

UNC Duo on a Roll as NCAs Near 3 More Ex-Tar Heels Sign NFL Contracts

By CHRIS RICHTER Staff Writer

RALEIGH – Sometimes the key to winning is just finding the right combination.

North Carolina men's tennis coach Sam Paul has found it in the team's No. 2 doubles duo of sophomore Nick Monroe and freshman Daniel Pinchbeck.

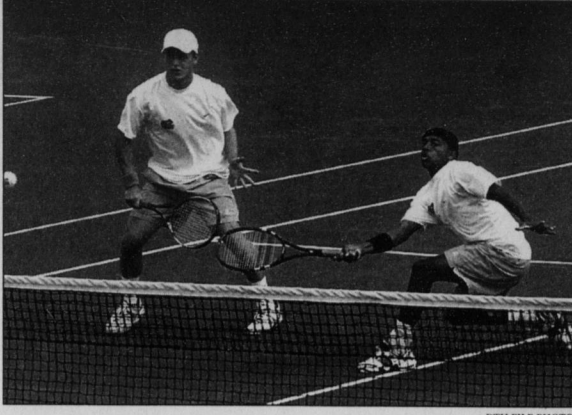
Since dropping their first match as a pair on April 6 against Florida State, Pinchbeck and Monroe have reeled off six straight doubles wins, including three at last weekend's ACC championships.

"That was a key for the tournament," Paul said. "The doubles play really picked up. They've just learned, and their personalities clicked."

After two 8-6 wins to start the tournament, Pinchbeck and Monroe breezed by Georgia Tech on Sunday, 8-3. The Tar Heels took the championship match 4-3 to win their first ACC title in 12 years.

"Daniel and I are a good combination," Monroe said. "We move well, and we return well. We feel like we can break our opponents every time they serve."

Pinchbeck said he and Monroe have similar styles. He said they both come to the net often and use their speed to stay ahead of their opponents.



ITH FILE PHOTO

UNC doubles partners Daniel Pinchbeck (left) and Nick Monroe have won six straight matches and have been a big part of the Tar Heels' success.

"The only match we've lost was the first match because we weren't used to playing," Pinchbeck said. "But we've worked hard on our doubles and knuckled down."

The pair has been just as hot in singles competition. Now playing at No. 3, Pinchbeck finished the regular season at 20-4 and has not lost since dropping a tight match in late March against Brown.

"I've been playing well all year," Pinchbeck said. "I went through a bad patch in the middle of the season where I lost a couple."

Pinchbeck got a scare Saturday, losing his first set 2-6 to Wake Forest's Derrick Spive before taking the next two 6-2, 6-3.

"(Saturday) I played the best player I've played in the ACC," Pinchbeck said. "He came out firing, and I just knuckled down and got the job done."

Monroe entered Sunday's championship match against the Yellow Jackets on a nine-match win streak.

"We made some adjustments with Nick after the (first) Georgia Tech match," Paul said. "That was where Nick hit rock bottom confidence-wise. He learned a lot from that match."

But Monroe lost 6-2, 7-5 to Tech's Scott Schugg, the same player to whom he lost before beginning his singles streak.

"He took it to me early," Monroe said. "I got a little frustrated and tried to pull it back together but couldn't come up with the win."

With a championship behind him and the team, Monroe said he expects the Tar Heels to have a strong NCAA tourney.

"I've been playing some good tennis as of late," Monroe said. "Everyone on the team is playing their best tennis. But we're going to bring all we have."

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Kory Bailey, Merceda Perry and Billy-Dee Greenwood all signed free-agent contracts with pro teams Monday.

From Staff Reports

Three more players from the North Carolina football team joined the NFL ranks by signing free-agent contracts Monday.

Kory Bailey, a wide receiver from Durham, signed with the New York Jets, defensive back Billy-Dee Greenwood signed with the Carolina Panthers, and linebacker Merceda Perry reached an agreement with the Jacksonville Jaguars.

Bailey, who ranks fourth all-time at North Carolina with 139 receptions, caught 44 passes for 608 yards and six touchdowns last season.

Greenwood, a safety from Norwalk, Conn., had 67 tackles in 2001. Perry started every game last year at outside linebacker and had 39 tackles, including three for loss.

The Tar Heels now have placed nine players off last season's squad in the NFL.

This past weekend UNC had more players selected (six) in the 2002 NFL draft than any other ACC school. Only five other schools in the country had more.

The North Carolina players drafted were: Julius Peppers (No. 2, Carolina), Ryan Sims (No. 6, Kansas City), David Thornton (No. 106, Indianapolis), Joey Evans (No. 219, Cincinnati), Ronald Curry (No. 235, Oakland) and Quincy

Monk (No. 245, New York Giants).

Greenberg Named Co-Player of the Week

UNC center fielder Adam Greenberg was tabbed as a co-ACC Player of the Week after hitting .556 (10-for-18) in four games last week.

The junior from Guilford, Conn., also had five runs scored, four doubles, two home runs, nine RBIs and two stolen bases.



Center fielder Adam Greenberg led the Tar Heels to a weekend sweep of N.C. State and hit .556 last week.

MVP McPike Leads Tar Heels to Title

By GAVIN OFF Staff Writer

With a little more than eight minutes to go Sunday, North Carolina senior midfielder Christine McPike charged the Maryland net, lost the ball, regained control and fired a shot past goaltender Alexis Venechanos without losing stride.

The game-winning goal gave UNC's women's lacrosse its first ACC championship and helped McPike to her first tournament most valuable player award.

"It just got knocked away from me, and I still realized there was a whole path to goal," McPike said. "I had time to pick it up, gather myself and shoot it."

McPike, the conference player of the year, ranks in the ACC's top 10 in points and goals scored. She also ranks second to teammate Andy Fortino in turnovers caused.

The UNC senior finished the championship game with five goals, tying her

career-high. She scored seven goals in the weekend tournament.

"She's awesome," said Maryland coach Cindy Timchal. "McPike is a great player, (with a) high level of intensity the whole game. Good energy. Fast. A good team leader."

After the game, though, she was anything but full of energy. With a sweat-soaked blue bandanna on her head and eye black still on her face, McPike talked about the team's play and deflected any personal credit for its accomplishments.

Instead, she talked about how much



UNC midfielder Christine McPike scored seven goals this weekend and was named ACC tourney MVP.

the seniors have experienced and what a relief it was to finally capture a conference title.

"Our senior class has been through the ups and downs of the program," McPike said. "For four years we've all benefited from each step along the way, so we knew how to take a loss and how to pull through a big win. And we were finally able to put it all together."

The Tar Heels rest atop the ACC thanks in large part to McPike's play. She and teammate Kellie Thompson netted eight of UNC's 11 goals in the championship game.

McPike also led the team with six shots on goal and was second with two caused turnovers.

But still she pushed aside her billing as the tournament's MVP.

"It's a shock," McPike said. "I'm happy, but I'm also happy more that we won the game."

UNC coach Jenny Slungoff Levy said

the Tar Heels needed to find other scoring outlets than the senior from Farmingdale, N.Y.

Slingoff Levy also said she liked the way McPike didn't force UNC's offensive attack but rather let the game come to her.

"I think Christine is a solid, consistent spark for us every game," Slingoff Levy said. "We ask not only her, but especially all of our middies, to contribute on both ends of the field. And I thought she played a really smart game, took her opportunities (and) didn't push the ball too much."

And when McPike did exert herself and try to make something happen, it resulted in the game-winning goal.

"Something like that is not something you think about at all when you're out there," McPike said. "It's kind of an extra gift in a way."

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

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