

UNC Digs Early Hole, Can't Escape

The men's tennis team came back from a 3-0 deficit to tie the match at 3-3, but Duke prevailed in the end.

By **BRET STRELOW**
Assistant Sports Editor

DURHAM — The North Carolina men's tennis team was buried nearly six feet deep.

The 16th-ranked Tar Heels were swept in doubles and lost the first two completed singles matches against No. 6 Duke to fall behind 3-0.

They climbed all the way back to tie the match, but minutes later, Blue Devil senior Porter Jones clinched a 4-3 team victory by defeating junior Chad Riley 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 at No. 6 singles.

The end result meant the end of UNC's 11-match winning streak and the extension of Duke's ACC regular-season win streak to 31.

The streaks began to lean in opposite directions after Riley captured the second set. Jones had to take a five-minute injury timeout after the set to have his back worked on.

But he used the break to plan his third-set attack. Jones broke Riley's serve in the set's fourth game to take a 3-1 lead and won 12 of his next 16 service points to close out the match.

"Even though it was five minutes to stretch, it was also five minutes to reflect on how I won the first set and what I did differently in the second set," said Jones, who was playing his last regular-season match at the Duke Tennis Stadium and improved to 7-1 at No. 6 singles.

"I knew I needed to attack a little more, and near the end I was starting to come in, and I think it threw him off."

Jones' victory came just minutes after UNC sophomore Marcio Petrone won a second-set tiebreaker to clinch a 7-5, 7-6 (7-5) victory against Joel Spicher. Petrone finished off the match with a backhand lob for a winner that evened up the score at 3-3 for the Tar Heels (14-3, 5-1 in the ACC).

Junior David Cheatwood and senior Tripp Phillips got the Tar Heels' comeback rolling at No. 3 and No. 1 singles, respectively.

After dropping the first two points of the match to Andres Pedroso, Cheatwood rattled off 16 of the next 19 to jump out to a 4-0 lead. He took the set 6-1, then clinched the match by winning a second-set tiebreaker 7-2.

Phillips broke Doug Root's serve in the third game on his way to a 6-4 first-set win. He fell behind 5-2 in the second, but stormed back to capture the victory by winning a second-set tiebreaker 7-4.

"I had had a lot of chances earlier in the set, deuce games, I just wasn't getting them," Phillips said. "I was just patient, and it came around."

The Tar Heels had to claw their way back because of Duke's early dominance, which included straight-set wins for the Blue Devils (17-5, 6-0) at No. 2 and No. 5 singles.

Assaf Drori and Greg Archer lost 8-3 at No. 1 doubles, but the two other Tar Heel tandems had legitimate shots at victory.

Petrone and Tyne Brownlow were in control at No. 3 doubles, up a break at 6-4. But Duke's Jones and Michael Yani won 16 of the next 22 points and won the match 8-6.

Cheatwood, teamed with Phillips at No. 2, was broken in the second game, and the duo were unable to convert any of their five break-point chances the rest of the way and lost 8-5.

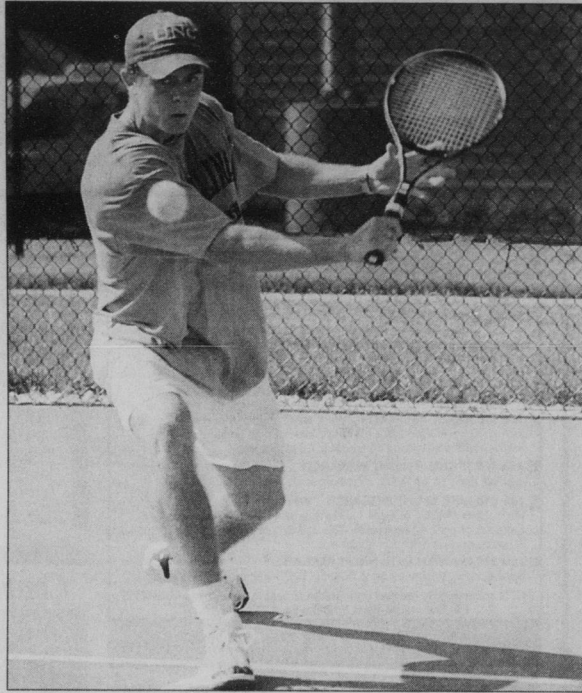
"Our guys have been that way all year long," UNC coach Sam Paul said. "We've dug some holes, and we've found a way to dig out of them."

UNC almost did it again, but Jones picked up his own shovel and buried the Tar Heels.

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



Tar Heel junior David Cheatwood topped Duke's Andres Pedroso 6-1, 7-6 (7-2) at No. 3 singles.



UNC's Chad Riley, shown against Virginia Commonwealth, came back from a one-set deficit to force a third set but lost to Duke's Porter Jones.

DTH-KATE MELLNIK

Bucs Make Keyshawn NFL's Highest-Paid WR

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — The Tampa Bay Buccaneers are counting on Keyshawn Johnson to be a man of his word.

The two-time Pro Bowl receiver promised one thing Wednesday — to be himself — after signing an eight-year, \$56 million contract with a \$13 million signing bonus that makes him the highest-paid player at his position in the NFL.

Johnson gives a huge boost to Tampa Bay's passing attack. For the Bucs, who failed to go to the Super Bowl because they couldn't score enough points, that would be enough.

The team traded two first-round draft picks to the New York Jets and committed nearly \$7 million per season to him to finish the deal because of his track record as a productive and charismatic player whose top priority is winning.

"I'm not a savior ... I can't say I'm a hired gun and come in here like Dennis Rodman did with the Bulls when they were missing a rebounder to win a championship. All I can say is, I'm

going to do my part," Johnson said.

"It's refreshing to know the Bucs wanted to give up two first-round draft picks to acquire me," he added later, turning on a podium to look toward Tampa Bay owner Malcolm Glazer. "And, I guess, dig into their checkbook to pay a small fee."

To make room under the salary cap for Johnson, the Bucs released receiver Bert Emanuel, who was scheduled to earn \$4.2 million next season.

One of the reasons the team was in the market to acquire an impact player was that Emanuel had been a disappointment after a signing as a free agent two years ago.

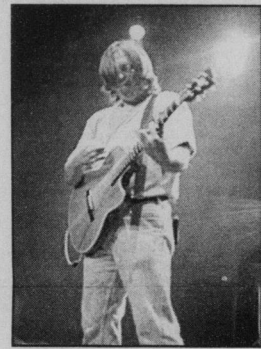
New York gets the 13th and 27th overall picks, making it the first team ever with four first-rounders. The others are No. 16 and No. 18.

Johnson, 27, has caught 305 passes for 4,108 yards and 31 touchdowns in four NFL seasons. He has done so despite playing only one year of his career — 1998 with Vinny Testaverde — with a high-quality quarterback throwing to him.

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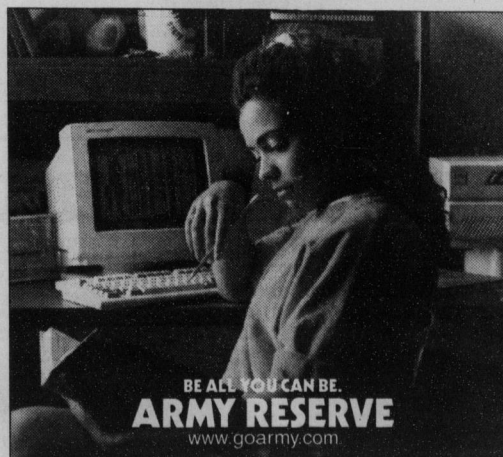
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