

Sports

Radford steals last-second win

By JAMIE ROSENBERG
Staff Writer

When a basketball game comes down to the final minute with the score close, the nerves tight and the sweat abundant, teams look to their veterans to pull them through.

But this axiom may have been disproven Thursday night in a women's game between UNC and Radford University. Veteran blunders and freshman heroics in the game's waning seconds culminated in a steal and layup by Radford freshman Rosalyn Groce with five seconds to play, giving the Highlanders a dramatic 72-70 victory.

With nine seconds showing on the clock, Groce swiped an inbound pass thrown by Tar Heel junior Wendy Gatlin at the UNC end of the floor and outraced two defenders for an easy hoop at the other end.

The Tar Heels made a last effort to send the game into overtime, but a shot at the buzzer by junior guard Liza Donnell glanced off the back of the rim.

UNC, however, had to scrap and scramble just to make the game close. With the Tar Heels down, 70-65, and 50 seconds remaining, freshman point guard Emily Johnson canned a three-point bomb to close the margin to two points.

After a tenacious North Carolina trapping defense failed to phase the Highlanders, the Tar Heels were forced to foul, but, so it seemed, they put the wrong person on the line.

With 18 seconds left, Donnell fouled Radford point guard Stephanie Howard, who had riddled UNC with 33 points and six of seven free throw shooting.

But Howard, a 5-foot-5 senior, missed the front end of her one-and-one and gave North Carolina a chance to tie. At the other end, Donnell drew a shooting foul in the low post and converted both free throws with 11 seconds left to even the score.

After UNC's Tanya Lamb tied up Radford's inbounds pass with the possession arrow pointing in the Tar Heels' favor, North Carolina had yet another chance and was looking to end its four-game losing streak.

The Tar Heels, however, had no time-outs left, and hastened into an inbounds formation which led to disaster.

"I committed a cardinal sin when we got stuck at the end without any time-outs," UNC assistant coach



UNC's 6-foot-3 sophomore center Kim Oden (42) goes up for two

DTH/Brian Foley

Andrew Calder said. Calder was acting coach Thursday night because head coach Sylvia Hatchell was still recovering from giving birth to a baby boy on Tuesday.

Calder was unable to set up an inbounds play and unable to tell Gatlin to throw her pass away from the Radford end of the floor.

"If you throw it away toward your goal, at least you get a chance to play defense," Calder said.

Senior center Merlaine Oden led the Tar Heels with 11 points and nine rebounds. North Carolina dipped to 9-10 on the season and will return to ACC play on Sunday at Georgia Tech. Hatchell, who gave her team a pep talk over the phone Thursday night, is expected to be back by then.

The Tar Heels led by as many as 11 points in the first half and six in the second, but with Radford's Howard able to drive and score at will, no lead was safe. A driving layup by Howard with 16:04 to play in the game gave the Highlanders (14-3) their first lead and the first of Howard's 22 second-half points.

"When she wanted to score, she scored," Radford coach Charlene Curtis said.

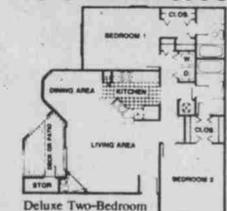
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	UNC	Edge	Georgia Tech
Backcourt	With Lebo still ailing, King Rice will play a lot of minutes once again. He looks like he's become comfortable in his new role. Steve Bucknall's threes are now falling.		Dennis Scott is an awesome offensive talent, but must learn to move without the ball. Though Scott gets all the ink, Brian Oliver is a well-rounded star on the rise.
Frontcourt	Kevin Madden, now staying in the 10-15 foot range offensively, is almost unstoppable. J.R. Reid and Scott Williams could also come up with big games vs. Tech.		Tom Hammonds is a player with tremendous pro potential. He's very difficult to stop when he posts up. A. Sherrod is strictly a shooter, J. McNeil a rebounder.
Depth	Jeff Lebo, Hubert Davis should get in a few minutes. Pete Chilcutt is looking better and better every day. Rick Fox is playing well but must work harder on defense.		Karl Brown, a 6-1 point guard, handles the ball well. Maurice Brittan, a 6-9 center, is not a real threat. 6-10 junior James Munlyn plays like a freshman.
Defense	The Tar Heels will have Bucknall on Brian Oliver, one point man that he should guard. Will also focus on denying Scott the ball. Can play tough half-court defense.		Among the starting five, only Hammonds and Oliver are effective at both ends of the floor. Look for McNeil, Brittan to do a lot of pushing under the boards.
Coaching	Dean Smith has a 29-5 career record vs. the Yellow Jackets. Sir Smith has his players focusing on the things they do best — team defense, smart shots, rebs.		Bobby Cremins is in his eighth year at Georgia Tech. He took a team that was winless in the ACC to the ACC title in four years (81-85). An excellent recruiter.

