

Undrafted Williams Sweats Out NBA Lockout in Raleigh League

BY JUSTIN SCHEEF
SENIOR WRITER

RALEIGH — Donald Williams was supposed to leave North Carolina to pursue his NBA basketball career on July 8. He would have participated in free agent/rookie camps for the Vancouver Grizzlies, Houston Rockets, Boston Celtics or Philadelphia 76ers.

But the former Tar Heel's dreams of playing in the NBA will be put on hold as long as the owners' lockout continues. No teams are allowed to talk to any players until the owners and players work out their differences.

Until then, Williams will keep in shape in the Chavis Adult Basketball League at St. Augustine's College. The pro-am league, which runs through August 18, features local talent from Triangle colleges. Other former and current UNC players competing in the circuit this summer include Rasheed Wallace, Jerry Stackhouse, Jeff McInnis, Serge Zwikker, Ed Geth, Derrick Phelps and Brian Reese.

The informal league, held in cozy Emery Gymnasium, helps the athletes tune up their game in the offseason.

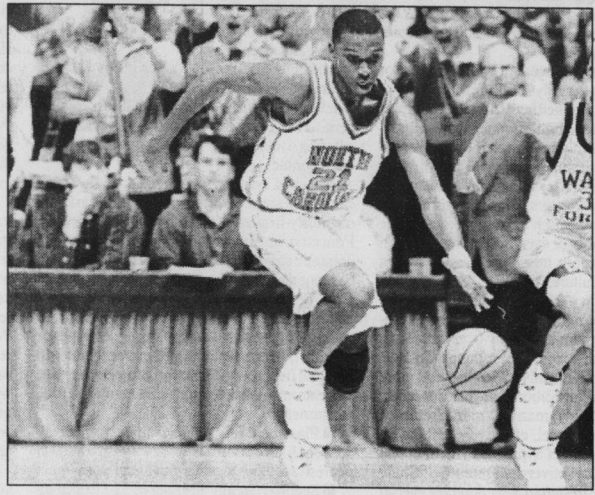
"I just have to stay in shape, and when the time comes, I can't let it bother me," Williams said Tuesday. "I'm using the summer league to stay in shape, so I'm still confident."

Since Williams wasn't taken in the June 28 NBA Draft like Wallace and Stackhouse, the Garner native would have used the July camps to find an NBA home.

"I was disappointed — I think everybody wants to be drafted — but things like that happen, and I can't let it bother me," he said. "I just have to play like I've been playing. If they like me, I'll be there. If they don't, I'll move on to other things."

Phelps, who was jilted in last year's draft, has some advice for his former teammate.

"Don't let not getting drafted get you



DTH FILE PHOTO

Former UNC guard Donald Williams is keeping in shape during the NBA lockout by playing in the Chavis League at St. Augustine's College.

down," he said. "Keep your head up, because you always have the opportunity to make yourself better. With the lockout it's hard for free agents to make the veteran camps right now."

Phelps played for the Bucks in their rookie league last summer and then starred in the CBA before signing with the Sacramento Kings for the last five games this year.

Not getting drafted in the second round allowed him to choose which team he felt he could make.

The 6-foot-3 Williams said he would play either point or shooting guard in the NBA.

"Wherever the team needs me at, that's where I'm going to play," he said. "I'm going to go in and work on my point guard

skills and my shooting skills, and stay sharp."

Phelps Looks for New Team

When Phelps was taken by Vancouver in the expansion draft in June, it essentially meant nothing. The selection made the East Elmhurst, N.Y., native an unrestricted free agent, meaning he could sign with any team except the team that he was taken from, Sacramento.

"It's a good situation in a way, and it's a bad situation, so I just have to make the best of it," he said. "But I still have other options, so I don't have to be loyal to one team."

Phelps said if there wasn't a lockout, he would have gone to the 76ers or the Jazz's free agent camp.

ther, Gary Milanovich, refused to comment Tuesday, saying he had not had a chance to discuss the NCAA's decision with his son.

Yow said Coach Mark Duffner "hopes to influence the individual to complete his education" at College Park.

The holder of several school passing records, Milanovich had reportedly been considering entering the NFL's supplemental draft if his punishment was not reduced.

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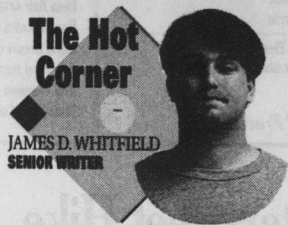
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SHOW TIMES FOR FRIDAY THRU THURSDAY

Neutral Boss Could Save Baseball



The Hot Corner
JAMES D. WHITFIELD
SENIOR WRITER

Baseball just doesn't seem like the same old lovable game of the past. Maybe it's because there was no World Series last year. Possibly it's because the season has been shortened.

But baseball's failure to solve many of its major problems continues to be the dark cloud over many-a-ballpark.

The game has applied band-aid after band-aid to stop the bleeding. The owners and players have bent over backwards, attempting to appease the fans. Promotions and free baseball are nice, but is this the real cure to what is ailing baseball?

Major league baseball hasn't even gotten its hands dirty. Half-price admission and free baseball cards give fans temporary reasons to come to the park. These enticements definitely aren't permanent.

