



SPORTS BRIEFS

Soccer Teams and Hockey Ranked in Nation's Top 2

Chapel Hill — Three of North Carolina's non-revenue sports teams rank at or near the top of their respective national polls.

The men's soccer team has climbed to No. 2 in this week's Soccer America poll and No. 9 in the ISAA poll. UNC is 6-2 after beating No. 1-ranked Virginia 5-1 Sunday. The No. 2 ranking by Soccer America is the highest any UNC men's soccer team has ever been ranked.

UNC was No. 3 in the Sept. 22, 1987 Soccer America and ISAA polls, the Sept. 6, 1988 preseason ISAA poll and the Sept. 6, 1994 Soccer America poll.

UNC's eight-time defending national champion women's soccer team is ranked first in both the Intercollegiate Soccer Association of America and Soccer America polls this week.

The field hockey team continues to be ranked No. 1 in the NCAA Field Hockey Coaches Poll this week. The Tar Heels have shut out their last seven opponents.

UNC Football Players Earn Player-of-Week Honors

CLEMSON, S.C. — Two players from North Carolina — punter Mike Thomas and defensive back Sean Boyd — earned Atlantic Coast Conference football player-of-the-week honors.

Boyd had 13 tackles, including 11 solo stops, for the Tar Heels in their 31-18 loss to Florida State. Thomas punted six times and averaged 43.3 yards per kick. Four of his kicks pushed the Seminoles back to their own 7, 4, 21 and 14-yard-lines, and because Florida State only returned those punts for 19 yards, Thomas netted 40.2 yards on his kicks.

Jockey Banned After Pulling Rival Off Horse

LONDON — A jockey who pulled a rival off his horse after losing a race was banned for six months on Tuesday.

Kieran Fallon of Ireland was found guilty of violent and improper conduct on a race course. He got one of the stiffest sentences ever handed out by the disciplinary committee of the Jockey Club, the governing body for British horse racing.

Fallon pulled Stuart Webster off his mount, Sailormate, just after Sailormate had won the John Mangles Memorial Handicap at Beverly on Sept. 14.

Afterward, the two jockeys fought in the weighing room, with Webster suffering a broken nose. The committee cleared the pair on charges of improper conduct in connection with the brawl because the stewards could not establish who was to blame.

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

New Heavyweight Champion McCall Might Fight McNeeley

NEW YORK — Oliver McCall says he wants to be a people's champion, and he'd like one of those people, a 25-year-old third-generation fighter from Boston named Pete McNeeley, to be his first challenger.

"I'm definitely willing to give Pete a shot. I'm looking forward to a good fight," McCall said Tuesday at a luncheon in New York to introduce him to the United States as new heavyweight champion.

"I'm taking one week off, and I'm getting back into the ring," he said. "I'm taking no one lightly. I won't be a Riddick Bowe. I won't be sitting around, 300 pounds, saying, 'Hey, what's happening, man.'"

Saturday night in London, McCall (25-5, 18 knockouts) stopped Lennox Lewis, a former sparring partner, in the second round to win the WBC championship belt.

Significantly, McNeeley (30-1, 24 KOs) was also at the luncheon, although McCall's promoter, Don King, said nothing was definite. If the two fight, it would probably be in December in Boston Garden, which is due to close shortly thereafter.

"I'd like to be McNeeley. I'd like to give him a chance like I gave Oliver, but nothing is decided yet," King said.

McNeeley's grandfather, Tom McNeeley Sr., fought on the card that opened Boston Garden on Nov. 17, 1928. In the main event that night, Andre Routis of France, the world featherweight champion, lost a 10-round non-title fight to Dick "Honey Boy" Finnegan.

Pete McNeeley's father, Tom Jr., fought

Floyd Patterson for the heavyweight title on Dec. 4, 1961 in Toronto, getting knocked out in the fourth round. That fight was supposed to have been at Boston Garden, too, but the state athletic commission wouldn't allow Patterson to bring in his own referee, McNeely said.

