

UNC Readies for Run at Terps

By WILL SMALL
Staff Writer

For seven years, College Park, Md., has been the Mecca of women's lacrosse.

Maryland won its seventh straight NCAA championship last season, and the Terrapins enter the 2002 season ranked No. 1 and riding a 43-game win streak. They sit atop a pedestal of greatness.

North Carolina wants to knock them down.

And this season, it may have the personnel to do it. The sixth-ranked Tar Heels return four All-American seniors in Christine McPike, Lindsay Stone, Porter Wilkinson and Kellie Thompson, a finalist for the Tewaaron Trophy, given annually to the national player of the year.

Add to that mix Erin McInnes (a senior attacker who set UNC's single-season record for assists last year with 25), a defensive unit that kept all its starters from last season and a talented freshman class, and North Carolina has reason to be excited about the upcoming season.

"I really feel like we have the talent and the experience that maybe we haven't had in the past," McPike said. "We want to win."

For that to happen, the Tar Heels will look to their All-Americans to lead them. McPike, Thompson and Stone will make up the nucleus of the North

Carolina midfield and will also serve as the team's tri-captains.

Thompson set a UNC single-season record with 51 goals last season. In a game against Syracuse, she tied the school single-game record for goals scored, netting six. She was third in the ACC in points with 64.

Stone and McPike were also among the ACC's elite offensive players last season, finishing fifth and ninth, respectively, in the ACC points standings with 58 and 44.

Coach Jenny Slingluff Levy said it will be difficult for other teams to defend her midfield. "Our midfield is one of the best in the country," she said.

The senior class is not only talented, it's hungry to win. The past two seasons have been marked by disappointing finishes.

Last season, Duke defeated UNC 10-5 in the first round of the ACC Tournament. Then, in the NCAA tournament quarterfinals, the Tar Heels lost 10-4 to Georgetown. In 2000, UNC lost



Senior attacker Kellie Thompson set a UNC single-season scoring record with 51 goals in 2001.

in the first round of both the ACC and NCAA tournaments.

"I'd say we didn't live up to our potential the past couple of years," Stone said.

Slingluff Levy agreed that the Tar Heels have fallen short of their goals the past few years, but she said those shortcomings will drive them to perform better this season.

"Our senior class came in right after we had gone to two final fours, so they came in here maybe expecting to be there four years in a row, and they haven't been there once," Slingluff Levy said. "That kind of puts something in the back of your mind."

While UNC has an experienced, determined team coming back, Maryland has graduated six of its top 10 scorers, including Jen Adams, the 2001 national player of the year.

But the Terps still enter the season at No. 1, and North Carolina faces not only one of the toughest schedules in the country but also ghosts of seasons past that haunt a team known as under-achievers.

Despite the label, Stone and her teammates still feel this could be the year that Maryland gets knocked off its pedestal.

Said Stone, "We know we have everything it would take to win a national championship."

Rowers Fight Odds, ACC With Strong Work Ethic

By DAVID ANDRUKONIS
Staff Writer

Joel Furtek has to feel a little like John Candy's character in "Cool Runnings." Coaching rowing at North Carolina is not too different from trying to form a Jamaican bobsled team.

"There's just very little high school rowing in North Carolina," Furtek said.

That, along with UNC's high admission standards for out-of-state students and the fact that many academically qualified out-of-state rowers choose the strong Ivy League rowing programs, makes it difficult to field an experienced team.

Of the 29 women on this year's novice squads, two had high school rowing experience. Of the 20 varsity rowers, one was a high school coxswain.

Furtek fills his boats by mailing try-out invitations to every incoming freshman woman. "We're looking for people who were born to row but don't know it," he said. "We're looking for somebody who's got an athletic engine."

And that's just what he finds. "The fastest novice in our program this year never heard of rowing until she got here," Furtek said.

Now in its fifth year as a program, UNC is still building. Last spring, the team finished fourth out of four ACC

teams. "We view that as last," Furtek said. "We want to close that gap."

So Furtek has his team working 19.5 hours of the 20-hour league maximum.

"We've been kicking our butts with the weights and (ergometers)," said Lauren Tarabokia, a sophomore transfer from George Washington. "We need to do better than we did in the fall. We hope to show Duke and Clemson how hard we've been working."

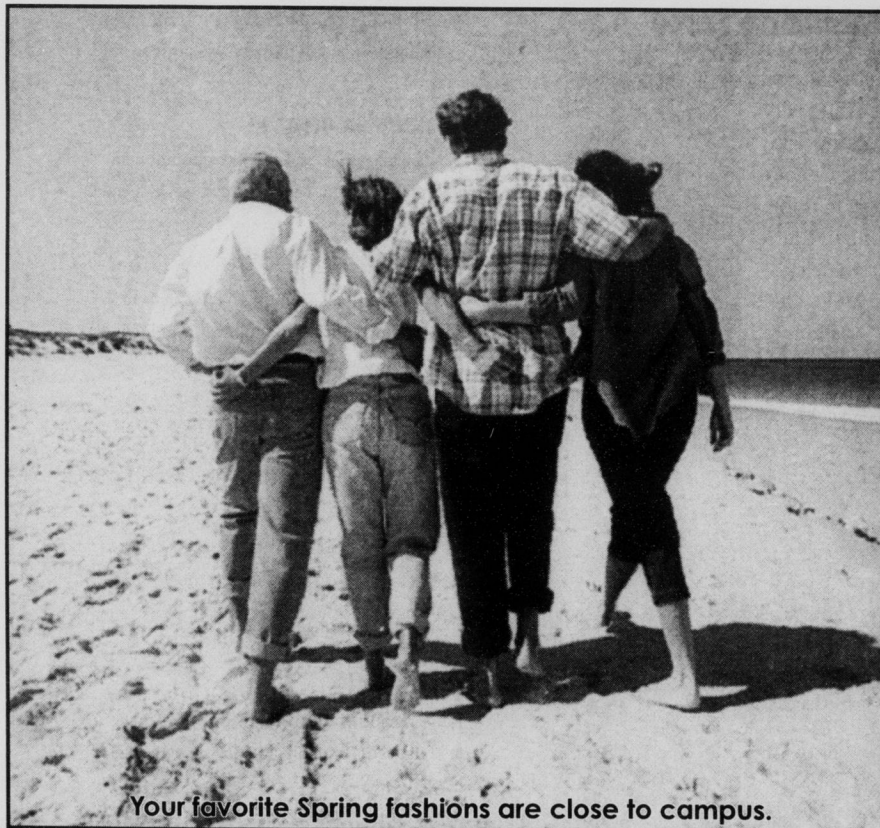
More importantly, the Tar Heels hope that effort translates to wins. At the Lake Michie Invitational in September, Duke and Clemson beat UNC in every race.

Furtek refuses to get frustrated, recalling a telling scene from a few weeks ago. After his team had started a land workout, some football players showed up nearby, chatted while they warmed up, worked out, chatted some more and left while the rowers pressed on.

"We're a young team," said Layne Carey, one of just four seniors. "But we do have the competitive edge, and I'm excited to start racing with everybody."

Excitement aside, Furtek said he knows it might not be all smooth sailing for the rowers this season. "It's going to be a struggle," he said.

"There's some great athletes in North Carolina, and we just have to teach them how to row."



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