

# Football fortunes in limbo

Recruiting philosophy of new coaching staff key to good times—or continued bad ones—for Carolina football

One of Dick Crum's assistant coaches was chatting with a Carolina student in a motel lobby last Friday night in Clemson, S.C., the night before the Jekyll and Hyde Tar Heels came close to defeating Clemson.

"So you're a senior, huh," Denny Marcin said. "Too bad you won't be around for the good times."

The Carolina fellow looked at Marcin as if the coach was batty in making such a proclamation. "You mean there will be some good times?" the student asked, hoping Marcin would elaborate.

Marcin returned a look of amazement. "You better believe there will," he said.

And he wasn't kidding, either. At least he doesn't think he was. No matter how frustrated Crum and his assistants have become watching the Tar Heels fumble and tumble to a 3-6 record, nobody's moving out of Kenan Field House. At least not for a couple of years, not until the new coaches have been given ample opportunity to give Carolina the kind of winning football they say they can.

Saturday's game against Virginia and next Saturday's finale against Duke are merely minor skirmishes in the overall scheme. They mean very little to anyone, except to the 14 Tar Heel seniors. None of them, obviously, are happy with the season; even Bob Loomis, who moved from obscurity at fullback to all-star status at tight end, is disgusted. And several of the seniors are bitter about the coaching transition and Dick Crum's system—on the football field and off. They can't wait until the final whistle against Duke. And though Crum won't say so publicly, there are a few players he'll be happy to escort out the door.

The important Carolina football battles are being waged on Friday nights when assistant coaches scour the East and South for football players who would like to come to Carolina, and whom Crum and his staff would like to coach. And when the Duke game film is placed on its shelf in a couple weeks, Crum will pack his suitcase for a winter of one-night stands in motels and for cups of tea in a prospect's living room.

That's where he'll seal his fate—or spark his fame—as Carolina's football coach.

## Lee Pace

And the recruiting campaign that Crum is directing is one quite different from the system used by former coach Bill Dooley.

North Carolina and Virginia were Dooley's prime hunting grounds. Crum is branching out, looking into Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, South Carolina and any other state where he finds a player that will work into his system. "We've got a good reputation outside Virginia and this state," he says. "We attract a lot of interest in the Northeast. It's not like we're known only in the immediate area."

That's why Crum approaches Saturday's game against Virginia as just another game. For Dooley, the Virginia game was important to impress prospects from

the state of Virginia. Crum isn't interested in a kid who might make his mind up on the basis of one game.

The new staff won't go exclusively by a player's high school stat sheet or his game films, either. His high school transcript and his college board scores will be studied closely. "If a kid wants to go to college to be a football player and nothing else, I'm not very interested in him," Crum says.

That's why Carolina isn't interested in a couple of outstanding high school players in North Carolina who are being courted by Alabama, Georgia, N.C. State and East Carolina, among others. That's also why UNC is recruiting a couple of in-state players that other schools have taken merely a casual glance at. If the coaches spot an obscure tackle in Pennsylvania who has the basic physical qualifications—speed and size—as well as some quality gray matter and an interest in Carolina, Crum will recruit him and hope he can coach him into being a decent football player.

Crum isn't unrealistic enough to say that every outstanding high school player he offers a scholarship to will be Dean's List material. "We'll probably bring in about three marginal kids in each class," he says. And the coach will do his best to keep in school several Dooley recruits who have no business being here in the first place. He'd crucify himself in the eyes of wealthy alumni—those controlling the purse strings—if he ran off some players who excel on the field but barely survive in the classroom.

Crum's approach is a gamble. But it's one he believes in and one he thinks he can make work. If it does work, there will be good times. If it doesn't...



UNC coach Dick Crum...recruiting is key

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