

# The Daily Tar Heel

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*"I was a Tar Heel born; when I die I'll be a Tar Heel dead. But in the middle, I am a Tar Heel and a Jayhawk bred."*

# ROY RETURNS

## ANALYSIS

### HOME LURE TOO STRONG TO RESIST

*Roots, family bring coach back*

BY IAN GORDON  
SENIOR WRITER

It was an appropriately simple greeting.

After newly hired North Carolina men's basketball coach Roy Williams read a prepared statement to the assembled throng of media and members, both new and old, of the North Carolina hoops family, UNC Chancellor James Moeser stuck to basics.

"Coach, welcome home," said a smiling Moeser, turning to Williams. "Welcome home."

Home to the place where Williams, who grew up outside of Asheville, learned to love Tar Heel basketball.

Home to the basketball program in which the UNC alumnus first cut his teeth back in 1978, when he ran videotapes of Coach Dean Smith's weekly talk show to television stations around the state.

Home to the university from which both his children, Scott and Kimberly, earned their diplomas.

Home to the tradition, the family atmosphere and the system Williams tried to replicate in his 15 years as the head man in Lawrence, Kan.

But it was more than the many allures of Chapel Hill that brought him back to UNC after so many successful seasons in middle America. For a man as emotional as Roy Williams, it had to be something much more intangible, something much more visceral.

Three years ago, long after Bill Guthridge's retirement started the first push for Williams' return to his alma mater, Williams said he kept waiting for a sign to come to North Carolina.

When he walked around campus, he waited for the beauty and history of the Old Well or the Davie Poplar to pull him back. They didn't.

Nor did the urging of Smith, whom Williams clearly reveres.

In the end, Williams said he did what was right: stay at Kansas with a flourishing freshman class led by soon-to-be stars Nick Collison, Drew Gooden and Kirk Hinrich.

On Monday night, Williams said he believes he again made the right decision — this time by choosing to leave KU for UNC.

"Last night when I got on the plane and left Los Angeles, I said that I was going to make a decision," he said. "And when I landed, whatever decision it was I was going to stick with it because it

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DTH/BRIAN CASSELLA

Almost two weeks after former UNC basketball coach Matt Doherty resigned, Roy Williams flew to Chapel Hill to become UNC's next head basketball coach. Williams will be the third coach in the seven years since Dean Smith's retirement.

## Williams accepts 2nd chance at UNC

BY AARON FITT SPORTS EDITOR

A half-hour after he was expected and 15 years after he first left, Roy Williams returned to Chapel Hill at 9 p.m. Monday.

The former Kansas coach was greeted at Horace Williams Airport with a handshake — first by his new boss, North Carolina Director of Athletics Dick Baddour, then by his old boss, former Tar Heel coach Dean Smith.

The three men led a group of about a dozen into four cars headed for the Smith Center, where Williams was introduced as UNC's new men's basketball coach at a 10 p.m. press conference.

Williams entered the Smith Center's practice

gym to a standing ovation from the assembled boosters in the back and the UNC players in the front. He sat down, smiled, thanked his new team for its applause and then thanked his old team for its dedication.

"There's no doubt that I'm excited to be here, or I wouldn't be here," Williams said. "But other than a serious injury or death to my family, I've never had anything more difficult than what I went through this afternoon talking with my team, telling those 13 young men (at Kansas) that I was leaving them."

Before long, Williams was addressing a differ-

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## REACTION

**Dean Smith**  
"We thought it was done three years ago, and it didn't work out. ... We'll get better under Roy's leadership."



**James Moeser**  
"The Tar Heel fans will take care of this good man. Welcome home, Roy."



**Dick Baddour**  
"Our players, our fans ... should have the best coach in America to lead our basketball program."



## Williams' hiring pleases players

BY TIM CANDON  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

While hundreds of elated North Carolina fans awaited the arrival of new men's basketball coach Roy Williams at the Smith Center on Monday, the players he will guide next year expressed their pleasure at simply having a coach.

They first showed their excitement by greeting Williams with a standing ovation, and they continued to shower him with praise when they spoke with reporters.

"We knew right before we came in and played pickup today," said freshman center Sean May. "Right after we got done lifting weights, we were in the locker room just talking, and we were like, 'Hey, this is a great opportunity. One of the best coaches in America is going to be our coach.' It was a weird feeling, but a great feeling."

Sophomore guard Jackie Manuel said he was glad to finally know who will be his coach for his junior campaign.

"It's a burden off my chest," he said. "Now we know it's basically time to get ready for the season."

Teammate Raymond Felton shared similar sentiments.

"It's great," he said. "Coach Williams is a great coach. I'm happy he's here."

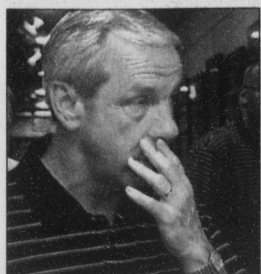
As Williams read a statement, he reached a point where he talked about his former Kansas players and how proud he was of them.

Then he looked to his left, where UNC players sat intently, and said, "I'm going to care about you guys. I expect the players to make me proud. ... And I promise

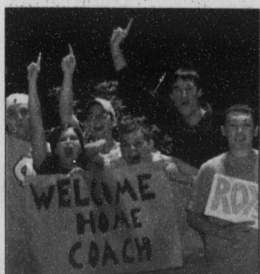
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### WILLIAMS' CAREER

- 1968-73 Plays for one year at UNC as a non-scholarship player. Receives a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in teaching from UNC.
- 1978-1988 Serves as assistant coach at UNC under Dean Smith. Is on the bench for the Tar Heels' 1981-82 championship season.
- July 8, 1988 Hired to become the head coach at Kansas. Goes on to compile a 418-101 record at KU, with four trips to the Final Four.
- March 23, 1991 Advances to his first Final Four, where KU lost to Duke in the championship game.
- March 1993 Williams advances to his second Final Four, where KU falls in the semifinal to eventual national champion UNC.
- July 6, 2000 Announces that he will stay in Kansas rather than accept the head coaching job at UNC. Matt Doherty, Williams' former assistant, is hired.
- March 24, 2002 Beats Oregon to advance to the first Final Four appearance since 1993. KU falls to eventual national champion Maryland.
- April 7, 2003 Loses to Syracuse in the NCAA title game. During the Final Four, Williams had to deal with speculation about whether he would accept the UNC job.



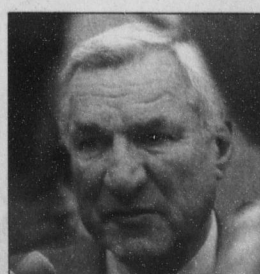
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