

UNC tennis player likes to raise a big racket

By SHARON KESTER
DTH Staff Writer

With refreshing childlike exuberance, sectional tennis champion Betsy Heidenberger described an upcoming tournament. She spoke not of strategy, but of the scheduled opening night steak dinner, Sea World trip and beer party.

"I just couldn't believe it when I went to the Middle Atlantic Championships this summer and found out that I had qualified for a trip to California," said UNC's No. 2 singles player, who will compete in the Penn National Invitational, beginning Nov. 2.

But such exuberance does not belie the seriousness of this competitor and is, perhaps, the very key to her success.

"Do the best you can, I tell myself," Heidenberger said. "If not, too bad. Next time, I really don't try to put the pressure on at all. I try to do other things like going out at night. I run a lot. I'm involved in other sports here, and I don't just keep tennis it."

When Florida Southern College became a pressure-filled program and failed to meet her needs for some diversions from tennis, Heidenberger transferred to UNC last fall.

At Southern, if you lost, it was terrible," she said. "The difference here at Carolina is that there's a lot of team spirit and team unity is just really great. All of us get along so well and have a good time here. If we do great, that's even better. But, if we lose a close match, we really don't get down in the dumps about it. We still

pick ourselves up and decide OK, next match." That pick-yourself-up attitude was instilled at a young age. "My parents have always said, 'If you lose, so what. It's just experience and you're getting the chance to travel and meet new people.' No pressure was ever put on me by them, and to this day I'm really grateful."

Nor was pressure ever applied by Heidenberger's coaches. "I never had just one coach," she said. "I think that's helped me today in that if I have something wrong with my strokes, I just sort of figure it out on my own. I don't feel like I have to rely on one person or past coach."

In Profile: Betsy Heidenberger

This past summer, Heidenberger figured out how to deal with the weak part of her game — volleying. "I switched in the early part of the summer to a large-headed racket," she said. "I'm gaining the mental confidence I need to handle it."

UNC's tennis coach Kitty Harrison is always available for help, she said, but her philosophy was consistent with Heidenberger's own.

"Some coaches sit down with their players before a match and say, 'OK, you play this like that and you better do this,'" Heidenberger said. "Kitty just says, 'Do the best you can. You can beat her. If not, she just

played better than you today.' This is definitely what a coach should do and not make it seem like the end of the world."

Just as defeat is not the end of the world, victory is not the epitome of it either. "We try to keep our attitude casual," Heidenberger said. "We're not a show-off team like Clemson and some of the others. We're underestimated a little bit, but we show that we can do it, like when we beat Clemson at the ACC championship last year and did really well in states and regionals. But we're modest about it."

Heidenberger is modest about her individual performances, preferring to talk about team spirit and depth. Having moved to the No. 2 singles position, Heidenberger is looking forward to playing up higher. "I feel I'm ready to play some tougher matches," she said, expressing confidence in her ground strokes.

"What helps I think, is doing these drills of hitting balls cross-court, down-the-line, and I'm able to pretty much run down the opponents."

When Heidenberger, an industrial relations major, is no longer running down opponents, she would like to work in sales promotion for a company such as Nike or Adidas. But more immediate post-graduation plans include traveling throughout the United States and Europe, playing in qualified satellite tournaments, which are a level below the recognized professional circuit.

And similarly, Heidenberger said: "If I do get money and do really well, I'll just continue playing tennis. If I get burned out, say no more. I'll just get some business-oriented job that I'll enjoy."



Heidenberger

DTH file photo

Soccer match and cross country run highlight weekend action

By LINDA ROBERTSON
Assistant Sports Editor

Two lopsided soccer victories Wednesday served as target practice for the real war on the field coming up this weekend. The UNC men shut out Elon College 5-0 while the women overwhelmed Duke 11-0.

Neither team will have much time to savor the wins, however, as the men face third-ranked Clemson Sunday and the women prepare for the expected showdown with George Washington University in the North Carolina Invitational.

Junior Mike Reid led the way against Elon, scoring two goals, while Robert Kelly, Tim Ensley and Adam Abronski each scored one. Billy Hartman chipped in two assists and Mike Fiocco had one. UNC outshot Elon 34-4 and raised its record to 9-1.

The women mowed down Duke in much the same manner they have been routing opponents all season. In fact, they outshot Duke 65-0.

Stephanie Zeh, Nancy Clary, Amy Machin and Chrissy Billings knocked in two goals each. Ann Klas, Wendy Greenberg and Laurie Gregg had one goal apiece.

The Elon College game was a break in the Atlantic Coast Conference gauntlet for the men, who lost 3-2 in overtime to Virginia Sunday and who must win the Clemson match to get back into the ACC title chase.

Clemson won eight straight ACC crowns before being dethroned by Duke last season. This year they are 6-0 overall and 3-0 in the conference and they have already beaten both Duke and N.C. State.

"Really it's a do or die situation," midfielder Mike Fiocco said. "We've already lost to Virginia and somebody's got to stop Clemson."

Last year's UNC-Clemson clash ended in a 2-2 tie.

"If we can score early and take them by surprise, I think we can frustrate them into making some mistakes," senior Adam Abronski said. "This will be the toughest Clemson team we've faced since I've been here."

Coach I.M. Ibrahim's Tigers are led by 1979 ACC Player-of-the-Year Nnamdi Nwokocha and striker Mo Tinsley. Sixteen of Clemson's 22 players are foreign. "They've brought in another boatload of Africans and they have a lot of talent,"

UNC coach Anson Dorrance said. "This game and the women's tournament are two highlights of our season."

"We have a healthy respect for Clemson and this game should give us a good idea of how we stand in the ACC and the nation," Gerry O'Donnell said. "We enjoy playing them because they play first-class soccer."

The women's team plays William and Mary at 2 p.m. on Saturday, and George Washington plays Randolph-Macon at 4 p.m. The winners advance to the finals which will be held following the men's game at 2 p.m. Sunday.

The women are looking forward to the expected confrontation with George Washington, a squad that UNC nipped 1-0 last year.

"It's kind of a grudge match because their coach doesn't like our coach and they recruit from the same area as we do," senior Molly Current said. "They also started a full-fledged varsity program the same year we did. If we beat these Virginia schools, it's pretty indicative of our standing in the region and will help our national seeding."

The women are 8-0 on the season and have outscored their last four opponents

46-0. The men's and women's cross country teams hope to follow up impressive performances at Maryland with strong finishes at the Virginia Invitational Saturday in Charlottesville. The men race fifth-ranked East Tennessee as well as top 20 teams Michigan State, Kentucky, Tennessee and Auburn.

"It's a field of 11 teams, so it's a real early season test, but it's necessary to know how good we are so that we don't set goals that are too ridiculous or too high," Coach Don Lockerbie said.

The women face a top-ranked field, including No. 1 Virginia and powerhouses Michigan State and Auburn. They also must contend with Virginia's exhausting roller-coaster course.

"It will be really tough to beat Virginia, but the score will be much closer than last year's," Janice High said. "Their course is the roughest I've ever seen — worse than State's."

In other weekend action, volleyball travels to the South Carolina Invitational, baseball plays at UNC-Wilmington, field hockey plays at Virginia and women's golf competes in the Lady Tiger Invitational in Memphis.

Tech on delay

The cable sports network ESPN will not televise Saturday's UNC-Georgia Tech game live, but instead will show the game on tape at three different times next week: at 9 a.m. Sunday, at 3:30 p.m. Monday and at 9 p.m. Tuesday.

The game can be seen on Channel 28 by Village Cable subscribers and on Channel 23 by Alert Cable patrons.

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