

Clemson's smiles rest on returning offense

By CLIFTON BARNES
Sports Editor

• Fifth in a series

Clemson, S.C. — When your entire offense is back, you have to be smiling. But if Clemson coach Danny Ford is smiling, he's not letting anybody know.

"I just hope we can go out and not beat ourselves, as we did so many times last year," Ford said. "We have some good talent, but I don't think any of our players have shown everything they can give us."

"Our personnel is competitive with any other team in the conference. Our main concern is to show how good Clemson wants to be. Last year we lost a lot of respect."

The big loss from last year's team is placekicker Obed Ariri who broke seven NCAA records and tied two more while with the Tigers.

"Last year we relied too much on Obed," All-Atlantic Coast Conference offensive tackle Lee Nanney said. "We've been working on putting the ball into the end zone. We need to get seven points more than we do three."

Junior quarterback Homer Jordan is ahead of Steve Fuller's record breaking pace at this stage of his career. Jordan ran and passed for a total of 1,683 yards last year.

"It's a pretty good feeling to have the quarterback situation set going into the season," Ford said. "That's a luxury we haven't had the past two years. Early last year Jordan struggled a little bit, but he showed what he could do at the end of the season. I think his best days are ahead of him."

Tackle Nanney anchors the offensive line. All-ACC

preseason pick Tony Berryhill is at center to help provide the Tigers with a strong offensive line.

"The offensive line should be much better and more capable this year," Ford said. "They've played together long enough to be a mature group ready to handle any challenge."

"Basically, we have the same offense," Nanney said. "It's just a little more reviewing. We've been doing this for a couple of years. We'll be better the first few games because of the experience factor."

Jeff McCall and Chuck McSwain will be the running backs. McSwain, the ACC rookie of the year in 1979, rushed for 544 yards last year. McCall carried for 317 yards last season.

All-ACC receiver Perry Tuttle, who may break Jerry Butler's receiving record, is back for his senior year. "We made a lot of mistakes last year — a lot of turnovers," Tuttle said. "Barring injuries and little mistakes we can be a good team. We want to bring the Clemson tradition back up again. Not only respect from conference teams, but from around the country."

Tuttle said he believed the Tigers could win the conference and be in the top ten. But for the Tigers to do that they must replace some defensive players. Clemson lost five players on defense, three of whom signed a pro contract.

"We won't have any problems on defense," defensive back Hollis Hall said. "If we get the breaks and play together, we'll have a super defense. I don't think our secondary is weak. All our young players are coming along well."

Strong safety will be manned by non-letterman Kim Childers, a 6-foot-1, 180-pound sophomore.

"If a team can pass they have a better chance to beat us," All-ACC linebacker Jeff Davis said. "The pass ... I don't like it. We're good against the run. Nobody is going to run against us."

"I like playing the pass," Hall said. "It's a challenge to the secondary. If we're in the right defense and the line is charging hard, we're good against the pass."

Andy Headen has been moved from secondary to defensive end. The 230-pound junior started eight games last year on defense.

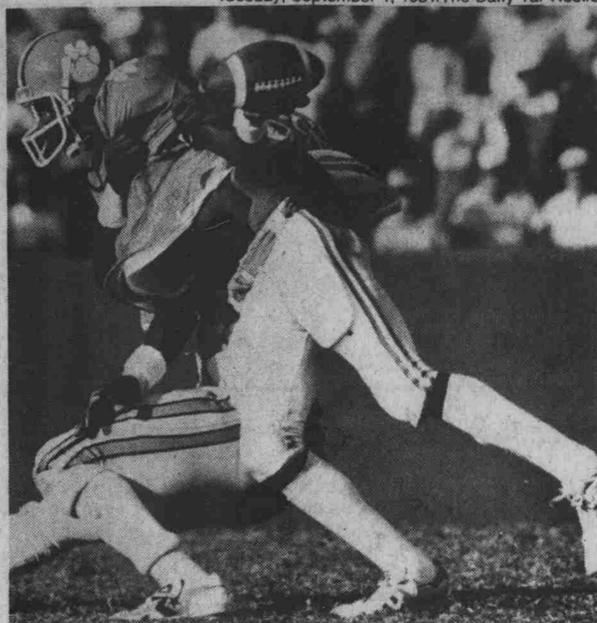
Returning starter Jeff Bryant is at one tackle, but the other tackle, Steve Durham, is gone as are linebacker Chuck Rose and middle guard Charlie Bauman.

Willie Underwood and Eddie Geathers, both four-year starters, are missing out of the secondary, but Hall and Terry Kinard return, along with sometimes-starter Tony Rose. Rich Hendley took over punting chores in the second game last year when the starting punter was hurt and is back for his junior year.

"Preseason has gone by real fast, but we're ready to get started," Tuttle said. "Our win over South Carolina in the last game has carried over into this year. This year the team wins or the team loses. It's not a defense or offense thing."

