

An Easy Life?

Soccer's not so tough for sweepers, at least not for UNC's Marvin

By GEOFFREY MOCK
Staff Writer

Soccer can be such an easy sport. Take Ricky Marvin, for example. He says all he has to do from his sweeper position is sit back, make sure the other defenders do their job and watch the shutouts roll in.

In Profile: Ricky Marvin

"I don't have to mark anybody," Marvin said. "There are four of us against three defenders. All I do is to make sure the offensive players are marked tightly. If they do their job, it's easy for me." Others don't see Marvin's job as so passive. "If Ricky Marvin isn't an All-American pick," UNC coach Anson Donrance said, "something is very wrong."

Marvin was All-Atlantic Coast Conference last year as a midfielder but was moved this year to join All-ACC players Kevin Kane and Bucky Buckley and rising stars Jay Ainslie and Jim Poff to form one of the stingiest defenses in the nation, which has scored six shutouts in nine games.

"Playing with a good defense as a sweeper is enjoyable," Marvin said. "Good teams will have men breaking through and get him open. From the sweeper position, I can see these things develop easily. When I see a side of the field open I can shift to cover."

The junior from Baltimore, Md., was selected as co-captain for the team, a duty he takes seriously on the field. "A sweeper is a good position to captain from," he said. "I can see the whole field and I don't have to worry about following a man. I look at what's going on in the field and make suggestions."

Marvin and the defense haven't often had to regroup after goals scored against them—but a

certain mental toughness is required when it does happen.

"You have to mark on your man and say, 'he's not going to score,'" he said. "As a sweeper I hate to be scored upon. I feel it's my responsibility. It's a letdown and you have to get back up."

Marvin says the key to the successful defense is for all 11 men on the field to get involved. "We have a high-pressure defense. If one breaks down, it filters down to me. Then we're four-on-four, and I have to pick the open man up."

Marvin's role on the team, however, hasn't been purely defensive. His five assists in nine games have put him on track for the school assist record of nine set by Thomas Perkins in 1959. This puts him second on the team in assists to Tony Johnson. Marvin's assists usually come from his throw-ins.

"A throw-in is more dangerous than a corner kick," he said. "Chris Heyn and I can get it to the big guys like Tony Johnson and Sean Naber

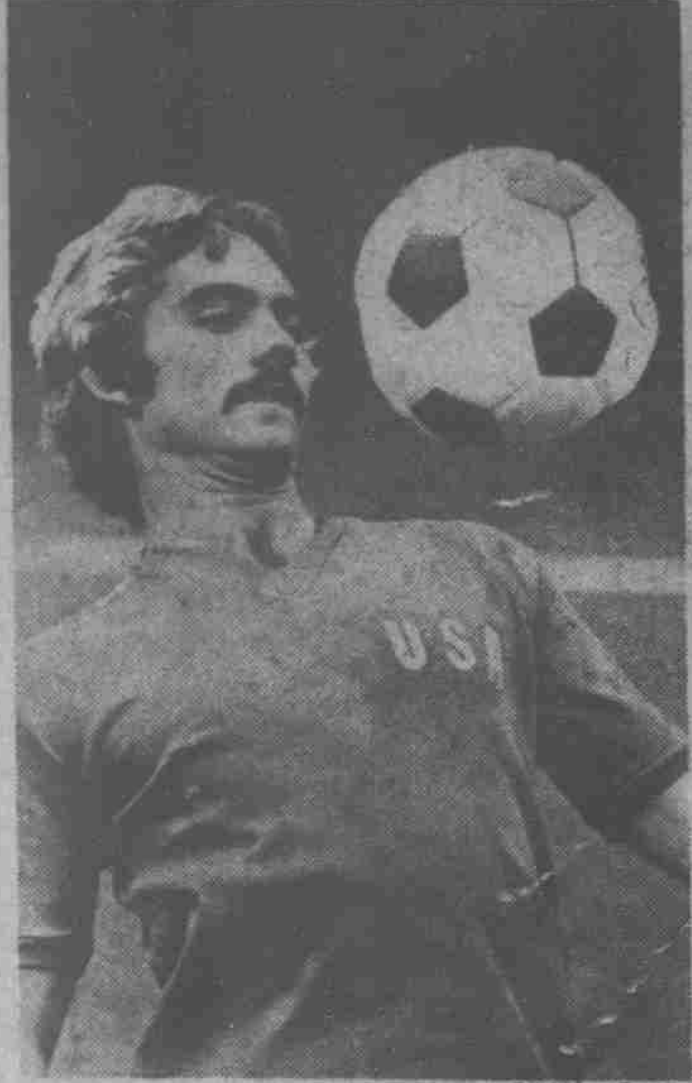
and the defense can't do anything. The goalie is in a terrible situation because a thrown ball is more accurate than a kick."

