

SPORTS CALENDAR

TODAY

■ **WOMEN'S SOCCER**
at Florida State, 7 p.m.
Tallahassee, Fla.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 23

■ **MEN'S TENNIS**
UNC Fall Invitational,
All Day Fri. and Sat.
Cone-Kenfield Tennis Center

■ **FIELD HOCKEY**
vs. Duke, 7 p.m.
Henry Stadium

■ **MEN'S SOCCER**
vs. Clemson, 7 p.m.
Fetzer Field

■ **VOLLEYBALL**
vs. Virginia Tech, 7 p.m.
Smith Center

SATURDAY, SEPT. 24

■ **CROSS COUNTRY**
Great American XC Festival,
All Day
Cary

■ **CROSS COUNTRY**
Roy Griak Invitational,
All Day
St. Paul, Minn.

■ **FOOTBALL**
at N.C. State, 12 p.m.
Raleigh

■ **VOLLEYBALL**
vs. Virginia, 6 p.m.
Smith Center

BLOGGIN'

■ **BRANDON'S BLUNDER**
Check out the misadventures of DTH football beat writer Brandon Parker in the difficult and confusing land of post-practice interviews. go to: <http://apps.dailytarheel.com/blogs/pressbox.php>

UNC defense planning to 'Pack a punch'

BY BRANDON PARKER
SENIOR WRITER

The goal line stand. Everybody remembers it.

The image of former N.C. State tailback T.A. McLendon slamming into the solid 6-foot-6, 297-pound wall better known as North Carolina defensive lineman Khalif Mitchell to seal the 30-24 UNC victory last season still rests in the mental chest of Tar Heel football memories.

But even with the rivalry game between the Tar Heels and Wolfpack on the horizon, Mitchell and his teammates have one thing in mind — and it has nothing to do with last year's epic play.

"I feel safe in saying that all our guys' minds are focused on making N.C. State look horrible," Mitchell said with a straight face. "Last year's play was good, and it goes down in history, but now and come Saturday, that play means nothing."

One area that UNC defensive coordinator Marvin Sanders might want his unit to remember from last year's victory is the 577 yards it allowed to the 'Pack.

"We can't let that happen again, and as a defensive unit we won't allow that many yards again," said sophomore defensive tackle Kyndraus Guy. "Coach Sanders has been telling us to bring more intensity to the game so we can bring the amount of rushing yards allowed down to 150 or 100 yards."

In last weekend's 14-5 loss to Wisconsin, UNC showed its improving defensive ability. Although Badger tailback Brian Calhoun rushed for 171 yards, the Tar Heels gave their offense numerous opportunities by stopping Wisconsin on 11 of 17 third downs, but it was to no avail.

The scenario of a staggering offense and an efficient defense is quite a change from last season, with the victory against N.C. State being a prime example of a strong

"All our guys' minds are focused on making N.C. State look horrible."

KHALIF MITCHELL,
UNC DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

offensive output carrying the Tar Heels to victory.

"Somebody said to me this year that the offense has been taking our load the last few years, so now the roles are reversed and it's time for the defense to do its job consistently," Mitchell said.

Some might argue that the defense already has taken the necessary strides to make UNC a competitor in the ACC, but Guy and his teammates disagree.

"We're never satisfied because there's always room for improvement, which is obvious since we haven't come away with a victory yet," Guy said. "We want to get a turnover and score, too. We're looking to get two turnovers a game."

With just one fumble, four sacks and no interceptions in two games, turnovers is the highlighted area of improvement. And until the offense can get on track, such game-changing plays will be even more significant.

"There's a little bit more pressure to get a turnover if the offense is struggling," Mitchell said. "But any fuel to the fire is great."

While Guy agrees with his teammate's assertion, he sees the key to any game this season to be the same as the focus before UNC's famous goal line stand last season.

"Stopping the run and controlling the clock," Guy said. "Once you stop the run, other things come — like sacks and turnovers."

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.

Center's career officially over

BY DANIEL MALLOY
SPORTS EDITOR

A career that never really got off the ground ended Wednesday when the North Carolina men's basketball team announced that Damion Grant's tenure as a Tar Heel has reached its end.

Grant, a senior, finally succumbed to the injuries that have plagued him his entire UNC career. A right ankle injury he suffered this summer was the final straw.

"Damion gave it a shot, but it was clear to him after three days of practice and two games that playing this season would be a real struggle," said men's basketball head trainer Marc Davis in a press release issued Wednesday.

The 6-foot-11, 260-pound center played with the team on its recent trip to the Bahamas, where he scored three points in two games. But after returning state-side, the injury was too much to handle.

"I'm disappointed by the situation," Grant said in the release. "I would've liked the opportunity to help my team this year, but it



UNC senior Damion Grant has ended his injury-riddled career after hurting his right ankle.

wasn't meant to be. I'll focus on graduating in May and try to get into law school."

The Kingston, Jamaica, native came to UNC by way of Brewster (N.H.) Academy and played in 19 games as a freshman in 2002-03, scoring 30 total points and pulling down 28 total rebounds all while being hampered by knee problems.

In the next two seasons, Grant got on the floor in only nine games and didn't score, as thumb, knee and foot problems derailed his career.

And last April, he watched the National Championship game from behind the bench in street clothes.

"He never really got a chance to show me what he could do because he was never close to 100-percent

healthy in the last two years," said Coach Roy Williams in the release.

