

# Loss of Recruiting Edge Hurts Men's Lacrosse Program

Increased competition from other lacrosse programs cut off UNC's monopoly on the nation's best players.

By JAMES GIZA  
Staff Writer

Before the season even began — before a four-game losing streak ruined his team's perfect start, before an emotionally draining semifinal defeat in the ACC tournament, before he lashed out at the North Carolina athletic administration — UNC men's lacrosse coach Dave Klarmann sat at his desk in his office in Carmichael Auditorium.

He talked about something he had not been accustomed to recently: winning. "We want to play well all the time and compete to win all the time," he said. "But you must also realize that you probably won't win all the time. It doesn't diminish your desire to try and be victorious. The players and coaches always go out to win in any sport, especially in team sports. That's what we do here, and that's what we try to do here."

The Tar Heels tried again this year. They have two games left and a slim chance to get into the NCAA tournament. But regardless of the outcome, the UNC lacrosse program has provided yet more evidence that it is a shell of its former self.

At 7-5, the Tar Heels will have their first non-losing season since 1996 — the last time they were ACC champions. They have gone 26-29 the past four years, including 1-11 in conference play.

In addition, UNC hasn't won an NCAA tourney game since 1993 and was

absent from the bracket in 1997 and 1999.

The recent Tar Heels hardly resemble those of yesteryear. Klarmann went undefeated during his first campaign at the helm in 1991 — the last time the team was NCAA champion — and compiled a record of 52-10 over the next three, winning the ACC title every year.

One major reason for the Tar Heels' downward spiral is simple: They just don't pack in the recruits like they used to. "We've still gotten some great kids," said UNC Associate Athletics Director Willie Scroggs, who coached the Tar Heels to three national titles in the 1980s. "We may not have gotten as many as we have years ago, and we may not get the top kids like we have in the past — the blue chippers."

Of course, in Scroggs' day — and even the early days of Klarmann — college lacrosse was not as competitive as it is now. With schools such as Princeton, Virginia, Duke and Georgetown making substantial efforts to beef up their programs in recent years, the fight for recruits has become an all-out brawl.

The net result is that UNC no longer enjoys the monopoly on top talent it did in years past.

"Their third midfield line was as good as anybody else's first," said Duke coach Mike Pressler about the UNC teams of the past. "Their third attack was better than anybody else's first. Their third long pole was as good as anybody's first."

"When they were dominant, they had stockpiled players. They just had the best players and more of them."

Not so anymore. Now, the Tar Heels find themselves struggling to keep up in the recruiting war. The Cavaliers, who handed UNC a 17-16 double-overtime



DTH FILE PHOTO

UNC men's lacrosse coach Dave Klarmann, center, has compiled a 99-51 record in 10 seasons. He is 26-29 in his last four years, however.

defeat Friday in the ACC semifinal and went on to beat Maryland in the final, have been gobbling up recruits as of late.

"The battle has been between Virginia, Maryland and Carolina," Pressler said. "Part of the reason Virginia has been so successful is that it has been winning those battles."

But why? Why have UVa. and other programs like it muscled their way to the forefront while UNC has been relegated to second fiddle?

One former UNC player from a northern lacrosse talent hotbed, who played under Klarmann in the late '90s, said Klarmann has a gruffness with recruits

and a tyrannical coaching style that has an adverse effect on the program.

The player said Klarmann alienated several of his friends, whom he referred to as "some of the top players" in his area, by telling them they wouldn't get more than a certain amount of playing time and by declining to offer them as much scholarship money as other schools.

Word of Klarmann's fiery coaching personality also reached home, the player said, turning off even more potential recruits. He recalled one instance when, after a loss to UVa., Klarmann unleashed an expletive-filled tirade on the team while the players' parents looked on.

## Diminishing Returns

The UNC men's lacrosse team was a national power when Dave Klarmann was named the head coach in 1990. The Tar Heels have not maintained that level of success in his 10 years in charge.

