

Snare Trap Catches Spartans

UNC junior Ryan Snare gave up one earned run in 6-2/3 innings as his team earned its 40th win of the season.

By JAMES GIZA
Staff Writer

Ryan Snare was exhausted. And that was before the pitcher for the North Carolina baseball team even took the mound for his start against UNC-Greensboro on Tuesday.

Not that you could really blame him. He spent the entire night before the game working on a paper for his COMM 14 class.

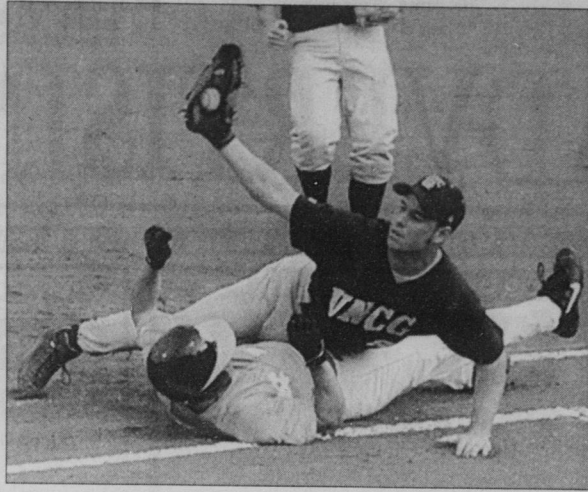
If Snare's gutsy performance against the Spartans (32-19) factors in at all for the grade on his paper, here's a bit of advice for his teacher: Give the boy an A.

Snare threw 6 2/3 strong innings, yielding only one earned run as the Tar Heels (40-11) eked out a 4-3 win at Boshamer Stadium.

"It was one of those days that I didn't feel like I had my best stuff," Snare said. "I was just happy to get the win for the team."

The junior started out slowly on the hill, struggling through a 21-pitch first inning. Then in the third, UNC-G's Shane Schumaker blasted a triple to deep right field that sent UNC outfielder Matt McCay crashing into the wall and sent Jesse Martin to home plate.

The next batter, Jeremy Purcell, blooped a pop-up to shallow left field. Third baseman Clay Hooper called off left fielder Tyrell Godwin and shortstop Chad Prosser but bobbled the ball, scoring Schumaker and giving the Spartans a 2-0 lead.



UNC outfielder Adam Greenberg (bottom) is tagged out at first base by UNC-G's Chris Mittendorf after trying to bunt for a hit in the first inning.

But that was all the Spartans could muster against Snare. He kept them at bay until he was finally lifted for Derrick DePriest in the seventh with five strikeouts and 110 pitches under his belt.

"That was typical Ryan out there tonight," UNC coach Mike Fox said. "Early on, it takes him time to settle into a comfort zone or find his rhythm."

Another Ryan — first baseman Earey — provided the Tar Heels with the deciding run in the fourth.

Earey came up in the fourth with the Tar Heels trailing 2-1, and McCay and Godwin on first and second. He whiffed for his second strike on a hit-and-run, but Godwin and McCay successfully completed the double steal.

On the next pitch, Earey lined a single up the middle, scoring both runners.

The Tar Heels went up 3-2 and had the lead for good.

"I was trying to protect the runners, but I saw a pitch that I could hit," Earey said.

The Tar Heels added an insurance run in the seventh when Tyrell Godwin drove in Adam Greenberg with a sacrifice fly to right field.

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UNC 4, UNC-Greensboro 3

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Pitching: UNC-G — Hancock, Home (4), Gordon (7), Cable (8) and Martin, Knektorian (9); UNC — Snare, DePriest (7) and Moylen. Wins — Snare 9-1, Loss — Home 3-1. Save — DePriest. 11. Leading hitters: UNC-G — Schumaker 1-3 (3B, RBI), UNC — Earey 1-2 (2 RBI), McCay 2-4 (run, SB), Moylen 1-3 (RBI, SB).

