

# UNCC

# BASKETBALL

## the year of the forty-niner

### On a possible

a journal report

### mission

Bill Foster refuses to acknowledge the existence of the idea that something...anything can't be done. He radiates confidence that any task, any goal can be achieved with careful planning and hard work.

And work he does. Ever since the dynamic young coach assumed his duties as head of the new basketball program at UNCC, he has been constantly on the go — creating fan interest in the upgraded basketball program through a myriad of appearances at civic club meetings, press interviews and in personal conferences with some of the area's most important civic leaders. Rarely does he spend less than fourteen hours a day on the job.

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte was created as the fourth campus of the University of North Carolina system in 1965. Continuing the low-key athletic program of its predecessor institution, Charlotte College, the 49ers played in the non-scholarship Dixie Conference with a limited measure of success.

When UNCC leaders decide to embark upon a major basketball program, they offered the coaching position to Foster, who was then an assistant coach at The

Citadel. His task was to raise the money for scholarships, staff salaries, and equipment. A portion of the student athletic fee would be directed to the basketball program, but no institutional funds, by state law, could be used for athletics.

In accepting the post, Foster bombarded the offices of local area businessmen, industrialists, and professional leaders asking for support for the new program. He promised a basketball program at the University that would be second to none in quality. Quite a statement for an area that includes such basketball powers as Duke, UNC-Chapel Hill, Wake Forest, Davidson, South Carolina, Clemson, and N. C. State within easy driving range of Charlotte. Basketball fans in the Queen City were used to top-flight competition in the Charlotte Coliseum, which had been host in immediate past years to both the Atlantic Coast and Southern Conference basketball tournaments, as well as a myriad of single game headliners during the annual basketball campaigns.

And he began to raise the money through a non-profit organization, the UNCC Athletic Foundation. Most of its members were graduates of other

institutions, but each had a fierce loyalty to the city of Charlotte and felt that the future of major college basketball in the area lay with the infant program at UNCC.

University officials felt that they had shown keen insight in hiring Foster a full year before he fielded his first 49er squad. During the winter of 1969-70, Foster put over 30,000 miles on his car recruiting a flock of junior college transfers and freshmen to compose the 49er varsity squad.

In addition, he spent countless hours on the telephone and in correspondence to assemble an attractive and challenging schedule. The result was a 23-game slate that included such major NCAA teams as Georgia Tech, Xavier, Toledo, the University of Buffalo, and Texas A&M, as well as LSU-New Orleans, the nation's No. 1 ranked college division team.

Toiling through many long practice sessions to instill the Foster tradition of aggressive defense and high percentage offense into his squad, he surprised even the most optimistic of his supporters by achieving a first-year record of 15 wins and 8 losses.

Most of the players from the 1970-71 49er team will return for the coming season as well as four members of the freshman team who are expected to see a great deal of action. They will face a 24-game schedule that includes Mississippi State, the University of Oklahoma, East Tennessee State, Tulane, Loyola University, Marshall, LSU-New Orleans, and DePaul. Sixteen of the games will be played at home, with three of the contests slated for the Charlotte Coliseum. All of the home varsity games will be preceded by a freshman contest.

A quartet of returning veterans will form the nucleus of Foster's squad for the coming season. Senior guard Jerry Boggs became the team leader during the past campaign, directing the 49ers' attack from the point position, while averaging 11.8 points per

contest. Center Harold Thames, a 6-7 block of granite in the middle, averaged 11.4 and 7 rebounds per contest, while hustling 6-6 Terry Sloan won a starting job in mid-season and finished with a 6.6 scoring mark.

Norris Dae, a 6-5 senior forward, will once again be one of the keys to the 49ers plans for success. A holdover from the UNCC squads under Coach Harvey Murphy, Dae is already the holder of the school's career rebounding mark, and in addition was last year's team leader in scoring with a 13.9 average.