Year	Overall Record	ACC Record	ACC Tournament Record	All-ACC Players	Final Finish	Final Ranking
1991	16-0	3-0	2-0	4	national champion	1
1992	12-3	3-0	2-0	5	national semifinalist	2
1993	14-2	2-1	2-0	7	national runner-up	1
1994	10-5	2-1	2-0	2	national quarterfinalist	4
1995	9-7	1-2	1-1	1	lost in first round	8
1996	12-5	2-1	2-0	3	national quarterfinalist	2
1997	6-7	0-3	0-1	0	no NCAA tournament	15
1998	7-8	0-3	0-1	1	national quarterfinalist	10
1999	6-9	1-2	0-1	1	no NCAA tournament	15
*2000	7-5	0-3	0-1	2	?	?
<b>Totals</b>	<b>99-51</b>	<b>14-16</b>	<b>11-5</b>	<b>26</b>		

\*as of April 26 (two regular-season games remain)

The player said once Klarmann is gone, players from his hometown area will be more willing to consider UNC.

"I think it's been known that it's Klarmann's fault," he said. "They know that there's going to be fresh blood in here. When someone new comes in, the program is going to turn around."

But UNC defenseman Todd Maher dismissed the notion that Klarmann's dealings with recruits were inappropriate. Maher said he appreciated Klarmann's refusal to make hollow promises like other programs that recruited him.

"That's just hard for a lot of people's egos to deal with," Maher said. "Most of the guys playing in high school, they've been stroked their entire lives."

Klarmann's days at UNC are numbered. He announced his plans to retire in 2000 last summer, saying that he understood the program needed to be

taken in a new direction.

But he changed his tune following his team's loss to UVa. on Friday.

"Regardless of what some people in my administration might think, the future looks very bright for this program," he said. "It's going the right way."

"I deeply, deeply regret having to be removed from this lacrosse program. But I am greatly relieved to be leaving this administration."

Dick Baddour, UNC's director of athletics, said Tuesday that he stood by the statement Klarmann made at last summer's press conference and would not say that Klarmann was being forced out.

"That's what he chose to do," Baddour said. "That was my position on it then, and that's what it is now."

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

## Preseason Positioning

The North Carolina football team released the two-deep depth chart it will open with in the fall. The 47-player list comprises 15 seniors, 12 juniors, 13 sophomores and seven freshmen.

OFFENSE	DEFENSE
<b>WIDE RECEIVER</b>	<b>END</b>
3 Bosley Allen (6-1, 190, So.)	49 Julius Peppers (6-7, 270, So.)
88 Sam Aiken (6-2, 190, So.)	85 Malcolm Stewart (6-3, 230, So.)
<b>LEFT TACKLE</b>	<b>TACKLE</b>
70 Louis Marchetti (6-6, 280, Sr.)	87 Ryan Sims (6-4, 285, Jr.)
69 Greg Woolfer (6-5, 270, Fr.)*	47 Eric Davis (6-3, 260, So.)
<b>LEFT GUARD</b>	<b>TACKLE</b>
66 Cam Holland (6-2, 300, Sr.)	58 Anthony Perkins (6-5, 270, Jr.)
71 Jupiter Wilson (6-2, 290, Fr.)*	97 Willie Quick (6-3, 290, Jr.)
<b>CENTER</b>	<b>END</b>
60 Adam Metts (6-1, 270, Jr.)	68 Ross McAllister (6-5, 255, Sr.)
67 Marcus Wilson (6-2, 270, Fr.)*	95 Joey Evans (6-5, 260, Jr.)
<b>RIGHT GUARD</b>	<b>LINEBACKER</b>
78 Isaac Morford (6-3, 285, So.)	52 Sedrick Hodge (6-4, 235, Sr.)
63 Don Peters (6-2, 290, So.)	41 Quincy Monk (6-4, 240, Jr.)
<b>RIGHT TACKLE</b>	<b>LINEBACKER</b>
73 James Wagstaff (6-3, 360, Sr.)	44 Brandon Spoon (6-2, 245, Sr.)
74 Bryant Malloy (6-3, 310, So.)	55 Robert Harris (6-1, 225, So.)
<b>TIGHT END</b>	<b>LINEBACKER</b>
82 Alge Crumpler (6-3, 255, Sr.)	54 Mercedes Perry (6-4, 245, Sr.)
83 Dauntae' Finger (6-4, 255, Sr.)	30 David Thornton (6-2, 210, Sr.)
<b>QUARTERBACK</b>	<b>CORNERBACK</b>
1 Ronald Curry (6-2, 205, Jr.)	18 Michael Waddell (5-11, 175, So.)
14 Antwon Black (5-11, 190, Sr.) OR	17 David Scott (5-10, 170, Fr.)*
9 Luke Huard (6-4, 230, So.)	<b>SAFETY</b>
<b>TAILBACK</b>	42 David Bomar (5-11, 190, Sr.)
15 Willie Parker (5-10, 195, Fr.)*	24 Dexter Reid (5-11, 180, Fr.)*
27 Donte' Thorogood (5-7, 175, Sr.)	<b>SAFETY</b>
<b>FULLBACK</b>	28 Billy-Dee Greenwood (6-2, 185, Jr.)
20 Anthony Saunders (6-1, 225, Jr.)	25 DeFonte Coleman (6-1, 215, So.)
32 Ronnie Robinson (6-1, 245, Sr.)	<b>CORNERBACK</b>
<b>WIDE RECEIVER</b>	29 Errol Hood (5-11, 195, Jr.)
12 Kory Bailey (6-1, 190, Jr.)	21 Kevin Knight (5-8, 175, So.)
6 Danny Davis (6-0, 190, Jr.)	<b>PUNTER</b>
<b>PLACE-KICKER</b>	38 Blake Ferguson (6-0, 170, Fr.)
92 Jeff Reed (6-0, 200, Sr.)	* denotes redshirt

