

Reminders of Past Glory on Display at Smith Center

Former North Carolina star Antawn Jamison will have his jersey No. 33 retired at halftime of tonight's game.

BY EVAN MARKFIELD
Senior Writer

There will be a couple of reminders for the North Carolina men's basketball team Wednesday night about the success it has enjoyed in the NCAA tournament in recent years.

Senior point guard Ed Cota will be playing his last game at the Smith Center in a Tar Heel uniform. And at halftime, former UNC star Antawn Jamison will be on hand to have his jersey hoisted to the rafters and retired. Both men, of course, were integral parts of North Carolina's two Final Four runs at the end of the 1990s.

The irony of it all is that when UNC (17-11, 8-6 in the ACC) actually takes the floor against Georgia Tech (12-15, 4-10) at 9 p.m., the team will be fighting for a win to sure up its chances of getting into the tournament at all this year.

"I feel they're in the NCAAs, but people say this is an important game for them," Tech coach Bobby Cremins said.

"I just hope we go up there and play well."



Senior point guard Ed Cota will play in the last regular-season home game of his college career tonight.

It will be Senior Day for the Tar Heels, with Cota, Terrence Newby and walk-on Matt Laczkowski starting in the final home games of their UNC careers.

For the Yellow Jackets, leading the effort to thwart the Tar Heels' tournament hopes will be 7-foot senior Jason Collier.

The Tech big man leads the ACC in rebounding with 9.3 boards per game and is sixth in the conference in scoring with 16.3 points per game. He put up 14 points and 13 rebounds against the Tar Heels earlier this season.

"In some ways he's a lot like (Maryland forward) Terrence Morris," UNC coach Bill Guthridge said. "He can post up inside, knock down the 3 outside, and he's a good passer. I think he's having a great year."

Collier will be aided by the ACC's fifth-best rebounder, junior Alvin Jones

(8.1 rebounds per game), posing a big challenge for UNC's big men.

Tar Heel center Brendan Haywood, also a 7-footer, leads the nation in field-goal percentage (.735) and had 14 points and eight rebounds in UNC's first meeting with Tech last month, a 70-53 win.

North Carolina will also have 6-11 forward Kris Lang to body up inside against Tech's twin towers, but Lang will have to be more judicious about the contact he makes on defense than he was in the Tar Heels' last outing.

In UNC's 81-73 loss to Maryland on Saturday, Lang fouled out with 14:27 remaining in the second half, depleting the Tar Heel frontcourt.

If both teams' big men cancel each other out, the game could come down to the play that occurs outside the paint.

UNC forward Jason Capel led the team with 20 points in the last meeting against the Jackets. Plus, it is most likely that Cota will come out strong in his farewell game and that his teammates will try to send him out with a win.

"North Carolina will be ready to play on Senior Day for Ed Cota," Cremins said. "He's been a great player in this league the last four years."

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

THE LOWDOWN ON TONIGHT'S GAME

C JASON COLLIER, 7-0
Leads the Yellow Jackets in scoring (16.3 ppg) and rebounding (9.3 rpg).

F ALVIN JONES, 6-11
Averages 10 points, 8.1 rebounds, and an ACC-leading 2.6 blocks per game.

F JASON FLOYD, 6-6
Averages nine points and 3.3 rebounds per game.

G TONY AKINS, 5-11
Tech's second-leading scorer has 17.3 ppg average in last four games.

G SHAUN FEIN, 6-3
Leads Yellow Jackets in steals with 30 while adding 3.3 assists per game.

Georgia Tech (12-15, 4-10 in ACC)

vs.

North Carolina (17-11, 8-6, in ACC)

G ED COTA, 6-1
Leads the ACC in assists (7.2 apg) for the fourth consecutive season.

G TERENCE NEWBY, 6-2
Has scored 22 points while appearing in 26 games this season.

F MATT LACZKOWSKI, 6-9
The walk-on will be making his first-ever start for the Tar Heels.

F JASON CAPEL, 6-8
Led the Tar Heels with 20 points in UNC's last matchup with Georgia Tech.

C BRENDAN HAYWOOD, 7-0
Leads the nation with .735 field goal percentage and averages 13.5 ppg.

Game: Georgia Tech at UNC
Time: 9 p.m.
Location: Chapel Hill
Radio: 100.7 FM, WCHL-1360 AM
Television: Raycom/JP

Series Record: UNC leads 48-14.

