

UNC Seeks to Prove Coach's Prediction True

By ADAM D. HILL
Staff Writer

This summer, before the fall golf season began, North Carolina women's coach Sally Austin made a bold prediction.

Austin ventured to say that if her young squad worked hard in the months leading up to the spring, it could compete with any team in the nation.

If Austin's words prove to be true, the 2000 version of the Tar Heels should make quite a turnaround from last year, when UNC finished ninth in the NCAA East Regional.

"The players have been working very hard," said Austin, who is in her seventh year as head coach. "This team, top to bottom, is very diligent in their work. We are getting better and better, and I'm excited about that."

Senior Marcy Newton is central to

UNC's hopes for a banner season. Newton, a two-time All-ACC golfer and preseason All-American, is looking to overcome a rough fall season and take her place as the leader of a squad comprised of many youngsters.

"Marcy Newton is our senior leader," Austin said. "She is very committed to the team. She works hard and is talented and has a great temperament on the golf course. She sets a great example for the team."

For a squad containing only three



UNC sophomore Heather Angell finished second at the Fripp Island Invitational last March.

upperclassmen, Newton's veteran leadership will be crucial to the Tar Heels' success. Newton's role could be even more substantial if junior Shelley McKeivitt, who was in an automobile accident, decides to redshirt.

UNC will also rely heavily on the play of sophomores Heather Angell and Beth Lever and freshman Abby Spector.

Angell, a starter on last year's team who finished as runner-up at the Fripp Island Invitational, will look to build on a successful freshman year and add consistency to the Tar Heel lineup.

"Heather has played well this year," Austin said. "Heather works extremely hard and is very competitive. I never have to give her even a little shove to practice because she does it on her own."

All of the hard work has paid dividends on the golf course for Angell.

"Heather had a really good fall," Newton said. "She has really become consistent and is a great putter."

Like Angell, Spector is a youngster who must produce for UNC to finish near the top of the ACC. Spector was highly recruited coming out of Waterville, Maine, and was impressive in the fall season.

If the pieces can fall into place for UNC, it has a chance to compete with Duke, the nation's No. 1 team and preseason favorite, for the conference title.

"Duke is our best competitor, and they have a really good team," Angell said. "If we all get out there and work hard, then we have a good chance of going out there and challenging them."

Wake Forest and Florida State will also pose a challenge for UNC in the ACC, although the Tar Heels are also looking at the national picture.

"We didn't make it to the NCAA finals last year, and this year it's one of our main goals," Angell said. "We are trying to just go out there and show what we are made of."



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNC SPORTS INFORMATION

The UNC women's golf team will look to senior Marcy Newton, a two-time All-ACC performer and preseason All-American, for leadership.

Women's Golf



UNC women's golf coach Sally Austin

March 10-12 Casa de Campo Ladies Intercollegiate
Teeth of the Dog Course in Casa de Campo, Dom. Rep.

March 17-19 Lady Gamecock Classic
University Club Course in Blythewood, S.C.

March 24-26 Bryan National Collegiate
Bryan Park Champions Course in Browns Summit, N.C.

March 31-April 2 Liz Murphey Collegiate Classic
University of Georgia Golf Course in Athens, Ga.

April 14-16 ACC Championship
Salem Glen Country Club in Clemmons, N.C.

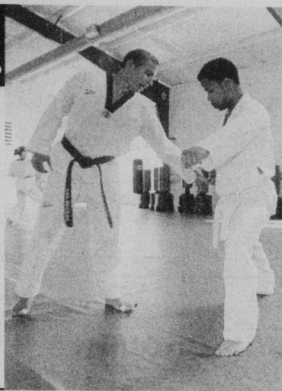
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