

SPORTS

UNC Football 1981

Tar Heels predicted to win ACC again...

By KIM ADAMS

With 13 starters returning from last season's victorious Bluebonnet Bowl squad, the Tar Heels have been picked by both the media and the head football coaches to repeat as ACC champions.

Head coach Dick Crum said that one of the best things about this year's squad is that the team doesn't have to worry about a rookie quarterback like last year when Rod Elkins stepped in to replace an injured Chuck Sharpe.



Rod Elkins is no longer a rookie at quarterback

"Fate dictated our quarterback situation last year," Crum said. "We now have a veteran and that should give us stability. We'll be able to throw the football more because Rod has gotten more passing experience. In spring ball he hit the receiver 20 out of 21 times."

Elkins, a junior from Greensboro was the pre-season All-Atlantic Coast Conference choice at quarterback.

He has had more time with his receivers than he did last season. "Timing is the biggest thing a quarterback and his receivers must work on," he said. "We were able to do that in the spring. In addition, I know how to read secondaries better. I've seen them on the field. A year ago I had only seen them on a chalkboard."

Elkins says his personal goal for the upcoming season is "to simply help the team as much as I can. As far as statistics are concerned, the one thing I would really like to do is complete 60 percent of my passes."

The running game will be handled largely by pre-season All-ACC team member Kelvin Bryant. The junior from Tarboro gained 1,039 yards last fall and scored 12 touchdowns.

Bryant will need to help fill a big void left by last year's stars Amos Lawrence and Billy Johnson.

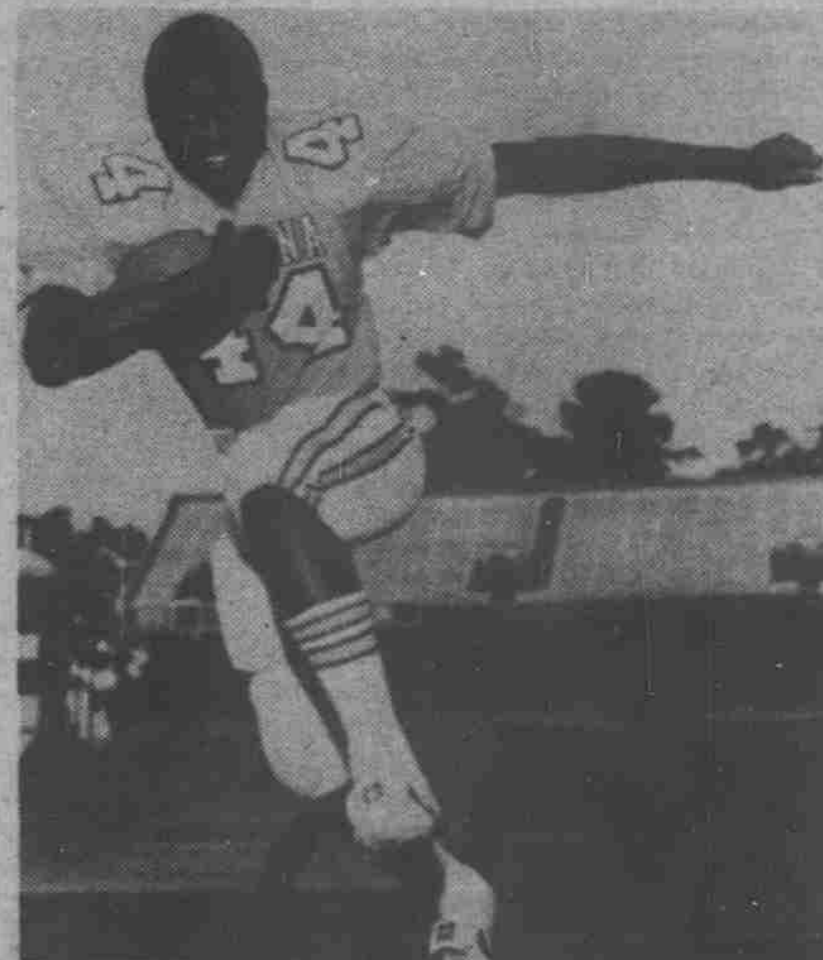
Crum said that his first area of concern is with the defense. "We had two first-round draft picks and one 6th round draft pick. Those types of players are hard to replace."

"We do have three of our four linebackers from last year returning, but there are still a lot of holes to patch up."

Crum said that there is going to have to be a replacement for Ron Wooten at guard and that it will probably be David Dreschler, a junior from Cleveland, N.C. Dreschler was also chosen to the pre-season All-ACC team.

The area of the greatest concern may be the punting game. "People ask me who we're going to miss the most and I'm not sure that it's not Steve Streater," Crum said. "The punting game will be handled by Chuck Sharpe and Jeff Hayes but it's going to require some work. I think that we can bring it back up to the point it was last year."

"We had good fortune at critical times last year," Crum said. "The most important factor is that we didn't have a



Kelvin Bryant gives experience to running game

whole lot of injuries. It's going to be tough to win the conference with no losses and if we had had even one loss last year we would have been tied for first instead of winning outright."