After a disappointing season last year, Clemson hopes it can regain the magic of its 1978 season, when it went 11-1 and was ranked sixth in the nation.

"We lost a lot of respect to nonconference opponents as well as conference teams," Ford said. "Desire will be our biggest ally."



Clemson quarterback Homer Jordan

Touring the ACC

Everybody is unbeaten in preseason

Great! I tell you our football team is great! This is our year! We can compete with any team in the country!

Pre-season predictions always end with exclamation points as memories of last year's 2-9 season fade to be replaced with the hopes of a new year. Last season's defeats are forgotten except for rationalizing their causes.

Geoffrey Mock

And why did we lose so many last year? Attitude. Some riff-raff on the team had a bad attitude. "There's something called the Duke Syndrome that caused our players to relax too much," said Blue Devil defensive back Dennis Tabron, who has seen all of eight victories in his three years at Duke. "Even when we had a lead we assumed that things would go wrong. We'd get a seven point lead and we didn't feel like we were in front."

But this year is going to be different because we have senior leadership and we've got a big, strong team. And we've got a winning attitude. "At the end of last season the team was a little confused," Richard Baldinger of Wake Forest said. "We lost several close games and we

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didn't know how to stop it. But we cleared up our heads in the off season. Maybe just changing our old ways and saying this is the new Wake Forest, we'll have the good seasons year in and year out."

Our talent is among the best in the area. Our receivers are the best in the conference. In fact, everybody's receivers are the best in the conference.

"We have three receivers that are the best in the conference," Virginia quarterback Todd Kirtley said. "I wouldn't trade any of them for any other receiver in the league."

"Our receivers are just dadgum good," Duke coach Red Wilson said. "They just don't drop the ball. Watch them! They just don't drop it."

Of course, without the coaches the team is lost. After former Heisman Trophy winner Steve Spurrier helped a sagging Duke offense last year, the Blue Devils hired former All-Pro Bob Matheson to do the same for the defense. So, Coach Wilson, what do you expect Bob Matheson to do for the Duke team?

"Well, Bob Matheson is really one of the truly great human beings. He is a gentleman and a scholar. His presence here has meant a lot to us."

That's fine, coach, but what do you want Matheson to do for the defense?

"Well, the kids really respect Bob because they know he can go out there now and put on the shoulder pads and hit with them. I'm a has-been, but Bob can still do it and the kids like that."

What the coaches and players really appreciate is the chance to publicize their programs, particularly in North Carolina where the other schools have to compete with the deluge of media attention routinely thrust upon the Tar Heels. And what kind of stories do the coaches want written?

"We want you to write positive stories," Maryland coach Jerry Claiborne said as the sportswriters feasted themselves on a delicious meal paid for by the Terrapins.

But after all the pre-season enthusiasm and predictions have been spoken, it requires an 11-game season to back them up. With all the great expectations, many of the hopes will not be fulfilled.

At some point the pre-season talk has to come to an end. "It's time to put up or shut up," Duke quarterback Ben Bennett said. "If we don't do it this year we should shut up."

But, Ben, you're only a sophomore. If this year falls through, what are you going to do for your last two years?

He places an imaginary telephone to his ear. "Hello? Stanford?"



Sports

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THE Daily Crossword By Marie West

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|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ACROSS | 35 Hermit or king | 52 La — Milan | 12 Addict |
| 1 Chain links | 36 Faintest | 54 Small blossoms | 13 Steep rise |
| 6 Oaf | 38 Hackneyed | 58 Voted in (famed statuery) | 21 — Marbles |
| 10 Bungle | 39 Slot spot | 62 Corporate emblem | 23 Foulards |
| 14 Follow | 40 Diehard's cry | 63 Indigo source | 25 Trays |
| 15 Pueblo | 42 8: Fr. | 65 16th century English poet | 27 Beat it! |
| 16 Actress | 43 — as the hills | 66 Arab gulf | 28 Cue, in round singing |
| 17 Terrain at New Orleans | 45 Bill of fare | 67 Knowledge handed down | 29 Talked non-stop |
| 18 Copycat | 46 Grafted, in heraldry | 68 Tough problem | 31 Harold of comics |
| 19 First place | 47 One who issues a formal order | 69 Borscht ingredient | 32 Intimidate |
| 20 Incites | 49 Roof support | 70 Medical applicator | 33 Upper crust |
| 22 Movie about TV | 51 To and — | 71 Frequently | 34 Hold back |
| 24 Natives of Gdansk | | | 37 Part of a sales pitch, for short |
| 26 102 | | | 41 Bucolic |
| 27 Leaped | | | 44 Challenge |
| 30 Was present | | | 48 Adds |
| | | | 50 Syrian city |
| | | | 53 Luminary, for short |
| | | | 54 Fat |
| | | | 55 Rich vein |
| | | | 56 Gothic arch |
| | | | 57 Brumal |
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