"Free throw defense" works on UVa.

By LEE ROBERTS Assistant Sports Editor

Buzz Peterson probably put it best as he sat on a bench in the North Carolina locker room at Virginia's University Hall Saturday.

"The free throw defense," Peterson said with a big smile, "has been good

Peterson was, of course, referring to the two missed free throws by Virginia's Tom Sheehey in the last 1:32 of the basketball game that allowed UNC to slip by in another crazily close ACC contest, 65-61.

Three days earlier, Maryland's Keith Gatlin and Adrian Branch had missed crucial free throws in the final :23 to set up a thrilling 75-74 UNC win.

"It seems like Maryland and Virginia both thought they had it won," Peterson said, "but . . ."

But North Carolina both times somehow scrambled back, despite having key players foul out late in the game, and despite the much-felt absence of 6-10 forward Joe Wolf because of injury. Missed free throws by opponents were part of it, but clutch play by unexpected sources in the final minutes helped as well.

On Saturday, after Warren Martin and Wednesday's hero Dave Popson both fouled out, it was Peterson and

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Curtis Hunter's turn to step into the role of clutch player.

North Carolina lost hold of an eightpoint first-half lead and found itself down, 32-31 at half. Then, behind the inspired play of the Cavaliers' new-look Olden Polynice (22 points, 14 rebounds, one blocked shot) and the short-range jumpers of guard Darrick Simms, Virginia forged ahead to a nine-point

lead with 13 minutes left. That lead was the Cavaliers' largest. Hunter, in the game because his quickness was needed to help harass Virginia's two freshman guards and because UNC's big men were all in foul trouble, went to work.

Hunter drew a foul from Simms and coolly sank two free throws. Then Steve Hale (nine points, seven assists, four steals), along with Kenny Smith (16 points), forced a steal on a pesky halfcourt trapping defense that forced 15 Virginia turnovers on the afternoon and fed Hunter for a layup that cut the Cavalier lead to five.

When Virginia had the nine-point lead, it could have put North Carolina away, but Hunter's quick points kept the Tar Heels in the hunt. "Curtis played very well," Coach Dean Smith said. "He's getting better and better, and he looks like he's relaxing."

Gatlin pass with :05 left in the Maryland game had sealed the North Carolina victory Wednesday. Hunter himself admitted that he probably wouldn't have been on the court in the pressure moments in the two recent games if Wolf were not injured. He also said that getting this much "quality time" on the court had helped his confidence.

"I think I've been playing real hard and concentrating more on defense," Hunter said. "I've been taking the shots I had, and my confidence is coming

UNC worked its way back to a 59-59 tie with the Cavaliers with 1:32 left when the "free throw defense" went to work. Within 15 seconds Popson fouled Sheehey twice, fouling out, and Sheehey missed the front end of a one-and-one both times, giving the Tar Heels a pair of lucky breaks.

Then Peterson, unlikely hero number two, took his turn. Peterson had not scored all day, and had only taken two shots. But from 22 feet out with just a minute left, he found his open shot and let go a bomb to give UNC a 61-

After the Tar Heels wouldn't let Virginia past half-court, forcing a turnover, Daugherty fed Hunter with a pass that resulted in a thundering slam dunk to put the finishing touches on

N. C. State

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The Tar Heel score also set a new school record in the vault, breaking the previous mark of 44.8. Freshmen Missy

on the uneven bars.

nastics team placed second in its season-

opening meet featuring the nationally

second-ranked Alabama Crimson Tide.

hampered by injuries to top all-around

performers Barbi Callihan and Suzie

Van Slyke, finished ahead of Cornell

and James Madison University and

found promise in the fact that their total

score of 173.45 is the highest ever in

"I was really pleased with our

performance today," said head coach Derek Galvin. "If there was any

disappointment, it's that we've been

hitting the balance beam and uneven

early as the team posted a score of 45.4

in the vault and held a narrow lead over

Alabama, which began the competition

The Tar Heels gained confidence

parallel bars routines in practice."

a season-opening meet.

The Tar Heels, who have been

Gymnastics team finishes 2nd Shaffner and Stacy Kaplan each turned

SPORTS MONDAY

By TIM BROWN in scores of 9.4 to shatter the existing The reactions were all positive individual mark of 9.2 set last year by Saturday as the UNC women's gym-Karen Kayser.

> After the vault the Tar Heels moved to the uneven bars and the balance beam, where they did not fare as well. "We were probably too psyched after the vault and lost some concentration,". Galvin said.