— compiled by Dave Glenn

Yellow Jackets looking at 'almost' as 'not enough'

By ANDREW PODOLSKY
Assistant Sports Editor

Yes, the Georgia Tech basketball team has lost three of six games in the last two weeks, but don't be deceived.

When the 22nd-ranked Yellow Jackets come to Chapel Hill on Saturday afternoon for a 1:30 match-up with the seventh-ranked Tar Heels in the Smith Center, they'll be at the end of one of the most grueling two weeks that any basketball team will face this year. And they played well.

Saturday will mark the fourth team ranked in the top 15 that the Yellow Jackets, 12-5 overall and 2-1 in the ACC, have faced in the last 14 days. In the process, they almost knocked off two of the top three teams in the nation.

After losing to 15th-ranked N.C. State (82-68), the Jackets gave third-ranked Louisville all it could handle on national television before succumbing 67-65, then turned around a week later and took an undefeated Illinois team to two overtimes before coming up short, 102-92.

Now the high-scoring Yellow Jackets come to Chapel Hill at a weathered, tested squad. They had to struggle Wednesday night to edge out a scrappy Clemson team 75-74.

Despite all that, Tech is still close to the lead in the ACC, and the Yellow Jackets boast three players who score more than 16 points per game.

The heart and soul of this 1989 Georgia Tech squad has to be 6-foot-9 senior forward Tom Hammonds. An All-ACC performer last year, Hammonds leads the explosive Yellow Jackets in scoring (20.8 ppg) and rebounding (7.6 rbg). The Tech big man is making his presence felt in

the record books as well as on the court as he closes in on third place in all-time scoring for Georgia Tech with 1,811 career points.

Hammonds, a natural forward, played out of position at center for most of last year because of a shortage of big people in the Tech line-up. This year, however, he has played most of his minutes at the power forward spot. It is here that he can be deadly. Comfortable playing with his back to the basket, he is truly one of the premier post-up players in the nation.

Joining Hammonds on the front line are senior forward Anthony Sherrod (7.1 ppg.) and Johnny McNeil (7.1 ppg.), with 6-foot-8 junior center Maurice Brittan (5.5 ppg.) coming in on relief. Averaging 6-feet-8, they will have their hands full against the deep and tall Tar Heel front line.

The Tech front line is not very deep after Brittan, and if the Jackets are going to be competitive on the boards they will have to stay out of foul trouble.

The Yellow Jackets are also going to have to have a Herculean effort from their exciting guards. Sophomore guard Dennis Scott, a 6-foot-8 gunner from the outside, is loved by everyone these days it seems, and at 19.4 points per game and 64 three-pointers on the season, it's no wonder. He can hit from 23 feet out, jam over 6-foot-11 centers and get up the court faster than, well, faster than most 6-foot-8 men. The word amazing comes to mind.

But someone is going to have to get the ball to this slashing guard. Point-guard Brian Oliver will have to come up with another pro-like effort.

Oliver may be pro material and is the consistent one of the bunch. He'll

meet his average of 16.8 points per game and will boost his impressive assists total on the season. He already has 135.

But these are tangibles, and as we know, anything can happen on the court. Tech has a lot of scoring potential, pouring in 85.1 points per game. If the Yellow Jackets use some of the things they've learned in the past few weeks, the Tar Heels may have a tough scoring battle on their hands.

But don't hold your breath.

Last year's games between these two squads included an unforgettable Jan. 31 fiesta at the Smith Center. You might remember it as the Jeff Lebo show. Lebo hit five consecutive three-point shots, the last with 48 seconds remaining, to give the Tar Heels a thrilling 73-71 victory. The March 3rd rematch at the Omni in Atlanta turned into a second-half shooting clinic by the Tar Heels, who shot their way to an impressive 97-80 victory.

Dunk Finals Saturday

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The celebrity cast of five judges includes some big men on campus, and the fathers of some even bigger men on campus. DTH sports editor (what's his name?) and Mr. UNC Cedric Brown represent the students.

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