

UNC improves Virginia squeezes out victory at Fast Times

Team prepares for ACC finals

BY ALICIA JONES
STAFF WRITER

With the ACC championships only a week away, the North Carolina track and field team focused on improving individual performances at the Carolina Fast Times meet Saturday.

Another goal for some athletes might have been to qualify for the upcoming regional meet, but UNC coach Dennis Craddock said he did not expect many of his athletes to achieve that on Saturday.

"We've been working them pretty hard this week, and next week is ACCs," Craddock said. "We're trying to rest them up. I think they're performing right where they should be at this point."

Despite the loss of 2004 Olympian Laura Gerraugty to an injury, the women are working toward a high finish at the conference championship.

Danielle Rodgers placed second in the 400 meter run with a time of 56.54 seconds. Anna Hay won the 1500 in 4:39.33. Lindsay Bond was second in the 100 hurdles at 14.09.

Sheena Gordon took first in the triple and high jumps with leaps of 41 feet, 3.25 inches and 6 feet, respectively. Both marks were season bests for the junior and also met regional qualifying standards.

Senior Erin Donohue took first in the 800 with a time of 2:08.41. Megan Kaltenbach was second in 2:14.22.

Donohue's time was good for regional qualification. She was also a member of the winning 4x400 relay team.

Senior John Hubbard said that a change in approach can make all the difference in an event. After moving his approach back two feet because he said he had been crowding the bar, Hubbard posted his best mark of the season in the high jump, winning the event with a leap of 6-11.

With the new method, he plans to carry on his good performance to ACCs.

"It's going to help a lot," he said. "I don't expect anything less than third, and I really expect to win."

Going into the conference championship, the women are faced with the reality that they will not claim another Triple Crown this year, and the men are out to maintain performances good enough to land them in the top three.

"It's hard coming from such a great year last year to be fighting for our lives this year," Craddock said.

But Donohue will compete for a title individually and said she hopes that the entire team can pull through for a title.

"I'm going to do my best as always, but I'd really like to win," Donohue said. "We had so much success last year, and this year everybody's working, but it hasn't quite worked out."

"Hopefully everybody will do their best (at ACCs), and we'll try to pull out a win."

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu

BY RACHEL SODER
SENIOR WRITER

It was only a slight tap that rolled barely three feet in front of the plate.

It doesn't seem like much, but despite scattering seven other solid hits on the day, a suicide squeeze was all it took for Virginia (20-25, 7-4 in the ACC) to defeat North Carolina (30-23, 5-7) in the top of the sixth inning at the UNC Softball Complex on Sunday.

With one out and two strikes on her, Cavalier cleanup hitter Jenn Wynn, who just a day earlier pounded UNC 4 to 1 at home run off of Tar Heel ace Crystal Cox, laid a bunt softly down the third base line. Virginia's Elea Crockett blazed home from third, and though a charging Joslin Higgins fielded it cleanly, the toss to catcher Whitney Gelin was too late, putting UVA ahead for good, 3-2.

"It was definitely the element of surprise," said UNC coach Donna Papa. "They executed it, and we didn't complete the play."

The play was set up when UNC's Alison Yin walked Crockett on a close inside pitch. Yin was promptly replaced by Cox, but Crockett quickly stole second base and advanced to third on an overthrow by Gelin. Then came Wynn's turn.

"That was really gutsy play on 0-and-2 to put a bunt down in that situation," Cox said. "I don't think we were expecting it. They executed, and we didn't."

Virginia starter Coty Tolar silenced the UNC bats for the first half of the game, allowing no runs through the first three innings. Then, in the bottom of the fourth, it looked as though UNC was about to come back to life.

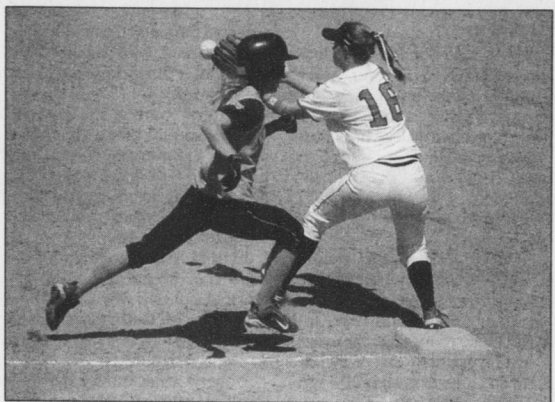
Left fielder Marissa May ignited the inning by hustling out a bunt single and advancing on an Anna Evans sacrifice bunt.

For a moment, it looked as though the white rally helmets that the Tar Heels sported in the dugout had worked when UNC's Jessica Young belted a first-pitch, two-run home run to right-center field.

