

# High numbers typical of week



DTH FILE PHOTO/GARRETT HALL

The more than 40,000 fans who typically attend UNC Homecoming football games show their school spirit in a variety of ways. The increased number of people migrating to Chapel Hill means big money for local businesses.

## Game attendance, hotel stays to rise

BY CAROLINE KORNEGAY

STAFF WRITER

Ever wonder just how many pomps are in the stands, creating that Carolina blue sea of screaming fans?

About 5,000 to 8,000.

But pomps are not the only change that blankets Chapel Hill during Homecoming weekend. The town itself swells with alumni and fans who fill hotels, buy T-shirts and celebrate the long-standing UNC tradition.

For the past five years, attendance for Homecoming games has been more than 40,000, said Steve Kirschner, communications director for the Department of Athletics.

For the 1998 win against Maryland, there were 51,200 fans, while the 32-31 loss to Wake Forest in 2001 packed Kenan Stadium with 53,000 Tar Heels.

This year's Homecoming features a challenge from Arizona State University.

But teams aren't the only winners at Homecoming.

The annually crowned Mr. and Ms. UNC can boast pretty high percentages of votes.

The last two Mr. UNC's, Barry French and Thurston Cherry, both won more than 50 percent of votes cast during their elections. The last Ms. UNC's, Susan Peters and Shayla Higginbotham, garnered 40 and 52 percent of the ballots cast, respectively.

Local stores also expect an increase in purchases.

Johnny T-Shirt, a UNC store on Franklin Street, should see an estimated 15 to 20 percent jump in sales across the board for Homecoming weekend, said store owner Chuck Helpingstine.

The increased sales are a result of alumni purchasing shirts, memorabilia and blue finger nail polish, Helpingstine said.

With fans pouring into town, hotels in the area should see an increase in reservations for the weekend of Oct. 17-19. Most of the hotels in the Chapel Hill area are booked solid and have been for a some time.

The Siena Hotel sees an approximate 15 to 20 percent jump in revenue during Homecoming weekend, when all 80 rooms are booked, said Kay Hess, rooms division manager for the hotel.

The Sheraton Hotel's 168 rooms have been booked solid for the past five weeks for this year's Homecoming weekend, said General Manager Lawrence Walters.

Whatever the numbers say, students, fans and alumni alike will be shaking their pomps as the Tar Heels take on the Arizona State University Sun Devils on Oct. 17.

Contact the University Editor at [udesk@unc.edu](mailto:udesk@unc.edu).

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## HOMECOMING ATTENDANCE

The annual Homecoming game typically draws one of the largest crowds of the football season. UNC alumni from across the country flock to cheer their team to victory. Part of the reason for the large crowd is that the game usually is played against an ACC opponent, making it easier for the opponent's supporters to come to Kenan Stadium. The 2003 game will be played against Arizona State University.



YEAR	OPPONENT	OUTCOME	ATTENDANCE
2002	Maryland	L 59-7	44,000
2001	Wake Forest	L 32-31	53,000
2000	Maryland	W 13-10	40,000
1999	Wake Forest	L 19-3	40,000
1998	Maryland	W 24-13	51,200

SOURCE: UNC DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

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