

Sports

SPORTS BRIEFS

by Paul Petrequin
Staff Reporter

NFL

The NFL draft took place on April 23 with Utah quarterback Alex Smith going as the No. 1 overall pick. As expected, the San Francisco 49ers chose Smith over University of California's quarterback Aaron Rodgers with their first selection.

The top five draft picks went as follows: San Francisco 49ers drafted Smith, Miami Dolphins drafted Ronnie Brown (RB - Auburn), Cleveland Browns drafted Braylon Edwards (WR - Michigan), Chicago Bears drafted Cedric Benson (RB - Texas), and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers drafted Carnell "Cadillac" Williams (RB - Auburn).

Projected to be a top five pick, Rodgers fell down in the standings until he was finally selected by the Green Bay Packers as the 24th overall pick in the first round.

Although Oklahoma had 11 players drafted, quarterback and Heisman winner Jason White was not among them. The former Sooner, who finished third in the Heisman voting this year, was expected to be a late round pick, but his two major knee surgeries proved to be too much of a gamble. White will now sign into free agency.

NBA

The NBA playoffs kicked off last weekend, as the top 16 teams will battle for the championship until early June. While the West playoff picture has been set for a while, the final spot for the East came down to the last game, with both New Jersey and Cleveland vying for the eighth seed. LeBron James' Cavaliers were unable to clinch after losing their season finale, while the Nets won theirs, securing the playoff berth.

The top seeded Miami Heat bulldozed the Nets in their first game, defeating New Jersey 116-98. In a game that Shaquille O'Neal graded himself "an F" in terms of health, he had 17 points and 11 rebounds in 32 minutes.

The seventh seeded Denver Nuggets upset the second seeded San Antonio Spurs in game one of their series. The Spurs, who posted the best home record in the NBA at 38-3, lost in San Antonio 93-87.

The Phoenix Suns, top seed in the West, defeated the Memphis Grizzlies 114-103 in their first playoff game at home. Shawn Marion led the Suns with 26 points and 13 rebounds, while Quentin Richardson followed closely with 22 points. Phoenix set a franchise record for 3-pointers made in a game with 15-of-32 shooting from beyond the arc. Phoenix set an NBA record with 796 3-pointers during the regular season.

MLB

Seattle Mariners' pitcher Jamie Moyer threw eight solid innings en route to a 9-1 victory over the Cleveland Indians. The win was Moyer's 130th victory as a Mariner, tying him with Randy Johnson for the franchise lead in wins.

NCAA Men's Basketball

Sean May, Raymond Felton, and Marvin Williams will all join teammate Rashad McCants in the NBA draft, as the three Tarheels all declared last week. UNC also lost seniors Jawad Williams, Jackie Manuel and Melvin Scott. The Tarheels returning leading scorer will be forward David Noel, who averaged 3.9 points per game, and will only field one starter from this year, point guard Quentin Thomas.

Baseball team drops series against Winthrop

by Tracy Horne
Staff Reporter

The Bulldogs dropped a three-game conference series at Winthrop University and then traveled to UNC-Greensboro for a mid-week game.

In game one, Winthrop's Kevin Slowey gave up only one hit in eight innings to lift the Eagles over the Bulldogs 11-0 April 15.

"We struggled hitting the ball," said Justin Wilkins, junior management student. "We didn't come out ready to attack the pitches."

Winthrop's Daniel Carte hit a two-run home run in the first inning to give the momentum to the Eagles early.

For the Bulldogs, John Whited walked to lead off the third inning, and in the fourth Tony Campana led off with a triple.

Whited and Campana were the only two base runners for the Bulldogs.

Chris White took the loss for the Bulldogs, pitching 4.1 innings and giving up 11 hits and nine runs.

"We have to do a better job hitting the ball when we have runners in scoring position," said Tony Wall, undeclared sophomore.

The Eagles rallied in the bottom of the eighth to take game two 8-3 April 16.

"We aren't a high scoring team, so we need to do a better job manufacturing runs," said Wall.

Wilkins knocked a two-run home run over the left-center field fence to bring in Wall.

In the ninth, Elliott Arrington and Wall had back-to-back hits, and Wilkins drove in Arrington on an RBI ground out.

Wall and Arrington both went 2-for-4, and Ben Kerr and Campana both added singles.

Tim Johnson took the loss for the Bulldogs, giving up five runs on three hits in seven innings. He also walked four batters and committed three balks.

The Eagles scored two runs on balk calls and two more off of errors.

In game three, the Bulldogs took the lead in the first off of a two-run homer by Josh Coyle and an RBI single by Wilkins, but the Eagles completed their sweep with a score of 8-3 April 17.