## Percentages Add Up to No. 1 for UNC Softball

The Tar Heels will compete as the ACC's top seed in the conference tournament this weekend in Tallahassee, Fla.

By MIKE OGLE  
Assistant Sports Editor

College sports fans confused by the Ratings Percentage Index (RPI) beware: The ACC softball tournament lurks around the corner.

So grab the aspirin, a calculator and a piece of scrap paper as top-seeded North Carolina tries to make sense of the madness that set the field for this weekend in Tallahassee, Fla.

As UNC coach Donna Papa said, "It's kind of freaky."

The confusion begins even when trying to figure out what teams actually comprise the ACC.

Only five member institutions field varsity softball teams — Florida State, Georgia Tech, Maryland, UNC and Virginia. But to qualify for an automatic bid to the NCAA tournament, a conference must have six teams.

The answer to the ACC's problems comes from currently unclaimed East Carolina.

"They allow you to have an alliance, a team outside of your conference

added so you can have that sixth team so you can get an automatic (bid)," Papa said.

South Florida and UNC-Charlotte filled that spot for the ACC in previous years, but they are now part of Conference USA, which is where ECU is headed after the 2001 season. Papa expects N.C. State to fill that void for the ACC.

When the regular season comes to a close next month, the ACC team with the best conference record, ECU included, will move on to regional play.

But the Pirates do not get to compete in this weekend's conference tournament, which essentially determines nothing more than bragging rights.

And the remaining five teams in the tournament have yet to complete regular-season play. In fact, three of them have yet to complete regular-season conference play.

So how did the number crunchers at the league office straighten out this mess? Here's where the calculator is needed to make sense of this RPI-like



UNC softball coach Donna Papa has guided the Tar Heels to a 45-15 record, which ties the school mark for wins.

ratings system.

Each team's ACC winning percentage factors for 50 percent of its tournament seeding. Its overall winning percentage counts for 20 percent. The winning percentage in games against teams in the Southeast Region and against ranked opponents are good for 15 percent each.

What it boils down to is that the Tar Heels (45-15, 6-2 in the traditional ACC) are the No. 1 seed in the tournament followed by the Terrapins, Seminoles, Cavaliers and Yellow Jackets.

The Tar Heels enter the weekend with their heads held high. They are tied for the most wins in a season in school history and have already topped the school marks for hits (503), home runs (34) and total bases (708).

"We're getting stronger as a team, and

I feel extremely confident," second baseman Crystal Henderson said. "It's always good to go in with a bunch of wins."

UNC tangles with the winner of the UVa.-Tech play-in game Saturday in the first round of the double-elimination tournament. But the players have their sights set on FSU, the host of the tournament and the culprits in UNC's two conference losses.

The Tar Heels dropped two one-run games at Florida State on April 16. But the losses are serving as extra motivation.

"We've had great games against all of the ACC teams, and we're ready to go in and shut them all down," UNC catcher Natalie Anter said. "I expect to win. I expect to kill Florida State."

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

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