

features

Black Athletes Enjoy Non-revenue Sports

by Shirley Hunter
Staff Writer

Athletes at Carolina are usually associated with the big-time, revenue producing sports like basketball and football. But there's a different group of athletes here — those who enjoy non-revenue sports like wrestling, gymnastics and cross-country.

And a few of them are Black.

Blacks who participate in non-revenue sports are rare indeed — they've not had the monetary incentive, exposure to or the opportunity to participate in these sports in the past.

"Most students in general aren't exposed to sports outside of football, basketball and baseball at the high school level," Dot Gunnels, women's golf coach, said in a recent interview. "It's a little hard to come into college without any experience and try to play (non-revenue) sports."

She said many of the non-revenue sports at Carolina were not offered at the high school level because of limited funding. In addition, many non-revenue sports are too expensive for either Black or white students to play.

For example, there were no Blacks on the 1984 golf team, she said.

Swimming Coach Frank Comfort agreed with Gunnels and said Carolina coaches didn't necessarily try to recruit Black athletes either. "We recruit the best athletes possible," he said.

Nevertheless, several Blacks at the University have overcome the problems of tradition, under-exposure and expense to play on non-revenue sports teams.

Christine Thorne, a senior from Maryland, is the only Black on the Carolina gymnastics team this year. She said the situation was the same in high school.

She pointed out that many Blacks couldn't participate because of the sport's expense, but said she saw a bright future for it because of greater accessibility in Black communities. "It's coming along," she said.

Introduced to wrestling in junior high school, Tracy Davis, a junior from High Point, wrestles for Carolina along

with his twin brother Stacey. Although wrestling is a slightly more popular sport than gymnastics with Blacks, Carolina still has few Blacks on the team.

Davis said he was welcomed on the team by his white teammates and had encountered no racism from teammates or opposing team members. "We're all working toward one goal — winning," he said. "Nothing else matters."

Although track is a popular sport for Blacks, cross-country running is not. Traditionally, Blacks have been thought to be poor long-distance runners and that may be changing, according to Hubert West, assistant track and field coach.

"The myth that Blacks aren't suited for long-distance running is no longer believed," West said. "Blacks are discovering that long-distance running is a good background for track and field."

Alissa Murray, a junior from Illinois, thought so too. She joined the cross-country team last summer to help her sprinting.

Murray, like Davis, said she'd encountered no racial problems as the only Black on the team. She said she believed that sports provided a different atmosphere from the real world—producing less racial tension on the playing field.

She added, "Believing the atmosphere is perfect would be idealistic, but it's a good starting place" for reducing racial tension.

However, Donald Cogsville, a freshman from New Jersey, who plays UNC soccer, said racism had often greeted him on the playing field. He said opposing team players made racial slurs during matches to distract him. "I used to react violently, but now I use it to inspire me," he said.

Soccer actually represents an interesting phenomenon in this country because it is widely played by Blacks in other parts of the world, yet few Blacks play on the Carolina soccer team.

"It bothers me that more Blacks don't play the sport," Cogsville said. "It's going to happen though — it's just a matter of time."

It's Coming Up

The Department of Dramatic Arts at North Carolina Central University will present a world premiere production, *FASCINATION MAN*, written by NCCU Professor and playwright, Randolph Umberger and directed by Dr. Linda Kerr Norflett. The play is a comedy in three acts suggested by Synge's *PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD*, and opens Wednesday, November 14, at 8:15 P.M. in the University Theatre of the Farrison-Newton Communications Building. The show will run nightly through November 17 and will have a 3:15 P.M. matinee on Sunday, November 18. Ticket prices are as follows: Adult advance/reservations - \$3.50; adult at door - \$4.00; NCCU student, children under 18 years and senior citizens advance/reservations - \$1.50; NCCU student, children under 18 and senior citizens at door - \$2.00; Special rates for groups of ten or more. For more information, call 683-6242.

Human Rights Week Nov. 12-15

Nov. 12

12:00 - **World Hunger Simulation**: A meal will be held which depicts the various levels of eating habits throughout the world - from the very rich to the impoverished. The Pit. (Raindate: Tues. 12:00, Pit). Sponsored by Carolina Union Weekly Features Committee.

4:00 - **Changes in the Senate and The Effect on Human Rights**: This topic will be discussed by Dr. Pollit of the Political Science Department. Union 205.

Nov. 13

12:30 - **The Significance of the Election for People's Movements**: A panel discussion concerning movements for justice and peace, sponsored by the Communist Workers Party. Union 205.

5:00 - **Greensboro Civil Rights Fund**: A videotape and discussion of the Klan/Nazi massacre in Greensboro and its implications about American society. Y Lounge.

Nov. 14

2:00 - **A Black in Chapel Hill**: Mr. Fred Battle, the local president of the Rainbow Coalition, speaks on his experiences as a minority in our community. Union 206.

Poetry Corner

Hate

It's a war waging inside
bubbling to the surface at times
hidden away
no one knows it's there
It has been there for a long time
brewing and raging to get out
frustrations bungled in with dislikes and despises
a way to hurt but the will to hold it in
never vented out towards an invulnerable
It's there for the wars, the prejudices
and those who take without giving
one day something will release it
but for now it's concealed within

-a body.

Diana Lowery

AN EVENING WITH...AUTHOR



JAMES BALDWIN

Celebrating Human Rights Week
Monday, November 12, 8pm
Memorial Hall
Admission FREE

A Carolina Union Forum Committee Presentation
Presented by the Carolina Union and the Campus Y