"We came out early and jumped on top, but we slowed up after that," said Wall. "We need to learn that once we get up, we need to keep pounding away."

The Eagles tied the score in the bottom of the third on back-to-back RBI doubles by Jacob

Dempsey and Kyle Roberson. They took the lead in the fourth off an unearned run. Three more runs came in the fifth and in the sixth. Dempsey hit a solo home run for his third RBI of the game and ended the scoring for both teams.

The Bulldogs had opportunities in the fourth and fifth, but left runners stranded on third base.

Ben Buchanan took the loss for the Bulldogs, throwing five innings and giving up eight hits, seven runs, four earned, walked four and struck out four. Graham Baughn threw three innings, giving up one run on three hits, walking one and striking out one.

"We had a couple errors in the sixth and seventh when they were dominating that really hurt us," said Wilkins.

UNC-Greensboro hit six more base hits than the Bulldogs to take the game 9-4 April 20.

"We gave (Greensboro) a few too many hits," said Wilkins.

Wall hit a two-run home run in the fourth inning while Campana tied the score at 2-2.

The Spartans took the lead back in the bottom of the fourth when Davis Adams and Danny McClure hit back-to-back doubles, moving the score to 3-2.

The Spartans brought in three more runs in the fifth with Jeremy Roulin leading off with a single and later scoring on a triple play by Jake Linney. Jay Maule tripled home Linney and went on to score on a sacrifice fly by Adams.

Greensboro's Wes McCall led off the sixth with a double and scored on a wild pitch to make the score 9-2.

The Bulldogs came out in the seventh, scoring their last two runs. Coyle led off with a single, and Wall reached first on a fielder's choice.

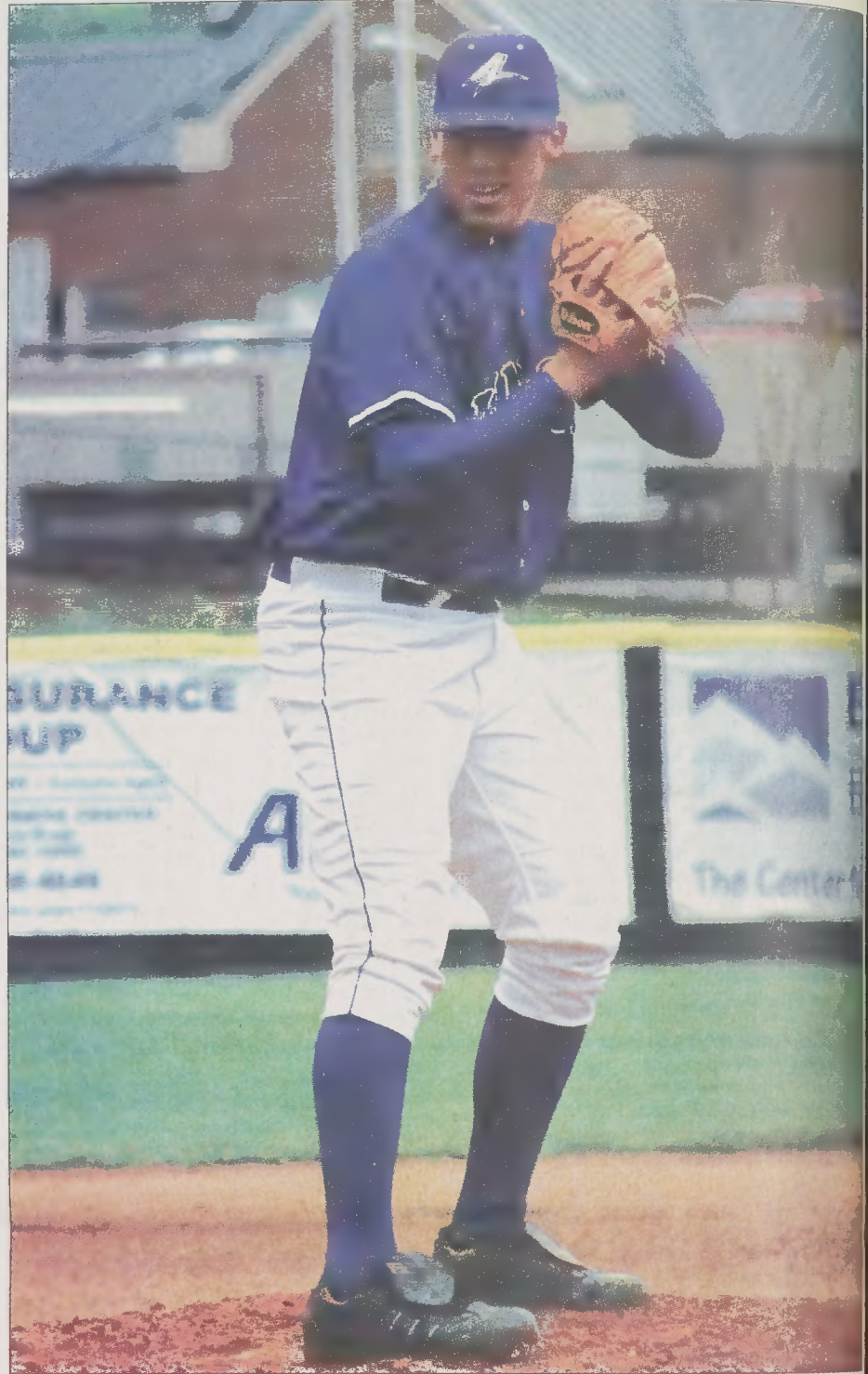
Arrington singled, moving Wall to second. Then, Nathan Durham loaded the bases with an infield hit.

