

Past and present stars win awards



Roy Clark

By JOHN FISH

During the past three weeks, several Carolina past and present athletic stars have received outstanding individual honors.

Kansas City Kings rookie Phil Ford, a '78 Carolina graduate, captured the National Basketball Association's Rookie of the Year award. Ford's excellent playmaking and running of the Kings' fast-break offense led Kansas City to the playoffs and a first-place finish in the NBA Midwest Division. The Kings finished in last place in 1977.

The two-time Carolina All-American was a near unanimous choice by a national panel of writers. The Rocky Mount, N.C. native collected 62 of the 66 votes cast.

Ford averaged 15.9 points a game, ranked fourth in the league in assists with an 8.6 average and was fifth in steals with 2.2 a game.

In one game against Milwaukee, Ford scored 26 points and dished out 22 assists which tied Oscar Robertson's team record.

The selection of Ford marks the second year in a row a Carolina alumnus has received Rookie of the Year honors. Last season, forward Walter Davis of the Phoenix Suns won the award.

Ford was also named Rookie of the Year by the *Sporting News*. The magazine bases its choice on the vote of the NBA players and will award Ford a silver plated, regulation size basketball.

"A lot of things turned us into winners, but Ford was the key," Kansas City Coach Cotton Fitzsimmons said about his club's remarkable turnaround. "He tied everything together."

Closer to home, another outstanding spring season for senior Tar Heel third baseman Jim Atkinson has netted him the Atlantic Coast Conference Player of the Year award for the 1979 baseball season.

Atkinson batted .359 for the year, hit 16 home runs and drove in 56 runs. He also scored 52 runs and was successful on 15 of 20 stolen base attempts.

The Sanford, N.C. native set the conference record with 28 career home runs, surpassing the previous mark of 27 by Clemson's Craig White.

Atkinson received 35 votes to 19 for runner-up Clemson outfielder Neil Simons.

The MVP award marks the second year in a row a Carolina player has won the award. Pitcher Greg Norris received the honor last season.

Atkinson earlier had been named All-ACC third baseman. Also, named to the first team all-conference squad was Tar Heel senior second baseman Roy Clark. Clark led the league in hitting with a .382 mark while setting a new league mark for hits with 84.

Carolina placed one player on the second team, pitcher Bill Gallagher. The hard-throwing freshman lefthander led the league with 94 strikeouts and posted a 7-1 record.

Carolina's nationally ranked golf team also placed two players on the all-conference squad. Senior John McGough, winner of last week's North-South Amateur, and Sophomore Frank Fuhrer were named to the eight-player squad selected by the conference coaches.

McGough won all-conference honors for the third year in a row while Fuhrer led the Heels with a 73.2 season average.



Phil Ford



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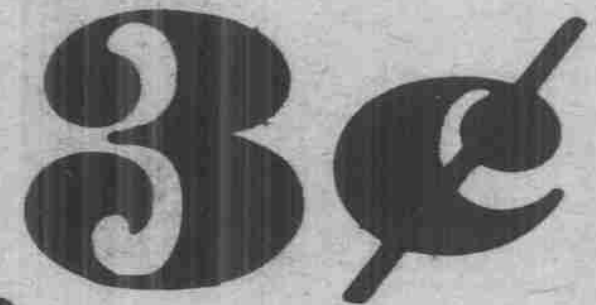
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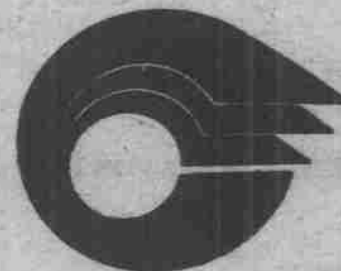
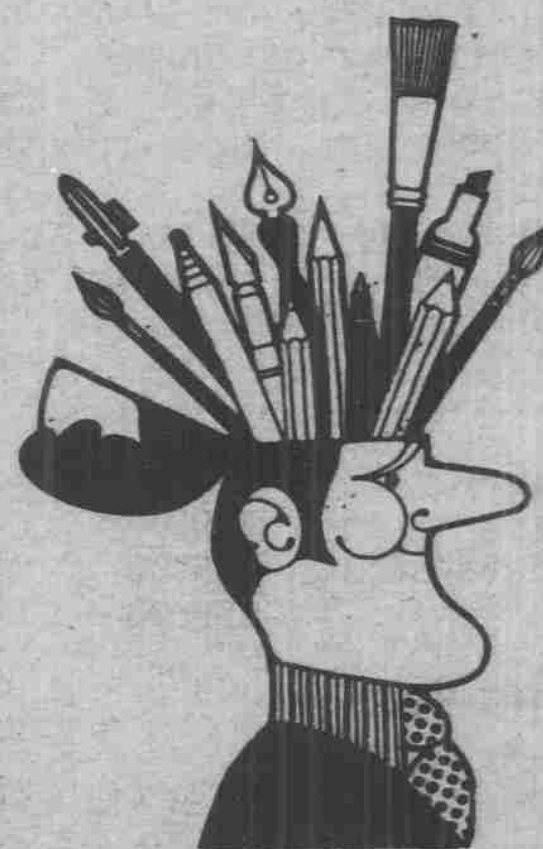


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