Although Grant was not expected to be a major contributor this season, his loss leaves a size-deprived UNC squad with even fewer options in the paint. Just two Tar Heels — freshman Tyler Hansbrough and senior Byron Sanders — are taller than 6-foot-8, and they will be expected to carry the bulk of UNC's inside game.

At a pre-Bahamas press conference, senior forward David Noel said the team had been practicing an offensive set with four perimeter players and one post player to offset its lack of size.

And now that glaring weakness has been exacerbated even further.

"From a basketball standpoint it certainly impacts our front-court depth," Williams said in the release.

"We didn't have much to start with, and now we're losing our biggest low-post player."

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.

THE Daily Crossword

By Victor Fleming

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ACROSS

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- 10 Rhine tributary
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- 22 Parts of feet
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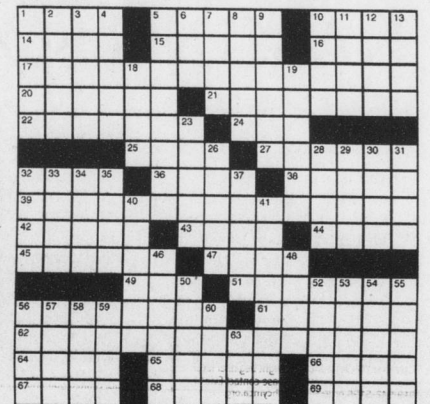
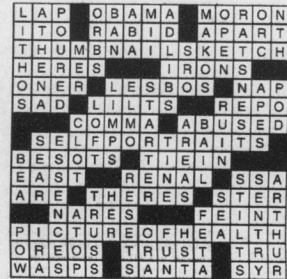
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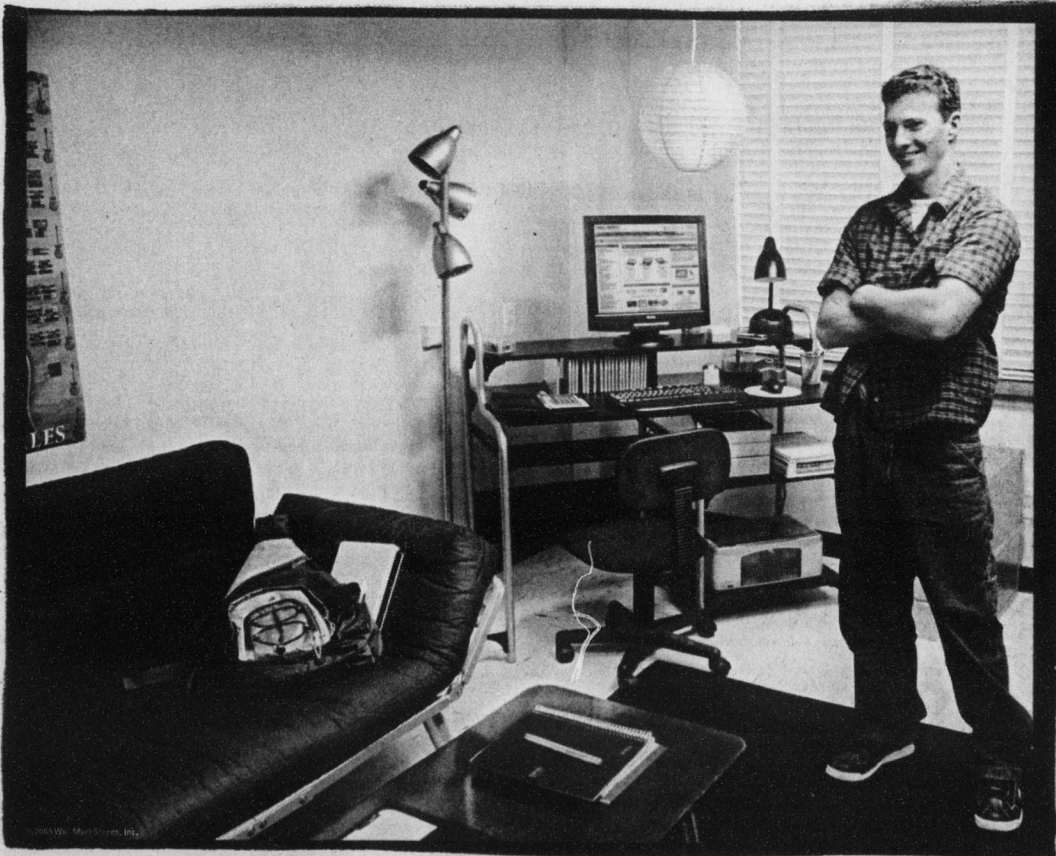
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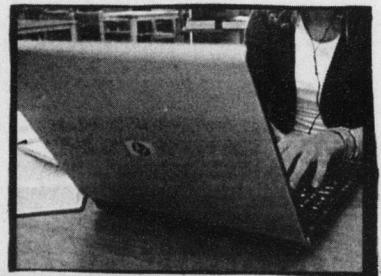
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- 60 Last breath
- 63 Pizza unit



Share your space, but live on your own.



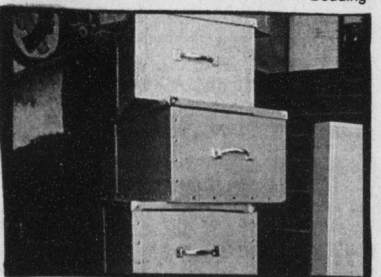
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