



DTH FILE PHOTO

The North Carolina men's swimming and diving team placed 10 swimmers in four individual finals to race to first place in the ACC men's swimming championships. The event continues through Saturday at Koury Natatorium.

Deep attack propels Tar Heels to early lead in swimming ACCs

BY DAVE ALEXANDER
STAFF WRITER

The North Carolina men's swimming and diving team couldn't have asked for a better start to its quest for a fourth straight league title Thursday at Koury Natatorium.

The Tar Heels used their depth and a few outstanding individual efforts to propel them to the front of the pack after the first night of the 44th annual ACC Men's Swimming Championship.

"It's wonderful to have the lead," UNC coach Frank Comfort said. "It's got to be the team effort, and today was absolutely that."

No. 14 UNC, which has won six of the past eight conference crowns, placed 10 swimmers in four individual event finals en route to a first-day total of 237.5 points.

Twelfth-ranked Florida State is second with 214 despite winning three of six events. FSU is followed by No. 19 N.C. State (194.5) and Virginia (156). All three teams are poised to challenge the Tar Heels over the weekend.

Clemson (99), Maryland (67), Duke (62) and Georgia Tech (59) rounded out

the competition. UNC's only victory came from junior Eric Fehr, who captured the 200 individual medley in a time of 1:48.61. Fehr trailed early in the race but rallied to take first.

"It feels great," Fehr said. "The points for the team are the big thing. It's very big to give the team a boost and come out of today in first place."

Tar Heel sophomore Tom Schmelzer placed second in the same race.

But North Carolina's biggest accomplishments came during the morning trials.

UNC proved that it is the deepest team in the field by placing 15 swimmers in event and consolation finals, more than any other squad.

"You've got to be so successful in the morning, or you don't get the opportunity at night," Comfort said. "I'm grat-



UNC swimming coach FRANK COMFORT said a strong team effort earned the Tar Heels the lead.

ified that people realized that they had to swim superbly in the morning."

The Tar Heels will need to continue their success this morning if they hope to maintain their narrow lead.

"The coaching staff and our captains really emphasize being up for the morning," Fehr said. "That's where we really try to key because the morning is crucial to getting people in finals."

Thursday's quick start has put UNC right where it wants to be — at the front of the pack. Now, the Tar Heels are looking to ride their momentum through the weekend.

"We've got a lot of confidence," Fehr said. "We're looking to build off of what we did today and just keep getting better."

The Tar Heels will continue their championship drive today and Saturday with preliminaries at noon and finals at 7 p.m.

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Baseball to battle Big East bombers

STAFF REPORT

A freshman has pitched in all seven games the North Carolina baseball team has played so far in 1997.

UNC coach Mike Roberts will look for continued improvement in his young hurlers this weekend as the Tar Heels take on Big East opponents Seton Hall and Connecticut.

"We have good arms — we just need experience," Roberts said.

UNC (3-4) will take on Seton Hall for a three-game set at Boshamer Stadium, beginning Friday at 3 p.m.

The Tar Heels will also take on the Pirates at 11 a.m. on Saturday and noon Sunday before battling Connecticut at 3 on Sunday.

Roberts said this weekend's games would help prepare his team for the conference slate.

He said, "I'm trying to give our young team a chance to play a lot of games early before ACC play starts."

Men's tennis to tackle Tribe

It's time for the North Carolina men's tennis team to make an adjustment.

Forget the fact that the No. 14 Tar

Heels (5-0) have slaughtered most of their opponents to date. UNC has a problem with foot faults, where a player's foot touches the white baseline before he strikes his serve.

Umpires repeatedly cited Tar Heel players for the violation against UNC-Asheville on Wednesday. And as UNC prepares for an 11 a.m. showdown with William & Mary on Saturday at Cone-Kennedy Center, North Carolina coach Sam Paul hopes he doesn't have to hear the call nearly as much.

"When it gets to a big match, big point, we don't want to do that," Paul said. "That's not a negative, it's something we can work on."

Women lacrossers to battle top teams

The North Carolina women's lacrosse team will get a look at some of the nation's top teams — and see where it fits in — Saturday at the South of the Border Tournament.

The round-robin tournament will feature 28 teams, some from as far away as Japan, in 35-minute games at Fetzer Field and on the Duke campus.

The Tar Heels will open with an 8:45 a.m. match against Maryland-Baltimore County, followed by matches with Princeton, Delaware, Hofstra and Dartmouth.

"We're really excited to be playing everyone," UNC coach Jenny Shingluff said. "Princeton is ranked No. 4, so we really want to see how we stack up against them."

Softball sets sights on 49ers

UNC's (1-9) Wednesday matchup with UNC-Greensboro was postponed due to rain, but the Tar Heels will return to action at Finley Field on Saturday in a doubleheader with UNC-Charlotte starting at 1 p.m.

Tar Heels pitcher Brandy Arthur ought to benefit the most from the rest, as she was scheduled to pitch Wednesday after throwing a shutout vs. Eastern Michigan on Tuesday. Arthur will likely start against the 49ers.

The game with UNC-C is the Tar Heels' first Southern Atlantic Alliance matchup and has postseason implications for both squads.

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