

The Daily Tar Heel



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Tuesday, September 7, 1999
Volume 107, Issue 68

News/Features/Arts/Sports 962-0245
Business/Advertising 962-1163
Chapel Hill, North Carolina
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Wrestler to Face Sentencing

A jury ruled that Clyde "Billy" Blunt was not liable in last year's death of N.C. State student Neil Davis.

By **MATTHEW B. DEES**
State & National Editor

RALEIGH — Former N.C. State University wrestler Clyde "Billy" Blunt faces sentencing today for misdemeanor breaking and entering after a jury acquitted him Friday of the more serious

charge of involuntary manslaughter. The jury of eight women and four men took 3 1/2 hours to decide Blunt was not liable for the shooting death of fellow student Neil Vernon Davis. The verdict came as a dramatic crescendo to the already emotionally charged trial. Tears streamed down the cheeks of Blunt's family as fellow wrestlers either celebrated by pumping their arms in the air or tried to stifle their own sobs of relief. Davis' high school friends and fraternity brothers wept bitterly and clung to

each other before exiting the courtroom through a side entrance. Davis' mother, Dorothy, who wore black during most of the trial, remained seated in the front row of the courtroom in an apparent state of shock as family friends offered their condolences. The families and lawyers of Blunt and Davis would not comment Friday. The verdict was issued just before 5 p.m. Friday, capping a weeklong trial that marked the final chapter of an incident that shook the N.C. State campus and the surrounding community. Blunt was accused of criminal negli-

gence for barging into Davis' bedroom in the early morning hours of Nov. 23 after an intoxicated Davis had fired several shots at a party across the street, one of which ricocheted off a vehicle and struck one of Blunt's fellow wrestlers in the shoulder. Davis was fatally shot in the stomach with his own gun during a struggle with Blunt, which Blunt alleged was merely an attempt to disarm Davis. After hearing closing arguments Friday morning, jurors were charged by



DTH/GREG WOLF

A Raleigh courtroom was filled to capacity Friday as the crowd awaited a verdict in the manslaughter trial of a former N.C. State wrestler.

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Nieman Takes Helm of ASG For 2nd Time

Jeff Nieman replaced Nick Mirisis as ASG president Friday, bringing an end to months of scandal surrounding ASG's leadership.

By **KATHLEEN HUNTER**
Assistant State & National Editor

Members of the UNC Association of Student Governments sought to restore stability to their organization when they voted 38-12 to elect Jeff Nieman as president during a special election held Friday at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Nieman, who served as ASG president from July 1998 until June, was pitted against Richard Wheelahan, a sophomore from Appalachian State University.

Nick Mirisis, former student body president at UNC-Chapel Hill, was elected to replace Nieman as ASG president in April but decided to resign the post during the summer after admitting to plagiarizing a paper for a class.

"I think Jeff is the most capable person to lead the association into the next century," said UNC-CH Student Body President Nic Heinke, who spoke on Nieman's behalf prior to the election. "After the chaos of the summer, someone with experience is needed."

Nieman said he was looking forward to following up on several initiatives he worked on last year. In a speech to the delegation, Nieman cited a sound tuition policy, the need for capital improvements funding, a state-run program for need-based financial aid and an increased financial base for the ASG as issues he would tackle this year.

Raj Mirchandani, N.C. State University's student body president, also expressed confidence in Nieman's ability to lead the ASG. "Jeff is a person about action, not just words," he said. "What he says he does follow up on."

