

Clyde narrows gap for starting QB job

Senior quarterback Clyde Christensen from Fresno, Calif., has closed the gap between himself and Matt Kupec for the starting job after impressing Coach Dick Crum during the Tar Heels' second intrasquad scrimmage Saturday.

"I would say they're just about even right now," Crum said Monday. "Clyde had a good day personally, running the veer, passing and running the ball. He's closed the gap."

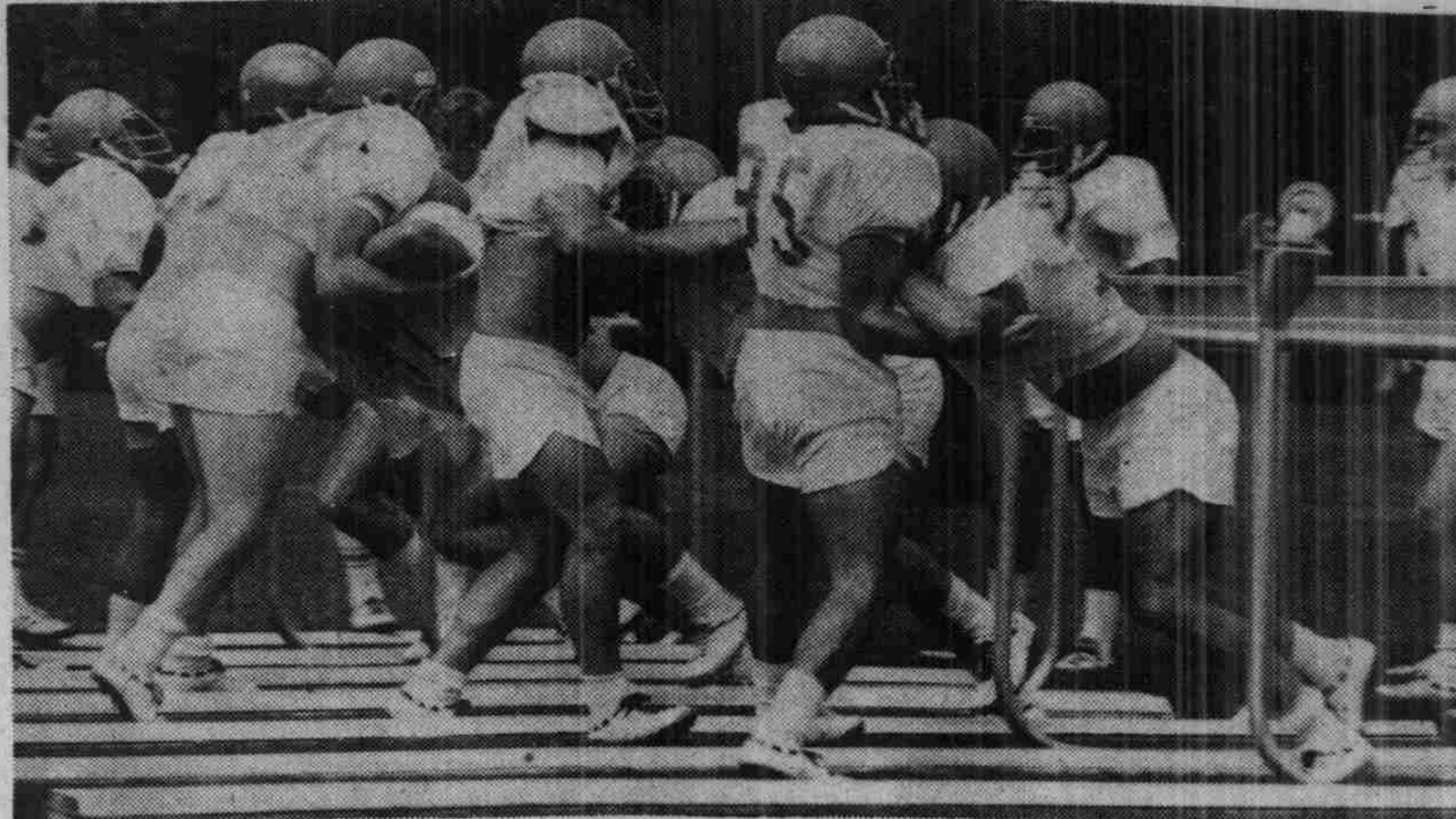
Kupec, a junior, started practice this fall as a clear-cut choice to quarterback the Tar Heels. Christensen, a senior, is a transfer from Fresno City Junior College.

