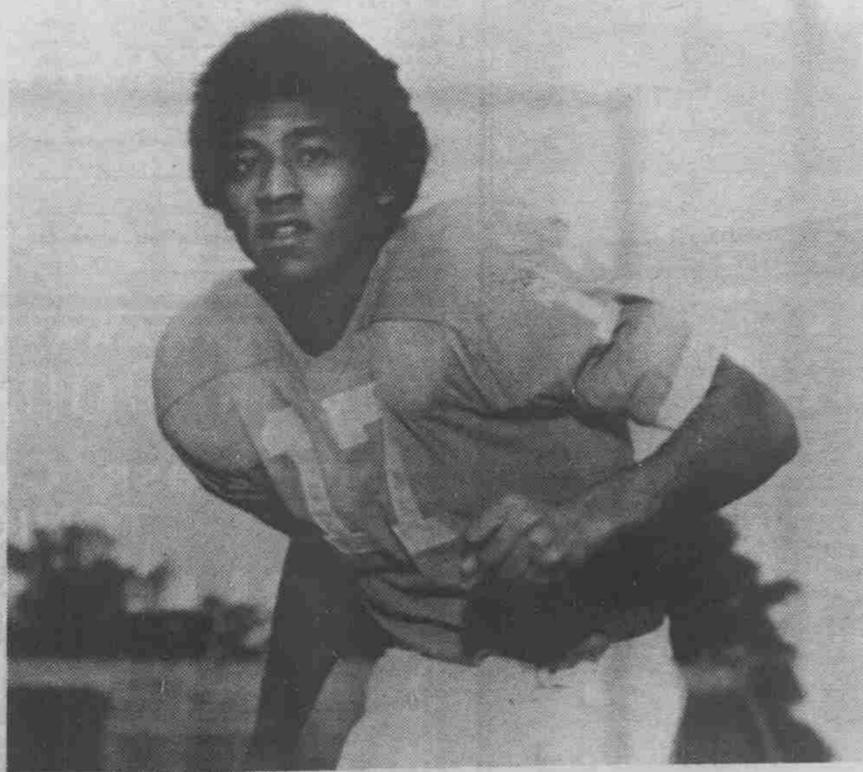
And when will the Heels offer evidence disproving the preseason talk? Today, says Conley, who was thrust into a starting role as a freshman two years ago and who performed steadily in 1974. In fact, Conley believes the contest with Maryland today may possibly represent the season's turning point for Carolina.

"I definitely think that we can win the ACC title this year. The Maryland game is super-important to us as far as winning the championship goes. It will definitely be a tough game, but I think that in it we'll show a lot of people that our team is going to be much better than the predictors said," explained the articulate Canton, N.C. native.

Much of the responsibility for stopping the Terps rests on Conley and his cohorts in the secondary. For the past two seasons the group has been the target of countless Tar Heel critics, as well as numerous opposing quarterbacks, who have welcomed the opportunity to improve their passing percentages.

Conley doesn't concede that the criticism has been justified, but he admits that there have been some costly lapses in pass coverage in the past.

"I remember the game against Maryland my freshman year," said Conley. "Al Neville hit Frank Russell for a TD that was my



Cornerback Russ Conley

responsibility. That was the first time that I had ever gotten beat deep before.

"Since then I haven't been completely consistent all the time, but I know I've improved a lot. Bobby (Trott), Ronnie (Johnson) and the other guys back there have also improved.

"We're shooting to be the best secondary in the league," continued the lithe six-foot, 175-pounder.

Whether or not the UNC secondary can shake off the reputation they have earned in past seasons and attain that lofty goal remains to be seen.

One thing is for certain though, Maryland quarterback Larry Dick, an all-Metro Washington, D.C. prep player, will provide the Heels' secondary with a stiff test. He completed 15 of 24 passes in the Terps' loss to Tennessee last week, including one touchdown pass.

"To look at him on film you'd think he has to be a pro prospect," said Conley. "We know they'll come at us with a lot of power sweeps, and we're expecting him (Dick) to put the ball up plenty."

Conley says he is looking forward to going against Dick and the rest of the Terps, especially since this is his last chance to beat them. UNC is not scheduled to play Maryland in 1976.

"They annihilated us two years ago (23-3), and then beat us in the rain last year (24-12). I think we're ready for them. We got off to a good start against William and Mary (two weeks ago, 33-6) and are really in the right frame of mind to play Maryland.

"Last week we concentrated on the physical aspect of playing them and left the emotional part out since we didn't play last Saturday. This week we've got the emotional part together."

Russ Conley exudes confidence. And while he thinks that Carolina will prove the ACC forecasters wrong, he hopes they will be able to cash in on at least one bet. Some observers have said that by the end of the season Conley will have gained all-conference honors.

"I don't like to get my mind geared towards the honors," remarked Conley. "I like to think I'm one of the best cornerbacks in the league, but if you start thinking too much about your individual goals, the important things, which right now concern Maryland, get out of focus."