"I was knocked down 13 times, he was knocked down once," the father said. "Some people say I was only knocked down nine or 10 times, but I say, hey, give the man his due. His speed was unbelievable. I thought the referee was sneaking in a couple of punches. That was Jersey Joe Walcott.

"But, hey, I ruined Patterson. In his next fight, he lost to Sonny Liston. He was worn out from knocking me down."

If McNeeley gets his shot, that would make him and his dad only the second father-son tandem to fight for the heavyweight championship. Joe and Marvis Frazier were the first.

McNeeley also would become the first white heavyweight challenger since Stefan Tangstad of Norway was knocked out by Michael Spinks on Sept. 6, 1986.

McCall's victory over Lewis ended any possibility of a Lewis-Bowe fight, and it shot King back into the heavyweight title picture. The IBF and WBA portions of the championship are held by Michael Moore, who is promoted by Dan Duva.

King's plan now is to have McCall fight a succession of King-controlled challengers, so he will have a heavyweight champion to offer former title-holder Mike Tyson when he gets out of prison in May.

Volleyball Breaks Through, Hands Duke Its First ACC Loss in 2 Years

UNC Earns Third Straight Win and Blue Devils Lose For First Time This Season

BY ERIN PARRISH  
STAFF WRITER

The North Carolina women's volleyball team busted through the glass ceiling of the ACC with a hard-fought 3-2 victory over previously undefeated and No. 18 Duke Tuesday night.

UNC (5-8) ended two Duke winning streaks with its 4-15, 15-10, 10-15, 15-12, 15-13 win. The Blue Devils (8-1) had won 38 consecutive matches in Cameron Indoor Stadium and had not succumbed to an ACC opponent in nearly two years.

"We didn't dwell too much on that (the streak)," North Carolina head coach Joe Sagula said.

"Every coach, no matter who it is, whether they're on the Carolina or Duke side — and no matter whether one team is supposed to be strong and one team is supposed to be weak — each year that match will still be a special match. Both teams come out very emotional and very inspired."

Tuesday's win was the first over Duke in seven attempts, and the first for UNC's

three seniors.

"This win is our baby," said senior outside hitter Colette Dingsen. "We wanted this win, and we did everything in our power to get it."

The Tar Heels came out looking a little rough around the edges and couldn't get their offense going early in the match.

"We were really out of sync, out of rhythm," Sagula said. "And, we were really nervous."

The Blue Devils continued to display its trademark walled defense in game two, but North Carolina capitalized on Duke's two rare service errors to turn the momentum.

Precise serving and powerful swings gave UNC an offensive edge, and Jill Peden and Amber Willey gave the Duke net a dose of its own medicine, combining for 10 blocks.

Game two was crucial to the Tar Heel momentum.

"We adjusted, took a little better angle on the ball," Sagula said.

The Blue Devils, led by 1993 ACC Player-of-the-Year Ashley Wacholder, looked like a national power in game three, denying the Tar Heels a chance to rebound from a long scoreless stretch. But



KRISTIN KRUSE had 18 kills vs. Duke.

UNC remained its calm and focused — a contrast to the already panicking Blue Devils.

Willey, heckled by a dedicated band of Duke fans throughout the night, silenced her admirers with a flourish, notching 10 kills, 12 digs and eight blocks, most of them in the final two games.

Although the scoreboard continued to flash "Duke Point" with every UNC kill, there was no mistaking that UNC was in its element in game five.

The Tar Heels surged to an early lead and pressed Duke at every sideout. Bolstered by Laura Gremillion's defensive play, the Tar Heels hit early and often to quell the attack of Wacholder and freshman Maureen Reindl.

Junior Kristin Kruse, who returned to the court last week after being sidelined with a knee injury, dismissed any questions about her health by leading the Tar Heel attack with 18 kills.

Dingsen notched 16 kills and 17 digs, and senior Katie Galloway chipped in 10 kills for UNC.

The Tar Heels have struggled with chemistry and communication for most of the season, but the Duke game showed a new, unified team, Dingsen said.

