

# Can the tar heels stop a Seminole? Stampedede!

North Carolina has never beaten Florida State. Is this UNC's year?

By BRIAN MURPHY  
Sports Editor

When top-ranked Florida State takes the field Saturday against North Carolina, it will have another ACC team on its mind.

This would be good news for the Tar Heels in most cases. Most cases concern the opponent looking past a team to its next foe or still riding the crest of an emotional win, limiting its concentration on the task at hand.

But this is not most cases because the Seminoles will not be remembering their 42-11 demolition of the Wolfpack last Saturday, nor will FSU be focusing its attention on a Oct. 5 contest with Duke.

Instead the Seminoles' thoughts will be on their 1998 game against N.C. State.

That's a bad thing for the Tar Heels. And that's just the way FSU coach Bobby Bowden wants it.

"We've been favored nearly every game for the past two or three years, so our motto is 'avoid the upset,'" Bowden said. "That's exactly what we talk to our players about. Avoid the upset."

"Can it occur? Yes, it occurred last year against North Carolina State."

That's what happens when your team has finished in The Associated Press top-4 for the past 12 years. That's the mentality that accompanies a team penciled in for an Alliance Bowl bid and a possible NCAA championship each year.

The Seminole dynasty has showed no signs of slowing in 1999. FSU enters Saturday's contest 3-0 with conference victories against Georgia Tech and N.C. State, teams expected to be among its top challenges in the ACC. With four returning All-Americans, the Seminoles' talent level is as high as ever.

And this year, Florida State has other reasons to dominate its opponents. Wide receiver Peter Warrick is aiming for the Heisman Trophy. Quarterback Chris Weinke is battling back from a neck injury. The 'Noles are seeking the undefeated season that has eluded Bowden so far.

Oh, add reasserting their belief that they, and they alone, rule the ACC to the Seminoles' to-do list.

Not that the Tar Heels are unaware of what they are up against. "It's one of those games where you know you're going against the best," UNC left guard Mike Gimbol said. "We've just got to take every play, every snap and give it our best shot."

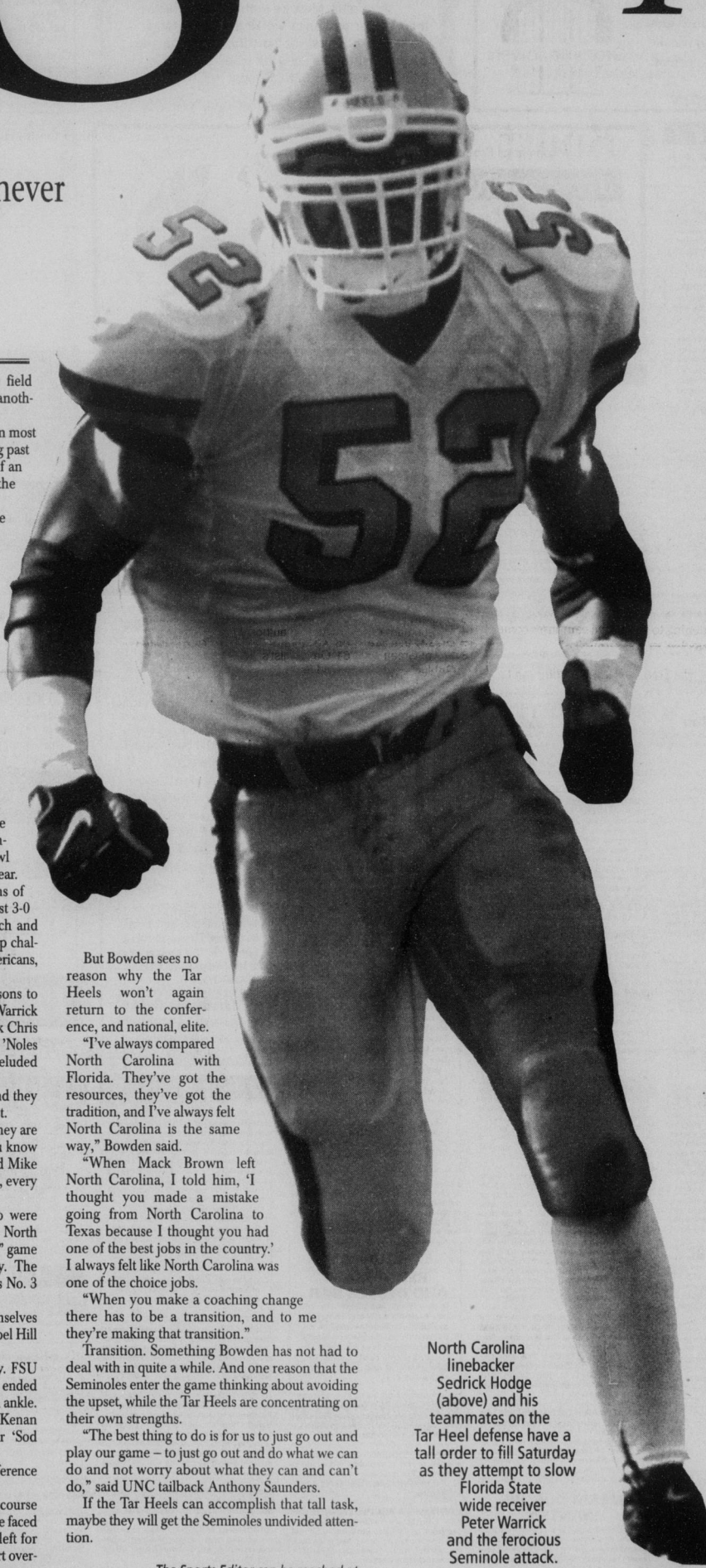
Two years ago, it was the Tar Heels who were poised to knock the Seminoles off their perch. North Carolina entered the Nov. 7th "Judgement Day" game unbeaten and ranked No. 5 in the country. The Seminoles, also unbeaten, brought the nation's No. 3 ranking to Kenan Stadium.

