

Fight Ruins Beautiful Day At Boshamer

Friday was a beautiful day for baseball. But it won't be remembered because of that.

On that day, UNC and Georgia Tech hooked up in a dazzling offensive show at Boshamer Stadium. But the game won't be remembered for the Tar Heels' 11-9 win. No, Friday will go down in the record books as a dark day in collegiate baseball history. Forget the balmy weather or the sparkling blue sky. They really didn't have much to do with this game.

That's right, one bench-clearing brawl ruined the entire afternoon.

It all got started in the bottom of the seventh inning, when Tech reliever David Elder served up a little chin music to UNC leadoff man Tyrone Brown. After taking the pitch, Brown glared at Elder. Jacket catcher Tucker Barr immediately jumped up and shoved Brown. Brown shoved Barr back, and then it really got ugly.

Barr punched Brown, and a three-minute brawl ensued. Punches were exchanged all over the infield, and all the umpires could do was watch.



JAMES D. WHITFIELD SENIOR WRITER

I've never felt more like folding my roster sheet into a cylinder shape and letting a loud "Boo!" bellow from my lips.

In the end, UNC's Brown and Josh Rowell and Georgia Tech's Barr, Scott Byers and Todd Papetti were ejected.

Obviously, fingers could be pointed at both sides. But to lay the blame on someone's shoulders and single that person out as the instigator would be wrong.

But several issues need to be addressed. ■ Anyway you look at it, baseball is a game. It's nothing more and nothing less. Games aren't a life-and-death situation. Win, lose, strike out, hit a 3-pointer, double fault on a serve, win a faceoff or commit a turnover, the sun will rise, and someone's down South someone will have a bowl of grits for breakfast the next day.

As Crash Davis said in Bull Durham, "You win some, you lose some, and sometimes the game gets rained out."

Taking it to the life-and-death level simply defeats the whole purpose of sports.

Never should the outcome of a game drive someone to throw a punch.

■ But one might say fighting is an innate characteristic of the human race. Brothers fight with each other. Best friends have been known to scrap a little. Even husband and wife squabble.

Some sports, like hockey, football and basketball, lend themselves to fighting because of their physical nature.

And because of this physical play, athletes have been known to shove each other after the whistle.

However, throwing a punch is a whole different ballgame.

For someone to punch or grab someone by the throat (for example, Andre Riddick in Saturday's North Carolina-Kentucky basketball game) has no place in sports.

Elevating this physical play to the point of trying to hurt someone is bush league.

■ And of course there is the children factor. Friday at Boshamer Stadium, about 20 children played under their parents' supervision along the first baseline.

Can you imagine what the kids thought? Watching college students duke it out sure gives them the true meaning of sport.

Instead of fighting, they should be seeing pictures like Kentucky's Jeff Sheppard helping UNC's Dante Calabria off the floor late in Saturday's game. That came after one of the game's most physical exchanges.

If kids continue to see bench-clearing brawls and throat-clinching grabs, there's no telling what we're gonna see on the playing field 20 years from now.

Prized Hoops Recruit Says He'll Be a Tar Heel

Vince Carter Puts End to Speculation, Announces He Will Sign With UNC

BY GREG AUMAN SPECIAL TO THE DTH

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — In the first of what should be many press conferences, Vince Carter made the mistake of smiling Monday, triggering a slew of flashes from the photographers around him.

"Get used to that," said his coach, Charles Brinkerhoff.

Carter, a 6-foot-6 shooting guard touted among the top 5 basketball prospects in the country, had reason to smile as he ended months of speculation by announcing he will attend North Carolina in the fall. The Mainland (Fla.) High School senior chose

the Tar Heels over Florida, Florida State and Duke.

"I felt comfortable there," Carter said when asked what drew him to UNC. "I felt comfortable as a person, as a player and as an academic student. I enjoyed being with those guys."

The Tar Heels, who advanced to the Final Four in Seattle and face defending NCAA champion Arkansas Saturday, stand two wins from their second national championship in three years.

With senior guard Donald Williams graduating, Carter has an opportunity to make an immediate impact in Dean Smith's program.

"That's a position I've been wanting to play all my life, two-guard," he said. "It's wide open. I'm just going to go in as hard as I have in high school, and hopefully I can learn the position. I'm not going in there expecting to get that position without

working."