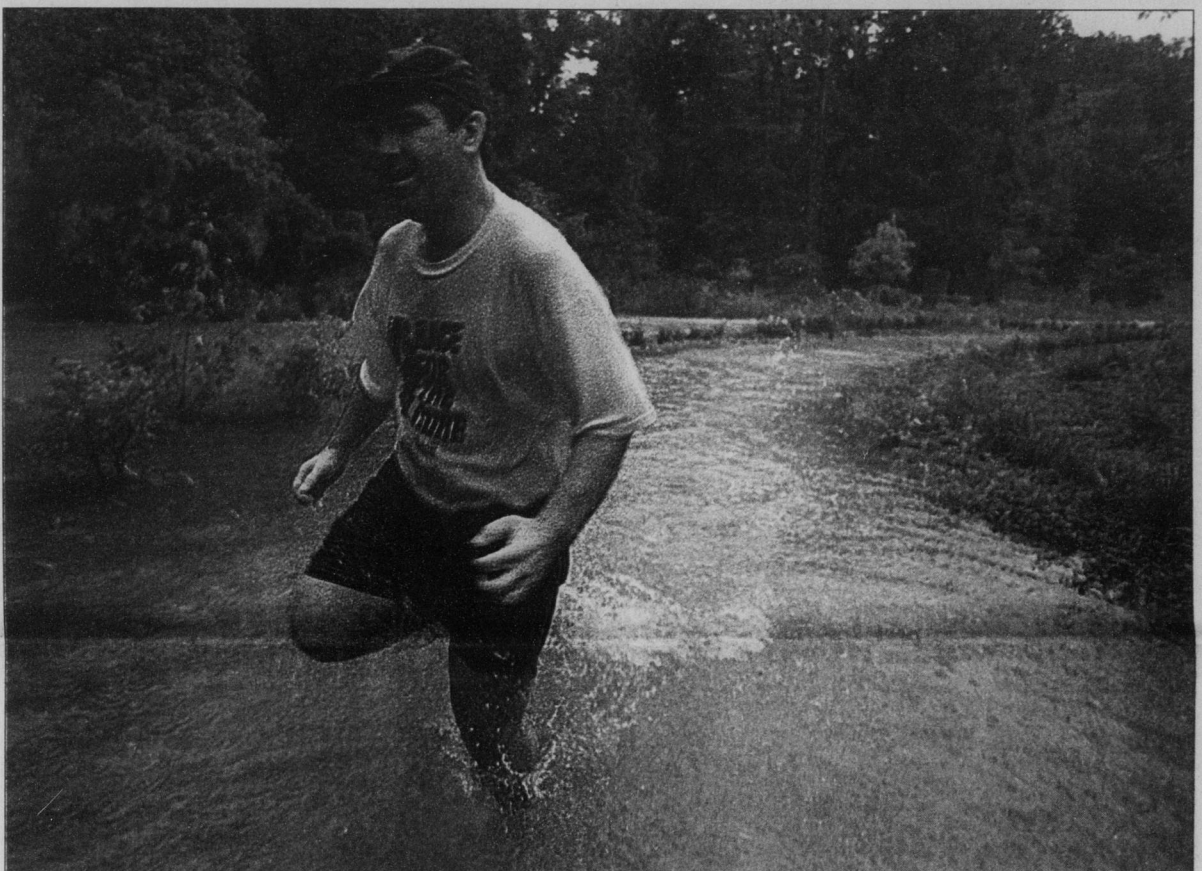
Wheelahan, Nieman's opponent, fielded questions from the delegation about his age and qualifications during the question and answer period before the election.

Lee Conner, president of UNC-CH's Graduate and Professional Student Federation, mentioned Wheelahan's lack of experience lobbying the N.C. General Assembly, and UNC-C Student Body Vice President Duvonne Everett questioned whether 18-year-old Wheelahan was too young to gain the respect of legislators.



Former ASG President **Jeff Nieman** was re-elected to a second term Friday.

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DTH/DAVID SANDLER

John McVickar attempts to run through a flooded portion of the Bolin Creek Trail near Franklin Street on Sunday. The remnants of Hurricane Dennis drenched the region over the weekend, leaving area creeks swollen with drastically higher water levels.

Dennis Leftovers Flood Chapel Hill

By **RYAN STEWART**
AND **AURA STOEHR**
Staff Writers

Chapel Hill and Carrboro were battered by high winds and the most recorded rainfall in Orange County history as the remains of Hurricane Dennis stalled over the area this weekend.

More than 10 inches of rain fell on the region over the weekend, knocking over trees and causing low-lying areas to flood.

Extensive rain from the remnants of Dennis downed a tree on Airport Road around 9 p.m. Monday, according to Chapel Hill Fire Department officials.

The fallen tree blocked two lanes of traffic while workers from the Fire Department used chainsaws to clear the tree from the road.

Triangle Gets Soaked by Weekend Deluge
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Scott Falics, of Chapel Hill police, said the main concern of the officers was to ensure the safety of drivers. "We want to make sure no one hits the tree."

It took the workers about 40 minutes to clear the remnants of the tree.

