

SPORTS

Touche

Determination to win is crucial for fencer

By **LONNIE McCULLOUGH**
Special to the DTH

As I walked slowly to the strip, I could feel the blood pounding in my temples. My mind raced over the points of strategy covered in the previous week of practice. "Lead with your hand, Lonnie," Coach Miller said. "When you are close enough, extend the blade and let your hand pull you into the attack. If you miss, or if you're parried, be ready for the riposte."

God, was I nervous. Stepping onto the strip my attention focused on my opponent — Brian Bailey of Cornell University — some 12 feet away. As is common, I began to close out all noise and commotion around the strip. Bailey was a little larger and his mask was already firmly affixed to his head. At first I was confused, then angry.

He had neglected one of the courtesies that makes fencing a sport of gentlemen — the salute. Ignoring his rudeness and impatience, I slowly saluted the director and each judge around the strip. After doing so, I put on my mask and awaited the director's signal to fence.

In the brief moments before the bout began, my mind drifted back to the day that I had approached UNC head fencing coach Ron Miller as a freshman. After I told him I had a serious desire to fence, he chuckled. I supposed he thought it humorous that a small-town boy from rural North Carolina would want to try out for a sport dominated by athletes from schools north of the Mason-Dixon. I was wrong. Coach Miller was laughing at my accent.

"All I'm looking for is a little athletic ability and a big desire to win," he said. So with what athletic ability I could muster and the desire to win I've had all my life, I went out for the team. That was three years ago.

"Fence!" the director shouted. Within an instant Bailey was streaking toward me. I un-

'My blade literally flew toward his, and after a successful parry, lashed out at his ribs. The contact made the sound of a hickory switch slapping leather.'

derestimated his quickness, and even as I started to retreat I knew I was too late.

As his blade lashed out at my head, I leaped backwards in an attempt to parry it. He saw my response, changed his hand position and made a vicious cut for my midsection. I tensed every muscle in my stomach as the blade sliced across my jacket. I didn't bother to riposte (an immediate counterattack).

The director called halt as Bailey yelled victoriously and returned to the en garde line. My side was on fire. Although you're hit like that every day in practice, the pain is always the same. The director awarded Bailey the attack, and I received the touch. What a misnomer. It was a slash.

I walked back to the line near the center of the strip and again awaited the director's signal. I was angry because I had lost concentration and because of the welt rising beneath my jacket. But as is true in other sports, anger must be channeled effectively or the competitive drive is lost.

The bout continued at a rapid pace. I scored three unanswered hits. We changed ends of the strip as is customary when one fencer reaches three touches against, and began again. It was Bailey's turn to get angry. He did so by scoring three consecutive touches. The score was now four against me and only three against Bailey. In a regular fencing bout the first fencer giving away five touches loses.

My legs were beginning to shake from the constant strain and rapid changes in direction. Sweat poured from my brow into the corners of my eyes and down across my upper lip. I removed my mask momentarily to wipe the

sweat away and noticed that Bailey looked much the same. I smiled slightly, realizing that although no longer a sport with duels ending in death, fencing is one of the truest forms of competition.

The director gave the signal, and just like the first touch, Bailey came streaking toward me. But this time I was ready. I retreated rapidly. Just as I was about to reach the end of the strip, he launched another attack for my well-covered side.

I hesitated momentarily, expecting his original attack to be a feint. It was. He changed hand positions and his blade shot for my head. My blade literally flew toward his, and after a successful parry, lashed out at his ribs. The contact made the sound of a hickory switch slapping leather. The score was now tied. The next touch would decide the bout, and if I was lucky, the meet.

I called timeout and walked to the end of the strip. I glanced at the bench and scanned the faces of my teammates. A few smiled. Some gave the thumbs-up signal, while others just stared confidently.

I shook my head to regain concentration and trotted back to the en garde line. I had never fenced the deciding bout before, and fought to keep that thought out of my mind.

