

Sports

Brown's final conference filled with praise, caution

By MIKE BERARDINO

The final Tuesday press conference of Mack Brown's first season in Chapel Hill didn't seem to want to end.

It's quite unlikely there's another 1-9 coach in the country who still enjoys talking about football at this juncture.

Maybe it was a feeling of nostalgia that prompted last-minute questions that only served to rehash points made earlier in Brown's talk.

Spurrier's name came up first, of course, since he was suspended on Monday by the Atlantic Coast Conference for criticizing the officials after Duke fought N.C. State to a controversial 43-43 tie.

Spurrier called the call "the worst call in the history of Duke football" and will pay the price Saturday. He will not be allowed in Wallace Wade Stadium when the Tar Heels and Blue Devils meet in both teams' season finale.

"I hate it for Steve," Brown said. "But I'm a first-year guy in the league, you know on the block. When your commissioner says it's fair, it's fair. I'm a guy who goes by the system. In my home, when I'm told not to do something, I usually don't do it."

Brown had a similar opportunity to vent his frustration on the officials following the loss to the Cavaliers. Virginia's late field goal was set up by a questionable personal foul penalty on UNC cornerback Doxie Jordan.

"The thing you have to do is be so careful," Brown said. "You come off the field and you've been so emotional for three hours. I've found it's usually in my best interest to stay away from specifics. Coaches get tired this time of year because you are doing double duty, with recruiting and coaching."

Would the Blue Devils be too terribly harmed by Spurrier's absence Saturday? Brown said he thought not. "Duke's got a good football team and Steve has good assistants," Brown said. "It will probably be an emotional edge for them. They'll be playing for their coach."

As he's done so often this season, Brown used his wry sense of humor to lessen the pain of the mounting losses.

"It might help us if I wasn't on the sideline," Brown joked, "the way things have gone for us this year."

Injuries have taken quite a toll on the Tar Heels this year, especially on defense. Of the 13 players Brown listed as banged up Tuesday, 11 are part of the UNC "stoppers."

Defensive back Brad Sullivan is "out," while safety Bryan Causey and linebackers John Reed and Mike Bowman are "doubtful." Cornerback Skeet Baldwin is listed as "questionable" for the game with the Blue Devils.

Brown, a self-proclaimed "quarterback fan," spent a great deal of time praising Duke's signal-caller, Anthony Dilweg. After spending four seasons behind Steve Slayden, Dilweg, a fifth-year senior, has passed for 21 touchdowns and an average of 346 yards a game in leading Duke to an uncommonly good 6-3-1 season.

"He's having an outstanding year," Brown said. "He has to be considered one of the outstanding quarterbacks in the country. He's unbelievable. He has great touch; he can throw the long ball; he's a natural."

Not content to stop there, Brown continued his Anthony Dilweg For Heisman campaign for another few minutes.

"The guy is phenomenal," Brown gushed, showing he has this "coach-speak" thing down pat, thank you. "There aren't many players like him in college football. He doesn't miss. The guy plays with so much confidence. He's a guy I think you'll see playing on Sunday next year (in the NFL)."

The UNC defense's inability to stop the pass has Brown particularly worried about this weekend.

"We have not been successful stopping anybody from throwing the football; (Duke is) throwing it better than anyone we've played," Brown said. "It's scary to play against them because you're not going to stop them on offense. They're going to score their points. They pass the football so they can run it, very much like we did at Tulane."

"They're a team that can not only beat you, they can embarrass you if they get hot."

And Devils, as everybody knows, like to keep the temperature up.

AP Top 20

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Team, Record, Points. Lists top 20 teams including Notre Dame, Southern Cal, Miami, West Virginia, Florida State, UCLA, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Auburn, Arkansas, LSU, Michigan, Oklahoma St, Syracuse, Clemson, Wyoming, Houston, Alabama, Washington St, Georgia.

Duke tops AP poll; UNC 6th

Duke, a Final Four team two of the last three seasons, was named the No. 1 team Monday in the preseason college basketball poll, while North Carolina came in at No. 6.

The Blue Devils, who finished fifth in the final regular-season poll last season and went on to the Final Four and a semifinal loss to eventual national champion Kansas, received 33 first-place votes and easily outdistanced No. 2 Georgetown, which had eight first-place votes.

Duke, which last held the top ranking over the final three polls of the 1985-86 season, finished with 1,257 points from the nationwide panel of sports writers and broadcasters, well ahead of the Hoyas' 1,107.

Georgia Tech was ranked 13th

and N.C. State 18th.

Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski wasn't overly pleased at being No. 1.

"If you're ranked very high early, there's a tendency to think you've already accomplished something, and you really haven't accomplished anything," he said. "Those are just predictions. In practice settings, you have to be careful that there isn't a complacency that comes about."

"You're not defending anything. You should still go about the development of your team the same way."

Michigan, Louisville and Oklahoma — another Final Four team from last season — rounded out the top five in voting that showed the quick turns of the fortunes of collegiate basketball programs.

