

FOOTBALL

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team to zero or minus yardage on 11 of the game's 23 offensive plays, recording four sacks in the process.

Senior linebacker Brandon Spoon, who took a medical redshirt last season after tearing his left biceps tendon, had one of the sacks and showed no signs of favoring his surgically repaired arm.

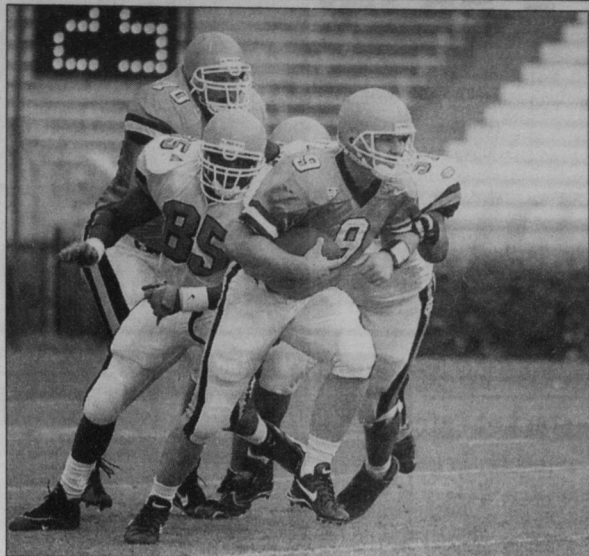
"When I first came back, I was hesitant a little bit - I shielded my arm a little bit - but every day I got a little bit better," Spoon said. "Now, I don't even think about it. Honestly, the first day I was nervous, but that comes out after the first hit."

Another player enjoying his first game action since taking a medical redshirt was wide receiver Bosley Allen, who tore knee ligaments in the final regular-season game of 1998.

Allen caught one pass for 17 yards Saturday and has looked quick in and out of his breaks during spring practice.

"It felt good," Allen said of his catch. "I hadn't put on the game jersey in like a year plus, so it was a pretty nice experience for me. I wanted to make more out of it, but I accept that."

Allen's reception came on the final drive of the game, which was stopped with 2:03 remaining in the second period. The Blue team had gained a net zero yards at that point before quarterback



DTH/MILLER PEARSALL

Quarterback Luke Huard (9) tries to elude the pass rush in the Blue-White game. Huard completed all three of his passes but was sacked twice.

Luke Huard led it to two first downs.

Huard was 3-for-3 passing for 24 yards in the contest, all of it coming on the final drive. He was also sacked twice.

Antwon Black, a converted safety

who saw some action at quarterback last season, was 2-for-3 for 12 yards during his lone series. Black and Huard will compete for the No. 2 quarterback position behind Ronald Curry, who has not

been cleared to play.

Former linebacker Richard Moore, who figures to be the team's fourth quarterback, also took some snaps. He was sacked twice and finished 0-for-2.

Curry Coming Back

Curry continues to recover from the torn Achilles tendon he suffered Oct. 9 against Georgia Tech.

He has been throwing and doing some drills in practice but will not be cleared to go full speed until probably the end of May, Torbush said.

Curry has been learning O'Cain's offense, but he lost some study time when he traveled with the basketball team during the postseason.

Physically, however, he is progressing rapidly and is about a month ahead of schedule. Torbush said he is grading out at between 87 percent and 92 percent on speed, agility and flexibility tests that team trainers administer.

That has O'Cain excited.

"I'm looking forward to it," O'Cain said. "Because if you could draw it up - if I could sit down and say this is who I would like to run our system - it would be a guy like Ronald Curry."

"He's physical, he's strong, he's got great speed, he's got a pretty strong arm. He can do everything."

Missing Players Face Uphill Battle

Among those players who didn't take part in spring practice were running

backs Daniel Davis and Dominique Williams.

Torbush held both players out for academic reasons and indicated Saturday that they would have some serious catching up to do when they return.

That is, if they return.

"Right now we're playing and practicing with the guys we feel like will make a contribution in the fall," Torbush said. "If somebody else comes forward who's not practicing right now, that's an extra."

"Right now, what we're playing with is what we intend to go into the fall with."