Lawrence Taylor, a 6-foot-3, 231-pound sophomore from Williamsburg, Va., has taken the lead from Rick Downs for the starting inside linebacker slot alongside Buddy Curry. The graduation of Bobby Gay left a void at that position.

The competition at that spot has been one of the highlights of Carolina's fall practice. Downs, a 6-foot-2, 211-pound sophomore from Woodbridge, Va., started the fall ahead of Taylor at that position and is still a contender.

Taylor has had a superb fall in what is really his first experience behind Ken Sheets and T.K. McDaniels and saw action on the specialty teams.

With Sheets and McDaniels both returning, Crum and his staff decided to switch Taylor to inside linebacker where he could have a better chance to play. He was impressive during spring practice and responded well so far this fall.



Practice, practice

Some colleges began their football seasons last Saturday while most get underway this coming Saturday. But for the Tar Heels, who don't open until Sept. 23, it's practice, practice and more practice. Carolina players worked out in shorts Monday afternoon following a scrimmage Saturday and worked on everything from blocking to tackling to trying to cause fumbles. Staff photos by Billy Newman.

Kickers affected by rules changes

College football rules-makers took three steps during the off-season to help curb the increasing number of field goals.

Following a move made by the National Football League several years ago, a 16-man rules committee passed a rule that will return the ball to the original line of scrimmage following missed field goals rather than spotting the ball at the 20-yard line. If a team misses one this fall with the line of scrimmage at the 35, the opposition will take possession there instead of at the 20.

Maryland coach Jerry Claiborne, a member of the rules committee, said he thinks the change is a good one.

"There are only a couple of guys in the country who can kick the real long ones," Claiborne told the ACC Operation Football tour two weeks ago. "They had a distinct advantage under the old rule. The new rule will cut down on the long ones. You'll see more punts now from around the 30-, 35-yard line."

Clemson's Obed Ariri, the ACC's best long-distance threat, will be affected by the change, Tiger coach Charley Pell said.

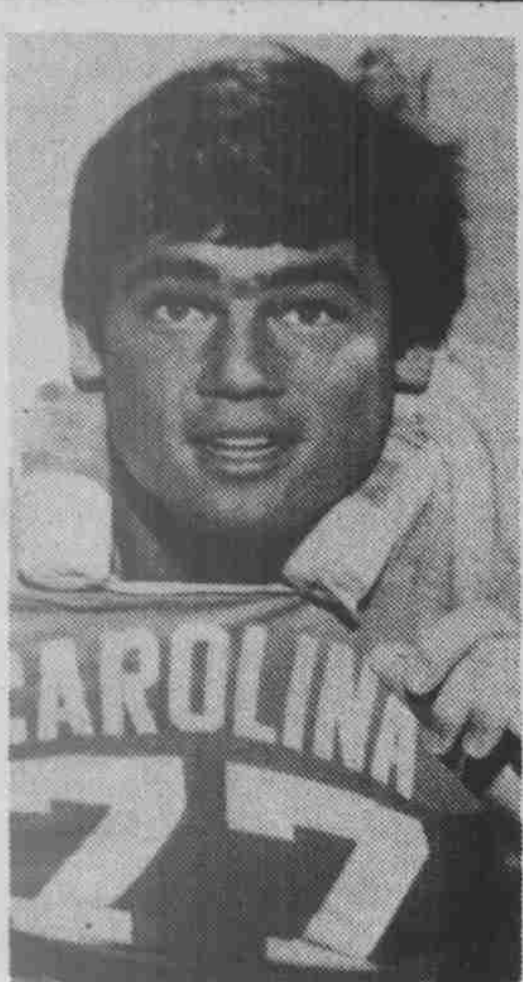
"We're trying to emphasize percentage instead of distance," Pell said of Ariri, who kicked a 57-yarder last fall against Wake Forest. "He just won't get those opportunities this year. The punters will get more of an opportunity to try and down the ball inside the 5-yard line. That can be a great weapon."

