

UNC Tennis Faces Early Test

By ROLAND HOFFMAN
Staff Writer

The North Carolina men's and women's tennis teams have something to prove in their first tournaments of the new year.

The men are set to rebound from a poor season a year ago. The women, on the other hand, are attempting to show the ACC that they are a true up-and-coming program.

Both will have their chances this weekend at the ACC Indoor Championships. The women will be competing at home at the Cone-Kenfield Tennis Center, while the men travel to Winston-Salem. Each tournament begins today and concludes Monday.

For the 27th-ranked women, the task will not be easy. Of the eight other ACC squads attending the event, seven are ranked in the top 64 in the country, with Duke topping the list at No. 4.

Close behind the Blue Devils is Wake Forest, ranked 11th. The Demon Deacons boast the top-ranked singles player in Adria Engel, while Duke's tandem of Gina Brio and Brooke Siebel hold the top doubles seed.

"Wake Forest is the hands-down favorite to win the conference this year,"

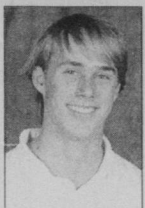
even though Duke is higher rated," UNC women's coach Roland Thornqvist said. "We're not too far behind those teams, however. We've closed the gap over the past few years."

In his second year, Thornqvist will call upon a strong freshman class to build upon last year's 16-9 record. Rookie Marlene Mejia leads the charge, coming in as the 52nd-ranked singles player.

In doubles play, the freshman pair of Kendrick Bunn and Kate Pinchbeck enter the event ranked 50th.

While the Tar Heels will rely on young talent, they also return several key players from last year's squad. Senior Jessica Zagaczky and junior Courtney Zalinski provide UNC with experience in singles action. In doubles play, junior Erin Niebling, paired with Mejia, will look to make an impact.

The biggest obstacle for the Tar Heels



Tar Heel senior Tripp Phillips returns to lead UNC this year after sitting out last season with a shoulder injury.

might not be the stiff competition, but instead their own injuries. Pinchbeck has been sick, and Niebling has been hobbled by a knee injury.

"We have a few players banged up," Thornqvist said. "If we can get everyone healthy, we'll be able to do well."

On the men's side, injuries are not a problem, but deciding who will play is. This tournament could be an opportunity for someone to step up and make an impact for the team.

"We have a really deep team, and we're still trying to figure out who our starters will be," UNC men's coach Sam Paul said. "Right now, we're looking for someone to have a breakthrough year."

The Tar Heels, looking to shrug off last season's 11-14 record, will rely on seniors Tripp Phillips and Assaf Drori.

While UNC is looking to start the season off on the right foot, Paul said he does not feel as though this tournament carries more weight than any other.

"There's really no increased pressure on us in this tournament," Paul said. "We're trying to get back on the right track. We just need to take it one day at a time."

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Dilbert®



THE Daily Crossword

By James E. Hinsh

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Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Cota, Newby Fail to Get Agreement

Associated Press

Six hours of negotiations Wednesday failed to yield an agreement between two North Carolina basketball players and the five people accusing them of assault.

If an agreement is not reached before Feb. 24, players Ed Cota and Terrence Newby, along with two other people, will be tried on assault charges stemming from a post-Halloween fight.

James Stanford, an attorney representing Cota and Newby, said he

remained "cautiously optimistic" that the parties can reach an agreement before the trial date.

"I think some progress was made," he said after Wednesday's mediation. "We did not resolve it, but the lines of communication are still open."

No date for a future meeting with mediators has been scheduled, Stanford said. If Cota and Newby reach an agreement with their accusers, all charges against them could be dropped.

"We want it resolved," Cota said. "We

want it over with."

The charges stem from a brawl early in the morning of Nov. 1. Cota and Newby claim they tried to break up the fight, but the accusers say they were assaulted.

The brawl ended with three injuries and several charges. Newby and Cota each face three charges of assault inflicting serious injury and two charges of simple assault. Lamont Bolden faces two charges of assault inflicting serious injury, and Edward Franklin Capel faces two charges of simple assault.

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