

Bersticker Sheds His Street Clothes

By BRIAN MURPHY
Senior Writer

North Carolina will have an extra player on the bench for Saturday's contest with Wake Forest. But the Tar Heels will only be able to use him for warmups.

Forward Brian Bersticker, out since December with a broken foot, dressed in uniform and went through pregame drills before Wednesday's win against N.C. State. The 6-foot-11 junior began light practice with the team last week.

"We're trying to push my foot as hard as it can go," Bersticker said after the Tar Heels' 70-62 victory. "It definitely felt good to be on the court without the suit and tie on, even if it was just warmup drills."

But the team has made no official decision on when - or, if - Bersticker will return this season. He is eligible for a medical redshirt if he doesn't return because he played in just five games before fracturing the fifth metatarsal on his left foot Dec. 3 against the College of Charleston.

"If it goes too long, then we'll talk to Brian about redshirting," Tar Heel coach Bill Guthridge said. "The farther it goes along, (redshirting) becomes a possibility. That decision will be his if it ever comes to that."

For now, Bersticker is just interested in getting healthy and "earning his scholarship," as Guthridge joked.

"I'm just trying to get back in shape, get back in playing shape, so hopefully I can contribute," said Bersticker, who was averaging 5.0 points and 2.8 rebounds per game before the injury.

Wake Hurting, Too

The Demon Deacons (13-10, 4-6 in the ACC) entered the season with NCAA aspirations after falling just short

THE LOWDOWN ON SATURDAY'S GAME

C **RAFAEL VIDAURRETA, 6-9**
Junior averages team-best 6.8 rebounds and ranks 20th in school history with 557 boards.

F **DARIUS SONGAILA, 6-9**
Sophomore averages 13.9 points and shoots 55.4 percent in ACC games.

F **JOSH HOWARD, 6-6**
Freshman has averaged 11.3 points and 6.2 rebounds in last six games.

G **ROBERT O'KELLEY, 6-1**
Junior averages team-best 15.0 points and chips in 2.2 assists per game.

G **JIM FITZPATRICK, 6-0**
Senior started his first game of the season Feb. 2 against Davidson.

Wake Forest (13-10, 4-6 in the ACC)

VS.

North Carolina (15-9, 6-4)

G **ED COTA, 6-1**
Senior needs 10 assists to move into sixth place on the NCAA all-time list.

G **JOSEPH FORTE, 6-4**
Freshman averages a team-best 15.7 points and grabs 5.5 boards per game.

F **JASON CAPEL, 6-8**
Sophomore ranks third on team in scoring (12.6) and second in rebounding (6.5).

F **KRIS LANG, 6-11**
Sophomore scored eight points and pulled down six rebounds vs. Wolfpack.

C **BRENDAN HAYWOOD, 7-0**
Junior has shot 70.7 percent with 15.7 points, 9.1 boards and 2.1 blocks in last seven games.

Game: Wake Forest at UNC
Time: 1:30 p.m.
Location: Dean E. Smith Center, Chapel Hill
Radio: 100.7 FM, WCHL-1360 AM
Television: ABC
Series Record: UNC leads 143-56.
Keys for UNC: The Tar Heels just need to keep playing as they have recently. They should give Brendan Haywood his touches on offense and maintain their improved intensity on defense. That formula has equaled success for the past few weeks and will do so again Saturday if UNC uses it.

Keys for Wake Forest: The Demon Deacons must score often against an improving-but-vulnerable UNC defense. They should get plenty of good shots against UNC's zone, especially from behind the arc where they shoot the second worst percentage (31.3) in the ACC. Wake needs to make some of those shots if it is to beat UNC for only the second time ever at the Smith Center.

UNC Bench: The Blue team is the current rage, playing short first-half stints in wins against Clemson and N.C. State. But Max Owens and Julius Peppers are the team's two legitimate bench threats.

Wake Forest Bench: Craig Dawson, former UNC star Jerry Stackhouse's nephew, leads a quartet of Deacons who average at least 4.7 points.

Prediction: UNC 74, Wake Forest 62
Compiled by T. Nolan Hayes

the last two years. But things have not turned out exactly like coach Dave Odom planned.

Now, he has had to adjust his starting lineup with the loss of starter Niki Arinze, who was averaging 5.4 points and 3.3 rebounds per game. Arinze has an injured tendon near his right ankle and will miss the rest of the season.

His absence has forced Odom to move preseason All-ACC pick Robert O'Kelley from point guard to shooting guard and insert seldom-used senior Jim

Fitzpatrick at point guard. O'Kelley, a junior, is averaging a team-best 15.0 points per game but has not been the consistent scoring threat he was during his first two seasons.

Wake's first meeting with UNC demonstrated O'Kelley's streaky nature. He missed all eight of his first-half shots before scoring 18 points in the second half and leading the Deacs to a 66-57 victory in Winston-Salem.

UNC's backcourt struggled in the loss, with Ed Cota and Joseph Forte shooting

just 4-of-22 from the floor. The loss to Wake began a streak of four consecutive losses for the Tar Heels (15-9, 6-4).

