

Victory Signals Bright Future for Men's Lacrosse

By ADAM D. HILL
Staff Writer

For the North Carolina men's lacrosse team, Saturday afternoon's victory against Butler was more than a step in the right direction.

For 10th-year coach Dave Klarmann and his squad, the decisive 13-7 win served as a signal that the No. 10 Tar

Heels were molding into a team that has the potential to compete — and win — while enduring the nation's third-toughest schedule.

"I felt we played better from goal line to goal line than last week," Klarmann said. "All segments showed improvement from last week, and that is how we have to play because our schedule is one that gets tougher and tougher as we progress through the season."

Perhaps the series of events that defined the Tar Heels' improvement most clearly came early in the second

period of play, with UNC leading 5-2.

Unlike last week when the Tar Heels built a four-goal lead against Fairfield only to lose their momentum and let the Stags back into the game, UNC remained focused. The Tar Heels permitted only one Bulldog goal before returning with a netter of their own.

"I think we felt a lot more confident today than last week," UNC goalie Kris Blindenbacher said. "We shot the ball better and played as a team more."

While the Tar Heels' team effort was impressive, several players turned in

great individual performances.

Senior attacker Chase Martin tallied three goals and one assist.

While Martin and teammate Mac Hammer, who also posted three goals, were lighting up the scoreboard, Blindenbacher was keeping a tight rein on the Butler offense. The sophomore from Narberth, Pa., saved 14 balls on the day, allowing only six Bulldog goals in 57 minutes, 45 seconds of action.

"We had some great efforts today," Klarmann said. "Mac Hammer in the first half really brought us to the top of

our game. Kris Blendenbacher played great between the pipes. When you can say a lot of people are playing well for you, that is what you want to have."

After trailing 1-0 and 2-1 early, UNC took the lead at 3-2 and never looked back.

North Carolina led 8-4 at the half and 11-4 after three periods. The Bulldogs outscored the Tar Heels 3-2 in the fourth period to bring the final tally to 13-7, but the game was well in hand by that point.

North Carolina won the battle of the face-offs 14-9, powered by Ryan Damon

and Hammer. The Tar Heels also out-shot Butler 48-33.

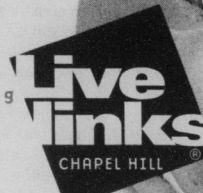
From this point, UNC must prepare to face Navy, the nation's 12th-ranked squad.

"I think we did a lot better than the game before, but I think the best part about this game is that we didn't play as well as we know we can," Martin said. "I think it is just exciting that we can play better."

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Irish Tops UNC in Battle of Siblings

By KELLY LUSK
Staff Writer

An entire family was in tears after the North Carolina-Notre Dame women's tennis match Saturday at Cone-Kenfield Tennis Center.

Losing their fourth dual match in a row didn't seem to make the Tar Heels cry. Instead, the tears commenced after the Zalinski sisters faced off in the deciding match.

UNC's Courtney Zalinski and Jessica Zaganczyk battled Notre Dame's Kelly Zalinski and Lindsey Green. The older sister, Kelly, came out victorious 8-4, clinching a 5-4 victory for the Fighting Irish with their fifth match point.

The importance of the match rested not only on it being the deciding one, but also on the fact that this was the first time that Courtney had faced Kelly since the UNC junior was 12 years old. The two are only 15 months apart

and are best friends, their mom, Kathy Zalinski, said.

"I didn't think it would be easy to watch," Kathy Zalinski said. "Looking at Kelly, even though she won, I know she feels bad."

Courtney Zalinski attributed some of her emotions to the match being against her sister but added that she needed to pull more weight on the team.

"I haven't been doing my share," she said. "All of our matches have been close and are going to keep being close, and I have to win more of my matches."

Even before the sister-vs.-sister matchup, things looked dismal for UNC. The Tar Heels trailed 4-2 after singles. No. 1 seed Marlene Mejia lost her

second singles match of the season, a 3-6, 6-3, 6-3 decision to Michelle Dasso.

"Dasso is one of the six or seven best players in the country," UNC coach Roland Thornqvist said. "But I think Marlene is better."

Zaganczyk, the Tar Heels' No. 2 seed, defeated Becky Varnum 6-4, 7-3.

"I felt very in control of myself and really stuck to my game plan," Zaganczyk said. "I've really been trying to work at that, things like constructing points."

Sophomore Erin Niebling brought in UNC's only other singles victory against Kelly Zalinski 6-4, 6-4. Niebling is undefeated in singles play this year.

Although the Tar Heels could not salvage a win, Mejia still unleashed her weapons in doubles to redeem her singles loss. Paired with Niebling at No. 1, she defeated the Irish's Dasso and Varnum.

"I was pretty pissed after my singles loss," Mejia said. "But I knew I had another chance to contribute to the team."

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

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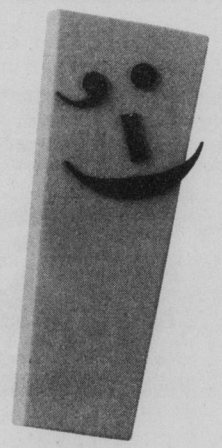
UNC junior Courtney Zalinski played against her sister Kelly for the first time since she was 12 years old.

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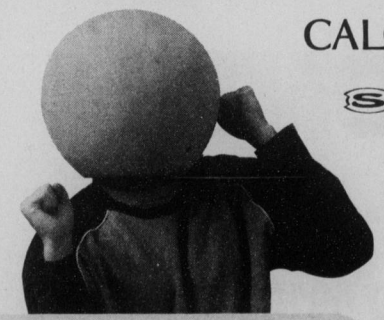
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