Famous Forward Returns to Football

Julius Peppers began the 1999 football season as a redshirt freshman defensive end, a player with great athleticism who failed to gain much attention.

Then came basketball.

Peppers was merely supposed to provide the Tar Heels an intimidating figure to show off in pregame layup drills, but he ended up playing significant minutes in UNC's run to the Final Four.

Now, everyone wants a piece of him.



UNC quarterback Ronald Curry could be cleared to go full speed as early as May and expects to start in the fall.

And Peppers is more than happy to oblige. Although he didn't play Saturday, he signed autographs after the game had been stopped.

He stayed out in the pouring rain alone - his teammates had already left the field - and didn't run back to the tunnel until each fan of his got his signature.

Quick Outs

Rising sophomore DeFonte Coleman has been moved from wide receiver to defensive back. Coleman, 6-1 and 210 pounds, has already gained a reputation among teammates and coaches as a ferocious hitter.

Dauntae' Finger, who was moved to fullback at the beginning of spring practice, is now back at tight end. He could play fullback in an emergency, but Ronnie Robinson, Anthony Saunders and tailback Rufus Brown should see the majority of the action there this season.

Safety Quinton Savage, who lacerated his kidney against Wake Forest on Nov. 6, has yet to be cleared to play. Torbush said Savage's injury could potentially be career-ending.

Cornelback Anthony Anderson also faces uncertainties heading into the fall. His back, which bothered him much of last season, is still causing him pain. Anderson did not play Saturday.

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

UNC's NCAA Hopes Take Hit With Loss to UVa.

By ADAM D. HILL
Staff Writer

As the final seconds ticked away in North Carolina's lacrosse showdown with No. 2 Virginia on Saturday, a band of ominous clouds approached Chapel Hill.

Mother Nature's timing could not have been more appropriate.

The gray clouds, like the Cavaliers, unleashed a powerful gust of fury, sending a message of supremacy to all who witnessed.

The dirt on Fetzer Field, like the Tar Heels' postseason hopes, washed away, leaving little more than a memory of when all of the stadium's grass was green.

On a day that most likely ended North Carolina's NCAA tournament hopes, the Tar Heels (6-4, 0-3 in the ACC) saw a competitive game turn into a rout at the half. The end result was a 13-7 Virginia victory.

UNC played with the defending national champions throughout the first half and trailed 4-3 at the break. The second half, however, proved catastrophic for the Tar Heels. Virginia scored seemingly at will in the final 30 minutes, while UNC could produce no offense of its own.

"Second half, when we got the ball, we'd turn it over," UNC attackman Jeff Sonke said. "Dumb things like not backing up shots and throwing the ball away."

"Simple stuff, we just couldn't do it today - that was the difference. It just

happens. It seems like it has happened a little too much to us."

After trading goals to begin the third quarter, UVa. put the Tar Heels away. Leading 5-4, the Cavaliers flexed their collective muscle on the offensive end of the field. Playing quicker and passing better than the Tar Heels, Virginia

reeled off four goals in the final 3:33 of the quarter. That explosion lifted UVa. to a 9-4 lead and sealed the victory.

"You can't win a game playing 30 minutes," said Sonke, who tallied one goal. "We just never got possession of the ball. It happens right off of face-offs. They go down and score - it happens."

"You have to get possessions. When we get the chances, we have to get the ball up on our end of the field and give the defense a chance, and we just weren't doing that."

Another thing UNC was not doing was stopping Drew McKnight. The senior attackman tallied four goals on the day while posting a pair of assists.

McKnight, however, was not the only Cavalier to produce. UVa. distributed the ball throughout its attack, with nine individuals scoring goals.

Matt Crofton led the way for UNC with two goals and an assist.

The loss drops No. 10 North



UNC attackman Jeff Sonke scored a goal for the Tar Heels, who have won one ACC game in the last four years.

Carolina's ACC record in the past four years to 1-15. The Tar Heels have made the NCAA Tournament once in the past three seasons, and the loss to Virginia certainly will not help the cause this year. With only four teams in the ACC, the league has no automatic bid.

"We have to win the rest of our games," Sonke said. "We have to do well in the ACC Tournament. We have to get our name back up there."

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