

Sports

Playing his role

Denny looks for elusive respect on talented squad

By BOB McCROSKEY
Staff Writer

He's easy to spot from almost any seat in the Dean E. Smith Center. You can see the anticipation and the enthusiasm on his face with every bounce of the basketball. With every whistle, he leaps out of his seat, eagerly awaiting the referee's decision. He sits about halfway down the bench from UNC head coach Dean Smith, patiently hoping for his chance to come.

But for senior guard Jeff Denny, those chances have been coming less and less as his career enters its final stages. As a role player on a UNC team loaded with talent, Denny knows that all his pregame preparation — taping his ankles, practicing layups, perfecting his outside shot and so on — could go for naught on any given game night.

Denny's present situation contrasts sharply with his high school past. Denny, along with David Carlyle of Wake Forest and Brian Howard of N.C. State, led North Forsyth High School to a state championship.

Then came the opportunity of a lifetime for Denny. A chance to fulfill a childhood dream.

"North Carolina was recruiting Rex Chapman," said Barry Jacobs, author of Barry Jacobs' Fan's Guide to ACC Basketball. "When Chapman decided not to come to North Carolina but to stay in



Jeff Denny

Kentucky, there was a scholarship available. Jeff Denny, having been a Tar Heel fan all his life, was thrilled to come to Chapel Hill."

Denny filled his role nicely for the Tar Heels his freshman year. He appeared in 21 games and showed the ability to hit the three-point shot. But his weaknesses became apparent in the areas of ballhandling and defense. These problems contributed to a drop in playing time during Denny's sophomore

season. He appeared in only 16 games for a total of 47 minutes.

Some players might have become discouraged with this lack of playing time, but Denny took it in stride.

"I knew my situation when I signed to come here," Denny said. "I realized it would be a long, uphill struggle for me to get a lot of playing time. I took it as it came, and I've worked hard since I've been here to try to get more playing time. Any athlete will never be satisfied with sitting on the bench."

With J.R. Reid sidelined with injuries in the 1988-89 season, Denny saw his playing time jump to 178 minutes in 35 games. He hit 52.2 percent of his three-point attempts and 81.5 percent of his free throw attempts, and he maintained a positive assist-to-turnover ratio. Denny was a role player in every sense of the term.

However, the emergence of Hubert Davis ensured Denny of limited playing time in ACC action. Throughout the last half of his junior year and most of his senior year, Denny has watched from his spot on the bench, knowing that his chance may never come.

With the development of Davis and Kevin Madden's uncertain status in the starting lineup, playing time for Denny at second guard has been hard to come by.

"My job is to come in, play six-to-

eight minutes a game and give King Rice a rest," said Denny. "We can complement each other and help the team, whether he's in or I'm in. Even though my minutes may not show that I had a very productive career at Carolina, I feel that I have been successful on the court."

Jacobs added that his success has spread to all areas of Denny's life, both on and off the hardwood.

"Jeff Denny is a good person to talk to after the games," Jacobs said. "He is very honest about his role on the team and knows his own limitations."