"It's a totally different team," she said. "For the first time, the whole team has made eye contact, everyone is together after every point, whether it's for us or against us. We all have the same emotions. And we're 3-0 in the ACC, and that's all that counts."

Cavaliers' Nance Finally Calls it Quits After Long Battle With Aching Knees

CLEVELAND — Robbed of the spring in his legs by age and an arthroscopy, three-time all-star forward Larry Nance retired from basketball Tuesday.

Nance, 35, split his 13 NBA seasons between the Phoenix Suns and Cleveland Cavaliers and became the league's career shot-blocking leader among forwards with 2,027.

The winner of the NBA's first slam-dunk competition at the All-Star Game in 1984, he also was a deadly outside shooter and a consistent scorer and rebounder.

He said the ailing right knee that forced him to miss more than half of last season did not respond to treatment during the offseason.

He had arthroscopic surgery on the knee twice last season and was unable to play in the postseason.

"One of the positive things about this is that I know I can't play at all on my knee, so there won't be any regrets," said Nance, an all-star as recently as 1993. "We did

everything we could do. It's just not meant to be."

Cavaliers owner Gordon Gund said the team would retire Nance's No. 22.

Nance came to the NBA with Phoenix in 1981 as a first-round pick out of Clemson.

He moved to Cleveland in February 1988 in a trade that stunned fans of both franchises, a trade whose merits have been debated ever since.

Cleveland acquired Nance and Mike Sanders from Phoenix for Kevin Johnson, Mark West and Tyrone Corbin.

The deal also included draft picks, one of which the Suns used to select Dan Majerle in 1988.

At the time, Nance was leading the Suns in scoring (21.1), rebounding (9.9) and blocks (2.4). Johnson was second string behind Price in Cleveland but developed into one of the NBA's best point guards.

"We gave up quite a bit to acquire a

basketball player who had distinguished himself in Phoenix for many years," Cavs general manager Wayne Embry said. "We felt adding a player of Larry's caliber would help us become instant contenders in the Eastern Conference."

"When we talk about the history of the Cleveland Cavaliers, I think we have to say the decision to bring Larry Nance to Cleveland was the right one, no matter what the cost."

Nance intimidated opponents with finesse more than power, and he kept a comparatively low profile for a player of his accomplishment.

"Some guys don't really care about being recognized in the newspaper," said Cavs' center Brad Daugherty. "What matters is what your teammates think of you and how your peers view you. And I can tell you right now, every one of his peers respects him."

LaRussa Tops Baltimore's List Of Candidates to Replace Oates

BALTIMORE — The Baltimore Orioles' wish list for a new manager begins and ends with Tony La Russa. Two Daveys, Johnson and Lopes, are among the contenders if La Russa declines.

Long before he fired manager Johnny Oates on Monday night, Orioles owner Peter Angelos coveted La Russa as the field general for his talent-rich ballclub. La Russa's contract with Oakland expires next month, at which point he will entertain offers that will net him millions.

Oakland wants to keep him. And several teams, including the Orioles and the Boston Red Sox, want to get him.

The Orioles were so eager that they asked Oakland for permission to speak to La Russa before they dumped Oates.

Oakland rejected the Orioles' request. But when word of the inquiry became public, Angelos was forced to announce the decision he had already made — to dismiss Oates.

Because La Russa is the No. 1 candidate and his contract doesn't expire until Oct. 7, Angelos won't name a manager soon.

"If one can get a La Russa, why would he want anyone else?" Angelos said. "He's a big name that would be good for this town."

If La Russa shuns Orioles, Angelos will have to turn elsewhere.

A few weeks ago, Orioles officials batted around the idea of chasing Tommy Lasorda, but that was dropped when he re-signed with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Johnson, who won a World Series with the New York Mets in 1986, is having communication problems with the Cincinnati Reds and is a candidate to replace Oates. However, Angelos might have problems hiring someone who is similar to Oates — a former Oriole who resented being ordered around by a powerful owner.

Lopes and Rick Dempsey are the top candidates within the Orioles' organization, but they are longshots to land the job.

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