

BOARD EDITORIALS

# ACADEMIC STANDARD

Although there is room to tweak the NCAA's new Academic Progress Rate, the system should help to improve the state of college athletics.

The NCAA has devised a better method of compelling college athletic programs to pay more attention to their athletes' academic performance.

The "Academic Progress Rate" is calculated as follows: Add one point if a player is academically eligible, add another if the player is still at the school, repeat for every player in a program, divide that sum by the total possible number of points and multiply by 1,000.

The APR is going through a test run. In the future, if programs rate less than 925 and an academically ineligible player doesn't return to school, the NCAA could take away scholarships.

This isn't a perfect plan, but it at least does something to address the growing inconsistency between playing for a college team and being a college student.

But some changes do need to take place before hard and fast rules start to take effect and schools start to lose scholarships.

Some schools might complain that the system penalizes programs with athletes who go pro before

their eligibility is up. But it makes sense to give only partial credit to programs that are unable to retain their student-athletes.

As it is, though, the APR also doesn't account for athletes who transfer, athletes who exhaust their eligibility and different schools' varying eligibility standards.

Some exceptions ought to be made in those cases. Otherwise, the APR is an indicator that should help the college sports world get in better shape. It certainly won't throw the majority of sports into disarray. In Division I, the only sports with average rates below the cutoff level are baseball — with 922 — and football, men's basketball and men's indoor track — with 923.

Unless they can accept scholarships being lost, programs across the country will have to find ways to keep their athletes in school and to ensure that they perform well enough academically.

Although there are a few kinks to work out, the NCAA has come up with a strong system to keep the term "student-athlete" from ever becoming an oxymoron.

# A DECENT WISH LIST

Except for a keg-registration law request, the Town Council's legislative agenda is a strong set of proposals that protect constituents' interests.

The Chapel Hill Town Council's Monday deliberations about its 2005 legislative agenda mostly hit the mark in terms of what the town needs.

The council did many of its constituents a great service by unanimously supporting three of member Mark Kleinschmidt's proposals.

The town will request that state lawmakers allow municipalities to recognize same-sex marriages performed in places that legally permit them, nix a proposed state constitutional amendment defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman and add sexual orientation to the language of N.C. hate crime laws.

Although it was imperative that these three items pass, it was refreshing to see many people from the area come to voice their opposition to any or all of Kleinschmidt's proposals.

Their presence ensured that the items would undergo some healthy debate instead of being passed quickly in a one-sided fashion.

Still, it is completely appropriate for the council to gauge the standing of town residents and to try

to change or halt statewide initiatives it believes are flawed or incomplete.

That's the purpose of municipal leaders: to represent the interests of their communities as best they can.

Unfortunately, the council didn't bat 100 percent Monday.

The group also approved council member Jim Ward's proposal to request a law mandating the registration of beer keg purchases. The necessity for and potential effectiveness of a corresponding bill is highly questionable, at best.

At least the council didn't ignore the risks involved in trying to bring about such legislation, as a number of members emphasized the importance of specificity in the proposal's language.

On its face, a keg registration law might seem capable of curbing underage drinking.

But it has the potential to do more harm than good — if a law is passed that compromises people's privacy, it could be downright insidious.

But that's only one complaint amid a heap of praise for the council, which is being courageous in going against the grain.

# PROTECTING JUSTICE

By establishing a commission to review convicts' claims of innocence, the state could bolster its justice system in an unprecedented manner.

The N.C. Actual Innocence Commission took a step toward protecting justice on Monday with a proposal to create a board to review claims of innocence.

If the commission's proposal is enacted by the legislature, North Carolina would be the first state with such an agency.

The disturbing trend of false imprisonment warrants the creation of a state agency to review the cases of defendants that might be innocent.

The recommending commission already investigates innocence claims of criminals found guilty at trial.

But the body came up with the idea of creating a state agency following the release of a number of wrongly convicted prisoners from death row.

The reversal of convictions of men including Alan Gell and Darryl Hunt has and should continue to put the N.C. judicial system in the limelight.

Gell sat on death row for nine years before being acquitted of murder.

Hunt, recently released from a life sentence, spent 18 years in prison.

The proposed review board, to be called the N.C. Innocence Inquiry Commission, would provide the judicial system with a safety net, hopefully preventing further imprisonment of innocent people.

The seven-person panel that would review the investigated cases of innocence could reduce the number of false appeals that clog the judicial system while aiding those seeking acquittal.

The panel, appointed by the chief justice of the N.C. Supreme Court, would include a judge, a prosecutor, a defense attorney and a victims' rights advocate.

In an effort to reduce false claims, defendants requesting review by the panel would have to release evidence of any criminal activity to the board and would be required to waive attorney-client privilege.

Some might worry that such a waiver could be a dangerous power the state might later abuse, but it's necessary for the panel to get a clear view of the facts and ensure that innocence claims are indeed serious.