Carter led Mainland to its first state championship in 56 years, averaging 22 points and 11 rebounds a game for the Buccaneers.

Carter announced his decision in front of the student body at Mainland's high school gymnasium.

"I have decided to take my academic and athletic skills to North Carolina," Carter said as he put on a blue North Carolina cap and held a basketball reading "UNC Tar Heels" high above his head.

He said he is hoping he will have a chance to play alongside UNC sophomores Rasheed Wallace and Jerry Stackhouse, who could be leaving early for the NBA.

"It's where I want to go, even if Stackhouse and Rasheed won't be there," he said. "I hope they are there, but if not, I'm going there for myself to better my skills, to move on to the next level after

college."

Carter said he has been recruiting Stackhouse and Wallace as well, urging them to stick around for another year or two.

"I've talked to them. It's been mentioned, trust me, it's been mentioned," Carter said. "They give me a hard time, I give them a hard time, especially Rasheed. He has picked on me worse than any player ever. I got along real well with all the players, and that really pulled me their way."

The oral commitment is not binding until the official signing period begins on April 12. But Carter said he would not be changing his mind.

"I really dream of being the next NBA superstar," Carter said. "When I was younger, I always wanted to be a superstar like Michael Jordan, to be as popular as he is. Now I just dream of being (in the NBA)." Coach Smith called Carter Sunday, and Carter told him he was coming, he said.

Coach Smith called Carter Sunday, and Carter told him he was coming, he said.

"He's not a guy who's going to get really excited, but I could tell he was pretty thrilled to have me in his program," Carter said.

Carter's mother, Michelle Robinson, said her son has received more than 3,000 letters in the past two years and at one point averaged more than 40 a day.

Greetings from coaches at 900 different colleges came along with unsigned letters from disgruntled fans making some strange accusations.

"They said a lot of crazy things, made a lot of accusations, about things we had received from different schools," Robinson said. "They tell me I'm driving a Mercedes now. But actually I'm driving a '92 Cutlass. I want my Mercedes."

Greg Auman is the assistant sports editor of the Independent Alligator.

Blue L.A. Skies Don't Translate To Victory for Tar Heel Women

LOS ANGELES — I've got to stop believing in omens.

I first had this inkling when, against everybody's better judgement, I picked Brigham Young to advance to the men's Final Four. I just had this feeling.

But it must have been a reaction to too much caffeine, because now I'm in last place in both of the NCAA bracket pools that I entered, and the sports desk is getting a good laugh. So much for women's intuition.

And then there was the women's Sweet 16 at UCLA this weekend — I knew, I just knew, that UNC was going to pull it out. Two forces told me so:

1) The sky. I know this sounds cliché, but DTH photo editor Craig Jones and I were on our way to Santa Monica to touch the Pacific Ocean when Craig asked our driver, Jordan (who wasn't supposed to be traveling out of a 5-mile radius but decided to do us a 'favor'), if the weather was usually as clear as it was on Wednesday.

"Where's the smog?" Craig asked. "Hmmm... it usually isn't this clear," Jordan said.

"You know why?" Craig asked. "California's in town, so the sky's Tar Heel blue."

Jordan believed, and so did I.

2) Another shot. I was in the media room eating Guppies (wannabe Peppercorn Farm Goldfish) as I watched Jennifer Jacoby feed Jannon Roland the buzzer-

beating 3-pointer that lifted underdog Purdue past first-seeded Vanderbilt.

What a fitting way, I thought, to introduce a UNC 'upset' of Stanford.

But maybe that time it was too many Guppies, because my omens fell through — just like the women's team.

But you still can't knock the '94-'95 Tar Heel squad — it had talent and genuine drive, not to mention superstars Charlotte Smith and Marion Jones. Its quest was to repeat as national champions, but time simply ran out.

So as an omen-less attempt at a tribute to this year's team, here's a look at a few things I won't forget about this season:

Best Play: Finally, the dunk. On the first play of the game against North Carolina A&T, Smith got an open-court steal, drove down the floor and got her hand above the rim for the play that women's basketball had been waiting for — only the third jam in a women's collegiate game in history.

Later in the game, Jones hit the back of the rim on another slam attempt.

