

In the Trenches

# This Team Can Score

*With a veteran offensive line and solid skill players, UNC should burn out a few scoreboard bulbs this year.*

By JAMES WHITFIELD  
SPORTSATURDAY EDITOR



Leon Johnson caught everyone by surprise.

"We may put up 40 or 50 points a game," said Johnson at a preseason press conference.

Hold on a second, I.J. That's a whole slew of points. In fact, in UNC's 100-plus years of football, North Carolina has scored over 40 points on 93 occasions. And in that same span, UNC has tallied 50-plus points just 30 times.

Well, our cover subject was exaggerating a bit. He realized what he said and tried to clarify it by saying that the UNC offense can't put those kind of numbers on the scoreboard every game.

But it's a point well taken. For anyone who has watched the evolution of North Carolina football, "From Dismal to Disney" as one DTH sports editor put it, this team's offensive potential is frightening.

Never before has a Mack Brown team had this kind of potential. From line to skill players, the Tar Heels are loaded.

Let's start with quarterback Mike Thomas. The Hamlet senior's arm should spread the UNC offense all over the field.

No longer can opposing teams ignore the pass and key on stopping the run. That's happened a few times in the past and has slowed the Tar Heel offense considerably.

If Thomas can cut out a few bad throws and hang on to the ball more, his arm could lead him into the North Carolina record book.

Complementing Thomas are receivers Marcus Wall and Octavus Barnes. Wall set a Tar Heel season record with nine touchdown catches last year and possesses stellar speed.

Barnes blossomed late in the year with 165 yards receiving against Duke, including a 71-yard catch that won the game.

But UNC's attack isn't just limited to the air.

In the backfield, there's I.J. He can run and catch with the best of the ACC. He has a knack for getting into the end zone, as his 160 points over his two-year career might suggest.

There's little question that the skill players are as good as any who have suited up in a UNC uniform.

However, the most important key lies with the big men up front. Few people realize how stacked the North Carolina offensive line is.

Thanks to injuries over the past few seasons and the coaching philosophy of offensive line coach Eddie Williamson, the Tar Heels have plenty of depth at every position.

Williamson has substituted regularly, bringing many young linemen key game experience. Injuries to Scott Overbeck and Pat Conneely also forced youngsters into the game.

So not only is this year's line big and talented, they have big-game experience as well.

With that experience comes depth. As

long as everyone stays healthy, UNC will have enough linemen to fill each position twice.

Now the Tar Heel two-deep really does go two-deep. Sophomore Ryan Hoffman is the only player listed at two different positions. He is scheduled to start tonight's game at left tackle and could back up Russell Babb at right tackle.

These factors build the right equation for the UNC offense. Yes, the fullbacks are inexperienced, and depth behind Leon Johnson is limited, but the heart of the team could keep the points coming in bunches this year.

It might not be 40 or 50 points a game, but don't bet against a 30-point average. With this offense, who knows?

## FIELD OF DREAMS

Doesn't the open-container law really suck for football games? No more tailgating and having a few beers on a cool, autumn day. C'mon, UNC's pregame atmosphere already trails N.C. State and East Carolina dramatically. Let football fans have their fun. They've never caused any problems in the past to warrant this. ... You'll have plenty more chances to see the North Carolina football team after tonight. Next Saturday's game at Maryland will be on ACC television, and the Sept. 21 game at Louisville will be televised by ESPN. ... Free safety Sean Boyd has started more consecutive games than any other Tar Heel. Currently, Boyd's streak is 25 starts.

# DTH SportSaturday

## COVER STORY



## 8 IJ: Looking for the Spotlight

Junior tailback Leon Johnson no longer has to split time in the backfield. That's good news for him because he wants to become UNC's all-time scoring leader.

By JAMES WHITFIELD

## 10 Beefy Schedule

After years of playing the likes of Army, Navy and UConn, Director of Athletics John Swofford (right) has lined up some stringent competition. The Tar Heels take on Syracuse and Louisville in '95.



By JOSEPH ROLISON

## FEATURES

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# DTH SportSchedule

## Division I Football

### SATURDAY

#### EAST

Purdue at West Virginia, Noon  
Lock Haven at Maine, 1 p.m.  
Gannon at St. Francis, Pa., 1 p.m.  
Monmouth, N.J. at Marist, 1:30 p.m.  
Waynesburg at Robert Morris, 1:30 p.m.  
Fordham at Buffalo, 7 p.m.  
Washington St. at Pittsburgh, 7 p.m.  
Nicholls St. at Hofstra, 7:30 p.m.

