

Sports

J.R. discusses bronze medal, playing for John Thompson

By MIKE BERARDINO
Sports Editor

J.R. Reid, a member of the bronze medalist U.S. Olympic men's basketball team, was back in Chapel Hill Wednesday, chatting amiably with the local media about his trip to Seoul.

But the press wasn't all that interested in Reid's stories about life in the Olympic village. Rather, the predominant topic of the 40-minute discussion was the American team's 82-76 loss to the Soviet Union in the men's basketball semifinals.

Why did it happen? Whose fault was it? John Thompson's? Danny Manning's? Why, why, why?

"I know people expect the U.S. to win all the basketball games, but that's just not going to happen now, especially when teams have been together as long as (the Soviets) have been together," Reid told a small group in the Skipper Bowles Room of Koury Natatorium Wednesday.

"I think if they could get a year together, the American team would be almost unbeatable. We just didn't have enough time. We were cramming in things in three months that (Georgetown and U.S.) coach Thompson was probably trying to get his team to do the whole year."

Reid said the loss, which was only the second for the U.S. in 86 games of Olympic competition, resulted more from a superior Soviet performance than anything else.

"We played as hard as we could; (the Soviets) just played better than us on that day," he said. "They shot the lights out. There's nothing more that can be said about it. I know people wanted us to win, especially with what happened in '72, but we were just outplayed. I don't think we have anything to be ashamed of."

America's other loss in Olympic men's basketball came in 1972, in

Munich, West Germany. There, the Soviets pulled out a much-disputed 51-50 win in the gold-medal game thanks to a confusing ending, one which saw the clock run out then set back to three seconds. The Soviets won on the last shot, and America was outraged.

After the U.S. team's second men's basketball loss ever, Americans were once again outraged, but at Thompson and not the Russians.

Reid said the U.S. team didn't underestimate the Russians. Rather, he said, the Americans may have wanted to win too much.

"We came out in the first half and we were playing panicky," he said. "We were only down a few points with six or seven minutes left in the first half, and we were playing like there were two minutes left in the game. It seemed like we could never get into the flow and play our style of play. We were playing catch-up the whole time."

"I think if they were too pumped up for the game."

Reid, however, had nothing but glowing praise of his Olympic coach.

"I love Coach Thompson. He's a great man," Reid said. "He just doesn't like the media. From what he told us, he feels no matter what he says, they're going to write their own stories anyway."

"He's his own man. He wants to do things his way, and that's the way he is. He doesn't want anybody to change him. I could see how he attracts many great players and the people that he does, because of his personality. I guess, with coach Thompson, if you're on the outside looking in, you wouldn't understand. But since we've all had the opportunity to be with him for a long period of time, we understand what type of man he is."

One of the biggest criticisms of Thompson following the loss to the Soviets was of his defensive system, which many considered too complex, too mechanical. Reid scoffed at that notion.

"I don't think anybody made that statement when we were beating teams by 40 and 50 points," Reid said. "As soon as we lost a game, all of a sudden (the defensive system) was too complicated. I don't think the defense was a problem. It was the same thing we run at Carolina, except we run all the traps."

When asked to compare Thompson to Dean Smith, Reid responded, "Coach Thompson is more vocal — just a little more vocal — than coach Smith. Coach Thompson is a big man's coach."

"He knows a lot about the game, especially the big men. He worked with us a great deal, he just taught us little things like positioning. What he stressed to us more than anything was catching the ball strong, because we would be playing against stronger, more physical players. That's something I did well was catch the ball strong, because I'm a physical player."

As for the prospect of sending NBA players over in 1992, Reid said he thought that would be "great," but cautioned against doing so in an all-star format.

"If they do it, I think they would have to send a whole team over," Reid said. "We played exhibitions against NBA teams with Barkley and Jordan and all kinds of all-stars. And we beat them."

That said, Reid added he wouldn't necessarily change anything.

"I think the way they're doing it now is fine," Reid said. "It wasn't necessarily the 12 best players in the country, but it was 12 guys (Thompson) knew could pick up his system quickly. He picked guys who he could tell wouldn't give him a whole lot of trouble about sitting on the bench and not playing a lot."

"We had 12 unselfish players, 12 successful, talented players who went over there and gave it all they had. We just came up a little short."

After stopping off at his parents' home in Virginia Beach, Va., where he left his bronze medal for safekeeping, Reid returned to Chapel Hill Tuesday.