Other strengths promise to be at tight end with Shelton Robinson, guard Ron Spruill, tackle Brian Blados, and at linebacker with Darrell Nicholson, Lee Shaffer and Greg Poole and at wide receiver with Jon Richardson.

...balanced conference presents obstacles

By KIM ADAMS

Though the other coaches in the ACC say that the Tar Heels have a good chance to repeat the success of the 1980 season, they also say that it's going to be a tough road for the eventual conference champion no matter who it turns out to be. Here's how the Tar Heels' ACC opponents look this year:

N.C. State

Picked by the coaches to tie for second and by the media to finish a strong fourth, defense should be the area where the Wolfpack is strongest.

"I think we have a chance to be a good defensive team," head coach Monte Kiffin, who directed State to a 6-5 mark in his debut campaign last season, said. "Our linebacking corp is solid with Robert Abraham, Sam Key and Vaughan Johnson."

Abraham is a pre-season All-ACC selection.

"We feel good about Tol Avery (at quarterback)," Kiffin said. "He's a good young man. Our weak point is in the running game and right now our best runner is Tol Avery. We need to find a good running back who we can depend on."

Clemson

The Tigers are picked by the coaches to finish tied for second and by the media to finish third.

Head coach Danny Ford said that his team has improved over last year's squad. "We won't be depending on freshmen this year," he said. "Were still not overly endowed, but at least we won't have to use so many freshmen."

"Everybody is returning on offense so we better have improved there," Ford said. "Homer Jordan will be better at quarterback, but we lost everybody in the kicking game. Obed Arii, a Nigerian soccer style kicker, can kick the devil out of it but he doesn't know where it'll go yet."

Maryland

"I'm optimistic, not pessimistic about this season," head coach Jerry Claiborne said. "We're going to go into every game feeling that we can win it."

The Terrapins have been picked to finish fourth in the coaches poll and second in the media poll.

Maryland's running game is well taken care of by the ACC's 1980 leading rusher, Charlie Wysocki, who was voted to the All-ACC pre-season team. Tim Woody and Willy Joiner will be on hand when Wysocki needs a rest.

"We feel we've got our five best linemen spread out on our line," Claiborne said. "But, our challenge will be depth on our defensive line and we don't have a letterman on our secondary."

"We have no one who has kicked the ball in a game, but we'll have someone who'll kick it well when the season starts," he said.

Claiborne also said that he is undecided as to who his quarterback will be.

Duke

The Blue Devils are lead this year by ACC 1980 Rookie of the Year Ben Bennett and the team could be a surprise this year.

Duke is picked by the coaches to finish fifth and by the media to finish sixth, but

Coach Red Wilson is optimistic about his team's chances.

"This is the first year that we have had a team that is made up entirely of people that I brought in," Wilson said. "They are thinking the way we want them to think and doing what we want them to do."

"We saw a different team in overall attitude this spring from last year's squad and it was a very rewarding impression."

The Blue Devils should see a big improvement on defense with nine experienced players returning, but the team faces a tough schedule and will be tested early, their first game being against Ohio State.

Virginia

Cavalier head coach Dick Bestwick said that even though his team is picked to finish last by the coaches and fifth by the media, that the Cavaliers may be the dark horse team in the conference.

Virginia's strength will be on defense led by senior linebacker Stuart Anderson. "Anderson is the best player I've ever coached in 16 years," Bestwick said. "Were going to use him the way Pitt used Hugh Green last year. We're just going to line him up and let him go."

Senior Todd Kirtley will lend experience at quarterback. "Todd will have experienced receivers to throw the ball to," Bestwick said. "He should return to the form of his sophomore year."

The Cavalier's kicking game will be handled by Wayne Morrison and Bestwick said that he is one of the best kickers in the conference if not in the country.

Wake Forest

The Demon Deacons, under first year coach Al Groh, are picked to finish last by the media and second to last by the coaches.

Groh, who replaced John Mackovic, said that he is concerned with his quarterback situation and running game. "It's important that we establish who will be our quarterback, but I feel that we've got two first team-quality guys."

"Kenny Duckett at wide receiver is the most respected, fastest, and strongest player on the team," Groh said. "He epitomizes the principals of a team personality."

Groh said that his defense is young and inexperienced but has made "great" progress. He said that the team's long-range goal is to add stability to the program.

Georgia Tech

Georgia Tech is not yet eligible to win the conference crown, but head coach Bill Curry is preaching improvement and optimism to his players.

"Last year we had some young people who were forced to play and to improve," Curry said. "As the season wound down, we began to see what it takes to win and we began to see fiber and quality."

The Yellow Jackets face a tough schedule including Georgia and Alabama. "You never know what a young player will do in Birmingham and we have to go there Sept. 17," Curry said.

Tech's kicker Jeff Pierce, was the pre-season All-ACC pick at that position. Curry said that the team should be improved in all areas and that "in the fourth quarters this season we may be able to find ways to win instead of lose."