The ACC is as balanced as ever, as shown by Duke's 3-1 upset over previously top-ranked Clemson. Both Duke, 1-0 victor over the Tar Heels in the Mayor's Cup, and Clemson are ranked in the Top 20.

"We outshot Duke," Marvin said, "and with Duke beating Clemson, we know we can do it. We'll get it in gear. We've always had a good defense and now we have an offense to go along with the defense and that's the key to us getting a bid (to the NCAA tournament)."

Marvin first played soccer at age eight in recreational leagues and he says he hopes to get a shot to play as a professional.

"I would like to go for a couple of years as a pro," he said. "I'd like to try the pros before something else. If I didn't, I'd feel like I might miss out on something."



Ricky Marvin

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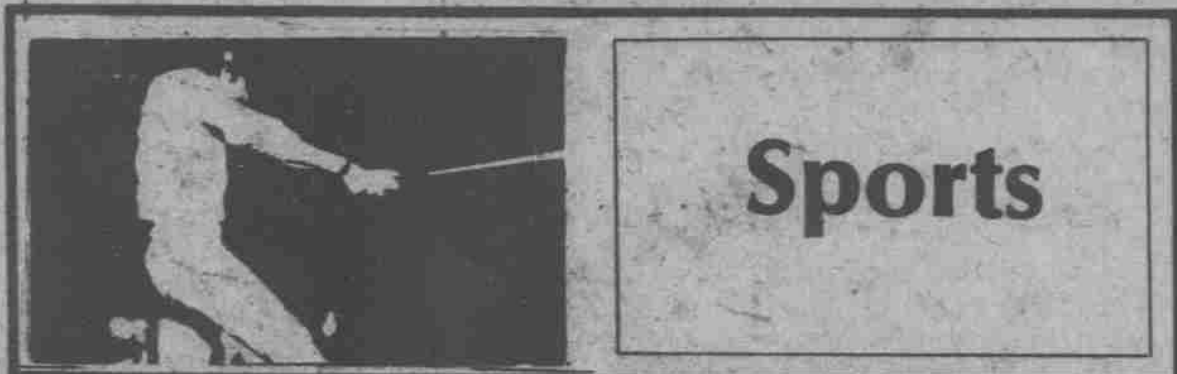
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Busy weekend in sports

From staff reports

It will be a busy weekend for UNC athletic teams as several squads play key games or matches.

The women's tennis team begins the weekend today with a match at Maryland. They travel to Virginia for another match Saturday morning. The volleyball team also plays today, in the first of two days at the South Carolina Invitational Tournament.

The Carolina baseball team will host Division II national champion Florida Southern in a pair of doubleheaders this weekend at Boshamer Stadium.

Florida Southern has won the title four of the last 10 years in Division II and finished second in another season. UNC coach Mike Roberts said the games would match strength for strength.

The first of the doubleheaders begins tonight at 6:30 while Saturday's twin-bill begins at 6 p.m.

The field hockey team will host Virginia at 3 p.m. Saturday on Hinton James Field, while the men's cross country team will race at Campbell and the women's cross country team will run in the Wake Forest Invitational.

Preview

The North Carolina women's soccer team goes after its fourth straight shutout against the Duke soccer club at 2 p.m. Sunday on Fetzer Field. The 5-3 Tar Heels defeated the Blue Devils three times last season, including an 8-0 triumph in the finals of the state tournament.

The UNC men's soccer team seeks to extend its three-game winning streak in a

"We'll find out the things we can do and the things we can't do," he said. "They'll give us super competition to see how well our team has progressed this fall."

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