Since the streak, UNC has rebounded to win four of its last five to forge a second-place tie in the ACC with Maryland.

"The losses we had early in the season can help us bounce back," Cota said. "We've just got to take it one game at a time."

The Sports Editor can be reached at sports@unc.edu.

UNC Names Browning Defensive Coordinator

Football coach Carl Torbush turned the defense over to assistant Ken Browning after two years of double duty.

By **BRET STRELOW**
Assistant Sports Editor

North Carolina football coach Carl Torbush had fostered the defensive unit for the last 12 seasons.

He watched the group develop from a small speed bump in an opponent's path to a brick wall.

But after two years of juggling the titles "head coach" and "defensive coordinator," Torbush let go on Thursday, naming UNC assistant Ken Browning as the Tar Heels' new defensive coordinator.

"It wasn't a title I was necessarily looking for, and I told him that," Browning said. "I told him he needed to do what he felt like would help us win football games. Period."

Torbush took over as UNC's defensive coordinator in 1988, Mack Brown's first year as the team's head coach.

That season, the North Carolina defense allowed 35.5 points and 462 yards a game.

In Torbush's third year, the defense started a string of eight consecutive seasons in which it allowed less than 21.2 points a game.

The defense limited opponents to 10 points and 222.6 yards a game in 1996 and 13 points and 209.3 yards in 1997.

But in the two years in which Torbush has been the head honcho, the defense has given up 24.6 points and 360 yards a contest.

"After the first year, I felt in my heart at some point that I would name a defensive coordinator," Torbush said.

"I had talked to Kenny several times. I didn't think it was fair last year to name Kenny or really any of our other members of our coaching staff as defensive coordinator. I felt very honestly I

wasn't sure how good we could be last year."

The Tar Heel defense showed signs of improvement in the final three games of the season.

North Carolina gave up 19 points in a loss to Wake Forest before limiting N.C. State to six points and shutting out Duke.

"The way we finished gives us some impetus going into spring," Browning said. "Hopefully, it will be something there we can build off of."

Browning faces a task much like the one Torbush endured for the last two years. He will pull double duty and retain his role as coach of the Tar Heels' defensive line.

"I don't anticipate a problem there," said Browning, who has coached at UNC for six years. "There will be some adjustments that have to be made in practice organization to make sure that that goes smoothly."

Gunter Brewer, UNC's newly hired wide receivers coach, joined Browning at the press conference and met the media for the first time.

Brewer held the same position for three of his four years at Marshall and coached Minnesota Vikings wideout Randy Moss.

He said Moss' success in the NFL can be used to motivate UNC's corp of wideouts.

"I've got a lot of tape, a lot of cutups, even from the Vikings," Brewer said.

"I've got a lot of pro film, and I want them to watch themselves and then watch others and do a comparative analysis."

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New North Carolina defensive coordinator **Ken Browning** has been a member of the UNC coaching staff for six years.

Brown Hits Milestone as UNC Falls to Clemson

Staff Report

CLEMSON, S.C. - Krystal Scott and Chrissy Floyd each scored 15 points, and Erin Bath collected a career-high 15 rebounds as Clemson beat North Carolina 69-65 Thursday night at Littlejohn Coliseum.

UNC junior Juana Brown scored her 1,000th career point on a free throw with 1:25 left, her 16th point of the game.

Clemson (16-7, 7-4 in the ACC) made its first 13 foul shots of the game and finished 29-for-38 from the stripe in coach

Jim Davis' 275th career win at the school. UNC (12-11, 4-8) won the battle of the boards 50-38, but the Tar Heels shot 32 percent and committed 23 turnovers.

Bath scored 12 points, and Angie Cossey added 11 for Clemson.

Nikki Teasley led UNC with 18 points but hit just 6-of-20 shots from the field. Brown added 17 points and eight rebounds, while LaQuanda Barksdale, the ACC's leading scorer and rebounder, had 15 points and 13 rebounds.

The game was tied 7-7 with seven minutes elapsed when Clemson went on a 10-0 run. The Tar Heels opened the game 3-for-15 from the field.

The Tigers had a 37-30 lead in the second half before going on a 13-0 run.

Nuria Forns scored all eight of her points in that spurt, giving Clemson a 50-30 lead with 10 minutes left. UNC was just 2-for-13 from the field to start the second half.

But the Tar Heels did not quit. They cut the lead to 57-54 with 2:32 remaining on a 3-point play by Jackie Higgins.

Clemson then hit clutch free throws down the stretch. Scott made six straight inside the last two minutes, and Clemson led 67-58 with one minute to

play. But the Tar Heels converted a 4-point play, then stole the ball and scored again. They cut the margin to two points on consecutive 3-point goals by Teasley, the last coming with five seconds remaining.

Cossey was fouled with 3.7 seconds left. The senior guard stepped to the line having missed her last two free throws, but she calmly sank both to tie the game.

Women's Basketball
UNC 65
Clemson 69

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