

USFL switches to fall as fans yawn

The owner of the New Jersey Generals was exactly right in his recent analysis of the United States Football League. The only problem was that Donald Trump didn't realize what he was saying.

"This league is going to be unbelievable now," Trump said after the USFL owners decided to switch from spring to fall starting in 1986.

Unbelievable is the key word. The league will be almost as unbelievable as some of Trump's other statements. Such as: "Now that we're in fall, we can challenge the NFL directly."

Or: "What we have in the fall is more people watching television, more revenue and more potential."

In other words, in the spring, there weren't enough people watching television, there wasn't enough revenue and there wasn't any potential.

Kurt Rosenberg

To do justice to the USFL, it is necessary to start at the top. Chet Simmons probably does a fine job as the head of the league, although the general public likely is unaware of his existence.

Certainly, the name doesn't sound as though it should belong to the commissioner of a professional sports league. The name "Chet Simmons" evokes images of a surfing champion or perhaps a doctor on a weekday afternoon serial. "Chet Simmons" sounds plastic, which is appropriate since the league he runs is also ersatz.

"Pete Rozelle," on the other hand, *sounds* like a football name.

Then there are the players, the ones who actually make the league what it is, or isn't, as the case may be. Most of them aren't good enough to play in the NFL, so the birth of the USFL was a blessing to them. It wasn't much of a blessing to football fans, who have seen a lower quality of play, if indeed they have watched the games either in person or on TV.

The names of a lot of the teams are sub-par. Originality obviously was not a priority when it came to naming the USFL franchises. Nearly a third of the teams have as their nicknames some form of villain: the Invaders, the Gamblers, the Gunslingers, the Bandits, the Outlaws. If they were half as menacing on the field as their names imply, the league would be in much better shape right now.

A few of the other nicknames were blatant ripoffs of the NFL teams in the same cities. The Michigan Panthers are the USFL's answer to the Detroit Lions, and the Oakland Invaders are a poor excuse for the ex-Oakland Raiders.

At least the World Football League had some creativity. The Southern California Sun, the Chicago Fire and the Philadelphia Bell had far more appealing names than the Memphis Showboats or the Pittsburgh Maulers.

The original concept of the USFL was supposedly spring football. If that was the idea, then why move to the fall?

The answer, obviously, is money. The owners seem convinced that a fall season will bring bigger contracts from the TV networks. But it will be difficult for a league that hasn't firmly established an identity to compete with both the NFL and college seasons.

ABC, which carries USFL games, already has hinted that it would not agree to televise the fall season.

"When we made the arrangement with the USFL, we were looking for quality live programming in the spring," Jim Spence, the senior vice president of ABC Sports, was quoted as saying. "It was not our intent to be involved in the USFL in the fall."

And if it is not ABC's intent to televise the USFL in the fall, there's no guarantee NBC or CBS will be interested, since between them they already televise every NFL game played on Sunday.

The USFL apparently believes that the transition from spring to fall is creating fear around the NFL.

"You know what's happening over there in the NFL," Trump said. "It's chaos over there."

Meanwhile, the USFL seas should be quite smooth come 1986. The only expected change is that the league will be reorganized. Just a minor complication.

● At least four teams — Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, New Jersey and Denver — must relocate because of stadium conflicts with NFL or major-league baseball teams.

● There could be as many as four mergers of some of the weaker USFL teams.

● The owners have not yet figured out how the league will fill the 14-month gap while it switches from playing in the spring of 1985 to the fall of 1986.

But there's plenty of time to solve all these problems. With Chet Simmons at the helm, the owners will figure something out.

And if they don't... will anyone really care?

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of columns by Kurt Rosenberg which will appear every Monday in The Daily Tar Heel.

Summer marked by success, losses

By MICHAEL PERSINGER
Assistant Sports Editor

Two North Carolina athletes on the gold-medal winning Olympic basketball squad and a Tar Heel medalist in the NCAA golf championships highlighted a summer that also included a few unexpected disappointments for some UNC athletes.