The rules committee voted to narrow the distance between goal post uprights from 23 feet, 4 inches to 18 feet, 6 inches and to prohibit kickers' use of "pet" balls for field goal attempts.

A number of kickers the last several years began using balls that were older and softer than regular balls and found that the old ball traveled further than the new, hard ones. N.C. State's Jay Sherill and Carolina's Tom Biddle both used the "pet" balls during the 1976 season, but the ACC banned their use last year. The new ruling makes the regulation a national one.

Another change will allow pass receivers who are knocked out of bounds by a defender to return to the field of play to catch a pass or throw a block. Before, an offensive player who went out of bounds was automatically out of the remainder of the play.

Running backs no longer will be allowed to change jerseys on the field in an effort to cut down on the number of tearaway jerseys being used. A player must leave the game to change his jersey or his team must take a timeout.



Tackle Bob Hukill 'Beefcake' Bob Hukill exploited

Carolina offensive tackle Bobby Hukill is rated by Tar Heel coaches as one of the team's top all-star candidates. And Hukill certainly hopes he stars more on the football field this fall than he did in a play last summer.

The 6-foot-5, 254-pound Hukill played one of the queen's bodyguards in a summer theater's production of "Kismet" near his home in Wilmington, Del. He says he didn't have many choice lines. "I was basically exploited," he says with a laugh. "I was beefcake. They wanted nothing more than my figure."

The play went over pretty well. The theater was sold out six nights a week, with 2,000 persons attending each night.

"I wasn't nervous, though," Hukill says. "It was nothing like playing football in front of 50,000 people."

In position changes, former linebacker Steve Taylor has been switched to noseguard and Phil Farris, a reserve running back, has been moved to defensive halfback.

"I think it will work out all right," said Farris, a junior who was fighting for a spot against the likes of Ken Mack, Amos Lawrence, Doug Paschal, Billy Johnson, Walter Sturdivant and Terence Burrell. He played cornerback Saturday.

Freshman Jeff Hayes booted field goals of 50 and 55 yards and was perfect with four extra point attempts in scrimmage Saturday. The Carolina punting chores are still a question mark, however.

"Coach Crum told me today (Monday) I had a good chance of doing both," Hayes said. He is competing against Steve Streater and Chuck Sharpe for punting duties. Bob Loomis and Bernie Menapace also can punt.

Loomis, moved to tight end this year, is being pushed by sophomore Rick Vanhoy, a 6-foot-3½, 218-pounder from Gold Hill...offensive lineman Ron Wooten is looking for a starting spot at guard to go with All-ACC guard Mike Salzano and is coming on strong, according to Crum. Lowell Eakin and Donald Lucas are also in the running.

Since defensive tackle Mike Argo broke his arm the first day of fall practice, Carolina has suffered no serious injuries. Linebacker Larry Redder sprained his ankle on the first play in practice Saturday, and Billy Johnson sprained his later in the scrimmage. Burrell has a bruised back from the scrimmage, and defensive tackle Donnell Thompson still is limping on an ankle he sprained Wednesday. Thompson should be ready to practice Wednesday.

Defensive tackle and noseguard coach Jack Himebauch singled out tackle Bunn Rhames and noseguard Dave Simmons as having good games in scrimmage Saturday...freshmen Bruse Porcher and Darrel Nicholson are names to watch, according to Himebauch. Porcher is a 6-foot-4, 245-pound defensive tackle from Concord, and Nicholson is a highly recruited 6-foot-3, 220-pound linebacker from Winston-Salem.

-PETE MITCHELL

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