



BEN COUCH
BROOKLYN'S FINEST

Basketball junkie gets Knicks fix

As we enter the fourth week of the NBA season, I've decided that LeBron James is a baller.

I mean, I've known about the kid since his sophomore year of high school because SLAM magazine is ridiculously on point, but averaging 17 points, six rebounds, six assists, a steal-and-a-half and a block so far?

I would've called it a good year if he put up 10, 4 and 4.

Remember, he's 18. I would've been hard pressed to put up similar numbers at Woollen my freshman year.

So why am I lavishing more praise on the player that Sports Illustrated deemed "The Chosen One" when he was a junior in high school, all of two years ago?

Because I've seen him play — a lot.

This may seem an odd statement coming from someone who grew up in Brooklyn before he came down to Chapel Hill, but it's wholly plausible — because of the wonders of NBA League Pass.

If your cable setup is compatible, all it takes is a trip to the cable company and a fair amount of cash — \$179 for the full season, which runs from November to March, because the playoffs are on regular television — to get hooked up.

For what amounts to roughly 60 cents a game, I can watch Stan Van Gundy coach a Miami Heat team that features Lamar Odom as its featured player.

Lamar Odom. I hail from the same city that Odom grew up in, and I wouldn't have even considered making him the centerpiece of a video game roster.

I'm putting the over/under on Stan shriveling into another version of brother Jeff at 32 games.

Speaking of whom, I get to see the mortician-esque former Knicks coach bring Diet Coke and basketball to the Western Conference.

He's been successful enough that the Rockets are already leading the league in nearly every defensive category and Yao Ming is turning into Patrick Ewing, version 2.0.

Which gets me to Ewing's team — operating on the premise that Seattle and Orlando never happened — which is one of the few negatives of League Pass.

Having to watch teams like the current incarnation of the Knicks attempt to play basketball is one of the most painful experiences of my lifetime.

This is a personal League Pass paradox. Being displaced from the city that never sleeps and having access to Knicks games, I feel an obligation to watch them.

A man can only take so much of Howard Eisley and Shandon Anderson without fearing his head is going to explode.

Of course, this is offset because I get to watch Coney Island's finest — point guard Stephon Marbury — as he tries to lead an up-and-coming Phoenix Suns squad through the Western Conference.

The biggest problem I've encountered with League Pass is trying to figure out which games to watch.

There are 12 channels that can potentially carry games every night, and when all of them are filled, my brain starts to spaz from over-stimulation.

Do I watch Steph? Or Bron? Or the Knickerbockers? Or my adopted team, the Pacers?

And how could I pass up watching the Tim Duncan robot mechanically pick apart opposing defenses?

There's no way around it. I love this game — It's faaaaan-tastic!

I'd continue to wax poetic, but I've gotta jet — Miami's playing the Lakers.

See you after the game.

Contact Ben Couch
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Tar Heel runners win regional

UNC FINISHES 1-2-3, ADVANCES TO NCAA CHAMPIONSHIPS IN IOWA

BY ANDY WALES
STAFF WRITER

GREENVILLE — It's as easy as one, two, three.

At least it was for the North Carolina women's cross country team Saturday at the NCAA Southeast Regional

Championships at Lake Kristi. Tar Heel runners placed first, second and third in the race on their way to a convincing team victory in what is widely considered the most difficult region in the nation.

Leading the Tar Heels was senior

Shalane Flanagan with a time of 19 minutes, 44.4 seconds in the 6-kilometer race. Sophomore Carol Henry placed second, finishing in 20:01.5. Junior Erin Donohue came in third, running in 20:17.

Flanagan's time was 22 seconds off her time at the ACC Championships. She attributed her slower time to the goals set by the team.

"The intensity is maybe less for this race (than the ACC's)," Flanagan said.

"We are just comfortable where we are as a team. At ACCs we wanted to step up and win the title. Here, the goal was just to get to nationals."

The top two teams in the region automatically qualify for the national championship meet next Monday in Waterloo, Iowa. N.C. State will be joining the Tar Heels in Iowa, since they finished 12 points behind in second place.

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Shalane Flanagan



DTH PHOTOS/BRIAN CASSELLA

Above: North Carolina quarterback Darian Durant (4) dives for extra yardage in Saturday's 41-24 loss to Georgia Tech. Below: Yellow Jacket wide receiver Jonathan Smith scored two touchdowns and threw for another against UNC.

SAME OLD STORY

Walker tallies career-high 240 rushing yards against Tar Heels

BY AARON FITT
SENIOR WRITER

ATLANTA — Most game stories about the North Carolina football team this season could have begun with the same algebra-like formula:

"Running back X rushed for a career-high Y yards in Team Z's win against North Carolina."

On Saturday, Georgia Tech's P.J. Daniels became the seventh running back to rush for a career high against the Tar Heels this year. The sophomore's Ga. Tech 41 240 yards on 36 carries led the Yellow Jackets to a 41-24 win against UNC in front of 52,346 spectators at Bobby Dodd Stadium.

"We weren't very good in the second half on defense — we all know that," said North Carolina coach John Bunting. "We couldn't stop any of their runs, whether they were perimeter runs or inside runs."