> On the balance beam the Tar Heels seemed shaken but didn't hold anything back. Their routines featured difficult mounts and tumbling moves that Galvin is confident will improve with time. "The girls were aggressive and they showed a lot of guts today," Galvin said, referring to several serious falls in the two events.

Freshman Stacy Kaplan, whose allaround score 35.65 score in the four events also set a new school record, said that the team entered the meet with a relatively loose and open attitude. "We knew that because of the injury situation our chances of upsetting Alabama were probably out of reach so we didn't have

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anything to lose," she said. While the Tar Heels were struggling

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through the beam and uneven bars, the Crimson Tide was putting together a consistent and sometimes eve-catching performance behind the consistently high scores of all-around performers Juli Estin, Penny Hauschild and Allison Beldon. Alabama head coach Sarah Patterson said she was happy with her team's performance coming off a long Christmas break and a meet last

Thursday at Auburn. UNC was challenged for second place only after the third rotation, when Cornell was able to pull within a point of them. But the Tar Heels were equal to the challenge as they concluded the competition on the floor exercise, described by Galvin as the team's strongest event. "The girls showed a lot of class coming off the balance beam," he said. "I was very pleased with the

way they maintained their composure." Galvin also said he was particularly pleased with the consistent performance of senior Sue Tonietto, who turned in team-high scores in the uneven bars and balance beam events and posted a 9.0 in the floor exercise.

Sportswriting test to be given

Anyone interested in writing sports for the Daily Tar Heel is encouraged to drop by the sports office today through Tuesday and pick up a copy of the sports questionnaire and test.

Writers with experience are encouraged to bring in clips of previous work, but this is not required. Prospective writers may pick up the test on the sports desk.

If you have any questions, speak to Frank Kennedy, sports editor, or Lee Roberts and Scott Fowler, assistant sports editors.



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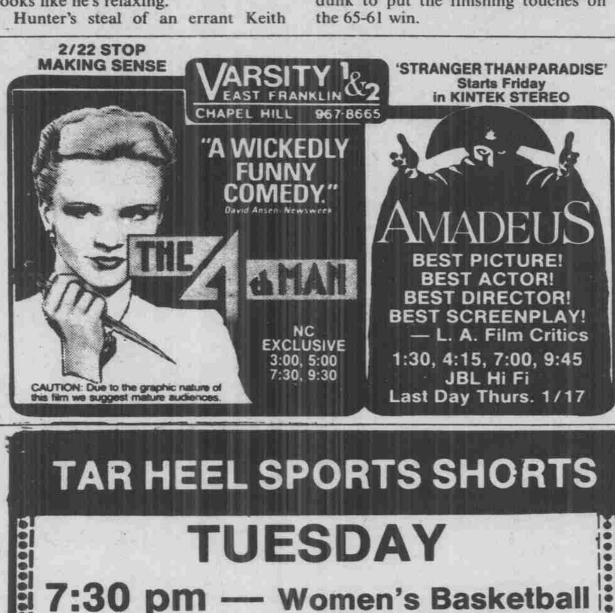
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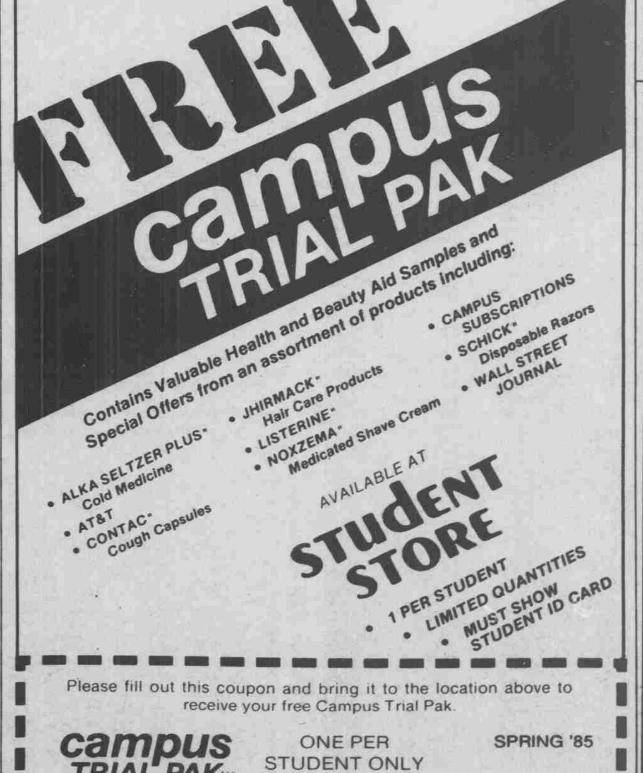
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