

Men's Tennis Confident, Searches for ACC Crown

By OWEN A. HASSELL
Senior Writer

The North Carolina men's tennis team came within one point of serving greater notice to the rest of the ACC.

That missed point came on Feb. 1 against Texas, a traditional tennis power, in a 4-3 loss to the Longhorns at UNC's Cone-Kenfield Tennis Center. At the time, UT was ranked No. 20 in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's college rankings while UNC was No. 34.

The Tar Heels (4-1) evened the score at 3-1 after winning its No. 4, No. 5, and No. 6 singles matches. But the Longhorns won two out of three doubles matches to secure the one-point win. The next day, Texas beat perennial ACC champion Duke by a larger margin of 4-1.

While it was the Tar Heels' first loss of the year, it gave the team and Coach Sam Paul new perspective on the young season.

"We were disappointed that we did

not come away with a win, but it was a good early showing by this team," Paul said. "We know that we can play with any team in the country and have a lot of confidence."

That confidence will prove helpful as North Carolina steps into the ACC season without two seniors from last year, David Cheatwood and Chad Riley. Both started in 2001 and were key contributors to the team's 6-2 conference mark, which was good enough for a second-place ACC finish behind Duke.

Cheatwood won the ACC championship at No. 3 singles and Riley was runner-up at No. 6.

To fill the leadership role this season, Paul said he will rely on his lone senior, No. 1 seed Marcio Petrone, to help out the younger players.

Although the Tar Heels are young, they still have experienced players in underclassman starters Nicholas Monroe, Trystan Meniane and Greg Archer.

"We have a very balanced and competitive group," Paul said. "Of course it is early, but it is a very deep team."

Golfers Look to Build on Fall

By BEN COUCH
Staff Writer

The fall golf season is essentially exhibition, a time when teams find out where their strengths and weaknesses lie before the true season begins in the spring.

For the UNC men's golf team, which entered the year with no seniors, this past fall was more of a learning season than ever. But the process was not terribly painful.

The Tar Heels managed top-seven finishes in three of their five tournaments, and there were also some encouraging individual performances. Sophomore Dustin Bray finished the season with a below-par average of 71.00, which included a tie for first at the Prestige in Palm Beach, Calif.

Jeremy Elliott came on strong with two top-20 finishes. Fellow junior Ramon Bescansa had three top-33 fin-

ishes, carding a low round of 73.

The team gained key experience for the spring.

"Last season was a definite confidence booster for me," Bray said. "I learned a lot about myself."

Ranked 34th in the MasterCard Collegiate rankings, the Tar Heels hit the spring links with high hopes. UNC coach John Inman said the ranking is fair, but that he is far from satisfied.

"There's a lot of room for improvement," he said. "We have the ability to be much better."

The offseason was a rigorous and productive one for the Tar Heels. For the first time, UNC was able to fully utilize the newly constructed Chapman Golf Center, a clubhouse at Finley Golf Course.

"It has allowed us to relax at the golf course," Inman said. "Everything is much more relaxed and professional."

Although more relaxed, the Tar Heels have been working hard.

And with the way things are shaping up, Elliott said that all the team needs now is a few good breaks and good finishes.

With Bray, Elliott, and Bescansa firmly entrenched as the top three starters, the Tar Heels are searching for someone to step up and provide some juice to the tail end of the starting lineup. Junior Bob Cherry and sophomore Richard Treis will start out the season in the two remaining spots.

The Tar Heels will need consistent, low-scoring performances from top to bottom this spring. And with the real season about to begin, a change in attitude also is needed.

"We need to see if we can grow to not be cocky, but where we know we can compete," Bray said.

Said Inman: "I'm excited about our prospects. All the young men are very talented, we just need to believe it. Once that happens, good things will come."

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The Relay for Life is a walk and run for fun ... and to raise money and awareness about cancer. Not only is the Relay for Life fun and inspirational, it also raises millions of dollars to help prevent and cure cancer and to support those battling this life-threatening disease.

Cancer survivors (one year, five years, one month - it does not matter) are needed to walk in the Cancer Survivor Lap - the opening lap of the Relay for Life. Cancer survivors can run, walk, or wheelchair the opening lap. We want to honor as many cancer survivors as we possibly can. Cancer survivors will receive a Relay for Life T-shirt as well as special recognition throughout the opening ceremony.

The Cancer Survivor Lap will take place
Friday, April 19, 2002 at 6:30pm
Fetzer Field at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

For a registration form or more information, call Katie at 929-6781.