

Parker Resurfaces in UNC Backfield

Freshman Willie Parker ran for 71 yards at Virginia, where he carried the ball for the first time in five games.

By Mike Ogle
Assistant Sports Editor

CHARLOTTEVILLE, Va. — Willie Parker saw an opportunity Saturday at Virginia and seized it.

He grabbed a chance to go back in time, to his happy place — the start of North Carolina's 2000 football season and practice.

"Coach told us at the beginning of the game, whoever made plays would stay in the game," the redshirt freshman tailback said. "I tried to make the most of it."

Brandon Russell started the game, as always, at tailback, but gained 1 yard on two carries in UNC's opening series.

When the Tar Heels got new life on the drive with a UVa. roughing-the-punter penalty, Parker got the call.

His first carry since the closing min-

utes at Florida State on Sept. 16 resulted in a 4-yard gain. The Tar Heels went to him again. This time he gained 9 yards off right tackle.

UNC went to him seven times in nine plays, including an errant pass attempt, after the penalty as it marched down the field for three points. Parker rushed six times for 25 yards on the drive en route to 71 on the afternoon. He also caught two passes for 26 yards.

"It felt good," Parker said. "It felt like my old times, old ways, spring ways."

In his old times, he impressed coaches in preseason practice so much he emerged as the clear choice as the opening-day starter. But his spot at the top of the depth chart didn't last long.

Russell got the nod against Tulsa



UNC tailback Willie Parker has 121 yards and two touchdowns on 41 carries this season.

when Parker was bothered by his back that week and has started all eight games for the Tar Heels.

Parker stands as the team's fifth-leading rusher with 121 yards after his performance against the Cavaliers.

Parker carried 10 times for 17 yards and two touchdowns against Tulsa and picked up 24 yards the next week at Wake Forest. He eventually fell to third on the depth chart behind André Williams and has barely been heard from since.

That is, until Saturday. "He showed quickness early in the game; he's been practicing well," UNC coach Carl Torbush said. "All three tailbacks are good players, and there's just one football. Willie performed well today and looked like Willie Parker from last spring."

Perhaps Torbush saw some renewed

energy recently from Parker in practice. Perhaps Torbush's frustrations with the running game finally got to him, and he just decided to shake things up a bit.

Whatever the reason for the opportunity, Parker was ready to take advantage of it.

"I'm never down on myself," he said. "You've just got to go from the positive. If you go negative, you just start feeling like you ain't nothing. You've got to have a positive mind-set."

WILLIE PARKER
UNC Tailback

feeling negative like you ain't nothing. You've got to have a positive mind-set."

At least one of his teammates has confidence in Parker, as well, and hopes to see more from him in the future.

"I think Willie is a talented running back," quarterback Ronald Curry said. "He just hasn't had a shot this year."

"Hopefully he'll play more."

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

Women's Soccer Seeded 3rd in ACC Tournament

From Staff Reports

The North Carolina women's soccer team (13-3, 4-3 in the ACC) has received the third seed in the ACC tournament, which begins Thursday at Koskinen Stadium at Duke.

Losing three games in a season for the first time since 1980, UNC dropped to sixth this week in the National Soccer Coaches Association of America poll. Notre Dame, Washington, Nebraska, Clemson and UCLA make up the top five. Virginia (No. 14), Florida State (No. 16) and Wake Forest (No. 22) are also ranked in the top 25.

The Tar Heels will play the opening game of the ACC tournament at 1 p.m. against sixth-seeded N.C. State in a quarterfinal match. UNC defeated the Wolfpack 3-0 in Raleigh on Oct. 11.

No. 2 Wake takes on No. 7 FSU, No. 4 Virginia plays No. 5 Duke, and No. 1 Clemson goes against No. 8 Maryland in Thursday's other quarterfinal matches.

The UNC-N.C. State winner gets the WFU-FSU winner Friday at 6 p.m. in the semifinals. The title game is at 1 p.m. Sunday.

Men's Soccer Moves Up

The North Carolina men's soccer team is ranked No. 2 in this week's NSCAA poll, released on Monday. The

ranking is UNC's highest ever in the NSCAA poll, eclipsing a No. 3 ranking on Sept. 22, 1987.

UNC (16-2, 5-1 in the ACC) has won 10 consecutive games with one game left in the 2000 regular season.

The Tar Heels were ranked No. 1 in the last two SoccerTimes.com polls, determined by a voting panel of 15 NCAA Division I head coaches. The new SoccerTimes.com poll will be released today.

North Carolina returns to action Sunday at No. 19 South Carolina.

Volleyball Holds Senior Night

North Carolina's volleyball team plays host to N.C. State at 7 p.m. tonight in Carmichael Auditorium for Senior Night, the last regular season home match of the season.

Seniors Liz Feldman, Lisa Fryer and Casey Simpson will be honored immediately following the match. UNC is 21-5 overall, 11-2 in the ACC.



North Carolina senior Casey Simpson plays the last home match of her career at 7 p.m. tonight against N.C. State.

Sullivan Wastes No Time Setting Personal Mark

By Tim Solic
Staff Writer

Molly Sullivan didn't waste any time in the 2000-01 swimming season.

In her first home meet of the year, the North Carolina swimmer obliterated her personal best in the 1,650-yard freestyle and continued to tear into UNC's record books.

Sullivan scorched the field Saturday at Koury Natatorium in the 1,650 free with a time of 16 minutes, 32.19 seconds. She took the lead early in the race against Rice and never looked back as she lapped several swimmers on her way to victory.

Sullivan finished five seconds faster than her time at the end of last season and vaulted ahead of Leslie Ramsey into fourth place all-time at UNC in the event.

"It's really exciting," said Sullivan, a junior from Las Vegas. "A lot of the pressure is off now."

UNC coach Frank Comfort already has been impressed by Sullivan's performances this season.

"It's utterly fantastic to have a distance swimmer swimming way under lifetime best this early in the season,"

Comfort said.

Since the end of last season, Sullivan has worked hard to improve her times. She qualified for the U.S. Olympic trials in the 800-meter freestyle during the summer and spent time training in California.

"She put a great summer in — getting ready for the Olympic trials," Comfort said. "She really paid a lot of dues, and she got extremely fit."

During her freshman year, Sullivan won the ACC title in the 1,650-yard freestyle with a time of 16:38.94 and placed eighth in the 500 freestyle. She qualified for both events in the NCAA Championships, finishing 45th in the 500.

Sullivan followed her rookie performance by finishing third in the 1,650-yard freestyle at ACCs her sophomore year. But her time was the fifth-fastest in



North Carolina junior Molly Sullivan won the 1,650-yard freestyle against Rice with a personal-best time of 16:32.19.

UNC history at 16:37.20.

Once again she qualified for the NCAA's in both the 1,650 and 500-yard freestyle.

This season Sullivan started the year off strong, taking first place in the 1,000-yard freestyle in the opening meet of the season against top-ranked Georgia.

Even with her great start, Sullivan is not caught up in her individual success. She is more concerned with the success of her team, which is ranked No. 9 in

the early season.

"I just want to help the team in every way possible — it's mainly a team thing now," Sullivan said. "It's so exciting right now."

"The potential here is just overwhelming."

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

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Personals

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Happy Birthday Vanilla lol! You're as cool as Adrock (it's his birthday too)

Christina: You are an amazing girl. Aced farmers and their cows. Love, Chaney

Down - last summer was sure a blast so let's get together real soon! How about both taking the AIDS course this Spring? Tues. 5:30-6:45 PM.