

Sports

UNC golf 'preserves' ACC victory as Hughes takes individual crown

By MIKE BERARDINO
Staff Writer

GREENSBORO — The history books will say that John Hughes and his fellow North Carolina golfers won the 33rd Atlantic Coast Conference championship on Sunday April 20. That's not altogether accurate. They actually won the tournament on Saturday. Sunday was more of a preservation job than anything else.

Led by Hughes, who took individual medalist honors by two shots with a three-day total of five-under-par 211 despite a final-round 75, the 11th-ranked Tar Heels bested defending champion Georgia Tech by six strokes. Fourth-ranked Wake Forest, the host school, was third with 874 while Clemson rounded out the upper half at 879.

"I'm very happy for the team and for John," UNC coach Devon Brouse. "(Sunday) was kind of a survival contest with the wind. But they did what they had to do."

What North Carolina had to do Sunday was play into a steady stream of wind gusts and somehow protect a masterfully-built 13-shot lead in the process. Despite the blustery, score-inflating conditions, the experienced Tar Heels maintained their margin.

Leading the hang-on-for-dear-life crew was Hughes. The 6-2 junior from Greensboro had started the tourney in fine fashion, parlaying scores of 71 and 65 into a four-stroke bulge at the start of Sunday's play. But when Georgia Tech's Nacho Gervas, playing in the same group as Hughes, knocked in a three-foot birdie putt on the par-three 17th, the lead was down to one and it was anybody's golf tournament.

At the 430-yard, par-four 18th, the drives were the difference. While Hughes waffled his pressure tee shot nearly 300 yards down the center of the fairway, Gervas jerked his effort about forty yards shorter and into the left rough. As the two links warriors walked side-by-side to their second shots, Hughes smiled and said "I guess it's just between you and me, babe." To which the junior from Madrid, Spain, replied "It sure looks that way."

But once Gervas left his five-iron approach shot about 20 yards short of the green and Hughes dropped his ball

15 feet from the hole, the issue had been decided. Hughes two-putted for par and the title, while Gervas settled for bogey and second place. Gervas ended the tourney with rounds of 71-69-73 for a three-under 213 and impressed a flock of followers with his shotmaking.

"I thought I put some pressure on him," Gervas said. "On the back, I had a chance to make birdie on every hole." Indeed, the man they call "Nacho" fired a 34 on the final nine to almost pull off a miracle comeback. He birdied the 10th and 16th before rolling in the big putt at 17. But it was at the par-four 13th where Gervas made his big move.

Trying to play it safe with an iron off the tee, Hughes hooked the shot miserably into a densely-wooded area. In the process of moving a fallen branch out of the way, Hughes' ball moved "about an inch." Although it's football, and not golf, that is the "game of inches," the minuscule movement cost the leader a penalty stroke and a double-bogey six. Meanwhile, Gervas settled for par to draw within three. Hughes, who said he wasn't that nervous about losing his lead, then parred in for the championship.

"Now that I think about it, I should have been more worried than I was," Hughes said. "I was just so wrapped up in my own struggles." Despite his birdie drought over the last 12 holes, Hughes had just enough to win.

But Hughes had plenty of help in winning the team title. Senior Bryan Sullivan, who along with classmate Kurt Beck won three ACC titles in his four-year career, came in third at 214 (70-71-73). UNC's No. 5 player Brendan Kennedy posted a strong fourth-place tie finish with totals of 72-70-73 — 215. Greg Parker (73-71-77 — 221) and Beck (74-74-77 — 225) were the other members of Brouse's championship team.

Next, the Tar Heels must prepare for the NCAA tournament, May 21-24 at the Bermuda Run course in Winston-Salem. Representing the northern portion of District III, the confident UNC squad regrets the long layoff. "It's too bad the NCAA's aren't next week," Sullivan said. "because we'd be ready."



DTH/Dan Charlson

North Carolina lacrosse players celebrate their thrilling, 9-8 overtime win over Duke Sunday at Fetzer Field

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by one, 6-5.

With the score tied 8-8, both teams ran deliberate offenses through the final 14 heartstopping minutes of regulation time. With just under two minutes remaining, Duke captured the ball and called a timeout to set up a play. "I thought they would go to him," Auburn said. "Him" was Rubin, who scored five goals in the match. But "he" did not take the shot and the Tar Heels got one final chance. Seivold took the ball to the net and let a shot go with four seconds left. Schraff caught it. Overtime.