Keys for UNC: The Tar Heels must hang on to the basketball. They have been plagued by turnovers in recent losses, ranking up 17 Saturday at Maryland. Also, Brendan Haywood and the UNC big men must be able to contain Jason Collier and Alvin Jones and try to keep control of the boards.

Keys for Georgia Tech: The Yellow Jackets will try to get the ball to Collier, who has averaged 20.5 points in the last two games. The best chance for a win will come if he and Jones can dominate the glass and force the Tar Heel frontcourt to pick up a lot of fouls.

UNC Bench: Julius Peppers might be called upon heavily to give Kris Lang a break and put his big body on Tech's Collier and Jones. Max Owens plays well against Tech. He established career scoring highs twice last year against the Jackets.

Georgia Tech Bench: Freshman forward Clarence Moore is averaging 5.0 points and 3.9 rebounds per game, and T.J. Vines can provide relief for Tech at point guard.

Prediction: UNC 77, Georgia Tech 65
Compiled by Evan Markfield

Henderson Settles Down in Chapel Hill

UNC pitcher Eric Henderson spent his freshman season at Tennessee and last year at a Florida junior college.

BY WILL KIMMEY
Assistant Sports Editor

Just call Eric Henderson a nomad. During the last three years, the Winter Park, Fla., native has played baseball at three different colleges.

The 6-foot-3, 200-pound left-hander signed with Tennessee out of high school. After pitching one season there, Henderson decided Knoxville wasn't for him and transferred to Santa Fe Community College in Gainesville, Fla.

The redhead enjoyed a fine season at SFCC, earning first-team All Mid-Florida Conference honors as an outfielder and second-team recognition as a pitcher. But junior colleges offer only two years of education, and Henderson, playing as a sophomore, was again looking for a new address.

At the same time, North Carolina pitching coach Roger Williams was looking for an experienced arm. Williams had a pair of top-flight starters on his 1999 staff in Mike Bynum and Kyle Snyder and figured they would turn pro at season's end.

Henderson and Williams crossed paths at a junior college all-star game in Kissimmee, Fla., in the fall of 1998. Williams liked what he saw, and UNC offered Henderson a scholarship.

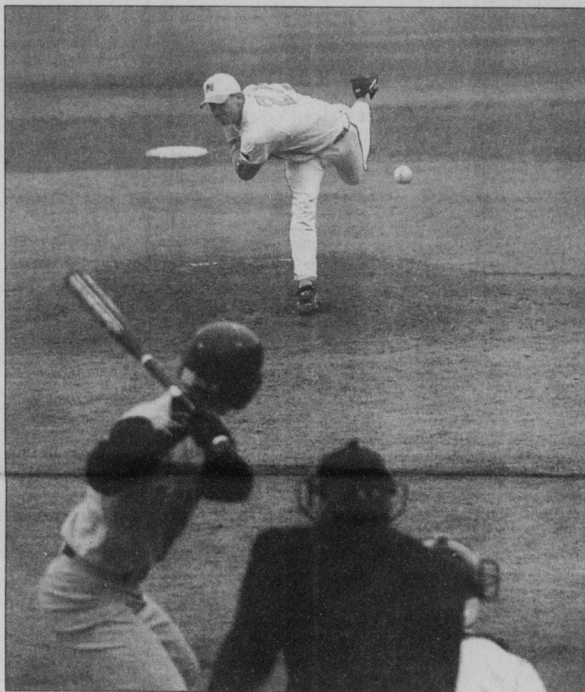
"We thought just by looking at him and the things he did that day that (he) could replace a Bynum and Snyder," Williams said.

But the nomad still wasn't sure what road he would take. Henderson was selected in the sixth round of the 1999 Major League Baseball Amateur Draft by the Tampa Bay Devil Rays.

In the end, Henderson turned down what he called "a great opportunity" in professional baseball and chose to attend UNC to get another year of seasoning at the college level. Thus far, the decision has worked out well for both parties.

"I've really found my home," he said. "Chapel Hill's my home."

Henderson has been a key factor in the No. 3 Tar Heels' 13-0 start. He has compiled a 3-0 record and leads the



DH/JEFF POULAND

UNC pitcher Eric Henderson is 3-0 this season with a 2.59 ERA. The lefty allowed only four hits in six innings against then-No. 2 UCLA on Feb. 19.

squad in innings pitched (24 1/3) and strikeouts (26). His 2.59 earned run average ranks first among UNC starters.

