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The Daily Tar Heel

92nd year of editorial freedom

Winning off the field

When the NCAA President's Commission meets in Kansas City next month, it would be wise to recommend that freshmen be made ineligible for varsity competition. Wise, yes, but even that measure wouldn't go quite far enough.

Freshman athletes, especially those in football and basketball, have a difficult time adjusting to college because playing a sport takes so much time. Indeed, athletics gets in the way of academics.

But while not letting them take part in varsity games would lessen the strain, it wouldn't solve the problem. There must be other restrictions placed on how much time freshman athletes spend on team activities.

The norm at UNC, and with most other major football programs in the nation, is that freshmen are redshirted, leaving them with four years of eligibility after their first year on campus. The football players are redshirted not because of injuries, but to give them added maturity and an extra year on scholarship to graduate.

Football players likely to play professionally often attend tryout camps in the spring of their senior year. Because they can't get their degrees if they're not around, these players usually need an extra semester to graduate. That's what

makes redshirting — and that fifth academic year — such a good deal.

Redshirting basketball players for academic reasons is not as common — and at UNC is unheard of — because competition in the spring keeps the seniors at school long enough to graduate. Most of UNC's basketball players graduate in four years, anyway. Still, basketball coach Dean Smith — always adamant that his players graduate — joins football coach Dick Crum in favor of eliminating eligibility for freshmen for the academic benefits.

But just making freshmen ineligible for games isn't enough, because, like redshirts, they would still attend practices, meetings and other team functions. The media attention may not be there, but the time constraints still are. Such a program would serve no purpose.

The only solution is for the NCAA to eliminate freshmen eligibility and include a clause that would allow athletes to retain their four years of eligibility. Further, the NCAA should severely restrict the amount of time freshmen can spend on team activities, perhaps by allowing only weight training and team meetings.

Education should always be the first priority, and that priority could be met more effectively by declaring freshmen ineligible.

2 points for the IRS

Taxpayers don't often get a chance to praise the Internal Revenue Service, but the agency should be applauded for a recent ruling concerning contributions to athletic scholarship funds. The ruling, which came last week, says the gifts cannot be considered tax-deductible if the donors receive benefits of equal or higher value.

Naturally, the IRS' action scares organizations such as the Rams Club, which regularly offers tickets or the chance to buy privileged seating in exchange for sizable donations. "Not many people will contribute unless they receive something in return," says Ernie Williamson, executive vice president of the Rams Club. "It's the American way."

Sadly, that may be true. But the average N.C. taxpayer should not have to subsidize the special privileges that booster club members are granted just because they can afford to dole out hundreds of dollars.

The IRS ruling is good for another, less apparent reason. Despite the foreboding of those involved in athletic programs, the decision may give university officials a handle on the growth of big-time athletics that has occurred at the expense of academics. Already sports booster clubs are being urged to examine carefully the contributions they receive to make sure they don't violate the IRS ruling.

Of course, the biggest contributors probably won't be affected by the change; their donations easily exceed the value of their preferred seating and lifetime parking spaces. But the ruling may encourage others to help students through college — instead of using their money to build a new stadium or basketball arena.

If that happens, donors may find the rewards of a better-educated society infinitely more valuable. Their contributions will also be tax-deductible.

The Bottom Line



Martha W. gets No. 100,000

Editors at the DTH office get an incredible amount of junk mail. Mind you, it's not the usual kind, which often consists of those annoying Chapel Hill Weekly Advertisers that dangle from your doorknob for days on end. Instead, we get press releases from every political campaign, agency and public interest group in the state — from the man running for dog catcher to the Committee to Preserve Silence in the Undergraduate Library.

Why do people send us these things? More often than not these "news" releases are used to protect the office desks from the grease that always comes with Fast Break fries.

The mail is not totally useless; it does provide us with some hot news tips, not to mention a lot of chuckles. Take for instance this breaking item from the state Department of Transportation: North Carolina has just issued its 100,000th personalized license plate to Mrs. Harold Allen Whitley Sr., of Albemarle. Martha W., as we presume she is also known, didn't win a prize for such an extraordinary accomplishment, but she did get a dandy picture taken of her with Department of Motor Vehicles Commissioner R.W.

Wilkins Jr. (right) and Transportation Secretary W.R. Roberson Jr.

