

## Def. Backs

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we are real close talent-wise, and everybody hangs out together. When you do that, it makes things a little easier on the field."

Taking over Vooletich's spot at weak safety is Victor Bullock, a 6-foot, 182-pound Henderson native. Bullock has been a jack-of-all-trades in the past, returning punts mostly.

But he started five games last season after an injury sidelined Howard Feggins, and his best game was at Georgia Tech, where he ripped down a one-handed interception to set up the winning touchdown in a 30-23 win.

Bullock recently talked about why defensive back is such a tough position to play.

"When you're covering a guy like Lawyer Tillman one on one, a guy of that speed and size, you don't want him to beat you deep, and you've got

50,000 people looking at this," he said. "It's a personal challenge, and you have to take upon yourself to do your best and not get beat."

And Bullock is tired of hearing about the secondary's lack of speed. "We don't think we're that slow," he said. "No group's going to say that they are. Inexperience we may have. We think that by being together and around each other for awhile, we can make up for that. People say we're kind of slow, but we feel we can play anybody man-to-man."

At the cornerback positions are two players who are a study in contrast. One, Chapel Hill native Skeet Baldwin, has been a fixture in this backfield since 1986, when he started the first nine games of the year as a redshirt freshman. But he relishes playing with his close friends.

"We've always played together, starting as freshmen being on the scout team," Baldwin said. "I feel comfortable with those guys, and there's a togetherness there. We do a lot of things together, like eating, and all those things make a difference, so when we're on the field we know what to expect."

At the other corner is the new kid on the block, Larry Whiteside, who has the least experience of the four. After a brilliant spring in 1987, the Morganton native was let down by being relegated to special teams work after having such high hopes.

"Now I'm in a starting situation, and it feels good to get all the repetitions in and just be known as a starter," he said. "Everybody's talking about the inexperience we have in the defensive backfield, but

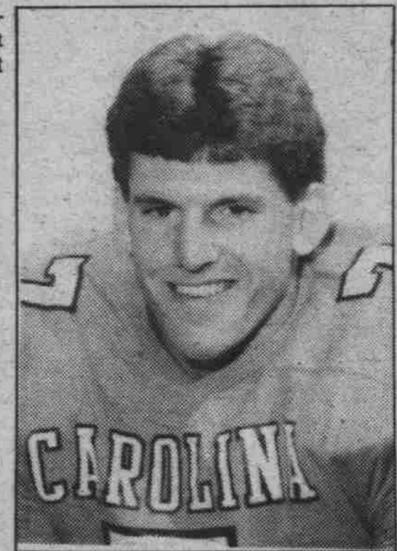
Dan, Skeet and Vic have the experience. I'm just like a little puppy out there, and it just makes me work that much harder.

"I know teams are going to be keying on me, and that's a real good motivator."

Added Hoch: "I've been very impressed with Larry Whiteside and the progress he's made since last spring."

Backing up the four starters are Clarence Carter, who has been moved from running back, Stuffie Hewitt, Bryan Causey, a walk-on, and redshirt freshman Doxie Jordan, who played with Dwight Hollier in high school.

Causey has been great in the secondary, Hoch said. "We're super-pleased with Bryan," he said. "I've got to find a spot here and there for him because he just comes up with the big plays. I don't know how to explain it. Causey wakes up in the morning, I swear, just looking to knock somebody out. That's just his personality."



Dan Vooletich

Hoch is very intent on making this group a success. "This is the biggest coaching challenge of my career, and we're just laying it on line," he said. "I'm giving them everything I have, and they're giving me everything they have."

## Def. Line

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"Every team needs a player like Dennis."

Like Gray, Tripp's goals are simple. He just wants the Tar Heels to be successful. "I hate getting beat at anything. My goal is for us to win the ACC," Tripp said.

Freshman Roy Barker is another important cog in the defensive line this season. Hailing from Village of Islandia, N.Y., the 6-4, 264-pound redshirt frosh ended spring practice as a starter on the line. Barker is a raw talent who has much to learn and will have many learning opportunities this season.

Brooks even says that Barker has the potential to be one of the league's finest linemen.

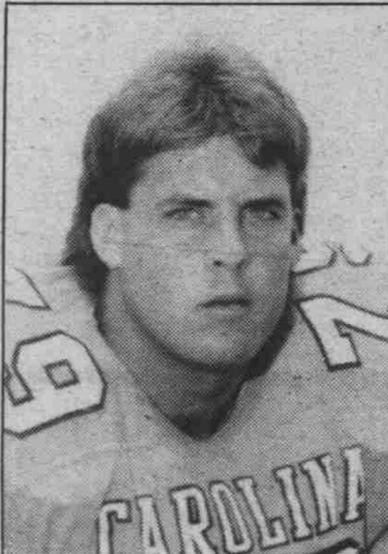
"As he becomes a better technique player, he'll get better and better," Brooks said. "He has all the physical tools to be a great one. We're teaching him the fundamental techniques. Roy will be one of the key players to watch this season."

Barker needs consistency, and he'll be the first to admit as much. "I'm going to try to be a consistent player this season," he said. "I'll try to stay focused on every play."

All Barker seems to want to do is hit someone — anyone.

"I try to hit people as hard as I can every play," he said. "I like to make my presence known on the football field."

One of Barker's biggest strengths is his nimbleness. "I'm a very agile football player," he said. "I'm able to out-finesse blockers. It's hard to outmuscle the offensive linemen, so



Chris Jacobs

I just try to fake them out when I'm trying to sack the quarterback."

Returning from a two-year absence from the UNC football program is starting defensive lineman Chris Jacobs. Jacobs gave up football prior to the 1986 season, but the exit of Dick Crum, the hiring of Brown and a burning desire to return to football fueled his comeback to the team.

Maturity, experience and leadership will be his contributions to the defensive line.

"Chris Jacobs has been real positive for us," Brooks said. "He's worked hard to get himself back into good condition. The physical and mental maturity of a Chris Jacobs is

so important to our young, inexperienced defensive line.

Our kids call him 'Old Man,'" Brooks said.

"Intense" best describes Jacobs' on-field nature.

"I don't have all the physical talents that others have, so I have to make up for it by being intense and hustling every play," Jacobs said.

He has been given a new life by Brown's staff. "I've gotten a good chance here," Jacobs said. "I've applied myself harder than I ever have before."

Perhaps the quickest defensive player on the team is Willie Joe Walker. Walker will see a lot of action on the defensive line this season. His fine performance at South Carolina may allow him to start some games this year.

The Bradenton, Fla., native was the Tar Heels' only junior college recruit last season. He comes to North Carolina via Garden City (Kan.) Community College. Walker's strength is his speed and quickness.

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