"Certainly, I would have to say to this point he has been our most consistent pitcher," Williams said after Henderson tossed seven shutout innings against Seton Hall on Feb. 25.

While Williams was confident Henderson could handle opposing hitters, he wasn't sure how the new guy would adjust to another new team.

"A lot of times you don't know whether that's going to happen when you've got a guy who's been in another program," Williams said. "But we

couldn't have asked for a better situation — he's fit in extremely well."

Henderson said UNC's veterans, especially senior co-captain Clay Hooper, were quick to make him feel comfortable in his new surroundings. "I felt welcome right away," Henderson said.

Said Hooper, "I just answered questions he might have, and if he's not sure about something, just be the guy who can answer him in a positive way. He doesn't need much help."

Arguably, Henderson's best job on the mound came on the road against then-No. 2 UCLA on Feb. 19. He watched the Bruins tally seven homers and 13 runs against the Tar Heels the day before he pitched. He held the Bruins to three runs on four hits while striking out nine in six innings.

"The ball really jumped out of the park," UNC coach Mike Fox said after the series. "That tells you what kind of an effort we got out of Eric Henderson."

While the pitcher in Henderson might have hated seeing the offensive onslaught in Los Angeles, another part of him secretly enjoyed it.

Henderson was a major threat with a bat in his hand at SFCC in 1999. He batted .414, which ranks second all-time in Saints history. He also amassed 49 RBI and nine triples.

But as much as he enjoys taking his cuts at the plate, Henderson knows his workplace lies about 60 feet in front of it, atop a dirt hill.

"I've always loved to hit," Henderson said. "But here we have so many guys who can swing the bat so well. I'm swinging every day in (batting practice), but my place on this team is on the mound."

Henderson's future depends on what he does on that mound. If he continues his early season success, he'll likely be taken in the draft again.

And if he follows the trails left behind by Bynum and Snyder before him, the nomad will be on his way again.

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Tar Heels Hit Bombs, Shut Down Spartans

Carrie Bates went 4-for-5 with four RBI and Natalie Anter added two home runs as the North Carolina softball team swept a doubleheader on the road Tuesday against UNC-Greensboro.

UNC (14-3) shut out the Spartans (10-6) in both games by scores of 10-0 and 2-0.

In the first game, the Tar Heels were holding onto a 2-0 lead when they exploded for eight runs in the top of the fifth. Michelle Semmes hit a three-run homer, which was followed by an Anter blast to put UNC up 6-0.



Sophomore catcher Natalie Anter hit a home run in each of UNC's wins against UNC-G on Tuesday.

A two-run double from Bates and a two-run double from Quinn Porter put UNC up 10-0. Michael Parrot (4-1) picked up the win, allowing four hits over five innings.

Anter was responsible for both of UNC's runs in the second game. She hit an RBI double in the first and led off the sixth with a solo homer. Pitcher Radara McHugh (6-1) scattered two hits in seven innings of work.

Tar Heels Duked in Season Opener

James Madison senior Julie Martinez scored four goals to lead the seventh-ranked Dukes past the fifth-ranked North Carolina women's lacrosse team 13-5 in the season opener for both

ON THE ROAD

teams Tuesday.

UNC senior attacker Kristin Off and sophomore midfielder Lindsay Stone each scored two goals for the Tar Heels. Senior midfielder Meghann Mohler netted the first UNC score to cut the JMU advantage to 2-1.

Sophomore Kellie Thompson, freshman Betsy Gaines and sophomore Christine McPike recorded assists for the Tar Heels in the loss.

Golfers Finish Eighth in Puerto Rico

The UNC men's golf team finished in eighth place at the Puerto Rico Golf Classic, the opening tournament of its spring season.

The Tar Heels posted an 877 total after carding rounds of 289, 290 and 298. Georgia Tech topped the field of 15 teams by firing an 11-under par 853. Northwestern (857), N.C. State (859), Clemson (861) and Georgia (866) rounded out the top five.

Northwestern's Luke Donald shot a final-round 68 and captured the individual title with a 9-under 207.

UNC's Paul Daniel and Rob Simmons both posted scores of 218, tying for 18th place. Max Harris tied for 29th at 220, and Ramon Becansa tied for 32nd at 221. Will Snellings tied for 72nd at 240.

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