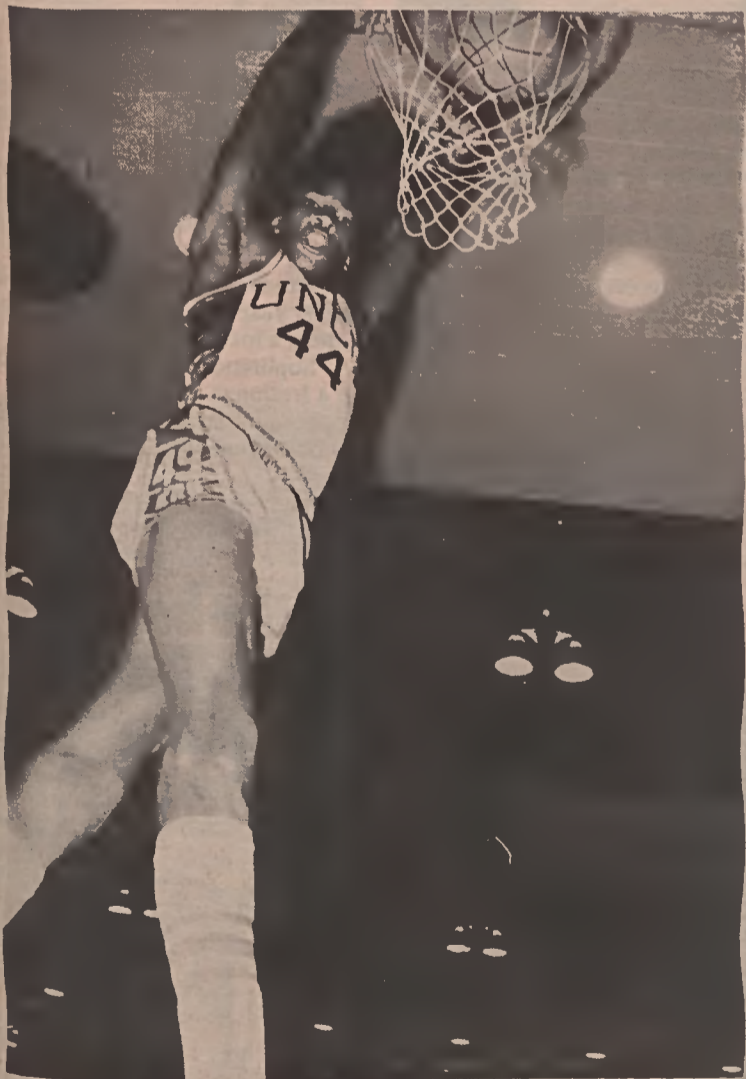
Other returning lettermen expected to contribute

significantly to the 49ers' success in 1971-72 include guard Chris Black (6.5 average), and forwards Sandy Bunce and Richard Guffy. A transfer from Wingate College, 6-7 forward Marshall Thaxton is expected to compete for a starting post at the wing.

Four sophomores should see a great deal of action. Robert Earl Blue, a 6-6 jumping jack, led the freshman squad with a 22.6 average, while 6-7 center Derek Jones improved dramatically during the latter part of the season to average 14.4. Guards Rick Dobson (13.0) and Lee Wilson (13.3) will fight for starting positions.



THE BEGINNING...Center Norris Dae reaches for the tip-off in last year's contest against Buffalo in the Charlotte Coliseum. The 49ers are beginning another season December 1, and hopes are running high that the Green and White can start another basketball dynasty in North Carolina.



DOWN IT GOES...Six foot, 160 lb. Robert Earl Blue flies up to stuff one. The 49ers have high hopes for this sophomore who last year averaged 22.6 points for the season as a freshman.

## journal analysis

After talking with Coach Bill Foster and several team members, I see no reason why the UNCC 49ers should get beat even once this year.

Strictly a man-to-man, ball-control team, the 49ers have four returning lettermen and several outstanding sophomores who will be fighting for a chance to start on a number one basketball squad.

Norris Dae is perhaps the biggest plus on the green and white squad this year. Norris holds the rebounding and scoring records from last year and is anxious to add to them. A 6'5" senior, Norris is the only native Charlottean on the starting team.

Richard Guffy, a 6'3" junior from Statesville who had the highest field goal (66.7%) and free throw accuracy (100%) last year, will be a forward threat.

Marshall Thaxton, a 6'7" transfer student from Wingate and Sandy Bunce will keep their competition busy. They are both extremely capable at the forward position.

Chris Black, a 6-foot senior

from Cleveland, Ga. will see action at guard as will sophomores Rick Dobson and Lee Wilson. Robert Earl Blue, a 6'6" sophomore from Concord, N.C. led the freshman team with a 22.6 scoring average and will see plenty of action this year.

With this line-up of formidable competitors, it's easy to see why I'm predicting an unbeaten season for the 49ers. Now, the Journal and I are going out on a limb and preview the first three games of this season.

The first game of the '71-'72 season will be played at the gym on Wednesday, Dec. 1, at 8:00 p.m. UNCC will host Tusculum College.

Tusculum is a small school (enrollment of 600) located in Greeneville, Tenn. Last season, the 49ers downed the Pioneers 101 to 50 and, even with eight returning lettermen, Tusculum is unlikely to show any great improvement. Their recruiting program has been somewhat sluggish. This game should be a moral booster for the Green and