

Women's field hockey team optimistic despite pressures of strong schedule

By DAVID WELLS
Staff Writer

One would think that North Carolina field hockey coach Karen Shelton would have the highest of expectations for her team this season.

After all, her 1983 squad was ranked 10th nationally and all but two players return from last season. Six promising freshmen join the team and All-Americans Mary Sentementes and Louise Hines are back.

However, Shelton's optimism is guarded, even though she admits the team has potential to improve over the season. She is not "bubbling over with excitement."

"It will take a lot of hard work," Shelton said, "and the harder we work the more successful we will be. We need to stay on an even keel and take one practice and one game at a time."

"We have a bunch of good girls. I've never been as encouraged this early in the year as I am with this team."

Shelton, in her fourth year as head coach at UNC, recently returned from the Olympics where she and the United States field hockey team won the bronze medal. The UNC field hockey team began practice on Aug. 14 and will open its season on Sept. 4 at home against Virginia Commonwealth.

"I think we have one of the top ten teams in the country right now, but not one of the top five," Shelton said. "We have to keep on learning."

UNC's rigorous schedule will certainly be a learning experience, as the Tar Heels will face some of the country's premier teams — including the University of Massachusetts, the University of Connecticut, Iowa and Penn State. The Tar Heels will also face last season's spoiler and national champion, Old Dominion, on

FIELD HOCKEY

1983 Record: 13-4-1

Coach: Karen Shelton

Home site: Navy field

Starters returning: Forward Louise Hines, forward Mary Sentementes, forward Sandy Smith, midfielder Beth Logan, halfback Jane Jester, halfback Alison Seger, goalie Jan Miles, sweeper Meg Wanser.

Forecast: With 12 returners, UNC will be favored to repeat as ACC champions. The Tar Heels should improve on its No. 10 ranking of 1983 as they challenge for the NCAA crown.

Oct. 21. The 1983 ACC champions, UNC was 13-4-1 last season, but three of its losses were to Old Dominion.

"I think our girls will be ready to redeem themselves (against ODU) this year," Shelton said. "We will have some experience against some good teams before we play them."

"I don't think we can get better unless we play against competition. I could have scheduled a winning season for us, but in the long run, I don't think it's in our best interest."

Shelton says she is pleased with her players' attitudes, due largely to the leadership of the seniors, Sentementes, a first-team Penn Monto All-America, and Lisa Morin, Jane Jester, Alison Seger, Meg Wanser and Jamie Warren are back for their final seasons.

Behind the coaching of Shelton, the seniors have helped turn UNC into a

perennial Top 20 team. But Hines, a junior, has also had a key role in UNC's progress. A second-team Mitchell & Ness All-America last season, Hines scored 19 goals and eight game-winners to become one of the nation's top forwards.

Sentementes, who led UNC in assists with eight, will join Hines at starting forward as will left wing Sandy Smith, a junior, and right wing Claire Dougherty, a sophomore. Sophomore Andrea Walsh, Morin, Warren and redshirt freshman Mary Ellen Falcone should provide front-line depth.

Judith Jonckheer, a freshman from the Netherlands, should give needed strength at the midfield position. Sentementes may see some action at a midfield spot. Junior Beth Logan, a returning starter, and freshman Betsy Gillespie will also contribute in the midfield, although Logan may play at halfback as well.

The midfield position should be improved this season, but the Tar Heels' defense needs little improvement. UNC allowed an average of only one goal a game in 1983.

Jester led the team in defensive saves with four last season and should play center halfback again this year. Seger has been a solid fixture at the left back for three years, and Warren or freshman Lori Brune could see time from the right back position. Freshmen Ellen Bakken, Tracey Houk and Kristy Kimball should see reserve duty at halfback.

Goalie Jan Miles, a junior, and sweeper Wanser complete the defense. Kathy Mulvey returns as reserve goalie.

Shelton said that her team has started practice at the highest level of skill and intensity since she has been at UNC.

"The girls are good to work with," Shelton said. "They're responsive and eager to learn. I'm really looking forward to this season."



Louise Hines leads the field hockey charge

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