Now, we don't mind state officials taking time out of their busy schedules for such important duties; we just wish something as important as the 100,000th vanity plate would have been a little more original. Recently seen plates GO CUBS, SPOIL'D, REVOLT, MUD4ME and BYLINE are infinitely more worthy. Even the one owned by a former DTH editor, UNC-DTH, would have been better. Of course, some of the seniors around this office might want to modify that to UNC-GTH.

A Long road to November

Whenever the winner of some award or election moves up to a podium to make the obligatory acceptance speech, there are always a few souls in the audience cringing in anticipation of the same, tired clichés. One of the worst is the classic penetrating analysis, "I just want to thank my parents, because without them I wouldn't be here."

But if Jim Long wins the election for state Insurance Commissioner, he can be excluded from any criticism for diving to new depths of this overworked platitude.

In Long's case, his parents were thinking of his political career before they even got married. Now that's the kind of devotion that gives clichés, if not a good name, at least an excuse for hanging around.

You see, it all comes down to names. Jim's mother was a Long long before she met Jim's father. So, considering North Carolina is full of Longs, Jim had a ready-made pool of supporters the day he was born.

According to a campaign news release, Jim considers this his "secret election strategy" — kinship with every Long in North Carolina. Being a Long for such a long time has given Long a long list of Long (and even not-so-Long) supporters.

Luckily for his opponents, the name isn't Smith.

And that's the bottom line.

An individual program for torture

BY R. JEEP BRYANT

As I walked through the door of the fitness center, a warm, moist cloud of body odor tried to escape. The door swung shut behind me, trapping me, and the odor, inside.

It was a familiar smell. It smelled just like my junior high locker room, where I spent 45 miserable minutes of every day. Well, actually, I spent most of that time outside. It was just when the guys locked me in the basket room that I learned to hate that smell.

Now, at the age of 21, I felt as if I was trapped in the basket room again.

"Hello!" exclaimed a bubbly blonde behind the counter. "Are you a member?"

With a Puma tote bag hanging from my bony shoulder, I sauntered over to her. I lowered my voice to the octave used for conversing with auto mechanics and, now, jockettes.

"No, I'm here for a trial workout," I grunted. "I called earlier."

"Oh, yes. You're Mr. Bryant," she said. The woman kept smiling as she went through all the introductory motions. She obviously had worked with frail college students before.

"The men's locker room is at the end of the hall," she said. "Go ahead and dress out, and come back here to start your workout."

There were several guys in the locker room, but not a single one of them punched me in the stomach. You have to realize what an accomplishment that was. When I was in the eighth grade, everybody punched me in the stomach.

I decided I might like this place after all.

I found my way back to the front desk, where I was greeted by Joe. Joe looked as if he had just climbed down off the cover of a muscle magazine, but he had put on some clothes. He was wearing a light blue shirt and navy pants, just like the woman behind the counter.

The shirts were emblazoned with the insignia of the health club. The logo on his shirt stretched over his left pectoral. On her shirt, the insignia stretched across her left — well, you get the idea of what the uniforms were like.

"How ya doin'?" Joe growled as he grabbed my hand.

"Fine. Fine!" I squeaked, forgetting all about my auto mechanics voice in the pain of the moment. I felt a wave of relief as the handshake ended, hoping that one of the toughest parts of my workout was over.

We sat down in a lounge area off to one side. "We should start by discussing what your goals are," Joe said.

"OK," I replied. I sat there for a few seconds, waiting for him to tell me what my goals should be. I quickly realized that he wanted me to do the talking.

My goals? My previous exercise program had consisted of shifting the gears of my Honda Civic. I found that to be pretty tiring and had promised myself that my next car would have automatic transmission. I really had. I mean, why work harder than you have to?

My real goal was to get my best friend off my back. He had been working out for over a year, so the pressure was on. I also hoped to develop the kind of body that would make women swoon, but I was prepared to allow some



time for that. I realized it would be at least a month before heads would begin to turn.

"My goals?" I asked Joe again.

"Yeah. You know, are you into toning or building or what?"

"Um. Toning for right now," I responded, remembering my rough and tough voice. Toning sounded like it would be less painful than building, and my goal for this trial workout was to minimize pain.

Joe talked for a while about the benefits of the fitness center. We discussed what the fitness center could do for me and what I could do for the fitness center. You know, stuff like that. In a matter of moments, Joe was back on his feet.