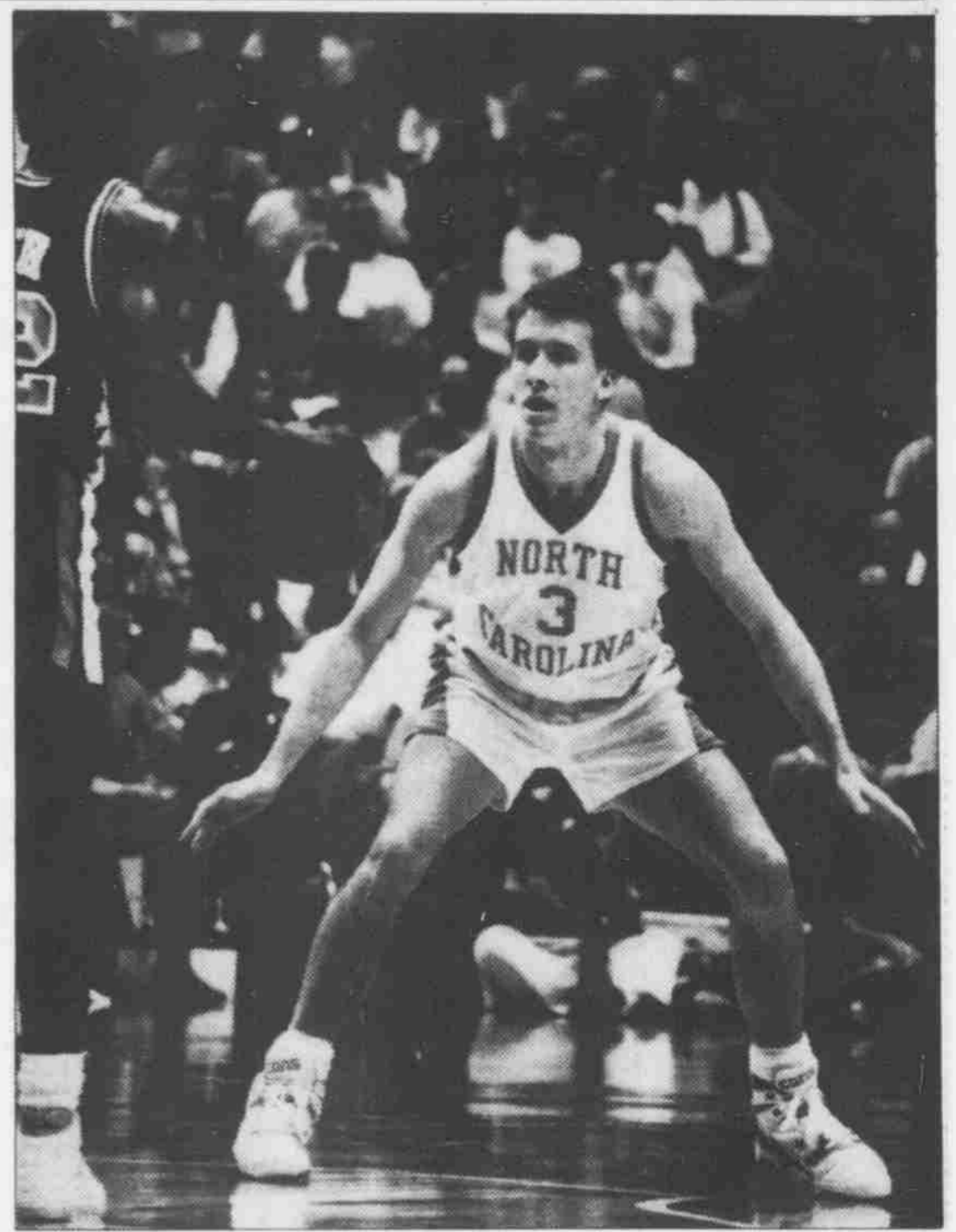
"He has also been a good roommate to Scott Williams, who has needed a good roommate because of some of the things that have happened in his personal life."

During his sophomore season, Williams faced hardship when his father murdered his mother and then committed suicide.

On and off the court, Denny has achieved his own measure of success, even though his statistics may not reflect it, according to Jacobs.

"He was able to play where he wanted to play and for the coach he wanted to play for," Jacobs said.

"Looking back on the last four years, I have no regrets," said Denny. "If I could go back in a time machine or something, I'd make the same decision again."



DTH/Jennifer Wing

Jeff Denny's playing time has been limited for the last two years

NCAA investigating Maryland and Wade

From Associated Press reports

COLLEGE PARK, MD — In an attempt to prod the NCAA toward leniency, the University of Maryland has offered to sit out the NCAA and NIT post-season tournaments. The Washington Post reported on Wednesday.

The Terrapins, 13-8 going into Wednesday night's game against Clemson, would have to win six of their remaining 10 games to be considered for an at-large berth in the NCAA's 64-team tournament. If the Terrapins finish with 17 or 18 victories, they would be a strong candidate

for the NIT.

University officials also offered to forfeit the school's share of revenue from the Terrapins' 1988 NCAA Tournament appearance and a reduction of scholarships.

School officials expect a more lenient penalty from the NCAA because of their cooperation in the governing body's investigation last year, for forcing Wade to resign, and the school's previous unblemished record. Forfeiting their 1988 NCAA tournament receipts would cost the Terrapins approximately \$272,000, their share for reaching the second round.

Swimmers to make big waves with Pack

By LAURIE DHUE
Staff Writer

The only good pack is a six pack.

Ask any UNC student or athlete what N.C. State means, and that will probably be your answer.

The North Carolina men's swim team is no exception.

