

SPORTS

Tar Heel fencing program on its way up

By DAVID WELLS
Staff Writer

The most successful men's team at North Carolina last year has begun its 1983-84 season, and Michael Jordan and Sam Perkins have nothing to do with it.

The UNC fencing team—No. 3 in the nation and ACC champion in 1982-83—started action last weekend, and hopes of extending a growing tradition of excellence into a national championship are high.

However, the fencing program has endured through a long and difficult journey to gain its present position. "Basically, when I started here, fencing was a zero," 17-year coach Ron Miller said. "The ACC was recognized as the worst (conference) in the nation."

Nevertheless, Miller's first season proved to be a pleasant surprise, as UNC won eight matches against a single defeat in 1967-68 and captured all four of its conference matches. The Tar Heels also won the ACC tournament and eventually stepped into the national rankings at No. 32. "We either had good luck or a phenomenal year," Miller said. "From that point on UNC fencing has grown slowly but surely."

Interestingly enough, the conference

seemed to grow also, as ACC schools began to provide funding for fencing programs.

UNC has been the conference leader and the model for other ACC programs since 1967. In the last 16 years, the Tar Heels have compiled a record of 50 wins and 35 losses, while winning eight of 10 official ACC titles and claiming four top 10 NCAA finishes. However, the ACC dropped fencing as a conference sport in 1980.

Miller estimated that there were 30 to 40 schools with fencing programs in the late 1960s compared to 70 to 80 today. Seventy percent of the schools are in the East, ranging from Maine to South Carolina. There is a fair amount of participation in the Midwest, and all the collegiate teams in the West are in California.

Despite the loss of All-American John Friedberg and honorable mention All-American John Hodde in the epee competition, UNC should once again attract national attention. Amiel Rossabi, who was UNC's top performer in the foil competition, returns for his final year.

Although UNC has gained national prominence, it has gained little school at-

tention. "You can't really expect many people to come to an individual sport," Rossabi said. "After last year when we had fencing awareness week, people started coming and were more interested."

One thing that sets Tar Heel fencing off from other UNC sports is that 90 percent of the team has no pre-college experience. Lonnie McCullough, a member of last year's All-ACC sabre team, is one example. McCullough's All-ACC selection marked the first time a player was chosen who did not participate in the ACC tournament.

"As a freshman, I signed up for fencing in P.E. and asked the coach if I could go out for the team," McCullough said. "He said I could and I've been there ever since."

McCullough said he ran track and played football in high school, and he said it was his athletic ability that enabled him to make the fencing team.

With the dual-meet season nearing, at least one fencer is going for it all. Senior Rossabi says the Tar Heels are good enough to be No. 1. "If it's one man per weapon, we have a chance at winning the NCAA championship."

Groh is convinced by North Carolina

The Associated Press

Undefeated North Carolina goes for its sixth straight victory Saturday against ACC rival Wake Forest, and Demon Deacon coach Al Groh is convinced he's running into a major adversary.

"The coaches see it as a small private school going against one of the machines in college football," Groh said. "I tried to call David and get him to tell me how he handled Goliath. But he has an unlisted number."

The Tar Heels are undefeated in the ACC after rallying for a 38-21 victory over Georgia Tech Saturday. North Carolina is also fourth in the latest Associated Press college football poll.

The Tar Heels found they were capable of the big rally when they trailed Georgia Tech at halftime, 21-10.

"We do have good balance in our attack," coach Dick Crum said at his press conference Tuesday. "At this point last year we had thrown more passes. We just didn't catch as many."

Scott Stankavage remains the nation's leading passer, although his completion rate suffered a little against the Yellow Jackets. Crum thinks it could drop a little more against the Wake Forest defense.

"Their defense has played very well against everyone," he said. "And they're not just a passing team any more. They can run the ball."

Two other league battles, Georgia Tech at N.C. State and Virginia at Clemson, highlight the weekend. In other games involving ACC teams, Syracuse travels to Maryland while Duke tries to stop its four-game slide at Virginia Tech.

Georgia Tech coach Bill Curry will try to end a four-game losing streak on the road.

"We're looking for another dogfight this weekend," Curry said. "They (the Wolfpack) have three super backs. They have

a tremendous tailback, fullback and quarterback."