AP Top 20

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Team, Record, Points. Lists top 20 teams including Duke, Georgetown, Michigan, Louisville, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Iowa, Syracuse, Illinois, UNLV, Arizona, Villanova, Georgia Tech, Missouri, Florida State, Ohio State, N.C. State, Temple, Stanford.

Air Jordan still down to earth

The other day, I ran into two things that brightened an otherwise boring and wet day: an article on Michael Jordan in The Charlotte Observer and a fool who tried to tell me Jordan wasn't one of basketball's best ever.

Now a lot has been written about Air over the years. He has probably received more ink than any sports figure this side of Muhammad Ali. Thing is, Jordan's only 24. He's got Food Lion commercials, Coke commercials, hosts his own Greatest Sports Legends television show, and that's not even mentioning those shoes — retail \$99.99.

I've gone on record as saying there are three words which best describe Jordan: It's just Air.

And it is. Listen to what Buzz Petersen, former UNC standout and North Carolina high school basketball player of the year — the same year Jordan graduated from high school — said in The Observer: "After he hit that shot which won the championship, he started dunking on everybody, and he wouldn't let you forget. After practice he'd write on the chalkboard, 'Dunked on Buzz,' 'Dunked on Lynwood (Robinson, former reserve Tar Heel guard).'"

And Michael is like that, too. But this isn't a Michael Jordan-is-the-greatest-hoopster-ever piece. That bit of rhetoric is well-known, even in French Lick, Ind., and Lansing, Mich. Without a doubt, as Julius Erving once said, Jordan is simply a phenomenon.

After Air dropped 63 on Boston in the Garden a couple years back, the Birdman himself retorted: "Jordan? Oh yeah, he's God disguised as No. 23."

Langston Wertz Staff Writer

Any counter arguments?

Jordan is a very likable guy off the court as well. He returns almost religiously to Chapel Hill every year, plays pickup games in Woolen and parties in the local clubs.

Jordan, off the court, is just like you or me. He eats at McDonalds, drives too fast and likes Nikes.

Andre Sloan, a senior pharmacy student, recalls one of the times he and Air were just hangin' out: "We were coming back from this party at an apartment, and Jordan and me were coming back to Hinton James in his white Porsche 911 turbo with the tails." (Description is very important to any story concerning His Airness, and exaggeration is, obviously, to be encouraged.)

"We were coming down Manning Drive at about... I don't know — fast. I asked Mike: 'How fast were you going?'"

"One-oh-five," came Jordan's reply.

"Then we got pulled, right in front of E-Haus. The cop came over and said, 'Oh, it's you. If I'd known it was you, I wouldn't have pulled you over.' Jordan got back in the car and says, 'Man, that sure saves me a lot on insurance.'"

But most people just like to recall times when they played with Jordan in a pickup game. Listen to Eric Davis, a 6-foot-8 former junior varsity standout at UNC: "We were playing over in Granville (Towers) during summer school, and Kenny (Smith) gave me the ball on the wing.

I saw Mike comin', but I went up anyway — dived at it and dunked it home.

"All the guys on the side started whooping and hollering. Air just shook his head and told me under his breath: 'I'm gonna get you, Slim.'"

"He came down and dunked on me three times. He even experimented with some of those moves that he uses in dunk contests. Man, every time I play with him now, all he says is, 'I'm gonna get you, Slim.'"

I remember the first time I met Jordan. I was a freshman living in Hinton James and I was walking to class with a lady friend whom Jordan knew. He stopped to give her a ride in his Chevrolet. He was driving everyday cars back then and he wasn't Air yet.

Since I was with her, he asked if I'd like a ride to class. I said sure and jumped in the back. The conversation was very ordinary and I came away thinking Michael was a nice guy.

But I guess my favorite Michael Jordan story comes from S'ven Levister, a self-proclaimed Woolen Gym rat: "I was in the cup (the gym) and Mike came in and had on all black. They called him The Man In The Dark Suit and Count Blackula. Jordan just smiled and scored 10 of the 15 points.

"But then the IM-Rec people came in and wouldn't let him play anymore. He didn't have an ID. Who doesn't know where Air went to school? But they didn't let him play. He could buy Woolen, and he had every right to mouth off, but all he said was, 'Well, maybe next time.'"

Oh, by the way, Mike. I wear a 10 1/2.

Ram Triple advertisement listing movies like 'The Accused' and 'Ernest Saves Christmas' with showtimes and prices.

Varsity and Ram Triple advertisement for 'Bird' movie, featuring Charlie Parber and showtimes.

Personalized Women's Health Care advertisement for Triangle Women's Health Center, listing services like birth control and pregnancy tests.

Tar Heel Sports Shorts advertisement for Saturday Women's Basketball game between Spanish Nat'l Team and Carmichael Audit, featuring Hardee's.

Ernest Saves Christmas advertisement with showtimes and Ram Triple logo.

Everybody's All-American advertisement for Ram Triple, featuring a photo of a couple and showtimes.

Chapel Hill Plaza 3 advertisement for Tom Hanks/Sally Field 'Punch Line' and Michael & Ben Caine & Kingsley 'Without a Clue'.

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