ESPN showed up. Fans nearly trapped themselves against the stadium gates before the game. Chapel Hill was at a fever pitch.

The Seminoles crashed the party — quickly. FSU sacked Tar Heel quarterbacks nine times. They ended starter Oscar Davenport's season with a broken ankle. After the 20-3 victory, they ripped up the Kenan Stadium sod and brought it home for their 'Sod Cemetery.'

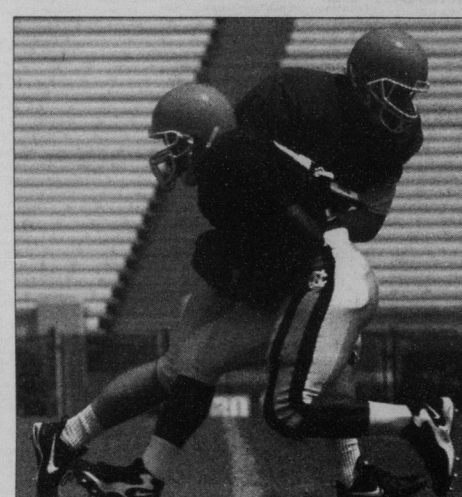
Thus ended the first challenge to FSU's conference supremacy.

While the Seminoles have continued their course since the game two years ago, the Tar Heels have faced a number of challenges. Coach Mack Brown left for Texas after the 1997 campaign. A dismal 0-3 start overshadowed last season's 7-5 record. This season, Virginia topped UNC on a last-second field goal.



North Carolina linebacker Sedrick Hodge (above) and his teammates on the Tar Heel defense have a tall order to fill Saturday as they attempt to slow Florida State wide receiver Peter Warrick and the ferocious Seminole attack.

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North Carolina freshman tailback Daniel Davis, who ran for 77 yards against Indiana, should be the future of the Tar Heel rushing attack.

DTH/MILLER PEARSALL

## Talkative Davis Dazzles With Running Prowess

By EVAN MARKFIELD  
Assistant Sports Editor

The only part of Daniel Davis' body that might move as fast as his legs is his mouth.

The speedy freshman tailback has earned a reputation among his North Carolina teammates as not only a runner with lots of potential but also a young man whose lips scarcely cease moving.

"He has the gift of gab," senior fullback Deon Dyer said, laughing. "He's a good kid though. Some people have to talk a lot. That's their personality."

Luckily for the Tar Heels, Davis' silver tongue is complemented by his golden feet.