Michael Jordan and Sam Perkins were instrumental on coach Bob Knight's Olympic basketball squad that breezed through the Olympics after a sometimes-brutal nine-game exhibition schedule against NBA players.

Jordan was the leading scorer for the Olympians, and Perkins earned a starting berth and was among team leaders in scoring, rebounding and field goal percentage.

Earlier, the Chicago Bulls made Jordan the third pick overall in the NBA draft, and Perkins was taken fourth overall by the Dallas Mavericks.

Jordan also won the McKelvin Award as the ACC's athlete of the year. Jordan received 53 of the 105 ballots cast, far ahead of Clemson football and basketball player Mike Eppley, who got 23 votes.

UNC swimmer Sue Walsh finished third in the McKelvin balloting with 11 votes, but after the Soviet-led boycott made her the favorite to take the gold medal in both the 100- and 200-meter backstroke at the Olympics, Walsh failed to make the U.S. Olympic team in either event, finishing third in the 100 and sixth in the 200. Only the top two finishers qualified for the Games.

Former UNC swimmer Betsy Mitchell took the silver medal in the 100-meter backstroke. Mitchell transferred to Texas early in the summer.

UNC golfer John Inman became the first Tar Heel to win the NCAA individual crown when he blistered the Houston Bear Creek Golf Course with a 15-under-par total. Inman's effort broke the 13-year-old record for lowest total in NCAA tournament play, formerly held by University of Texas golfer and touring pro Ben Crenshaw. UNC finished fourth in the team race.

Another Tar Heel golfer, Davis Love, had defeated Inman in the match-play North and South Amateur at Pinehurst one week earlier. The North and South is one of the most prestigious amateur tournaments in the country.

Inman was also named the winner of the Fred J. Haskins Award, given annually to the nation's top college golfer.

The UNC lacrosse team ended their season for the second straight year with a loss to Johns Hopkins,

this time in the NCAA semifinals, 14-9. Hopkins went on to take the NCAA title with a 13-10 win over Syracuse, extending the Blue Jays incredible string of senior classes who have graduated with at least one national title.

Tar Heel defenseman Randy Cox was named the ACC's lacrosse player of the year. The 6-2, 200-pound senior was joined on the all-ACC squad by Tar Heel teammates Tom Haus, Andy Smith, Joey Seivold, Steve Martel and Mac Ford.

The North Carolina baseball team was also bumped in NCAA play. The Tar Heels beat Eastern Kentucky to open NCAA play in Starkville, Miss., but they lost 5-4 to South Carolina and were victimized by errors that allowed six unearned runs to score in an eight-run fifth inning against New Orleans that dumped UNC from the double-elimination tourney.

Pitcher Scott Bankhead and catcher B.J. Surhoff became the first battery in NCAA history to be named first team All-America in the same season. The two then joined the Olympic baseball squad that toured the country before competing in an exhibition tournament at the L.A. Games. Surhoff hit .296 with two homers and 11 RBIs on the tour, while Bankhead was 4-0 with a 0.84 ERA and 38 strikeouts in 32 innings pitched on the tour and 1-0 in L.A.

