## Tar Heels Look to End Road Woes, Break Even in ACC

The UNC baseball team has a 1-8 record on the road in the ACC, while Duke has one conference victory at home.

North Carolina baseball coach Mike Fox has said it all season: It's tough to win ACC games on the road.

Fox's team has proved him right so far this year, registering a 1-8 league record away from Boshamer Stadium.

"In order to compete in this confer ence, you have to win on the road, and we haven't done that yet," catcher Dan Moylan said after UNC dropped three straight games at Wake Forest in early April. "It's something we have to go out and prove and do."

And that's exactly the task staring the Tar Heels in the face as they open a three-game set at Duke today at 3 p.m.

North Carolina stands at 8-10 in the ACC with six games remaining and

to finish at .500 in the conference.

Even with struggles on the road, there's no reason UNC can't out brooms against the Blue Devils, a 14-32 team with just four conference wins and only one at home. But the difficul-

UNC junior Ryan Earey said the Tar Hee have not played up to their ability in recent games.

ty comes in the Tar Heels' final ACC series, when they play host to second-ranked Florida State on May 13-14. If UNC can muster a sweep against Duke and take one from the Seminoles, it could push its league record to the

"We've got our work cut out for us," Fox said after losing a series to Virginia last weekend. "We were 13-11 in the league last year, so we would really have to go these last six games to even get

"We're going to have to play a lot bet-

ter at Duke, no question."
Playing better should definitely be a goal for the Tar Heels, a team that burst out of the gates at 21-0 and is 15-11

Add to that a sub-.500 conference record, and people might whisper that a team with talented players such as Tyrell

Godwin, Adam Greenberg and Ryan Snare was underachieving a

"We're not playing up to the most our ability, junior designated hitter/pitcher Ryan Earey said. "We all know we can play

better, and we need to, especially to get some wins in the ACC. But I wouldn't say we were underachieving; we just need to step it up a little."

North Carolina, a team that has aspi-

rations of serving as a host for an NCAA regional, might find itself out of the tournent picture if it doesn't improve its

Georgia Tech found itself in a similar situation a year ago. The Yellow Jackets pulled across the ACC finish line at 12-12 (38-20 overall) and failed to receive a tournament bid for the first

"In order to compete in this conference, you have to win on the road, and we haven't done that yet."

Georgia Tech was shunned because the league already had five represen-

Carolina resides in fifth place but is tied for that spot with N.C. State.

that publication's top 25. That mark includes two victories against seventh-ranked Clemson and neutral-site wins against No. 13 Miami and No. 25 Central Florida.

Georgia Tech (4-3) and Florida State (12-5), the top two respective teams in the ACC, are the only other squads in the league to collect more wins than

losses against teams of that caliber. "Unless Carolina collapses – I don't care what their record is - they're still one of the top teams around," Virginia coach Dennis Womack said after the

Cavaliers took two of three from UNC at home last weekend. "Plus, they've gone out of conference and beaten everybody."

Fox isn't concerned about his team's

postseason future – at least not yet.
"I hadn't thought that much about the NCAA tournament, quite honestly," he said. "Right now, I want us to take the next six games here, and the NCAA stuff kind of takes care of itself."

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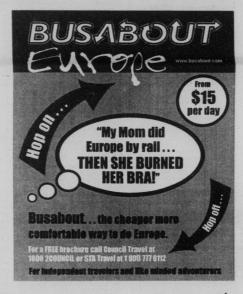


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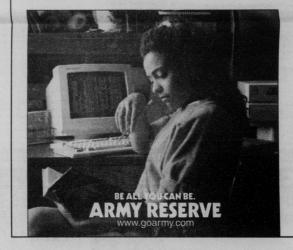
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