The innocence commission is offering the judicial system a way to effectively evaluate cases and to protect justice — its proposal should be passed in some form.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The above editorials are the opinions of solely The Daily Tar Heel Editorial Board, and were reached after open debate. The board consists of seven board members, the editorial page associate editor, the editorial page editor and the DTH editor. The 2004-05 DTH editor decided not to vote on the board and not to write board editorials.

## READERS' FORUM

### Awareness of sexual assault should extend beyond April

TO THE EDITOR:  
Next month is Sexual Assault Awareness month.

It is the month when the Orange County Rape Crisis Center sets up a tent in Polk Place to distribute teal awareness ribbons and to display the shirts that survivors have painted as a therapeutic outlet.

April will see speakers sponsored by campus organizations and various other measures taken to make UNC's student population more aware of the growing epidemic known as sexual assault.

But what about the other 11 months of the year?

Is sexual assault any less of a problem from May through March?

According to Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network statistics, approximately 3 percent of college women will endure a completed or attempted rape in a school year.

Three percent seems like a small number, but on UNC's campus, this equates to more than 450 women.

The statistics show that an additional 1.7 percent (the equivalent of about 260 women at UNC) will be coerced into having sex during the year.

Every two and a half minutes, someone in America is sexually assaulted.

To find out how you can help through donations or volunteering your time, please contact the

Orange County Rape Crisis Center at 968-4647 or visit its Web site at <http://www.ocrc.org>.

Sexual assault is bigger than just April.

Allison Reed  
Senior  
Journalism

### Council member is serving people well with proposals

TO THE EDITOR:  
I am writing in response to Robert Dumbacher's outrageous letter to the editor criticizing Chapel Hill Town Council member Mark Kleinschmidt for his pro-gay activism and telling him to stop making proposals that have "nothing to do with improving Chapel Hill."

Legalizing gay marriage has everything to do with improving Chapel Hill.

There are thousands of citizens in Chapel Hill who are discriminated against by the Defense of Marriage Act every day.

Numerous residents of this town do not have the same rights as others under the law to love whom they want to, and that is just plain wrong.

Kleinschmidt is working to open up basic human rights to a huge segment of his constituency, to whom they are now denied. I can think of few things he could do that would be more beneficial to this town's residents.

This is not a "national policy stance" about which Kleinschmidt has "no clue," as Dumbacher states.

As one of North Carolina's few openly gay public officials, Kleinschmidt certainly has a clue about the discrimination under North Carolina's laws that millions of this state's tax-paying citizens face.

This is not a national issue — this is an issue in thousands of households in this community every single day.

We need Town Council members who have the guts to stand up for what's right in the face of oppression, and that's why I commend Mark Kleinschmidt for his leadership and hope that my fellow students will join me in turning out this fall to re-elect him.

Tom Jensen  
Chairman  
Students for a Progressive  
Chapel Hill

### Inmate should have chance to benefit from moratorium

TO THE EDITOR:  
As Spring Break nears, we're all looking forward to a week without additional assignments, deadlines and stressors.

But imagine getting a message informing you that your Spring Break has been postponed. While your friends are at the beach, you will have papers, midterms and a

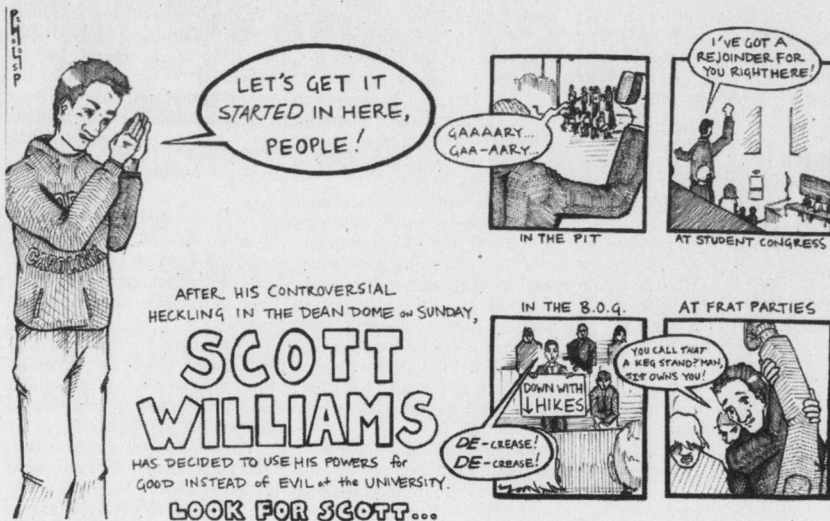
## ON THE DAY'S NEWS

"Justice renders to everyone his due."

CICERO, ROMAN WRITER, ORATOR AND POLITICIAN

## EDITORIAL CARTOON

By Philip McFee, pip@email.unc.edu



## COMMENTARY

# Sunday's game reminded me of an 8-year-old Carolina fan

It was 1992. Duke had just won the NCAA men's basketball championship for the second year in a row.