Basketball burnout? Forget it. Reid was playing pickup games in the Smith Center that same afternoon.

"I love basketball," he said with a boyish grin. "I don't think I'll ever get tired of it."



Midfielder Chad Ashton moves past a Wake Forest defender in Wednesday's 2-1 Tar Heel win

Men's soccer whips Deacons

By BRENDAN MATHEWS
Staff Writer

Just when you thought it was curtains for the men's soccer team, a team that has lost to Campbell and Catawba in the same year, they pull a stunt like this.

The Tar Heels kept everybody guessing by knocking off 19th-ranked Wake Forest 2-1 at Fetzer Field for their first conference win. The Deacons had been the Cinderella team of the ACC, topping defending national champion Clemson and battling top-ranked Virginia to a 0-0 scoreless tie.

The fantasy came to an end when John Cocking pounded home the game-winner at 71:23, a shot that involved most of the long-dormant UNC offense. Chad Ashton broke down the right sideline, brought it in close and hit Derek Missimo out in front of the net.

Rather than shoot, Missimo spun and dished the ball back to Donald Cogsville, who pounded it off Wake Forest goalie Scott Wehmer from 18

yards out. The rebound went right at the charging Cocking, who fired it in without breaking stride.

"Missimo was very composed in the box," Cocking said. "Cogs took a hell of a shot, it was a real cannon. The rebound came right to me and I didn't have to do anything but kick it in. Their back didn't track with me, he left me wide open."

Senior goalie Darren Royer returned to play the second half, shutting out the Deacons in his first appearance in the net since North Carolina lost to Catawba five games ago.

Wednesday's game also marked the return of Cogsville, who had sat out the last three games because of a concussion suffered two weeks ago in a 2-1 loss at Duke.

But Cogsville didn't seem dazed and confused at all Wednesday when, at 22:39, he put the Tar Heels up 1-0. He simply took a pass at midfield and shook Deacon back David Mackey to set up the one-on-one. Cogsville drew Wehmer out of the

net and popped it over the goalie's head and in for the score from 15 yards out.

The second half gave Royer a chance to show a little of last year's magic and a little of this year's luck. Five minutes into the half, with Wake Forest's Geraint Davies charging on an open-field break, Royer fell to his knees on the soaked turf. He dove at the sliding Davies, whose shot went way over the unguarded goal.

UNC had a chance to go ahead at 60:56 on a penalty kick by Ashton. But what is normally a sure thing wasn't, and the shot was wide to the left.

For now, though, UNC is going to savor the win. "This one was important for two reasons," Dorrance said. "First, because it is a conference win and that's our top priority. Second, Wake is a ranked team. It doesn't take the bad taste out of our mouths for the two games we should have won, but it's a good one."

Blaisse still shows European roots

By NEIL AMATO
Staff Writer

Julie Blaisse sits in her off-campus apartment and partakes in a distinctly European custom — sipping a cup of tea in the middle of the afternoon. In the background, a tape of European dance songs almost makes a visitor feel as though he's in the Netherlands, Blaisse's homeland.

"To the disgrace of my team, I like classical music," said Blaisse, a field hockey standout at UNC for the past three seasons. "The rest of the team just hates my music."

That is just one area in which Blaisse has had to make an adjustment since coming to UNC in 1986.

Blaisse admits she was a bit worried about coming to the U.S. "The first time I was in America was for the first practice," she said.

But the three-year starter also said she had some idea about life in America.

"There's a particular notion of America at home, of what it's like," she said. "I came here with a set picture of what America should be like, and the people pretty much lived up to it."

Blaisse first heard about North Carolina in her junior year of high school when she talked with former UNC player and fellow Holland native Judith Jonckheer. Blaisse said Jonckheer told her it was a great opportunity to play field hockey and get a good education.

Besides her field hockey talents, Blaisse also has a good academic record. Much to the dismay of her younger teammates, Blaisse plans to forgo her last year of eligibility and graduate in May. Blaisse expressed that, at first, the registration process was "confusing," but later she took placement tests and got credit for 30 hours.

Blaisse is equally impressive on the field. She has scored 43 goals, including seven in eight games this season, and tallied 16 assists in her first two campaigns. She's the "designated hitter" on UNC penalty corners but can always make the perfect pass

when opponents key on her too much.