Taking Some Last-Second Shots

Life in general tends to break down rather simply into three categories: the good, the bad and, of course, the ugly. Not surprisingly, life as a sports writer at The Daily Tar Heel does pretty much the same thing.

Through three years at the sports desk, I have experienced countless games, athletes, coaches, road trips and late nights in the office.

Along the way, you see things, you hear things and you learn things. Some are funny, some are sad, some are bizarre. Yet they all find their way into one of those three basic categories.

The Good

What might have made the biggest impression on me in my time here was something that occurred during the whole fired-unfired fiasco (see The Ugly) involving football coach Carl Torbush.

Torbush's players, the same ones who marched into Director of Athletics Dick Baddour's office a couple of years ago to score Torbush the job, stood tall to make sure he kept that job.

After the Tar Heels' season-finale win against Duke, center Ryan Carley spoke angrily about the situation during postgame interviews while his coach was in the next room delivering a press conference.

As Carley got up to walk out, he yelled into the other room, briefly interrupting Torbush, "Love you, Coach."

The signs, the words. The result? The man keeps his job. Beautiful.

Even the less dramatic events in UNC athletics scream out to fall under The Good. There's a lot to be said for teams that play in front of a few dozen fans every game but still compete like the house is packed and everybody's watching. And UNC's got a lot of them.

Even the teams everyone does watch will surprise you now and then. Some fellas who play down at the Smith Center come to mind.

And, hey, it's not all sappy serious stuff, either. Covering sports is a lot of fun. The road trips are fun. Hell, I missed class the entire month of March to hit the road with a bunch of wacky



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sports writers who cover the boys in Carolina blue.

Some of the advice you get from those guys is priceless. Like a local columnist (who shall remain nameless) who gave me some wise advice on job hunting, which although disturbing seems more and more appealing as I approach unemployment ... I mean graduation.

"Walk in to whatever place you want to work and tell them you're gay," the columnist told me. "Tell them, 'I'm the gayest motherfucker you ever met. You have no gay people working here. Either give me a job or I'll be back tomorrow with an ACLU lawyer.'"

Simply put, that's good stuff.

The Bad

Luckily, there's not a whole lot of bad. Maybe that's because all the bad stuff I've seen covering UNC has quickly leapt into the Ugly category.

But there is one thing. I have been horrendous bad luck for most of the teams I have covered (with the notable exception of this year's Final Four run).

Volleyball has been good the last two years. Know why? Because I covered them three years ago. Sorry, Joe Sagula.

Field hockey had three consecutive national titles. I show up, and it's an early NCAA tournament exit for coach Karen Shelton and company. Coach, you have permission to beat me with the flat side of a field hockey stick. Ouch.

Pretty tough regular season for Coach Gut, too. I'll take the blame for that one. But I refuse to let Gut beat me on account of that whole run to Indy.

Last, but certainly not least, I've got to give a big "sorry 'bout that" to Torbush. I jinxed the season. Glad it didn't cost you your job.

The Ugly

Speaking of Carl, perhaps nothing was as ugly as the way Baddour and the department handled that whole situation. When you look at all the spoiled, crybaby coaches in the country, Torbush is a breath of fresh air.

So how does Baddour reward that type of character? By digging Torbush a shallow grave, shoving him into it head first and then offering him a hand to help him out once players and fans finally convinced Baddour that Torbush wasn't dead yet.

Oh, yeah, and then lying about him being fired in the first place. Whoops.

That's so ugly, it makes Scottie Pippen look like Rebecca Romijn-Stamos.

Also falling under Ugly is the behavior — some proven, some alleged — of a couple of coaches at UNC. Phil Ford's driving drunk didn't look too good. Or how about the sexual harassment lawsuit against Anson Dorrance? Sometimes winning isn't everything. It helps to be someone the University can be proud of.

The End

There's something I learned in those three years that's important to remember. Sure, it's easy to put things into these three categories. But there's one that seems to be a little bit more important than the other two. After all, nothing can be all bad, and beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

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