Wolfpack coach Tom Reed is without the wide receiver Ricky Wall, who hurt a knee in practice last Tuesday.

"He definitely won't play Saturday, but he could be back next week," Reed said. "But from the snapping, popping sound it made... it does not look promising."

Clemson coach Danny Ford isn't letting Virginia's loss to Maryland fool him.

"When this season began, Virginia coach George Welsh had a six-win season as one of his goals and they already have four," Ford said. "The main difference between this Virginia team and those of the past is that they believe they can play with everyone."

In 22 tries against the Tigers, Virginia is winless. The effort to break that string is harder because it is the third straight road game for the Cavaliers.

"It's a difficult stretch," Welsh said. "I wouldn't have scheduled like that."

Maryland's victory Saturday over the Cavaliers came on the strength of two touchdowns from Rich Badanjek and three field goals from Jess Atkinson. Maryland has the fourth best offense in the ACC behind Duke, N.C. State and North Carolina.

After taking a 56-17 drubbing from Miami of Florida Saturday on national TV, Duke coach Steve Sloan sees trouble ahead in the form of the Virginia Tech rushing defense; it was allowed an average of 66.5 yards per game.

"They dominate offensively with their running attack and they dominate defensively against the run," Sloan said. "That's the smartest way to win."

Duke is last in the ACC in rushing offense, averaging 130.7 yards per game, and is next to last in rushing defense, giving up 224 yards a contest.

bequest From page 1

In the Court of Appeals case, the dissenting judge charged the University with not getting the money with "clean hands."

"The University could have used the trust funds... but deliberately decided not to do so," stated Judge Dickson Phillips in his dissenting opinion. "This was done for no other purpose than to reduce the amount of construction monies that the University would have to refund to the State in connection with that project."

Phillips' dissent also stated that the money should not be given to the University to spend as it likes because the money was not left with the general intention of giving it to charity.

The descendants argued that the money was left for a designated purpose — the construction of a memorial building — and not for a broader charitable purpose. UNC Planning Director Gordon Rutherford said this week that no wrongdoing was involved in the University's non-use of the money.

"I am not aware of any individual making a conscious decision," not to use the bequest, Rutherford said.

The descendants of the heirs have tried to settle out of court but the University has refused to do so. "They asked that it be split between them and us," Boylan said. "I don't think we'll settle."

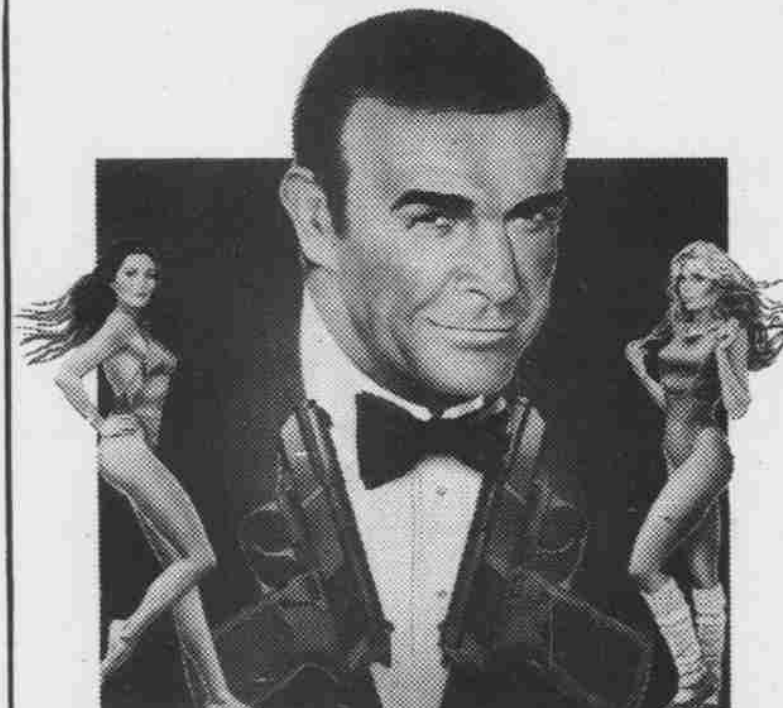
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