

Williams accepts 2nd chance at UNC

Former Smith assistant takes reins

BY AARON FITT
SPORTS EDITOR

APRIL 14 — 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. 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 different group of players with a sense of possession.

"Hopefully my players won't go to sleep over there," he said as he

prepared to discuss his coaching roots and his joint loyalty to Kansas and North Carolina.

Williams, a 1972 UNC graduate who played on the 1968-69 Tar Heel freshman team, was an assistant to Smith from 1978-88. He left Chapel Hill to take over a Jayhawk program on probation, and he built it into a near-replica of Smith's UNC dynasty.

Williams compiled a 418-101 record in 15 seasons at Kansas. He won at least 20 games in 14 of those seasons and laid claim to the highest winning percentage among active Division I coaches with at least six years' experience.

Baddour said Williams is "uniquely qualified" for the UNC job — both because of his accomplishments at Kansas and his Tar Heel background.

"It's a good day," Baddour said. "Our players, our fans and the University of North Carolina should have the best coach in America to lead our men's basketball program. Tonight I have the privilege of introducing you to that person."

Williams learned his trade in Chapel Hill but became a master craftsman in Lawrence, Kan.

"I was a Tar Heel born," Williams said. "When I die, I'll be a Tar Heel dead. But in the middle, I was a Tar Heel and a Jayhawk bred."

Williams said his love for Kansas drew him to the very brink of calling Baddour to say he was staying in Lawrence — twice.

"I got up a couple nights throwing up because I am emotional," Williams said. "I've never stopped loving North Carolina."

That's ultimately why he made the decision to replace his friend Matt Doherty, who resigned as UNC coach April 1. Williams said he made up his mind Sunday on



Coach Roy Williams enters the Smith Center floor to a standing ovation and throws t-shirts reading "Carolina Basketball & Chapel Hill — Worth Coming Home For" to students before his first game as coach of the Tar Heels on Nov. 22. The Tar Heels beat Old Dominion, 90-64, in the game.

DTH FILE PHOTO/BRIAN CASSELLA

the plane from the Wooden Award ceremony in Los Angeles to Kansas.

He called Baddour at 9:30 a.m. Monday.

"I called and said, 'If you want me to be the head coach at the University of North Carolina, I'll come,'" Williams said.

Along with Williams, five Kansas assistants will come to UNC unless

one of them gets a job elsewhere. Williams said he hopes assistant coach Joe Holladay will be a candidate for the vacated job at KU, and he implied that he might offer former Smith assistant Phil Ford a job if Holladay doesn't come to UNC.

Williams will receive an annual salary of \$260,000 for eight years. His contract contains bonuses for

NCAA Tournament appearances, Elite Eight appearances and achieving a graduation rate equal to that of the student body.

Baddour said the multimedia aspects of the contract, which make up the bulk of the coach's income, have yet to be worked out.

But it was clear Monday that Williams' decision to come to North

Carolina had little to do with money.

"I came back because I thought it was the right thing to do," Williams said, adding that Smith played a role in his decision. "The respect I have for Coach Smith — it's hard for me to say no to him twice."

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ACC adds Boston College, ends expansion saga

BY BRIAN MACPHERSON
SPORTS EDITOR

OCT. 12 — A long and controversial expansion effort on the part of the Atlantic Coast Conference came to an end Sunday when the Boston College president announced he had accepted a membership invitation from the conference.

The announcement by the Rev. William Leahy completed a process that has seen the conference grow from nine teams to 12, the number required to hold a lucrative football conference

championship game by the NCAA.

It is not yet clear, though, when BC officially will become a member of the ACC — and thus, when the conference will be able to hold such a game.

The ACC Council of Presidents unanimously voted to invite Boston College in a conference call Sunday morning, and the school announced that it had accepted the invitation within hours.

"Our decision to join the Atlantic Coast Conference is based on my judgment in terms of what is in the best interest of Boston

College academically, athletically and financially," Leahy said at a press conference.

Conference officials enthusiastically welcomed the Eagles as the ACC's newest member.

"Our presidents and chancellors are very impressed with Boston College, not only with the quality and breadth of their athletic programs but also with their excellent academic success and reputation," said James Barker, Clemson University president and chairman of the Council of Presidents, in a statement.

The expansion process began in May as conference officials targeted Boston College, Miami and Syracuse in an effort to increase the prestige of ACC football.

But in an unexpected turn of events, the ACC offered invitations to only Miami and Virginia Tech, leaving the conference one team short of the required number for a football championship game.

"Eleven was in one sense an incomplete pass, if you will, and some thought even an awkward organization," said UNC-Chapel Hill Chancellor James Moeser.

"Twelve works better. Twelve obviously gets you to a football championship, which has a major impact on the health of the conference."

Rumors swirled in late September about Notre Dame possibly being incorporated into the ACC on a gradual basis, a process that eventually would have included the Fighting Irish's independent football team.

But Notre Dame officials vehemently denied any interest, which forced ACC leaders to look elsewhere for the coveted final team. They found a willing partner in BC.

"The ACC is a strong, stable conference, and membership in it secures the future of our intercollegiate athletics program," Leahy said.

The announcement ends the expansion saga and the bizarre sequence of events involved.

"When the process started, our point of view was that we have a strong conference and there wasn't any need to expand," said Dick Baddour, UNC-CH director of athletics. "I'd say that the process was extremely difficult and awkward at times."

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