#### SOUTH

Furman at Georgia Tech, 12:10 p.m.  
South Carolina at Georgia, 12:30 p.m.  
W. Carolina at Clemson, 1 p.m.  
Rhode Island at Delaware St., 1 p.m.  
VMI at Richmond, 1 p.m.  
Morehouse at Hampton U., 1:30 p.m.  
Grambling St. at Alcorn St., 3:30 p.m.  
Duke vs. Florida St. at Orlando, Fla., 3:30 p.m.  
Alabama St. at Ala.-Birmingham, 4 p.m.  
Houston at Florida, 6 p.m.  
Morgan St. at James Madison, 6 p.m.  
Mississippi at Auburn, 7 p.m.  
Howard U. at Bethune-Cookman, 7 p.m.  
Newberry at Citadel, 7 p.m.  
Tuskegee at Florida A&M, 7 p.m.  
S. Carolina St. at Georgia Southern, 7 p.m.  
Louisville at Kentucky, 7 p.m.  
Tennessee St. at Middle Tenn., 7 p.m.  
Memphis at Mississippi St., 7 p.m.  
East Carolina at Tennessee, 7 p.m.  
Charleston Southern at Tn.-Chattanooga, 7 p.m.  
William & Mary at Virginia, 7 p.m.  
W. Virginia Tech at Liberty, 7:30 p.m.  
Syracuse at North Carolina, 7:30 p.m.  
NW Louisiana at Southern U., 8 p.m.  
Maryland at Tulane, 8 p.m.  
Alabama at Vanderbilt, 8 p.m.

#### MIDWEST

Albany, Ga. at Dayton, 1 p.m.  
Youngstown St. at Kent, 1 p.m.  
Howard Payne at Butler, 1:30 p.m.  
Ky. Wesleyan at Evansville, 2 p.m.  
Cincinnati at Kansas, 2 p.m.  
Mo. Western at Drake, 2:30 p.m.  
Northwestern at Notre Dame, 2:30 p.m.  
Michigan at Illinois, 3:30 p.m.  
E. Michigan at Akron, 6 p.m.  
Temple at Kansas St., 7:10 p.m.  
North Texas at Missouri, 7:30 p.m.  
McNeese St. at SW Missouri St., 8 p.m.  
Colorado at Wisconsin, 8 p.m.

#### SOUTHWEST

LSU at Texas A&M, 3:30 p.m.  
Utah St. at Arkansas St., 7 p.m.  
Baylor at Tulsa, 7 p.m.  
UNLV at Rice, 8 p.m.  
Jacksonville St. at Sam Houston St., 8 p.m.  
Arkansas at Southern Meth., 8 p.m.  
N. Iowa at Stephen F. Austin, 8 p.m.

#### FAR WEST

Brigham Young at Air Force, 12:30 p.m.  
Montana St. at Colorado St., 3 p.m.  
Arizona St. at Washington, 3:30 p.m.  
E. New Mexico at Montana, 3:35 p.m.  
W. Montana at Cal Poly-SLO, 4 p.m.  
Idaho at Oregon St., 4 p.m.  
Sonoma St. at St. Mary's, Cal., 4 p.m.  
SW Louisiana at Nevada, 4:05 p.m.  
Stanford at San Jose St., 4:30 p.m.  
N. Arizona at New Mexico, 8 p.m.  
Miami at UCLA, 8 p.m.  
Texas-El Paso at New Mexico St., 8:30 p.m.  
Angelo St. at S. Utah, 9 p.m.  
Oregon at Utah, 9:05 p.m.

Pacific at Arizona, 10 p.m.  
NE Louisiana at Fresno St., 10 p.m.  
CSU-Chico at San Diego, 10 p.m.  
California at San Diego St., 10:30 p.m.  
Texas at Hawaii, 12:05 a.m.

### SUNDAY

N. Carolina A&T vs. N.C. Central at Raleigh, 4 p.m.  
Jackson St. vs. Alabama A&M at Birmingham, Ala., 8 p.m.

#### SOUTHWEST

Miss. Valley St. at Ark.-Pine Bluff, 8 p.m.  
Prairie View at Texas Southern, 8:30 p.m.

## NFL Week 1

### SUNDAY

Cincinnati at Indianapolis, 1 p.m.  
Cleveland at New England, 1 p.m.  
Houston at Jacksonville, 1 p.m.  
Carolina at Atlanta, 1 p.m.  
San Francisco at New Orleans, 1 p.m.  
Tampa Bay at Philadelphia, 1 p.m.  
St. Louis at Green Bay, 1 p.m.  
Detroit at Pittsburgh, 1 p.m.  
N.Y. Jets at Miami, 4 p.m.  
San Diego at Los Angeles, 4 p.m.  
Arizona at Washington, 4 p.m.  
Kansas City at Seattle, 4 p.m.  
Minnesota at Chicago, 4 p.m.  
Buffalo at Denver, 8 p.m.

### MONDAY

Dallas at N.Y. Giants, 9 p.m.