In order to set major league baseball back on the right path, there are a few things which have to be taken care of:

■ First and foremost, baseball needs a commissioner.

I said it last summer, almost a month before the strike (July 14, 1994, The Daily Tar Heel), and I'll say it again: without any common ground (the commissioner), nothing can get resolved. Owners and players' feet will remain in cement, and one of two things will happen: either a salary cap will be implemented and the players will walk away mad, or the labor agreement stays like it is, allowing salaries to skyrocket and leaving owners mad.

Either way, baseball loses without a compromise.

That's why baseball needs someone who looks out for the best interests of the game, taking sides with neither the owners or the

players.

And his name isn't Bud Selig.

■ After naming a neutral commissioner, baseball needs a collective bargaining agreement that will stretch far into the future.

Without any assurance of a World Series this year or a season next year, fans will continue venturing to the ballpark or staying at home with skepticism.

A collective bargaining agreement makes things simple: No strikes. No lockouts. Just hot dogs, beer and baseball.

■ Next, baseball needs a lucrative television contract. While it's unlikely television will get all its wishes because of the poor ratings over the past five years, it still needs to push for a few things — televised coverage of all postseason games and one more national game on the weekend besides ESPN's Sunday Night Baseball. How many fans in America miss NBC's Game of the Week with Vin Scully and Joe Garagiola?

■ After getting the major framework out of the way, baseball will need to mull over minor points. One is the marketing of its players.

Aside from Ken Griffey, Jr., and Frank

Thomas, not many baseball players have high marketability like other athletes. Baseball needs to find ways to put Carlos Perez and Matt Williams' faces on billboards and buses.

They, an ad campaign with Perez holding numchucks and the music "Everybody Was Kung-Fu Fighting" in the background would be quite entertaining.

■ Fans just can't sit and enjoy the many intricacies in baseball. They need action, like slam dunks and hail-mary passes.

Many have proposed measures which will speed up the game to get more fans excited about the game. All baseball has to do is juice up the ball a little.

A good 1-0 game is great, but the majority of American fans like offense. So allow the marquee hitters to hit record long balls.

And when the long-ball hitters do go deep, set fireworks off in the background. Heck, give out free beer when someone goes deep.

Along those lines, how about this for a promotion: everyone drinks free until the home team hits a homer.

The bottom line is that baseball needs to be flexible. It needs to look toward the future and find someone or something that can carry it into the 21st century.

It can't afford to do nothing. Even if owners and players continue their stubborn ways, baseball will live. Kids will still play Little League and adults will remember how fast they ran around the bases when they hit their first home run.

But, if it hasn't already, baseball will lose its status as "America's National Pastime" as owners and players squabble over maintaining the status quo.

Maryland QB's Suspension Reduced to 4 Games

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — A University of Maryland athlete, believed to be star quarterback Scott Milanovich, had his NCAA suspension for gambling reduced to four games.

In the most severe penalty handed to a Division I athlete for gambling, the NCAA originally suspended the unidentified player for eight games.

But after hearing the player's appeal Tuesday, the NCAA's eligibility committee cut the punishment in half.

Maryland athletic director Debbie Yow said the reduction supports the university's contention that the original penalty was excessive.

Still, it is double the two games the university recommended.

"While we disagree with that, we plan to honor that decision," Yow said in a conference call Tuesday night.

The suspension was one of five given to Maryland athletes by the NCAA on July 10.

Four of the athletes gave the university permission to release their names. The fifth, according to sources, is Milanovich, but the school and NCAA again refused to confirm that Tuesday.

Milanovich, who allegedly placed six bets on college games totaling \$200 during the fall of 1992, 1993 and 1994, has not commented publicly on the case. His fa-

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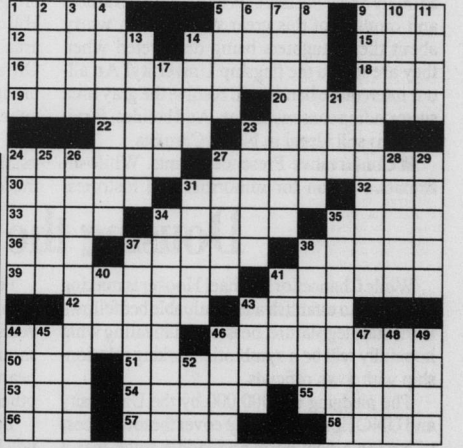
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 - Small drink
 - Baltic native
 - Recent meetings
 - Unctuous
 - Seattle sound
 - Rider's perch
 - Musical composition
 - City in Spain
 - Entertained sumptuously
 - "Rabbi — Ezra" (Browning)
 - Finish last
 - Smooth and effortless
 - Braid
 - Incite attacks
 - Ride a sled
 - Attorney general, once
 - Solemn entreaters
 - Analyzed sentences
 - Speechify
 - Sweet rolls
- DOWN
- Record
 - Lincoln and Burrows
 - Furnished
 - Be lovely-dovey
 - Adventure tale
 - king
 - Taught classes
 - Came into view
 - London lawmen
 - Squadron
 - up (invigorates)
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