

Ben counsels football players

By DRAGGAN MIHAILOVICH
DTH Staff Writer

The fall semester is not a particularly easy one for the football player. Grueling practices, nagging injuries and dreams of an undefeated season can make studying a toil.

"After practice, it's tough to sit down and study," said defensive tackle William Fuller. "But it's something you have to do. You're here for an education."

The man who is directly responsible for the scholastic development of the UNC football team is assistant academic counselor Phil Ben. A former tutor as an undergraduate, Ben has performed various duties in the athletic department for the past ten years.

Ben, whose profile fits in with the academic world, operates under the watchful eye of head counselor Paul Hoolahan.

Under Hoolahan, a program has been set up that tries to assess an athlete's basic math, language and reading skills and then attempts to improve him in the areas where he needs help.

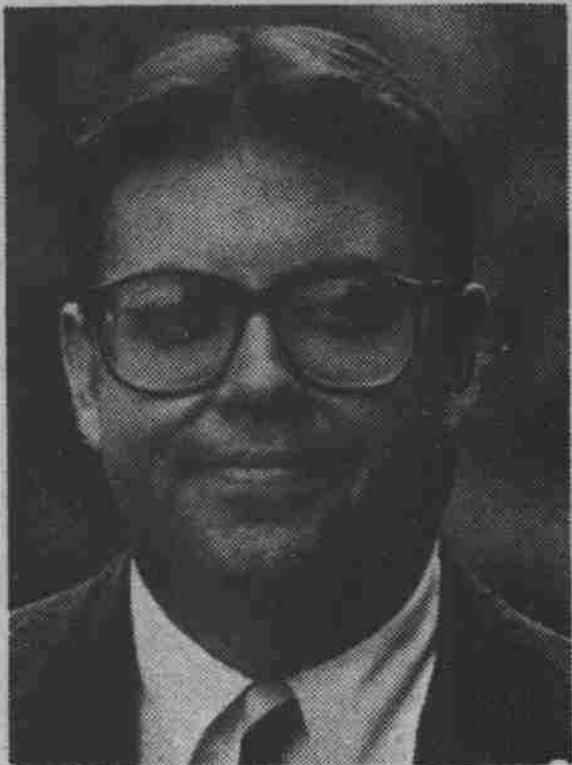
Ben's responsibilities include overseeing a two-hour study hall, Monday-Thursday. First semester freshmen and players with grade point averages below 2.0 are required to attend.

"I talk constantly with all the players," Ben said. "In study hall, I assess each individual's standing on a day-to-day basis."

Eight tutors are present during the study hall period to help freshmen and players with classroom deficiencies develop skills and budget time. Despite the close scrutiny, dependency on the tutors

or Ben is discouraged.

"Most freshmen are traversing uncharted waters," Ben said. "Others have stars in their eyes because they think they will have a glittering college or pro career. The study hall gets their feet better planted on the ground."



Phil Ben

Ben wants the atmosphere in the study hall to be conducive to learning.

"We don't want the study hall to be a form of incarceration," said Ben. "We remind the players that we are there as a resource."

Ben added that most were grateful that someone was concerned with their school-work.

Players not involved with the study hall meet with Ben during the week. Good rapport between athlete and counselor is a key element.

"When I inquire about their grades they must be honest with me," Ben said. "Trust is the most important aspect of my job."

In an era of forged transcripts, eligibility scandals and padded class schedules, Ben feels that head football coach Dick Crum has made a firm commitment to academics.

"It's obvious that the classroom is a top priority in this program," Ben said. "The players are aware of the academic opportunity here and they are concerned with it."

Crum, a former math teacher, has been known to tutor some players himself.

Defensive back Walt Black, a Morehead scholar, notes that the coaching staff looks for a particular trait in high school athletes.

"You can tell that the new recruits have a positive attitude toward academics," Black said. "The real life begins after college so you have to be prepared."

"I think most of our players are level-headed people," Ben said. "That's reflected in the classroom and on the football field."

The counseling department doesn't see tangible results of its work. "All we can do is measure how they progress on a daily basis in terms of attitudes and concerns," Ben said, "and we've seen an upswing in both of these."



The horror of waiting for tickets

"What the hell are you out here waiting for tickets for anyway? Did the press box burn down?" one student asked at about 1 a.m. or was it 2?

No, I thought I'd take a week off and actually watch a game instead of dissect it.

