

Dean's team — Going back to basics

Inside game the key for 'Team of the '80s'

By **DAVE GLENN**

Sports Editor

In 28 years of coaching, North Carolina head coach Dean Smith has seen it all.

Well, almost.

Smith's 1989-90 Tar Heels probably don't have as many strengths as his teams of yesteryear, but they probably don't have as many weaknesses, either.

On the one hand, UNC has one of the best frontcourts in the nation; on the other, the Tar Heels return only one experienced contributor in the backcourt.

Last year's 29-8 Tar Heel squad won with the inside scoring of J.R. Reid and the long-range bombs of Steve Bucknall and Jeff Lebo. All three players are now in the NBA, yet the new-look Tar Heels may have their best blend of offensive and defensive balance in years.

So are they better or not? Is another ACC Championship an impossible goal? How about another trip to the Sweet Sixteen or even (gasp) the Final Four?

Don't ask Smith, he's just worried about getting invited to The Show.

"Our goal is to make the NCAA Tournament," Smith said, perhaps for the 10th and final time this decade. "We will be a competitive basketball team, but a lot of things have to go

right for us to have an outstanding season."

Point well taken, but — as far as the NCAA tourney goes — it's a safe bet that this talented group will mark Smith's 15th consecutive invitation, an NCAA record.

This particular squad can actually put the icing on another cake that the UNC coaching staff has been baking since the start of the 1980s. A Top 10 finish in 1990 would mean the Tar Heels have finished every year in a decade's worth of basketball in that elite group. In that same span, UNC has won at least 27 games each season for an incredible composite record of 281-63 — by far the best in the country. Want more? How about this: In 1990 North Carolina can extend its record-breaking string of 20-win seasons to 20 in a row.

But maybe that's too much to ask of a team that, statistically speaking, lost almost half of its points and two-thirds of its three-pointers from a year ago.

"I think we lost our three best players," Smith said, referring to Bucknall, Lebo and Reid. "Someone had the nerve to say that we won't miss J.R., and I thought he was being funny. We'll certainly miss J.R. We'll also miss Jeff Lebo, whom I counted on for so many things."

This year, Smith will be counting



Dean Smith

on junior point guard King Rice (5.2 ppg, 4.1 apg) to run the show — from end line to end line, and maybe from start to finish.

"The player we can least afford to lose (to injury) this year is King Rice," Smith said. "He must remain healthy. You know, like I want (President) Bush to remain healthy. I won't say who our Quayle is."

Presidential comparisons aside, the biggest question for the Tar Heels is definitely at guard. The Tar Heels will need immediate contributions from senior sharpshooter Jeff Denny, new-and-improved sophomore Hubert Davis and freshmen Henrik Rodl and Kenny Harris.

In the frontcourt the coach must just watch and smile, for most of that

UNC Roster									
No.	Name	Pos.	Hgt.	Wgt.	Year	Hometown			
11	Scott Cherry	G	6-2	160	Fr.	Ballston Spa, N.Y.			
32	**Pete Chilcutt	F	6-9	223	Jr.	Eutaw, Ala.			
40	*Hubert Davis	G	6-4	177	So.	Burke, Va.			
3	***Jeff Denny	G	6-4	193	Sr.	Rural Hall, N.C.			
44	**Rick Fox	F	6-7	231	Jr.	Nassau, Bahamas			
54	John Greene	C	6-10	218	Sr.	Raleigh, N.C.			
4	Kenny Harris	G	6-2	165	Fr.	Petersburg, Va.			
45	**Marty Hensley	C	6-11	232	Sr.	Marion, N.C.			
34	George Lynch	F	6-7	207	Fr.	Roanoke, Va.			
22	***Kevin Madden	F	6-5	230	Sr.	Staunton, Va.			
21	**King Rice	G	6-1	191	Jr.	Binghamton, N.Y.			
5	Henrik Rodl	F	6-7	185	Fr.	W. Germany			
33	Kevin Salvadori	C	6-11	205	Fr.	Pittsburgh, Penn.			
55	Matt Wenstrom	C	6-11	245	Fr.	Katy, Texas			
42	***Scott Williams	C	6-10	235	Sr.	Hacienda Heights, Calif.			
*Denotes Letters Won									

Head Coach

Dean Smith (Kansas, 1953)

Assistants

Bill Guthridge (Kansas State, 1960)

Phil Ford (North Carolina, 1978)

Randy Wiel (North Carolina, 1979)

Dave Hanners (North Carolina, 1976)



work has already been done.