Best Quote: (From a UNC band mem-



ROBBI PICKERAL ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

ber at the Stanford game Thursday), "Burn that tree! Firebomb it," referring to the Cardinal mascot — a paper mache tree with googly eyes, big red lips and clown pants. My counterpart from The Stanford Daily explained to me that the overgrown mascot symbolized the tree that the school's founder had planted when Stanford first opened. It didn't seem to matter that the 'evergreen died last year. Go figure.

Best Game: UNC at N.C. State. No matter how many times I watch the replay, I still can't believe that the shot that Kolleen Kreul launched at the end of regulation to force overtime was a 3. But it was.

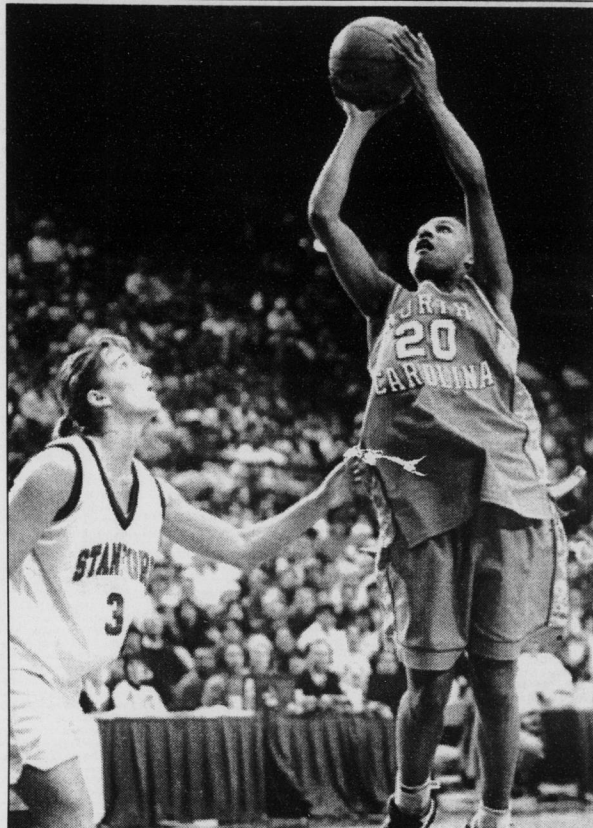
It also was a Tar Heel loss, but it was an eye-opener for both programs. The double-overtime contest gave the Wolfpack its ninth win, and almost assured State a bid to the NCAA tournament. For UNC, the loss seemed to fire up the Tar Heels.

Best Moment: The senior goodbye. When the final horn sounded in the Stanford game, Smith and fellow senior Stephanie Lawrence met near the UNC bench and indulged in a silent embrace. Last year, Lawrence fed Smith the inbounds pass with 0.7 seconds left for the 3-pointer that gave UNC its first national title.

Arm-in-arm, the tandem quietly congratulated the other team. That's true class.

Anyway, I know I've got to stop believing in these omens — they only seem to bring bad luck. I know this, the sports desk knows this and even Jordan knows this.

But I think I'd still pick BYU again.



Although Marion Jones and the Tar Heels came up short against Stanford, it was still a successful and exciting season for Sylvia Hatchell's program.

SPORTS SCHEDULE

Today	Baseball: vs. Louisville at Boshamer Stadium, 3 p.m.	Men's Tennis: vs. Furman at Cone-Kenfield Tennis Center, 2:30 p.m.	vs. Arkansas in Seattle, about 8:15 p.m.	Baseball: at Clemson in Clemson, S.C., 3 p.m.	Men's Golf: at Carpet Capital Collegiate in Dalton, Ga., all day.
Wednesday, March 29	Baseball: vs. Louisville at Boshamer Stadium, 3 p.m.	Lacrosse: at Duke in Durham, 8 p.m.	Men's Tennis: at N.C. State in Raleigh, 2:30 p.m.	Women's Tennis: vs. Virginia Commonwealth at Cone-Kenfield Tennis Center, 2 p.m.	Thursday, March 30
Thursday, March 30	Women's Tennis: vs. William & Mary at Cone-Kenfield Tennis Center, 2 p.m.	Friday, March 31	Baseball: at Clemson in Clemson, S.C., 7:15 p.m.	Men's Golf: at Carpet Capital Collegiate in Dalton, Ga., all day.	Women's Tennis: at Virginia Commonwealth in Richmond, Va., 2:30 p.m.
Saturday, April 1	Men's Basketball: at NCAA Final Four				

Tar Heel Shows Seminole Hoops Ritual

You Thought It Was Crazy Saturday Night? Check Out The Madness This Weekend

Like any normal Carolina-blue blooded Tar Heel fan, I joined in the celebration on Franklin Street Saturday night. In fact, this is the seventh such victory party I've been to in the last four years, not counting Halloween of course.