As in 1987, Blaisse is vital to the Tar Heels' national title hopes. She believes this year's unit has the right chemistry to be national champs. She thinks the best asset of last season's NCAA runner-up squad was confidence that they could win the big game. Blaisse says that this year's team is trying to regain confidence after its only loss this season, a 4-0 drubbing by No. 1 Old Dominion.

"We were just mentally down," Blaisse said in explanation of that loss. "We need the confidence like we had last year. We play ODU again in three weeks. We know we can play a lot better."

Blaisse attributes much of her success to her coaches, Karen Shelton, Meri Dembrow and Debra Brickey.

"They know a lot about skill work and tactics, and sometimes they can work with you individually in practice," Blaisse said of Dembrow and Brickey, the assistants. That's not to take anything away from Shelton, the head coach, Blaisse explained: "They definitely help Karen, because she was a defender, and so she focuses on defense."

Skills and strategy were two aspects Blaisse was taught to concentrate on in Holland, where she played four years on the junior national team.

"In Holland, I was used to more

finesse," Blaisse said. "We tried to go around people instead of whacking it through people like we do here. Here, field hockey is focused on speed and endurance, while in Holland, it's focused on skills and tactics."

Blaisse added that in the United States, emphasis is put on conditioning. "If you don't have the skills, then being in shape means nothing," she said.

When Blaisse isn't playing field hockey, she plays club lacrosse in the spring, is a tutor for the Campus Y and is a member of the Law Club. Also, she carries a pretty heavy course load — 16 hours this semester and 18 in the spring.

After graduation, Blaisse wants to return to the Netherlands and study to become a lawyer. She says she will return to the United States to visit, but most likely will reside in Holland.

Right now, though, Blaisse is focusing her thoughts on a national championship. She says one of the keys to winning it all is teamwork, which is one item of American culture she was glad to adjust to. In Holland, Blaisse said, teamwork is not that important.

"We do everything together," Blaisse said of the close-knit Tar Heel squad. "Teamwork is more fun and it makes you want to win more."

Volleyball beats State

From staff reports
RALEIGH — The UNC volleyball team started slow but finished strong Tuesday night, beating N.C. State 14-16, 15-6, 15-12, 15-10 in a non-ACC game.

The win upped the Tar Heels' record to 12-3. State dropped to 8-3 on the year.

Andrea Wells led UNC in the statistical parade with 24 kills and 17 digs, while Ann Schildmeyer contributed 15 digs to the UNC cause.

Earlier Tuesday, UNC's Sharon German was named the ACC Player of the Week. The junior hitter from Dillon, S.C., who was named all-conference in 1987, made 46 kills and 31 digs in three matches last week. UNC won two of those matches, beating Lamar and UNC-Charlotte, but lost to 20th-ranked Houston.

German posted a .340 hitting percentage and served six aces to earn the league's weekly honor for the third time in her career.

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SHOW TIMES FOR TODAY ONLY

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DTH Picks of the Week

Fall Break may mean a respite from the drudgery of classes for a few days, but it doesn't mean the DTH pickers *par excellence* will be at rest over the weekend. No, we'll be sweating out the results of our 10 games Saturday, just as the rest of the student body no doubt will.

After four weeks, Mike (Doc) Berardino is still out in front. The

sports editor went 6-3-1 last week to maintain a one-game edge over his whining underling, ASE Andy (Straw) Podolsky. Two games farther back is the ever-dangerous Dave (Kid) Glenn. Last place still belongs to the laughable Chris (Mookie) Spencer.

Go Mets!

Games	Mike Berardino (30-9-1)777	Chris Spencer (23-16-1)590	Andy Podolsky (29-10-1)743	Dave Glenn (27-12-1)693
UNC at Wake Forest	Wake	UNC	UNC	Wake
Clemson at Virginia	Clem.	Clem.	Clem.	Clem.
Maryland at Georgia Tech	Md.	Md.	Md.	GT
N.C. State at East Tennessee State	NCSU	NCSU	NCSU	NCSU
Auburn at LSU	LSU	AU	AU	LSU
Michigan State at Michigan	Mich.	Mich.	Mich.	Mich.
Oregon at Southern California	USC	USC	USC	USC
Notre Dame at Pittsburgh	Pitt	ND	ND	ND
Oklahoma at Texas	OU	OU	OU	OU
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