

Sports

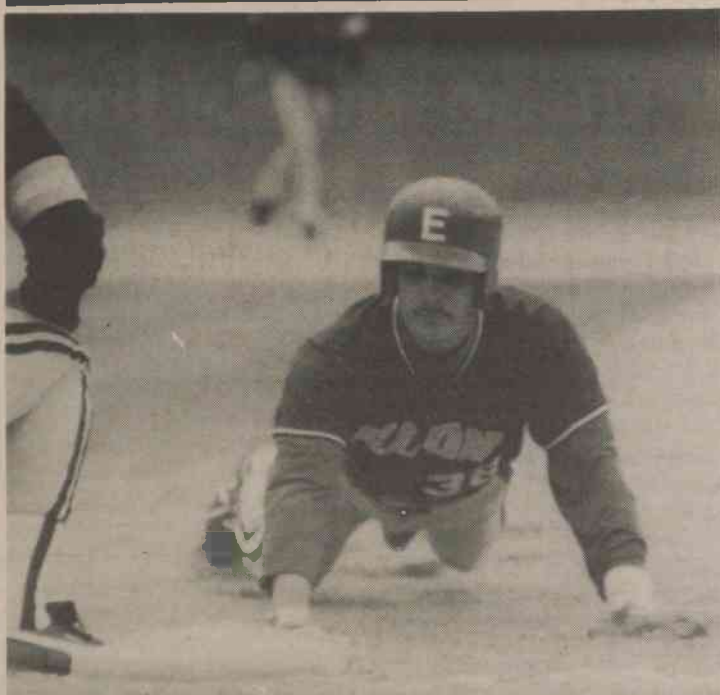


Photo by Brian E. Batchelor

DIVE: Senior second baseman Tim Patton dives back to first base in the Christians' loss to Wake Forest Tuesday. This was Elon's first loss of the season, they now stand at 3-1.

Lady netters begin with the right swing

By Brian E. Batchelor
Sports Editor

"We'll have to struggle this year," said Elon's new women's tennis coach Byrd Britt. "We should end up about mid-conference at the end of the year."

This year the whole team, including the coach, are pretty young. Britt is in her first year ever as a head coach.

Britt, who replaced former coach Karen Carden last summer, said no one had done any recruiting. "The team is basically walk-ons," she said. There are some returning players from last year, however.

Though she expects to have no "powerhouse" players, she said she is looking forward to steady play from all of the players.

Guilford, High Point and Atlantic Christian Colleges are the teams Britt expects to have real trouble with, but she said Elon should be competitive.

Britt said she feels that in the future the Lady Christians will be

better off. "We'll be a lot stronger next year," she predicted, pointing out that two recruits are already convinced to come to Elon. She added that she is still working on two more recruits.

"I think they're (Elon) really trying to build up the (tennis) program here," she says, noting that both the men's and the women's teams coaches are new to Elon.

The Lady Christians won their season opener at Wingate Monday 6-3. Number three player Cindy Wall, number four player Terri Barnes, number five player Juli Bollman and number six player Lori Johnson all won in the singles competition.

The doubles teams of Wall and Kathy Dudley (- 2) and Johnson and Bollman (- 3) also won.

The Lady Christians travel to Charlotte to face the University of North Carolina at Charlotte today and end the week by hosting Mars Hill Friday. Monday sees the Lady Christians traveling to Campbell University and Wednesday they go to Lenoir-Rhyne.

Baseball season opens up first week with a 3-1 mark

By Brian E. Batchelor
Sports Editor

Pitching trouble hurt Elon's Fightin' Christians as they fell hard Tuesday night to a powerful Wake Forest team, 16-3.

Rick Jones' Christians had nothing but bad luck while Marvin Crater's Demon Deacons couldn't go wrong. Bobby Oakley's first pitch, the first pitch of the game, was pounded over the left-center field fence.

Saturday the Christians topped the University of North Carolina at Charlotte 6-2, then captured both games of a doubleheader from the University of North Carolina at Asheville, 8-4 and 4-1.

Tuesday's contest was a far cry from the performance the Christians produced last year. Following the pitching of a very strong staff the Christians finished an impressive 40-10 and ended up in the NAIA World Series, capturing the fifth place national ranking.

The Christians are facing a four game home stand this week, hosting Wingate today, Mount Olive on Saturday, Western Carolina on Monday and Catawba on Wednesday.

Benny Tart is the only returning pitcher from last year who saw a lot of playing time. Last year's aces John Driscoll, Greg McDannold and Greg Harris have all graduated, limiting Elon's staff.

All Conference and All District player Mo Morton will also be missed. Morton and Harris both signed with the San Diego Padres after last year's season. Harris and Driscoll were also named to the All Conference and All District teams last year.

Despite the many players the Christians lost, a profitable recruiting year has allowed them to remain strong.

Hailing as transfers from Liberty Baptist are heavy hitting Barrick brothers, John and Andy, who defend first base while Andy roams left field.

Catcher William "Tank" Hardin transferred from Louisville Junior College and is also being counted on. Hardin had one of the few bright spots in Tuesday's loss when he punched a long homer over the left field fence.

Before the game senior second baseman Tim Patton implied that this would be the standard. "We got the long ball this year," he said. "We're going to hit homeruns."

Patton, who played short stop last year, noted the Barrick brothers, Hardin, and returning outfielder Troy Harris as the heavy hitters of the team. Patton said Harris was probably the "best pure hitter Elon's ever had."

Outfielder Randy Warren, also transferring from Louisville, will add a great deal. Warren, the off batter is expected to aid greatly in the scoring department.

In Tuesday's contest Oakley was replaced early by returning sophomore Jeff Girton. The Deacons were slowed but not stopped by Girton's sidearm style. After three solid hits against him with two outs in the fifth, Girton was replaced by Tate.

Tate held out until Jones replaced him. Joe Tate took over in the eighth with the Deacons leading 13-3.

Patton also noted possible troubles in the Christians pitching staff, "They're just not throwing strikes," he said.

But he also noted a definite talent in Duane Mike Sebesto and C. W. Willis, "If they stay on pitch (well) no one will beat us," Patton said. "When they're in top form they make the team. They're capable of getting anyone out."

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