I was here in 1993, and I celebrated the Elite Eight win, the Final Four win, and dodged falling trees with the best of them after the big one.

But this time, I was fortunate enough to gain a new perspective on the event by sharing the revelries of Franklin Street with someone who had never seen such a gathering. Someone who has totally missed out on the aesthetics and art of basketball. A bona fide football junkie, a Florida State student.

He thought of the Franklin festivities as sort of a religious ceremony. And why not?

Tar Heel fans engage in the ritual after every win over Duke and any other team that makes UNC the "underdog." To top it off, the Tar Heels have made the Final Four three times in the last five years, making the Franklin Street ritual happen almost as often as Easter.

And like any other holiday, the street was adorned with streamers of toilet paper draped over the stoplights and blowing from the trees.

As we made our way up the blocked off "sacred ground," I saw people dancing around, circling a giant bonfire.

In this ring, the FSU man noticed, were the bravest, er, the drunkest of the UNC faithful.

They were the ones who waved hand-



ALISON LAWRENCE SENIOR WRITER

made torches or twirled flaming T-shirts through the air barely missing each other. And heck, if they got burned, at least it would be to the glory of the basketball gods.

They also climbed each others' shoulders — some even three people high — forming human totem poles to wave their beers in homage to the great basketball gods that graced them with another victory.

Not only were they praising the gods of the hardwood, they were chanting the sacred prayers, "U-N-C, U-N-C, Final Four, Final Four!" in hopes of more wins.

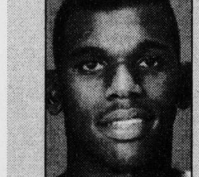
It was a rather moving experience, with several people jumping and shouting random whoops in ecstasy.

I even found myself so caught up in the ritual, the spirit moved me to shout out as well.

But there was one question left for the Seminole to ask, "Does this require human sacrifice?"

"No," I replied. "That's for the next win."

Athlete of the Week



Jerry Stackhouse Basketball

The numbers weren't too impressive — at least for Jerry Stackhouse — but Jerry Stackhouse is still the DTH Athlete of the Week. Lifting his team to its third Final Four in five years earns him his first DTH weekly honors. Against Georgetown and Kentucky, the Kinston native scored 30 points on 8-of-18 shooting, grabbed 19 rebounds, tallied 10 assists and five blocks, en route to winning the Southeast Regional Most Outstanding Player award. Teammates Rasheed Wallace and Donald Williams joined Stackhouse on the all-regional team.

In the regional final against the Wildcats, the sophomore scored 18 points — including 11 from the free-throw line — and ripped down 12 boards.

Brown Adjusts Defense in Spring Football

STAFF REPORT The North Carolina Tar Heels, looking to improve their speed on the defensive side of the ball, continued spring football practice Monday by flip-flopping players and testing younger ones.

Along the defensive front, senior All-America candidate Marcus Jones returns to his original tackle position after spending last season at defensive end.

Redshirt freshman Michael Pringle has

been impressive at defensive end.

Sophomore Omar Brown, who stepped in and played cornerback in UNC's injury-plagued secondary last season, moves to the safety slot.

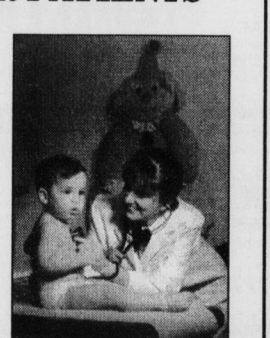
"We're trying to get more speed on the field at every position on defense," Tar Heel head coach Mack Brown said. "We want to have our fastest defensive team that we've had here, and I think we can do that."

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