I crouched in the ready position, forced my tensing muscles to relax and stared at Bailey. I was determined to win.

Lonnie McCullough, a junior RTVMP major from Mocksville, did win the match. He is a sabreman for the UNC fencing team.

UNC wrestlers regain top form against Tigers

By **MICHAEL PERSINGER**
Staff Writer

The North Carolina wrestling team rebounded from last week's loss to N.C. State with a close 21-20 win over perennial ACC power Clemson, but the hero of the match was an unlikely one.

Tim Plott, a junior from Bay Village, Ohio, won at the 150-pound class, which very few people expected him to do. Plott, who sported a 7-13 record going in, whipped the Tiger's Tom Carr, who entered the match with a 17-3 mark.

"Plott got the superior over an excellent wrestler in Carr, and that was really the difference in the match," said UNC coach Bill Lam. "We won about the same matches that we won against State, with the exception of 150, so that was a really big win," he added. Lam said that he felt his team did not wrestle particularly well, but he blamed part of that on the scheduling problem.

"We waited until noon to leave because we didn't want the kids to miss class," Lam said. "That made it five hours in the car going down and five hours coming back, with wrestling in between. That doesn't make for a pleasant trip."

The Tar Heels got wins from Al Palacio at 118, John Aumiller at 126, Matt King at 142 and Jan Michaels at 177 in addition to Plott's victory, but the key people at the higher weight classes are continuing to slump.

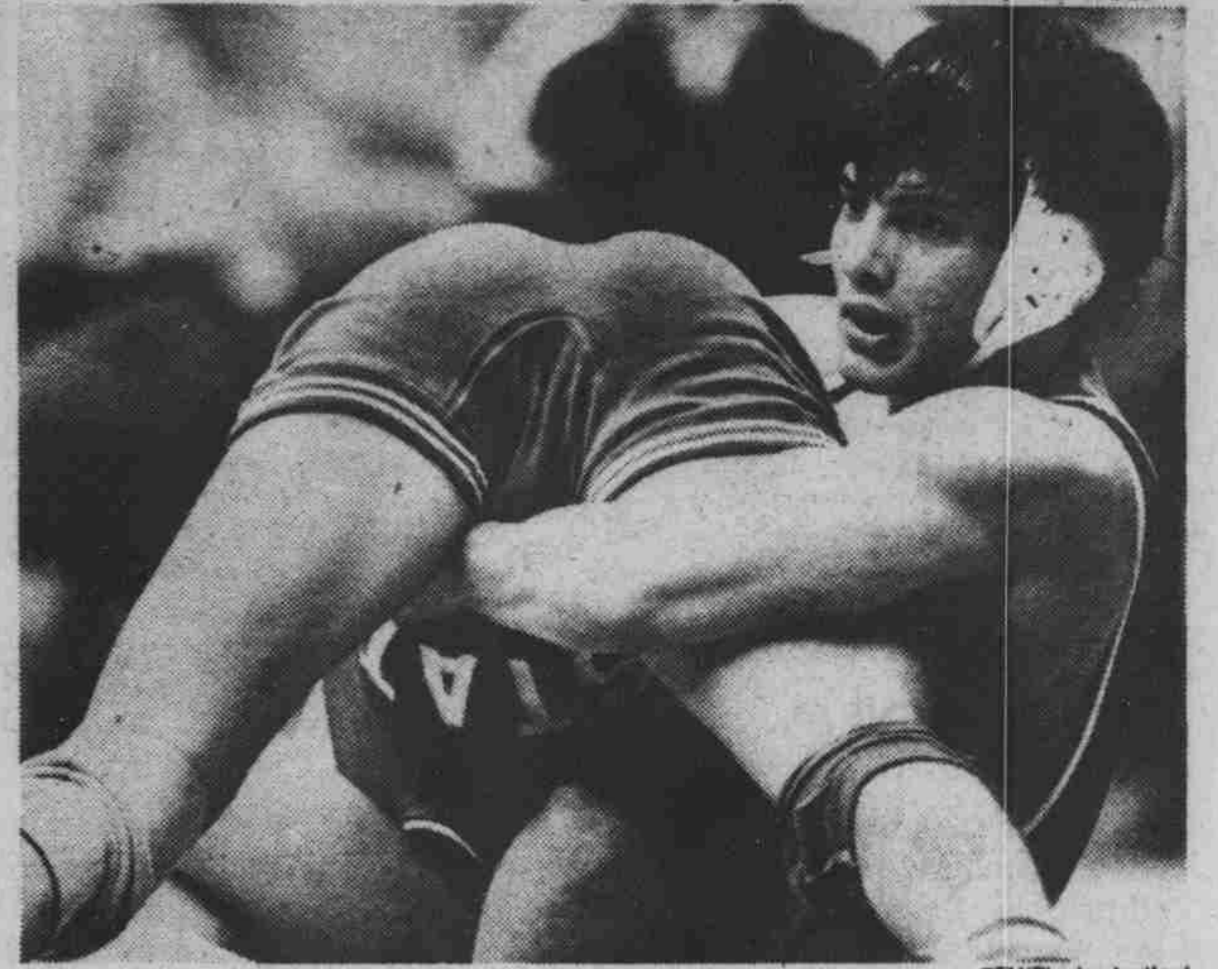
"We wrestled well at the lower weight classes, but our big guys are still not wrestling well," Lam said. "I'm not really worried about them though, because they were winning earlier in the year. We do need them to come back and start winning again, though."