Wilkins singled Wall home and Whited hit into an RBI fielder's choice to bring Arrington home. A double play with the bases loaded ended the inning and the scoring for the Bulldogs.

Wall, Arrington and Wilkins all had two hits for the Bulldogs.

Alan DeRatt took the loss for the Bulldogs. Buchanan threw 1.2 innings, giving up three runs on two hits and Eric Brotzman, and Chris Nigro each threw one scoreless inning, giving up one hit.

"We haven't played like we should have this season," said Wall. "But, if everyone works hard over the summer, we should come back and have a good season next year."



DUSTIN JORDAN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/REPORTER

Freshman Tim Johnson pitches for the Bulldogs against Radford University on April 22. The Bulldogs play next at Furman University April 29.

'Dogs finish in top 10 at championship

by Tiffanie Tatum
Staff Reporter

The men's outdoor track team finished seventh, and the women's team finished eighth in the Big South Outdoor Track and Field Championship, April 14-17.

The men's outdoor track team collected 50 points, while the women earned 24 points.

Root Kirbach, senior physics mathematics student, finished sixth in the 10K run.

For the UNCA women's team, Sarah Davis, undeclared sophomore, finished 11th in the hammer team. Jessica Salyers, undeclared sophomore, followed with a 15th place finish.

Senior Nathan Hedgepeth, senior biology student, came in second in the shot put with a throw of 16.04 meters. Hedgepeth's second place finish gave the Bulldogs eight points.

"Nathan did well," said coach Dean Duncan. "He came up from his previous best by a meter and a half."

Hedgepeth is learning a new technique in discus that he is starting to get down, according to Duncan.

"This should allow him to throw farther," said Duncan.

Troy Young, undeclared junior, finished fourth in the decathlon giving the men's team five points.

"I was very happy with how Young competed in the decathlon," said Duncan. "I thought he did a really good job there. Then he came back and placed second in the javelin."

David Bell, junior environmental science student, placed third in the men's steeplechase, helping his team gain six points.

"Bell is All-Conference in the steeplechase," said Duncan. "He ran a very good time. It places him No. 2 on our all time list for the steeplechase."

Hedgepeth came in second place in the discus event gaining eight points



DUSTIN JORDAN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/REPORTER

Sophomore Kris Fant practices hurdles before the Bulldogs competed in the Big South Outdoor Track and Field Championship.

for the men's team. In the javelin throw, Young placed second with a throw of 55.83 meters.

"The wind was pretty bad for the discus," said Duncan. "No one was really throwing far, but they still competed very well."

Kris Fant, undeclared sophomore, gained six points after bringing in a third place finish in the men's 110-meter hurdles. Also, the men's 4x100-meter relay team came in fourth place, and the women's 4x400-relay finished in fourth place.

On the women's side, junior Latanya Harris finished second in the 400-meter race and took a fourth place finish in the 200.

"For her it is probably kind of a heart-breaker," said Duncan. "She still competed very well. It's one of them days were you do the best you can in competition."

Harris brought in half the points the UNCA women's team earned during the championship meet.

"That's what we need," said Duncan. "We need more people like

Harris scoring points. We are recruiting that way now to bring in people who can do that."

In the 800, the women's team finished sixth and seventh in the finals.

Despite a broken foot, Loring Watkins, senior mathematics student, gained one point for UNCA after placing eighth in the 5K run.

"I wish I could have finished harder," said Watkins. "I could not go faster because there was a lot of pain in my foot."

When it came down to who could face the pressure, the men's team did a good job of handling it during the meet, according to Duncan.

"I feel like the men's succeeded the expectations," said Duncan. "They either ran what they were capable of running normally or they succeeded those expectations."

"The women ran good performance and they placed high in the ranking," said Duncan. "We got to learn how to compete when the going gets tough. They got to get good at handling pressure."

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