The images of a newborn rivalry are lasting. Haus slamming his stick to the

ground in frustration after a Duke go-ahead goal; Blue Devil attackman Ken Lukes staggering off the field in pain after his second goal; fans of both teams chanting wildly in the tense closing minutes; and the scoreboard. When the scoreboard read 8-8 with no time left, it served as a billboard announcing Duke's "arrival".

To a man, the Tar Heels had nothing but praise for their opponents after the match. Seivold called the win "a relief". Basking in the afterglow of the sudden death victory, UNC's first in its last four overtime games, Auburn spoke

about the new intensity of the UNC-Duke duel. "They've been getting a lot of attention and there was a big feeling of a rivalry here," he said. "It'll be tough from now on." And how.

Baseball battered twice

By JAMES SUROWIECKI
Assistant Sports Editor

Last Monday, the UNC baseball team was on a roll and was perched on top of the conference race after knocking off Georgia Tech and Clemson in consecutive home games. The Tar Heels' stirring 9-8 come-from-behind win over Clemson had raised their record to 21-13 (6-2 in the conference) and sparked thoughts of a ACC title and perhaps an NCAA bid.

Today, such notions seem remote at best. UNC faced the same two squads on the road this weekend, and was essentially handed an opportunity to catapult itself into national prominence. But to put it simply, the Tar Heels dropped the ball, literally and figuratively, losing 6-2 to the Tigers Saturday and 12-3 to Tech on Sunday while committing five errors in the two games.

The seventh and eighth innings of the Clemson game made it obvious that the

Tar Heels should have stayed home this weekend. Thanks to Paul Will's solo homer and RBI double, UNC went into the bottom of the seventh looking strong. The score was tied at two and top reliever Gordon Douglas was on the mound.

But the Tigers battered Douglas for five hits in the two inning, scoring two runs in the seventh and two in the eighth and making a winner of starter Oliver Whitaker, now 4-1. Bullpen aces aren't supposed to be treated so roughly.

Sunday was more of the same for UNC. Steve Mrowka had scored twice and the Tar Heels trailed just 4-2 when Tech came to bat in the sixth. By inning's end, UNC trailed 10-2, as Tech pounded out seven hits (20 on the day) and the Tar Heels committed three throwing errors. The loss dropped UNC to 7-4 in the ACC, good only for fourth place. National prominence has fluttered away, perhaps for good.

Kaplan injures knee at NAAs

Staff reports
GAINESVILLE, Fla. — UNC gymnast Stacy Kaplan injured her knee Friday when she fell during her floor exercise routine, knocking her out of

competition for All-America honors. Kaplan, a sophomore from Rochester, N.Y., was the first gymnast from UNC as well as the ACC to ever advance to the NCAA Nationals meet.

Softball victorious

From staff reports

FAIRFAX, Va. — The UNC softball team upped its record to 32-11 Saturday by winning both ends of a doubleheader with George Mason.

Freshman hurler Regina Finn picked up the victory in the first game, which UNC won 6-1. Finn improved her record to 12-7 and also had a good day at the plate, going three for four.

Virginia Augusta was the winning pitcher in the second game, and used her bat to pull out the victory. With a 1-1 tie in the eleventh inning, Augusta singled to bring in Cindy Rockaway, and later scored on a triple. The final was 3-2.

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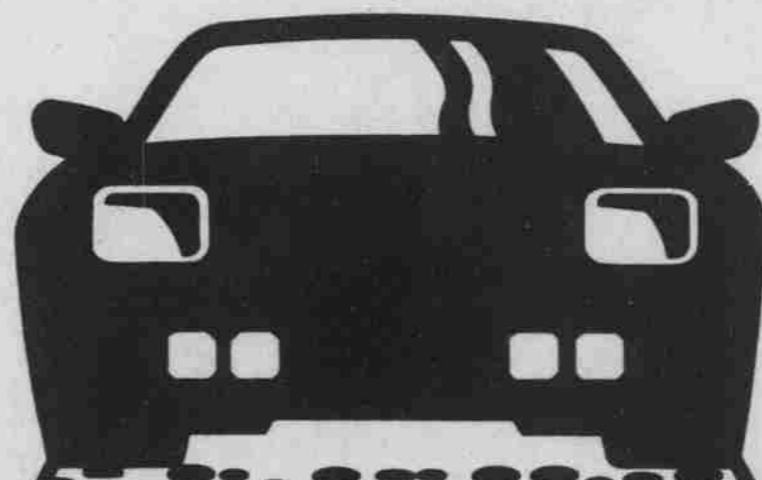
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