

Sports

Bulldog report



So far - so good

by Bill Vickery
Sports Editor

The UNCA athletic program is off to a good start for the 1988-89 year, at least as far as the Big South Conference goes.

While the Bulldog program has not won a championship yet this season, they have finished in the top four in soccer, volleyball and men's cross country.

Soccer player Mark Magee joined cross country runners James Allen and Jay Curwen as All-Conference performers as named by the Big South.

The UNCA volleyball team hosts the Big South Tournament on Friday and Saturday, with a realistic chance at the title.

Soccer, volleyball, and cross country at UNCA have one thing in common. They all have new first year coaches.

Steve Adlard, Art Faura, and Valerie Lemoignan should be congratulated for their work this season - as should everyone involved with those programs, particularly the players.

Adlard and Lemoignan took over programs with very little time to prepare for their seasons and Faura took over as interim volleyball coach just before the season began.

All three deserve credit for getting their teams to perform at a competitive level. However, they may have created a potential problem for the rest of the athletic program.

With basketball season just more than two weeks away, the pressure to succeed is greater than ever. Last season's teams had what could only be described as up-and-down years.

The Lady Bulldogs seemed to peak at just the right time of the season last year. UNCA's women upset Winthrop 67-62 in the closing game of the regular season, only to have Winthrop return the favor a week later in the Big South Tournament 77-62.

That score does not tell how badly Winthrop outplayed the Lady Bulldogs. Consistency was a problem that plagued the Lady Bulldogs all year.

If the Lady Bulldogs were inconsistent, the men were down right scary. The Bulldogs beat Western Carolina at the Asheville Civic Center 76-71, travelled out west to play California and won 58-53, and then lost to Campbell 78-60.

Neither team can hope to go far in the conference if the roller-coaster ride continues into this season.

Head Women's Coach Mary Ann Myers returns for her fourth season with the Lady Bulldogs. UNCA has improved its record each year under Myers and I see no reason for that trend to stop.

First year Head Coach Don Doucette is an unknown to most of the UNCA faithful. He will probably need time to get comfortable with the surroundings and his players, as well as recover from a very tough opening schedule.

The Bulldogs could open up with nine losses in their first 11 games and no one would be surprised. I doubt that will happen, though.

Maybe Doucette should confer with his fellow first year coaches, just to be safe.

Big South Volleyball Tournament

Friday

6 p.m. UNCA (4) vs. Winthrop (1)

8:30 p.m. Baptist (2) vs. Radford (3)

Saturday

11 a.m. Championship Match

All Matches played in Justice Gym



Staff Photos--Natalie Reinbold

Big South Volleyball comes to UNCA on Friday

Soccer season ends

Bulldogs fall in Big South

by Kenneth Coxie
Staff Writer

The UNCA soccer team finished their best performance of the last three seasons, on a sour note last Thursday. The Bulldogs lost in the opening round of the Big South Soccer Tournament to Radford 2-0.

Thursday's game was dominated by Radford freshman midfielder Dante Washington, who was the nation's leading scorer after the game. He scored the only two goals of the game in the first half.

"We gave away two silly defensive errors in the first half, which were unfortunate because we paid the price. Sometimes we make a mistake and get away with it, not this time. They scored on both," said Head Coach Steve Adlard.

"On the positive side, the first half was as good a display of soccer as we have had all year. The first half is the best time to play well. It proves that the program has moved forward," Adlard said.

He also noted that Radford was stronger than UNCA in the second half. "We did quite well in the second half until about 15 minutes from the end when the pressure built again and we struggled. So at the end of it, I felt that we played very well in the first half except for the two lapses. I felt that the second half was not balanced, we were outclassed," he said.

Washington opened the scoring at the 18:51 mark of the first half when he connected off a pass from Doug Majewski. He scored again 14 minutes later when he intercepted a bad UNCA pass and put the ball in the upper part of the net.

UNCA threatened twice - late in the first half when Pat Britz shot high on a breakaway, and early in the second half when Neal Wagner's header sailed high.

UNCA's major threat, sophomore Pat Britz, who was ranked as the nation's third highest scorer going into the tournament, was shut

out by Radford. During the regular season, he scored 16 goals and had seven assists.

Bulldog midfielder Mark Magee was named to the all-conference team.

Adlard feels that the team has improved and that it will be more competitive next season.

"The most encouraging things are the improvements in the areas of discipline, attitude, and team spirit. I can't fault the boys in any of those respects.... In fact, we earned a reputation this season as a team with some morals and some standards of discipline. Referees and opponents alike complimented us on the fact that we were professional in a good sense," said Adlard.

Adlard believes that next season UNCA will be more competitive. He is recruiting heavily from all over the nation to gain talented players. "The recruiting is so heavy that it's killing me," said Adlard.

"We are concentrating on the midwest and the

greater metropolitan Washington, D.C. area. There are applications from Florida, Colorado, and Texas. I have also received applications from North Carolina. The applicants seem to be fairly good. Many of them are state players," he added.

"The people who are applying academically are very strong, very strong indeed, which is good for three reasons. One, it will get them into school easily. Two, they're always assured of having the ability to graduate. The third, and most important to me, I think they learn quickly," Adlard said.

UNCA's schedule has also been revised to eliminate eight weak teams and to add stronger competition.

"Our schedule is up next year significantly. Although we are not playing Clemson, we are playing a greater number of division one opponents and several who have made the top 20 this season in the ratings," said Adlard.

Those who plan to return next season may have

more competition for starting spots due to heavy recruiting. The Bulldogs will lose six graduating players.

"As for those who remain, they will have to improve their standards if they are to secure a spot on the squad next year....

I tell you what, there will be more of a challenge for those who come back because they always thought they were on the squad. They never had to bust their butts. Now there is competition for every starting position. Nobody is guaranteed anything. That's the price you pay for competition," he said.

Adlard has big hopes for UNCA. "It is exciting to build a program when you have the support of the organization. This support is pretty much the ticket to success. In a few years, I hope to see us in the top 20," he said.

"Many people say that in order for a team to make it to the top 20, the coach has to have been at the top before. I have been there, and I know what it takes," said Adlard.

The Grove Park Inn and Country Club

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