Amiel Rossabi has combined athletic ability and a positive attitude to make him one of the top collegiate fencers in the United States.

Confident Rossabi leads UNC fencing team

By MIKE WATERS Staff Writer

One simple word that comes as close as any to describing senior fencer Amiel Rossabi.

His teammates shout, "Take him Sabi, take him!" whenever Rossabi wields his foil at an opponent on the

Try saying 'Amiel Rossabi' in an unenthusiastic way. It can't be done, especially if you've seen UNC's foil captain in action.

"He's always had a positive, hard-fighting attitude," fencing coach Ron Miller said. "He has a strong desire to win and a desire to make his teammates want to win. His competitive instinct is his strongest leadership characteristic."

Rossabi is excited about many things these days. Included in that list are fencing, the NCAAs, UNC and

"I wish everyone could try (fencing) to make them think more of it," Rossabi said. "In terms of athletic performance, I would think we're right up there with any other team at UNC. You use totally different muscles in fencing."

Rossabi got his first taste of fencing when he was still a high school student in New York City. Two friends needed a third partner to enter the city tournament and drafted Rossabi because he was a good athlete. The three

Rossabi's friends continued to attract him to their sport. Demetrios Valsamis, now a New York University fencer, was the under-19 national champion in three weapons at age 16. P.J. Posner was the other member, and he now fences at Columbia University.

Rossabi landed in Chapel Hill when his high school coach recommended Miller and UNC.

Simyon Pinchasov, the United States' fencing coach in last summer's Pan American Games, was instructing Rossabi during his senior year in high school.

"Simyon said that Miller was a good coach at a small school in the South," Rossabi said, shaking his head. "I couldn't believe it when I came down here, and it was 82 degrees in February. And I've got the biggest university I've ever seen around me."

Rossabi exudes about as much confidence as he does enthusiasm. And it usually doesn't matter what the sub-

"We have the potential to finish in the top five," Rossabi said. "It's not gonna be all on fencing ability and experience. We'll out-athlete the other teams and psych them out,"

Rossabi's confidence doesn't diminish regarding his own possibilities either. "I'm going to win," Rossabi said. "I'm going to have to keep getting better and try to be more consistent. I'll have to have my head on straight

"He's been able to develop himself quite well tactically," Miller said of Rossabi's performance. "At first, his moves were repetitive, and he made things work through his athleticism and strength. Now he has more versatili-

Rossabi's enthusiasm and confidence can be overwhelming to his opponent, his coach and his performance. Perhaps the best example of this are his attempts

to touch his opponent with a behind-the-back move. "It's a valid move against a good fencer who's off balance and open to it," Miller said. "Amiel has a tendency to get carried away with himself, and on those occasions he finds himself warming the bench."

Rossabi's credits in the past three years place him among the top foilsmen in collegiate fencing. He qualified for the Junior Olympics as a sophomore and a junior and last summer was the highest junior division fencer at the National Sports Festival. An 11th-place finish in last year's NCAAs inspired him to do more this March.

Aside from the enthusiasm and confidence, however, Rossabi obviously has attained the skills necessary to put him in the final round of every tournament this year, including a third place finish at the Chicago Invitational three weeks ago.

"There's nothing that could keep him from being the best," Miller said. "It hinges on the consistency aspect. He has everything he needs; he has all the tools."

Jordan player of the week; Maryland suspends two

GREENSBORO - North Carolina guard Michael Jordan has been named the ACC player of the week for his contributions to three UNC victories last

Jordan scored 71 points and pulled down 26 rebounds in the three games. He scored 21 points in North Carolina's

100-63 win over Wake Forest, and pumped in another 21 in the 73-61 win over Georgia Tech.

Jordan scored a season-high 29 points against LSU, as the Tar Heels took a 90-79 non-conference win.

Jordan hit 59.6 percent from the field for the three games and was successful on 13 of 17 attempts from the free throw

Maryland starter Adrian Branch and substitute Steve Rivers, charged with possession of marijuana, were suspended Monday by basketball coach Lefty

"I have, as of today, indefinitely suspended Adrian Branch and Steve Rivers as members of our men's basketball team, based on the recent allegations against these two individuals," Driesell said, in a statement released by the sports information office.

"The suspension will remain in effect until further investigation of this incident. As the head basketball coach, I am concerned for the personal welfare of these two individuals and hope that these implications do not adversely affect their



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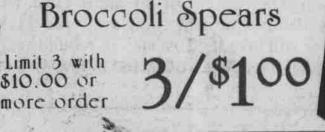


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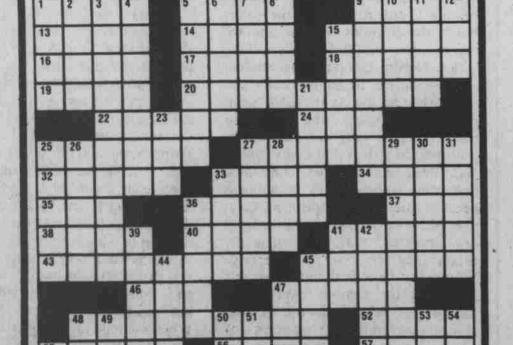
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