"I was just looking to do anything I could to help the team, especially since the girl in front of me put down the sacrifice bunt," Young said. "I think just naturally all the weight's on your shoulders. The girl on first... it's your responsibility to manufacture that run."

On a day meant to honor the team's two seniors, Young and pitcher Ashley Allen, it seemed appropriate that Young met the offensive challenge.

"Jess definitely stepped up," Papa said. "She helped us get back in the game, and that's why it's even more disappointing when we tied it up to then let them score the next inning."



North Carolina's Julia Bove (18) forces out a Virginia batter Sunday in UNC's 3-2 loss. The Tar Heels dropped two games in the weekend series.

But besides the long ball, the Tar Heels mustered only three other hits, two of which came from the slap-hitter May off a pitcher they tagged for four runs in a 4-1 win against the Cavaliers Saturday.

"I don't think we were aggressive enough," Papa said. "I didn't like our approach. I thought we were flat."

The pitching staff also struggled, deviating from a pair of solid Saturday performances in which Cox garnered 18 total strikeouts in a 4-1 win and 0-2 loss against UVA.

Starting on her end of Senior Day, Allen took the Tar Heels through 3 1/3 innings with four strikeouts

before coming out when a line drive barely missed her head. UNC's offensive performance this weekend was also hindered by the absence of cleanup hitter Casey Testa, who will likely miss the rest of the season with an ankle injury.

"My goal is for us to position ourselves for the end of the season for who you're going to face," Papa said. "These games have a lot of weight on them, and not to perform in it in the way that I feel like we should is truly disappointing."

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu

Rowers' 2nd varsity 8 remains unbeaten

FROM WIRE REPORTS

OAK RIDGE, Tenn. — The North Carolina's second varsity eight won its event, and the novice eight took first in the B final Sunday as UNC finished a weekend of racing at the Southern Intercollegiate Rowing Association (SIRA) Championships in Oak Ridge, Tenn.

On calm, smooth water at Lake Melton, the varsity eight finished fourth in Sunday's A final.

With its finals win in a time of 7:10.40, the Tar Heel second varsity eight remained unbeaten this year.

"They've been working really hard, and it's showing," said UNC coach Sarah Haney. "Every time down the racecourse they're feeling really good about what they're doing, and it's definitely proving in the results."

Tennis falls to Georgia Tech

ATLANTA, Ga. — The eighth-ranked Georgia Tech women's

tennis team edged No. 13 North Carolina 5-2 on Sunday at the Bill Moore Tennis Center in the Tar Heels' final regular season match.

With the win, the Yellow Jackets (16-3, 9-1) finished the season as ACC co-champions. UNC (19-8, 7-3) will most likely be a fourth seed in the ACC tournament.

Spellman sets record in win

BALTIMORE, Md. — The North Carolina men's lacrosse team got four second-half goals from senior attackman Mike McCall and a solid performance in the goal by senior Paul Spellman as the Tar Heels notched an 11-5 victory against UMBC on Saturday.

UNC improved to 4-7 to keep alive its hopes for a bid to the NCAA Tournament.

Spellman made 15 saves in the game, moving his career total to 642 and establishing the Tar Heel record for career saves.

Women's golf takes 7th place at ACCs

FROM WIRE REPORTS

CHARLOTTE — No. 1 Duke captured their tenth straight Atlantic Coast Conference Women's Golf Championship Sunday at Carmel Country Club. Duke's Brittany Lang claimed her second individual championship in as many years. After a third round four-over 292 performance, the Blue Devils finished with an 886, a 47 point margin of victory, a new conference championship record. Lang finished two under for the day, the best score by anyone all weekend.

Ann Laney, sixth overall, led North Carolina to a seventh place finish. The Tar Heels shot their best round of the tournament in the final round (310), despite playing with only four players. Maryland finished eighth overall, led by Jessica Reno's tournament 243.

Men's golf finishes in 8th

NEW LONDON — The North Carolina men's golf team moved up one place in the final round of this year's ACC Championship. The Tar Heels finished in eighth place with a tournament total of 906.

North Carolina junior Ted Smith shot a one-under-par 71 in the final round to move up three positions in the individual race. He finished in a three-way tie for 13th. Sophomore Martin Ureta also played well for the Tar Heels. Ureta posted an even par 72 in the final round to finish in a tie for 24th place.

Duke captured both the team and individual honors as the Blue

Devils carded a team victory. Duke golfer Ryan Blaum fired the tournament's lowest score in a round with a 67 on the final day to claim the individual title.

UNC loses in close match

ATLANTA — No. 45 North

Carolina and No. 35 Georgia Tech staged a battle for over five hours on Sunday afternoon in men's tennis with the Yellow Jackets prevailing in a razor close match 4-3. The match closed the regular season for both teams. UNC finishes the season 14-9 and 4-6 in the ACC.

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