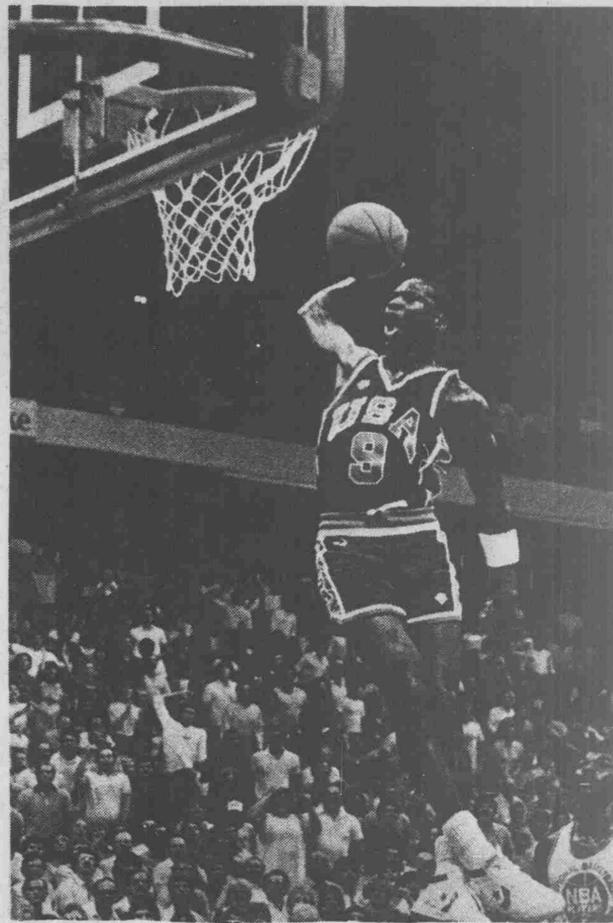
Bankhead was the 16th player taken in the Major League Baseball amateur draft, going to the Kansas City Royals. He will play in an instructional league this winter. Surhoff returns to UNC for his senior season.

Among other former Tar Heel baseball players, catcher Scott Bradley is hitting .339 with five home runs and 64 RBIs for the Columbus Clippers of the Class AAA International League. Bradley leads the league in both average and RBIs and is awaiting a call-up by the Yankees when Major League rosters expand Sept. 1.

Second baseman Chris Pittaro is hitting .271 with 10 homers and 45 RBIs for the Class AA Southern League Birmingham Barons in the Tigers organization. He also has 14 stolen bases.

Outfielder Todd Wilkinson was named the Expos' minor league player of the month for July when he hit .343 with 3 homers. Overall, Wilkinson is hitting .254 with 3 homers and 18 RBIs for Jamestown (N.Y.) of the Class A New York-Penn League.

Pitcher Chris Kahler is also in the New York-Penn League, with Batavia (N.Y.) in the Indians organization. Kahler is 1-1 with a 4.99 ERA and 25 strikeouts in 40 innings for Batavia, a team that is last in its division.



Michael Jordan scores another Olympic 'Thriller'