Virginia's Sampson named player of the week

The Associated Press

GREENSBORO — Virginia center Ralph Sampson has been named Atlantic Coast Conference player of the week for scoring 51 points and grabbing 28 rebounds in leading the Cavaliers to two non-conference victories.

Sampson scored 16 points and had 16 rebounds in Virginia's 59-44 triumph over George Washington, and he scored 35 points in a 98-81 victory over Louisville. He added 12 rebounds in the victory.



Junior Tim Plott controls opponent in an earlier match ... won at 150 pounds to secure 21-20 victory at Clemson

Things won't be getting any easier for the Tar Heels, since they now must face a grueling stretch of three matches in four days, starting with tonight's meeting with Navy. UNC will then travel to George Mason for a Friday night match and then on to Old Dominion to meet the Monarchs on Sunday afternoon.

"Navy is ranked in the top 10 in the nation, so that will be a very tough match," Lam said. "Old Dominion on Sunday will also be tough because they have good people in the same places we have good people." Lam said that he expects to beat George Mason, if the travel doesn't wear the team down.

If the Tar Heels get by the weekend, the end is still far from sight since a trip to Raleigh

to face last week's nemesis N.C. State is coming up next Thursday in Reynold's Coliseum. North Carolina was ranked 18th in the Amateur Wrestling News poll last week, prior to the loss to State. Even with that loss, Lam does not expect his team to fall from the ranks of the elite.

"We shouldn't fall out of the top 20, since State was ranked ahead of us going in," Lam said. "And even if we do, we have a lot of matches left. We need to take these things one at a time and keep improving. If we can eliminate the errors and improve each match, we will be in good shape," Lam added.

"When the big guys come back and start winning again, the rankings will be there."

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audit

upsetting." But Kawalec said the council knew many of the problems existed before they were identified in the management audit.

"I think the council has to take a lot of the blame for the problems these departments are experiencing," she said. "We promoted people who shouldn't have been promoted."

Kawalec said she favored a recommendation by the auditors to bring the town clerk and attorney under the town manager's supervision. The clerk and attorney now report to the council.

The town recently adopted one of the study's recommendations by hiring a full-time town attorney. Previously, the town had been paying almost \$88,500 in legal department costs. The full-time attorney, Granger Barrett, receives an annual salary of \$35,000. Council members disagree on the value and extent of the audit's recommendations.

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