Several sewers overflowed in the towns during the weekend, and University Lake rose several inches during the highest two-day rainfall period recorded in the county's history.

Dennis deposited more rain than past

storms. Ed Kerwin, director of Orange Water and Sewer Authority, said the organization began keeping rainfall records in 1934.

"This tropical depression just sat over us," he said. "It was almost stationary."

On the University campus, several buildings were flooded and cars were damaged by downed trees. A UNC building located at 208 N. Columbia St. was hit with

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Outgoing President Offers Apology

By **KATHLEEN HUNTER**
Assistant State & National Editor

Nick Mirisis' tumultuous presidency of the UNC Association of Student Governments formally ended Friday when he apologized to the delegation and stepped down as its leader.

Mirisis, who decided to resign as ASG president after admitting to plagiarizing a paper for his Peace, War and Technology class at UNC-Chapel Hill, offered student leaders a formal apology during the ASG's first meeting of the year. "As tonight formally ends my association with this excellent organization, we will revisit the past, those events that precipitated the present, and we will examine how the present can form a brighter future," Mirisis said.

Mirisis then described the events that transpired this summer as "a cross between Beverly Hills 90210 and Spin City," blasting reporters at the University Times, UNC-Chapel Hill's newspaper, for attempting to smear his public image. The University Times broke the story of

Mirisis' academic trouble in its June 21 edition.

At points during his speech, particularly when he spoke of the friendships he had developed through the ASG, Mirisis paused to regain his composure. "I have been on quite a journey these last few weeks, and it is important to me that everybody who has been hurt by my actions and whose trust I betrayed know the sorrow and guilt I feel is genuine," he said.

Mirisis also held a closed session during the ASG Board of Directors meeting Friday. This allowed the system's 16 student body presidents to voice concerns, out of media glare, about the implications of Mirisis' academic dishonesty.

Nic Heinke, UNC-Chapel Hill student body president, said the closed meeting helped the delegation move forward with a united front. "A lot of very honest concerns were said and I think all 17 of us understand the point that we are at," Heinke said.

He said he was confident the ASG could move forward in the wake of the scandal surrounding its former president. "As far as the

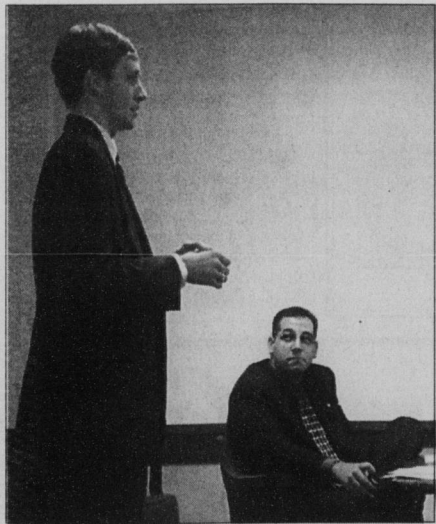
credibility of the organization, I think it has been hurt a little bit," he said. "But I don't think it has suffered damage beyond repair."

Heinke said he looked forward to seeing the ASG accomplish its goals under the leadership of its new president, Jeff Nieman. "This year is the time for the ASG delegation to step up and show that the ASG is a powerful force for higher education in North Carolina," he said.

Other ASG representatives also said they respected Mirisis' handling of his resignation. Nieman said Mirisis' apology made him consider what Mirisis could have accomplished.

But Nieman said Mirisis did the right thing by stepping down. "We had an excellent example of someone who showed poor judgement and out of respect for the association, he stepped down and allowed someone else to fill the role," he said. "I don't excuse or condone what he did, but I think he has made amends."

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DTH/VICTORIA ECKENRODE

Jeff Nieman (left) addresses the ASG on Friday as Nick Mirisis, who resigned as president, looks on.

INSIDE
Tuesday

The Mac Daddy

Apple Computers Inc. recently released what they claim is the world's first "supercomputer," the Macintosh G4. Prices range from \$1,599 to \$6,498. See Page 2.

Class Act

Until Sept. 16, seniors can offer their input on the class gift at the DTH's online site at the following address: www.unc.edu/dth. Results will be published Sept. 17. Ballots are also available in our office.

Today's Weather

Sunny;
Low 90s.
Wednesday: Sunny;
High 80s.

You can't adopt politics as a profession and remain honest.

Louis McHenry Howe