The Tar Heels (2-9, 1-6 in the ACC) actually led 14-10 at halftime. They held the Yellow Jackets (6-4, 4-3) to just 139 total yards, 80 of them on the ground. Whenever Daniels would get into a rhythm running the ball, Georgia Tech would try to throw the ball. All four of Tech's first-half drives that didn't result in a touchdown were stalled on failed passing plays.

Conversely, North Carolina's passing game was clicking. Darian Durant completed his first eight passes and 10 of 13 in the first half for 91 yards, including a 2-yard touchdown pass to Bobby Blizzard with 50 seconds left in the half.

"We've been saying that the emergence of our running game will open the pass up," Durant said. "They seemed to try to stack the box on us and that opened the passing game up. We tried to exploit that."

Smith scores TDs in unconventional ways

BY JAMIE AGIN
SENIOR WRITER

ATLANTA — Two Yellow Jackets might have penned themselves into the Georgia Tech offensive record books on Saturday, but in terms of creative flair, it was the Microsoft Office manual versus "The Lord of the Rings."

While tailback P.J. Daniels ground his way to a 240-yard rushing day during Georgia Tech's 41-24 win, wide receiver Jonathan Smith became the first player in school history to score on a run, a pass and a kick return.

Perhaps more impressive, all three of Smith's touchdowns came in the fourth quarter.

Smith's first score came with the Yellow Jackets up 20-17. Georgia Tech had a second-and-2 on the

UNC 26-yard line and tried a reverse to Smith.

Smith ran to the right and saw North Carolina defensive end Madison Hedgecock. Smith stopped dead, freezing Hedgecock, then floated the ball up to wideout Nate Curry.

"I knew (Hedgecock) was going to be there, but I didn't know he was going to be that close," Smith said. "They told me if there was someone in my face, to just try and make a move and run it, but I saw Nate leave his man so I just threw it up."

Smith's first touchdown pass since high school won't win any quarterback challenges, but the timing was right on the floater to Curry, who beat Tar Heel cornerback Chris Hawkins to the end zone.

"It scored," said Tech quarterback Reggie Ball, who had three touchdown passes of his own Saturday. "I give any touchdown pass a good grade."

Ball was behind the next score. After the Tar Heels cut the lead to three, Tech marched to the UNC 30

UNC blasts early-round NCAA foes

O'Reilly, Tarpley pace potent Tar Heel offense

BY CHRIS GILFILLAN
ASSISTANT SPORTS SATURDAY EDITOR

It was business as usual in the first two rounds of the NCAA Tournament for the North Carolina women's soccer team.

Fueled by sophomore Lindsay Tarpley, UNC beat High Point 8-0 on Friday and UNC-Greensboro 5-0 on Sunday.

On their way to the third round of the tournament, where they will face Purdue UNC at 6 p.m. Friday at Fetzer Field, the Tar Heels combined for 69 shots against the Panthers and Spartans.

All the while the Tar Heels only allowed four shots to be taken.

The only real scoring opportunity had by their opponents came with 17 minutes, 13 seconds left in the second half against Greensboro when Spartan Raket Logadottir got behind the Tar Heel defense in anticipation of a pass.

When the pass finally came, she was called offsides, although she had already punched the ball past UNC goalkeeper Aly Winget and had begun dancing her way up the field.

Her dancing release pretty much summed up the opponents' sentiments this weekend.

On the other end of the field, Tarpley led UNC to two lopsided wins. Against Greensboro, she became only the third Tar Heel to accumulate 20 goals and 20 assists in one season.

"I think they can put some flesh and blood around their fear," said UNC coach Anson Dorrance. "When they look at us, they look at who we got and what (they) are going to have to deal with."

The list continued with Heather O'Reilly, who finished the weekend with three goals, and Alyssa Ramsey, who had a goal and an assist against UNC-G.

But against the Spartans, UNC had numerous other opportunities to score, including three shots off the post and two off the crossbar. Catherine Reddick was responsible for two of the crossbar shots.

"Catherine's quality is her strength, not her accuracy," Dorrance said.

Along with UNC's near misses, Greensboro keeper Jennifer Stillman finished with seven saves, not including a myriad of other stopped crosses and punched corner kicks, of which the Tar Heels had 10.

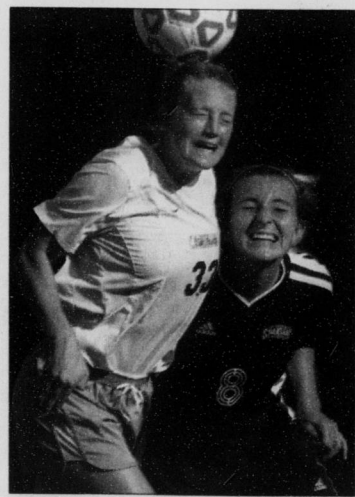
Nevertheless, the score could have been a more disparate margin.

But in both games, UNC struck early.

Just over two minutes into the Greensboro game, Ramsey stole the ball and drove down the field with Tarpley and Lori Chalupny in front. Ramsey pushed it to Tarpley, who bumped it to Chalupny for a running putaway.

Against High Point, the Tar Heels posted two goals in the first eight minutes. One of which was a rebounding goal by Maggie Tomecka, and the other was Tarpley's 20th goal of the season.

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DTH/JOSHUA GREER

North Carolina forward Mary McDowell (33) fights for a header with UNC-Greensboro defender Tracey Withrow in Sunday's UNC win.

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