The Tar Heels return the powerful quartet of Pete Chilcutt (6.9 ppg, 5.4 rpg), Rick Fox (11.5, 3.8), Kevin Madden (14.6, 4.8) and Scott Williams (11.4, 7.3) in the paint, though Fox and Madden will also see plenty of time on the perimeter. Newcomer George Lynch, a 6-7 forward who will open some eyes around the ACC, brings confidence, athleticism and aggressiveness to this already-potent mix. Freshman center Matt Wenstrom, Smith's first official 7-footer, may also get some minutes this season, especially now that an appendectomy (Nov. 10) will sideline Williams for two or three weeks.

The biggest change for UNC fans in 1989 may be the switch back from last year's up-tempo style to more traditional, conservative Tar Heel

basketball.

"We will not continue the experiment we tried last year," Smith said. "We only got eight more possessions a game on the average, and I expected to see a difference of 20. So it wasn't worth the bad shots that we took or the gambles we made defensively."

"This year we'll revert back to the way we've done it all the other 27 years. We'll push it up, certainly; we'll take good shots. We'll still get after them defensively, but we'll be a little more conservative."

But how will the "old way" work without the likes of Bucknall, Lebo and Reid?

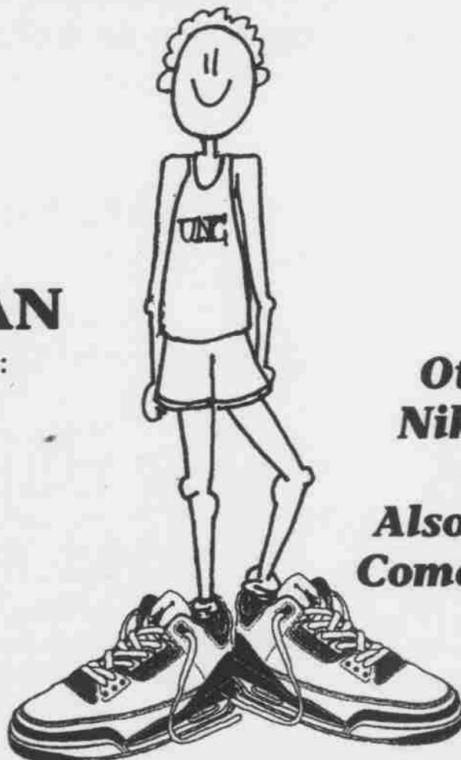
"A program means you lose a good player, but you continue to have good teams," Smith said. "Maybe not as good a team, but maybe better."

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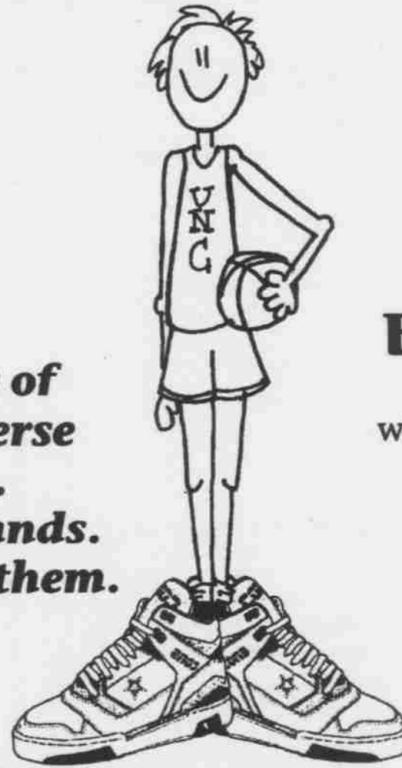
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