The Stafford, Va., native scampered his way to 77 yards on 13 carries to lead UNC in his debut two weeks ago against Indiana. Davis had big runs on three Tar Heel touchdown drives in UNC's 42-30 win.

Davis rushed for 2,039 yards and 33 touchdowns in his senior year at Brooke Point High School, earning All-America honors. On top of that, he was the Gatorade and USA Today Player of the Year in Virginia.

Now Davis' performance in UNC's practices and against Indiana has teammates talking about more than his chatty nature.

"(Davis) creates a threat back there that some of the other guys don't create with his slashing," Tar Heel quarterback Ronald Curry said. "He's a very excellent back."

While Curry added that Davis had some things to learn about running — to lower his shoulders more when he hit a hole, for instance — the sophomore quarterback also said he saw qualities that set Davis apart as a dangerous tailback.

"You can't coach his vision," Curry

said. "You can't coach the moves he makes. That's just him."

Those moves had Davis slashing and dashing his way to the best rushing performance by a UNC freshman in his first game (in which he had a carry) since Leon Johnson — now playing for the New York Jets — rushed for 94 yards against Southern California in 1993.

Davis' status for Indiana had been questionable three days before the game because he developed an ulcer in his left eye caused by his contact lenses.

But prescription goggles from the optical lab at UNC Hospitals arrived in Bloomington the morning of the game, paving the way for Davis to get his college football career off to a good start.

And with the kind of running he's displayed thus far as a Tar Heel — like the 5.9 yards per carry average he tallied against the Hoosiers — it's only natural Davis might do a good deal of talking on the gridiron too.

"He likes to talk on the field to keep his confidence," Dyer said. "He's very confident I'll tell you that."

Game-time talking aside, his mates in the backfield said Davis seldom missed an opportunity to put in his two cents off the field.

"He can add on to any conversation," fellow tailback Rufus Brown said. "He just talks."

Maybe that's because Davis wants to be noticed all around Chapel Hill, not just in the cozy confines of Kenan Stadium when he's carrying the football. "He's the kind of person that loves attention," Dyer said. "And he's not gonna stop talking 'til he gets it."

But as much as Davis might talk, when it comes to leg speed versus lip speed, Dyer said it was no contest: "The legs, definitely."

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DTH FILE PHOTO

<p><b>No. 1 Florida State at North Carolina</b></p> <p>3-0, 2-0 in the ACC</p> <p>Kenan Stadium 3:30 p.m., Saturday Television: ABC, Radio: WCHL 1360-AM Series Record: Florida State leads 9-0-1</p>		<p><b>Key Players</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>UNC QB Ronald Curry:</b> The sophomore quarterback is the key to the Tar Heels' offense. His ability to run and pass will be essential to keeping the UNC offense on the field and moving.</li> <li>■ <b>FSU WR Peter Warrick:</b> The speedy wideout will continue his Heisman Trophy campaign Saturday against the Tar Heels' inexperienced secondary. It's a combination which could produce spectacular highlights and plenty of Seminole points.</li> </ul> <p>Peter Warrick</p>	<p><b>Key Matchups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>FSU Wideouts vs. UNC Secondary:</b> Warrick and the other Seminole wideouts have speed to burn. It's a speed the inexperienced Tar Heel secondary has not faced, and a trait game film cannot prepare one for.</li> <li>■ <b>UNC Offensive Line vs. FSU Defensive Line:</b> For the Tar Heels to win this game, the front five must control the Seminoles' front seven. If UNC's linemen can give Curry time to throw and tailback Daniel Davis room to run, the Tar Heels can move the ball. If not, Curry will be scrambling for his life — not a sight UNC's coaches want to see.</li> </ul> <p>Ronald Curry</p> <p>Daniel Davis</p>	<p><b>Final Analysis/Prediction</b></p> <p>The contest lacks the hype of two years ago, a factor that could work in the Tar Heels' favor. With bigger games on their schedule, there is the chance that Florida State could overlook UNC.</p> <p>But Seminole coach Bobby Bowden will not let that happen. He will have his team ready to play, as usual. And if that's the case, the Tar Heels just do not have the weapons to match the Seminoles' heavy arsenal. Look for Warrick to have a monster game.</p> <p>The Tar Heels will score early, but the Seminoles will score often.</p> <p><b>FSU 48, UNC 13</b></p> <p>Compiled by Brian Murphy</p>
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