"All right! Let's go do it," he said.

I hopped from the sofa only to find all the blood rushing to my head. It's the same kind of feeling that I have when the phone wakes me up from my afternoon nap and I have to cross the room to answer it.

It was a terrible feeling.

The workout room was filled with machines and people. There were only a couple of times when I had trouble determining which was which. The machines looked ominous. Each was constructed with lots of padding, pulleys and weights; each was designed for a particular variation of pain. The people looked ominous. Very few had extra padding, and muscles abounded.

I was immediately encouraged by the healthy ratio of women to men, but soon decided that most of the women were stronger than I.

"OK. Hop up on here," Joe ordered. I sat on a cushioned seat, bent my knees and placed my feet under a padded bar. Joe showed me that the way to play with this first machine was to push the bar up by straightening my legs, hold the bar in the raised position, and then lower the bar slowly.

I held onto the seat with my sweaty palms and pushed the bar upward. "Slowly!" Joe

reminded. "OK!" I gasped.

After several repetitions, Joe told me to keep my knees and my feet pressed together. "But it hurts when I do that," I breathlessly protested.

"It's supposed to," he said with a smirk. "The whole purpose of the body-building machines is to work each muscle group to total exhaustion . . . to momentary failure." He just stood there smiling as if he had spoken words of moral encouragement and friendly support.

I was led through an obstacle course of 11 more machines. As I finished each exercise, I accepted the fact that one more muscle group had been lost to total exhaustion. The only question that remained was how long "momentary" failure would last.

Joe became more creative on subsequent machines. As I pulled down on a bar, he would pull up. He said it was good for me. He called it "negative resistance" or something like that.

"So what's your major?" Joe asked as I began my ninth repetition at 70 pounds. What a comedian. There I was, trapped in the most painful experience of my entire life, and he was suddenly interested in my studies and plans for the future.

"Broadcast (gasp) journalism!" I stammered. The weights clanked together behind me as I released the bar. "Whew," I sighed. "That was 12."

"Two more," Joe ordered.

I felt the blood in my head again. The workout finally ended. I was back in my normal clothes carrying the Puma bag. I had a brief discussion with the woman at the counter, but I was really too nauseated to talk about rates and memberships.

I was content to stagger to my car and struggle with the gear-shifting once more. Physical education had never been fun.

R. Jeep Bryant is a senior broadcast journalism major from Charlotte.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Using religion to promote intolerance

To the editor:

J. Thomas Jackson's letter ("Don't tolerate gays," DTH, Sept. 18) demeans the Christian message by selective misquotation from scripture and by quickness to judge the differences of others without evidence of any understanding of those he condemns.

Gays have not turned from worshipping God. The largest lesbian and gay organization in North Carolina, in fact, a Christian one — the Metropolitan Community Church, whose congregations serve twelve cities in our state. Since gay people, like most other North

Carolinians, grow up in Christian families, the demand for such spiritual support is natural. And because some churches and families, like Jackson, refuse to tolerate gay people, the special mission of these churches is very important to the gay community.

Gays have not turned from natural sexual desires. Any homosexual woman or man may feel that their capacity to love others is a beautiful gift from God, just as Jackson believes his sexuality is. All recent research indicates that a person's sexual orientation is established before the age of three, long

before he or she knows what sex is — so there can be little talk of "turning." Jackson has no right to assume that his nature must be God's rule for all others, nor has any gay person the right to prescribe for Jackson.

AIDS is not "the judgment of God" against gay men, any more than sickle-cell anemia would be a "judgment" against blacks, or herpes a "judgment" against heterosexuals. Jackson ought to consider the other side of his argument about AIDS: If that disease (which may affect one-tenth of one percent of the gay male population) is God's judgment, then lesbians, who have

the lowest rate of venereal diseases of any portion of the adult population, must be congratulated for being God's chosen people.

Finally, Jesus did not tell us that if our neighbor offends us, then we should "cut him off." What he said (Mark 9:43-50) was that each of us must take responsibility for our own eyes and hands. When it comes to others, Jesus asks us "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thy own eye (Luke 6:41)?"

Gloria M. Faley
School of Dentistry

Hunt, Helms: There they go again

By KYLE MARSHALL

In the midst of last week's polite, gentlemanly conversation on statewide television between Jim Hunt and Jesse Helms, Helms mentioned Mather Slaughter, the \$25,000 Man. Once an employee of the N.C. Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, Slaughter had been in the news first in 1979, when it was reported that he had checked up on the political loyalty of North Carolina sheriffs at the behest of Hunt aides.