I doubt very seriously that I'll do it again.

You'd think if you got there at midnight you'd be alone. Wrong. You become No. 125 in line.

Maybe this week was a fluke or maybe Wake Forest is an important game to Tar Heel fans, more so than Boston College anyway. But whatever the case, students were lined up almost to the Bell Tower by 5:30 a.m.

That's ridiculous, and it gets more ridiculous the further back in line you are.

One guy changed clothes right there in front of God and everybody.

The strange part is that some people could sleep. The important thing is to go with someone who can sleep and won't make an ass of himself.

But even sleeping can hurt you, especially when for no apparent reason people get up and start moving toward the door at 6 a.m. You get trampled as people break right in line. You drop your alarm clock and someone else picks up your pillow.

Then when the door is opened, you feel like you're at a Who concert, and even more break in front.

It's obvious that 21-year-old college students cannot conduct themselves properly with a level head.

It's a shame that students who'd rather sleep can't get decent tickets. It's also a shame that the UNC student section is represented by some of the asinine people who wait out all night.

There ought to be at least an usher or several ushers at the door when it is opened to create some sort of order.

As it is now, a student who waits out since 4 a.m. can run to a sparse section in the auditorium just by chance and get a better ticket than someone who has been there since midnight.

To top that off, when there is semi-order, the ushers send you to a certain ticket box, assuring you that all the tickets are the same. I expect to have about 20,000 students sitting on my lap in the card section Saturday.

The fact is that depending, by chance, on which box you're sent to, you may not be able to get card section, if you so desire. However, someone who has been waiting a lot less time than you have can get card section just because he was mandatorily sent to a different box.

The ticket system is far from perfect but maybe the biggest change needs to be in the mind-set of the students. But maybe every student should wait in line once. Next time I'll be dissecting games again or maybe getting someone to wait for me.

Women's golf team finishes fourth, puts damper on national standing

By SCOTT PRICE
DTH Staff Writer

The women's golf team suffered a major setback in its quest for national respect Tuesday, finishing the three-day Lady Tiger Invitational in Memphis in a tie for fourth place.

The loss put a damper on the team's hope for an improvement on last year's national standing of 18th, but Coach Dot Gunnells is not discouraged.

"It's real disappointing, but we'll be back," Gunnells said. "We're going to be out practicing this afternoon."

Louisiana State grabbed first place with a 891; the University of Missouri took second at 928; Kentucky was third with a 938, and UNC, Furman and Wake Forest tied for fourth with a 939.

"Anything can happen in this game,"

Gunnells said. "LSU played a grand game; this is the first time they've beaten us since I've been coaching."

The Tigers played an awesome game, finishing 37 strokes ahead of second-place Missouri, and averaging an individual score of under 75.

"I was a little surprised," Gunnells said. "LSU has a strong team."

But LSU's game could only have been helped by the weak play of the UNC squad. Only one player — Linda Mescan — broke into the top five, while Jill Nesbitt tied for 18th with a 235 and Page Marsh took 30th with a score of 239.

The team had trouble keeping the ball in play and in the fairways; and once on the greens, they also had trouble putting.

"It was just a bad tournament," Gunnells said. "We finished ahead of

eleven other teams, but we should have beaten four others."

The Lady Tiger Invitational was a large tournament, composed of fifteen teams from around the country, such as Mississippi State, Alabama, Florida Atlantic and Missouri. It was the first real test for the Tar Heels this year, and its result shows a need for more consistent play.

The team won its first tournament without two of its best players — Jill Nesbitt and Linda Mescan. Consistency is needed if the team is to improve its showing at the AIAWs in the spring.

The squad travels to Durham this weekend for the Duke Fall Invitational and a much less competitive regional tournament, Gunnells said.

"We're looking forward to a better tournament this time," said Gunnells. "We're going to do it this weekend."

Clifton Barnes

It might not be so bad if folks would sleep. I'd just as soon not hear Gap Band singing "You've got me humpin' midnight dancing" (or something like that) at 3 a.m. And what makes a person want to yell "Wake up!" at the top of his lungs at 4 a.m.?

One guy was doing an English paper due that day. Feel sorry for him. Hell no. He talked for five straight hours that I know of and he was probably still yacking as he entered class. I'll give him a break though considering that he had about two six-packs of beer.

It's pretty bad when the police come up and say the noise is disturbing a resident and the closest non-student is a couple of blocks away from Carmichael.

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