I begged my mom not to make me go to school. I might have even pretended to be sick — that's how bad I knew it was going to be.

Third-graders are mean, and they will make fun of you for everything from wearing the wrong shoes to pulling for the wrong team.

And I was a Carolina fan living in Durham.

Besides my best friend and me, there weren't very many Carolina fans at my elementary school. I remember being embarrassed about being a Carolina fan.

As kids, my brothers and I played with Carolina basketballs and drank out of Carolina cups. My parents dressed us in Carolina T-shirts and hats.

We were born Carolina fans, and we hated Duke even before we could understand why.

I sometimes felt as though I was born into some strange cult. I knew that being a Carolina fan made me different, and because both of my parents went to Carolina, I had no choice in the matter.

In those days, basketball felt like a religion.

My brother and I used to close our eyes and hold our breath in the final seconds of close games, because we feared that if we breathed or watched, we would jinx the game.

I remember watching the 1992 NCAA regional final in which Duke's Christian Laettner made that last-second shot to beat Kentucky. My brother cried.

Then there was the 1993 NCAA final — Michigan's Chris Webber called for a time-out that he didn't



LAUREN CRAIG  
LIVE FROM THE BOONDOCKS

have, costing his team the championship and allowing the Tar Heels to win.

For my generation, those were the golden days of college basketball.

Nothing existed except UNC and Duke. In the eyes of a child, it was as though the basketball world revolved around those two teams.

At the time, the UNC-Duke rivalry seemed like the most important feud in the world. Operation Desert Storm and the war in Sarajevo were pretty much unknown to us — they were distant and complicated.

But the UNC-Duke rivalry was right in my neighborhood and on the school bus.

And it was simple. UNC = good. Duke = bad.

Over the years, the UNC-Duke rivalry has, of course, come to play a lesser role in my life. I no longer have to worry about being hit with a spitball for being a UNC fan, and I don't feel the uncontrollable urge to throw up when I see Coach K on TV. I have even been to a few basketball games at Cameron Indoor Stadium and survived.

For a few years, it seemed as though the rivalry had lost some of its spark.

But for me, Sunday's game was a validation of what this rivalry is all about.

I am by no means a sportswriter, but I don't feel unqualified to

say that we haven't seen a player like Sean May since Antawn Jamison and that watching J.J. Redick play is sickeningly reminiscent of Christian Laettner.

And I haven't seen Chapel Hill so alive since ... I don't remember when.

As a senior at UNC, this is the first season since I began going to school here that I have been excited about Carolina basketball. The women's team ended Duke's run of five straight ACC championships Monday. We will see this weekend if the men will be able to win, as well.

As I watched Sunday's game from the Dean Dome boondocks at the back of the upper level, I felt myself revert to that 8-year-old girl who used to cross her fingers, to hide her face in a pillow and to pray to the basketball gods to "let him make this free throw."

It might sound silly — but for the first time in my "adult" life, even if it was only for a few hours, basketball was the most important thing in the world again.

But this time, it didn't take place in some distant land on TV. This time, there would be no kids to taunt at school the next day.

As my friends and I made our way down Franklin Street on Sunday night, I imagined my 8-year-old self watching the celebration on TV, 10 miles away.

She and her brother would be catching their breath and picking out Carolina shirts to wear to school the next day.

She would be more excited than I am now — and even though she is only 8 years old, she would feel like she had somehow made it happen.

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Board Applications are available at <http://www.unc.edu/rha> and are due today.

No prior experience with RHA is required. It is preferred that you live on campus for the 2005-06 school year, but that is not a requirement.

We are looking for the most qualified and engaging people who will adequately represent the residents to fill next year's executive board.

Please send turn in applications at the RHA Office — Union 3512C or e-mail them as an attachment to [wich@email.unc.edu](mailto:wich@email.unc.edu).

If you have any questions please contact Chasity Wilson at [wich@email.unc.edu](mailto:wich@email.unc.edu).

Applications are due no later than noon, Thursday, March 10, 2005.

Chasity Wilson  
President-elect  
Residence Hall Association

**TO SUBMIT A LETTER:** The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments. Letters to the editor should be no longer than 300 words and must be typed, double-spaced, dated and signed by no more than two people. Students should include their year, major and phone number. Faculty and staff should include their title, department and phone number. The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity. Publication is not guaranteed. Bring letters to the DTH office at Suite 2409, Carolina Union, mail them to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515 or e-mail them to [editdesk@unc.edu](mailto:editdesk@unc.edu).

### Deadline for RHA Executive Board applicants extended

TO THE EDITOR:  
A reminder from the Residence Hall Association President-elect, Chasity Wilson: 2005-06 Executive

John Steen  
Senior  
English