The Slaughter name again had come up in 1981 after the General Assembly abolished his job and he was hired to work at the state's port at Morehead City — for \$25,068 a year. And this year, when reports surfaced that the \$25,000 Man was getting paid to do nothing, Hunt ordered state officials to investigate. During the debate, Hunt said that he was assured Slaughter was doing valuable work concerning the safety of the state's ports.

Helms saw this as a golden opportunity to show that North Carolina, with Hunt as governor, had employees on the state payroll who had no duties other than to provide Hunt with political information.

"Well, governor, you paid Mather Slaughter to spy on North Carolina sheriffs and write political reports to you," Helms said in the debate. And he returned to the \$25,000 Man on two occasions later in the debate: "But let me go back to Mr. Slaughter. I know you don't want to answer the question . . ." Helms said after a discussion of negative advertising. In his third attempt, this time following a question concerning agriculture, Helms said: "But I want to know, governor, I want to know if you're going to avoid the question that I asked about Mr. Mather Slaughter."

The \$25,000 Man is yet another in the long string of non-issues that have crept into the Hunt-Helms race, the political version of the

Super Bowl. I suspect there are a few voters out there, particularly among Helms' supporters, who may get all fired up over the issue of the \$25,000 Man. But does that issue really say anything about who should be elected to the U.S. Senate from North Carolina in 1984?

If you want to base your decision on non-issues, you don't have to look very far to find them:

• Also in the most recent debate, Helms' first question to his opponent dealt with Hunt's advertisements in black-owned newspapers concerning the Martin Luther King holiday bill. The ads — not Hunt's support for the bill or Helms' opposition to it — were the focus of the senator's attacks. Helms said Hunt was trying to limit any possible damage to himself by placing the ads only in the black newspapers. Thus, the two candidates, when they talk about those ads, are getting off the established track.

• In July, Bob Windsor of Chapel Hill, publisher of *The Landmark*, printed what he admitted were unsubstantiated rumors that Hunt had a homosexual lover while in college. It was obviously an absurd statement designed to damage Hunt, yet for an entire week it was the only issue facing the two candidates. Hunt tried to link Helms to the newspaper, and the issue occupied the front page of *The News and Observer* of Raleigh as the camps swapped barbs about what Windsor had reported.

• Some political observers would see out-of-state contributions to the candidates as an issue. It's true that these two gentlemen are vying to represent North Carolina in the Senate for the next six years, but it's also true that the campaign has drawn nationwide attention, not to mention money from around the country. This is political life-and-death in the 1980s, where campaigns often are won and lost on television — an expensive battleground. As such, the candidates need to tap resources from everywhere, and they shouldn't find any reason to attack each other on this non-issue. (In the first debate, Hunt

challenged Helms to quit accepting out-of-state contributions. Helms appropriately responded by rejecting the notion.)

These are but a few of the non-issues, what would remain for the two candidates to talk about?

The federal budget deficit, for one. Tax increases, for another. Improving education, protecting the environment, Social Security, domestic spending programs, defense, Central America. They're all issues, and they've all been given varying degrees of attention by both Hunt and Helms. In fact, it's not difficult to find out just what positions the two have taken on these and other "real" issues.

What we too often get in the debates, in speeches and in TV ads, however, are things like the \$25,000 Man.

And how many times have we heard the two challenge each other to "talk about the real issues"? During Helms' opening statement before the last debate, he said, "Now tonight I do hope we can have a complete, honest, candid assessment of the issues." And this weekend, after learning that a new Gallup Poll put Helms slightly ahead of Hunt, the governor issued a statement that said that "the poll results show that we have to work doubly hard over the next seven weeks to focus this campaign on the issues that really concern the people of this state."

For the vast minority of voters who are still undecided, there are a number of readily available sources where they can find enough "real" issues to help them make up their minds. News stories, TV coverage, political endorsements, and, yes, even TV ads, are a start. But for each "real" issue, there's a nasty little non-issue lurking, waiting to draw attention away from important concerns, subject to exploitation by one candidate in his attempts to smear the other.

Kyle Marshall is a senior economics and journalism major from Hendersonville.