

# Senior Metts Guides Young Offensive Line

Senior center Adam Metts anchors an inexperienced offensive line filled with four sophomores.

By BRAD BROTHERS  
Assistant Sports Editor

Senior center Adam Metts' tasks on the offensive line go way beyond snapping the football to quarterback Ronald Curry.

It even goes beyond protecting Curry himself.

Metts, the lone senior on North Carolina's offensive line, is also left the challenge of helping mentor the rest of Tar Heels' line, which is projected to start four sophomores.

One of those sophomores, left tackle Greg Woofter, knows Metts' importance for the line's



Adam Metts started every game last year for the Tar Heels at center.

growth.

"His leadership is more vocal," Woofter said. "There is not a lot of vocal people out there, and that is what we needed in a center and in a senior."

"You've got to be able to rally when the going gets tough. He gets on people, and we get on him just the same, but it's just a little bit different when you've been there a little bit longer."

Woofter and the rest of the line are again coached by Robbie Caldwell, one of three coaches from former UNC coach Carl Torbush's staff who avoided termination.

Caldwell and new offensive coordina-

tor Gary Tranquill looked to make the offense quicker and more athletic in 2001.

Sophomore Jupiter Wilson, the projected left guard, is one of many players who expressed support towards the new offensive philosophy.

"You've got to be smarter in this offense, I guess," Wilson said. "(It) is different compared to last year. I will say that we are a little more athletic."

On the right side of the line, two players - Jeb Terry and Marcus Wilson - look to overcome their inexperience.

At 6-foot-6 and 295 pounds, Terry is an imposing presence and big blocker downfield. Despite missing the 2000 sea-

son with a fractured ankle, Terry performed well in the spring and is slotted to start at right tackle.

Anchoring the right guard position is Wilson, who lacks size but has solid technique and strength up front.

"We are still making mistakes, but that is going to be expected this early in the season, especially coming off a new team and a new offense, but definitely we are doing a lot better than we were expected to do," Metts said.

"We are trying to work out the small details of the offense, and once we get a foothold onto that we will be able to succeed very easily."

## Depth Questionable at LB

Three veteran linebackers will attempt to continue the linebacking tradition at UNC but have untested backups.

By RACHEL CARTER  
Sports Editor

Thirty years ago, North Carolina had an intense linebacking tradition who once made 20 tackles in a game against Notre Dame.

The Irish aren't on UNC's schedule this year, but first-year North Carolina coach John Bunting expects his linebackers to show the same kind of tenacity as he did way back when.

Although he hasn't gone specifically to his starting three linebackers - David Thornton, Quincy Monk and Merceda Perry - to talk about his glory days at one of UNC's traditionally strong positions, Bunting still expects big things out of his guys.

"I think the linebackers are the guys that run the football team," Bunting said. "You want a good football team, you

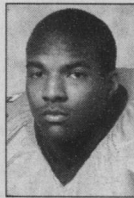
need a quarterback that leads and linebackers that lead."

UNC's three linebackers have plenty of experience between them - but it's better than the backups.

Senior Thornton played in 316 snaps in 2000, mostly on special teams. But his hard work impressed Bunting enough that the former walk-on earned a scholarship in the spring.

Perry started the first two games of last season as an outside linebacker until fracturing his right ankle against Wake Forest after making four tackles. He received a medical redshirt.

Taking over at middle linebacker for Brandon Spoon, who was a fourth-round pick by the Buffalo Bills, is senior Quincy Monk. Monk stepped in last



UNC senior Merceda Perry started two games last season before fracturing his right ankle against WFU.

year when Perry went down for the season.

Monk had 76 hits and six tackles for a loss of 31 yards last year, but he'll be needed for a lot more than that. Replacing a defensive leader like Spoon will require more than six TFLs.

"Monk's a great leader," Thornton said. "Merceda's provide a whole lot of extensive leadership as well."

Leadership might only carry the Tar Heels so far. Beyond the three starters, there's a whole lot of questions.

Two redshirt freshmen and one junior back up the three. Ronald Harris, the junior, played in 11 games and will backup Monk.

"Oh yeah," Thornton said when asked if he was comfortable with the linebackers' depth. "We got Ronald Harris, Malcolm Stewart, Clarence Gaddy and Devullen Bullard - they'll provide formidable depth."

Depth or no depth, things should be interesting for UNC's linebackers. Defensive coordinator Jon Tenuta has instituted a pro-style defense that the corps hopes will baffle their opponents.

## Defensive Backs Look To Negate Big Plays

UNC's defensive backs must regroup after finishing third in the conference in passing touchdowns allowed.

By KELLY LUSK  
Assistant Sports Editor

On more than one occasion last season, North Carolina's defensive backs got burned by an opposing team's wide receivers.

One game especially sticks out in the mind of senior cornerback Errol Hood, when the Tar Heels relinquished a 17-point lead in the second quarter to Clemson last October when the Tigers defeated UNC 38-24.

"I worked as a counselor at a rec center this summer, and those kids even gave me a hard time about the Clemson game," Hood said.

In that very game, Clemson's top receiver, Rod Gardner, set a Tiger record with 182 receiving yards - yards that Hood was supposed to deny.

In fact, during the 2000 season UNC tied for third in the ACC in passing touchdowns allowed with 19. Only Duke and Wake Forest let more passes through their respective defenses.

But with new defensive coordinator Jon Tenuta's in-your-face tactics, UNC's

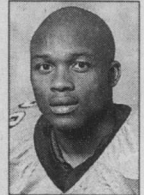
defensive backs have gained a sense of confidence that has been severely lacking in at least the last two seasons.

"Coach Tenuta has pushed us to overcome our weaknesses and get better," Hood said. "Last year (defensive backs) Coach (Ron) Case kind of let us do our own thing, and I didn't work as hard."

Hood played more snaps than any other Tar Heel last season, racking up 54 tackles and breaking up 12 passes. His two interceptions were a team high but paled in comparison to the five he grabbed in his sophomore season.

"Last year there came a point where a lot of us just stopped having fun," Hood said. "When that happens it's over. The bottom falls out right there." Junior cornerback Michael Waddell will try to assist Hood in keeping the defensive unit focused this season. Although Waddell's speed has never been a problem - he runs one of the

See DEFENSIVE BACKS, Page 7



UNC safety Errol Hood finished third in the conference in pass breakups last season.

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