DTM/Jamie Moncrief

March of Dimes

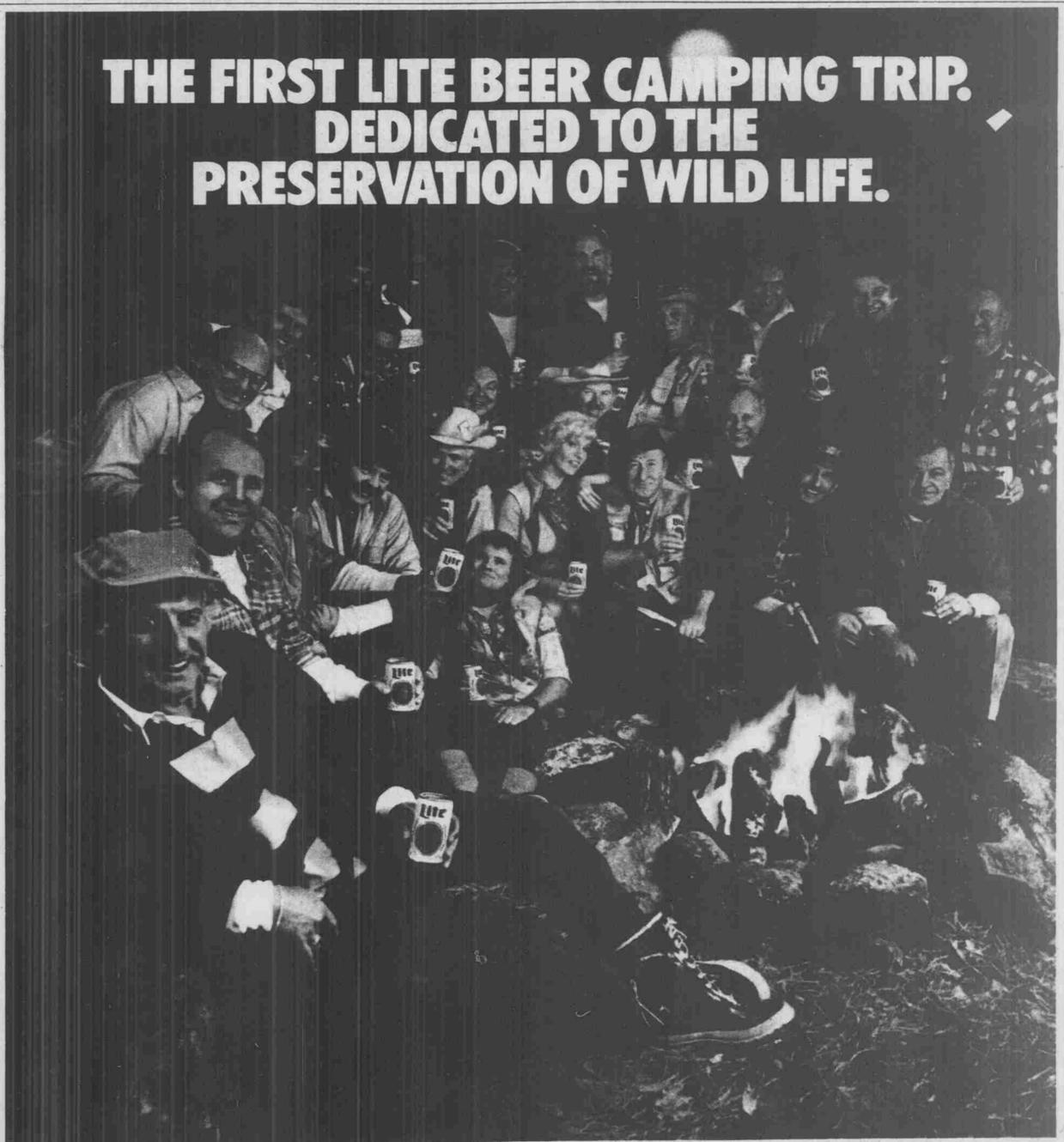


Help Prevent Birth Defects

How you live may save your life.



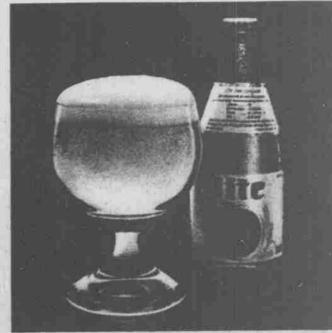
American Cancer Society



THE FIRST LITE BEER CAMPING TRIP.
DEDICATED TO THE
PRESERVATION OF WILD LIFE.



1. Ray Nitschke
2. Bert Jones
3. L.C. Greenwood
4. Frank Deford
5. Dick Williams
6. Buck Buchanan
7. Jim Honochick
8. Boog Powell
9. Ben Davidson
10. Grits Gresham
11. Rodney Dangerfield
12. Red Auerbach
13. Tommy Heinsohn
14. John Madden
15. Marv Throneberry
16. Bob Uecker
17. Steve Mizerak
18. Bubba Smith
19. Dick Butkus
20. Jim Sholders
21. Corky Carroll
22. Lee Meredith
23. Mickey Spillane
24. Billy Martin
25. "Boom Boom" Geoffrion



© 1984 Miller Brewing Co., Milwaukee, WI

EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED IN A BEER. AND LESS.

Welcome Back!
With your 1984-85 Student ID receive a
FREE

50-item, All-you-can-eat
Fresh Fruit, Hot Soup
and Salad Bar

with the purchase of any special, plate or sandwich.

Not valid with any other special or coupon.

Offer valid through September 7, 1984



Sonny's
REAL PIT
BAR-B-Q.

"LOCATED THROUGHOUT THE SOUTHEAST"

15-501 Bypass at Elliott Rd. in
Chapel Hill
933-9248