Tonight at 7 p.m., the hungry Wolfpack will arrive at Koury Natatorium in what should be the most exciting meet of regular season competition. Both teams have comparable records (State is 10-1 overall, 3-1 in the ACC; UNC is 10-2, 5-0, 18th in the country), fast swimmers and the desire to win. This is the last meet before the ACC championships.

"State hasn't beaten us since 1985, so they're going to want some payback,"

UNC head coach Frank Comfort said. "We'll have to swim as well as we have been recently if we want to win, because some of their swimmers will be shaved. It's going to be a wonderful dual meet."

The Tar Heels will be relying on the talents of freshman distance phenom David Monasterio, veteran sprinter Tod Schroeder, middle-distance record holder John Davis and senior backstroke Rich Gleason. Besides being the team's top performers, the quartet will have the most competition from the Wolfpack.

N.C. State will call on the talents of David Fox, a freshman from Raleigh who is currently one of the nation's top sprinters. His 50-yard freestyle time of 20.52 seconds leads the conference, bettering Schroeder's 20.60. Fox also has faster qualifying times than Davis in the

100-yard free and butterfly events, as does Dan (here comes the) Judge, who is tops in the ACC in these two events.

Gleason will be challenged by Steve Bradshaw, whose times of 51.28 (100-yard backstroke) and 1:51.63 (200-yard back) rank him in the top position. Gleason is second and fourth, respectively, in the two events.

"This meet is great motivation going into ACCs," Gleason said. "Since it's the last dual meet, it's important that we win. State has some front-line guys who are good, but we'll wear them down with depth, which has been our key this season. This meet should be another example of that."

Comfort agreed. "We have to use our depth to its

fullest advantage, as well as count on our top swimmers to beat the ones who have shaved," he said. "We would dominate easily if none of them shaved."

Relays and diving will also be critical to victory, Comfort predicted. UNC will rely on Nunzio Esposito and Joel Johnson to battle against a strong NCSU diving corps.

The front half of the meet will be close because State has the top-ranked 400-yard medley relay in the ACC (3:21.29), nearly three seconds faster than UNC's 3:24.25. But with expected wins in the distance events, anchored by Monasterio and Marc Ferguson, and strong performances in diving, the Tar Heels should send the Wolfpack home with their wet tails between their legs.

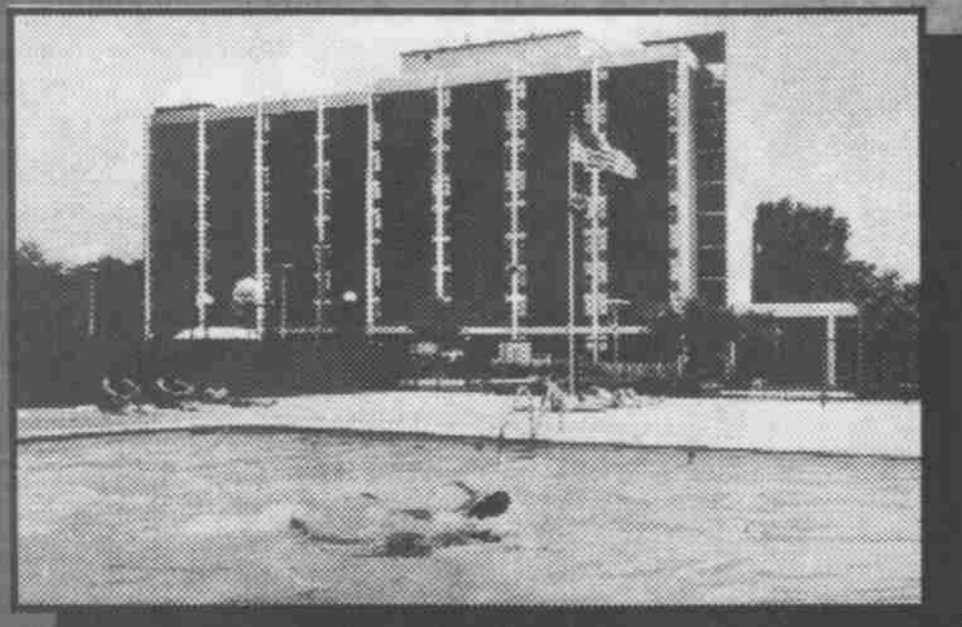
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