

# Good impression left by ND Crane follows UNC golf roots

**BY BRIANA GORMAN**  
SENIOR WRITER

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — It's not every day that North Carolina gets to play against one of the most storied football programs in the country.

Notre Dame boasts 11 national championships, seven Heisman Trophy winners, five College Football Hall of Fame coaches, the second highest winning percentage in history at 74 and of course, the classic sports movie, "Rudy."

With football ranking above almost everything but God at the Catholic university, it was no wonder that the Tar Heels felt a little extra motivated Saturday when they stepped onto the field of Notre Dame Stadium in front of 80,795 people.

"I always told myself, 'I want to play very hard because I know it's a great football school' and just tried to come out and perform to the best of my ability," said wide receiver Hakeem Nicks, who had a career-high six catches for 171 yards and two touchdowns in the 45-26 loss.

Nicks said the team visited the College Football Hall of Fame on Friday, which got them thinking about the pageantry of Notre Dame even more.

But Nicks wasn't the only player to be aware of the significance of playing the Fighting Irish. After

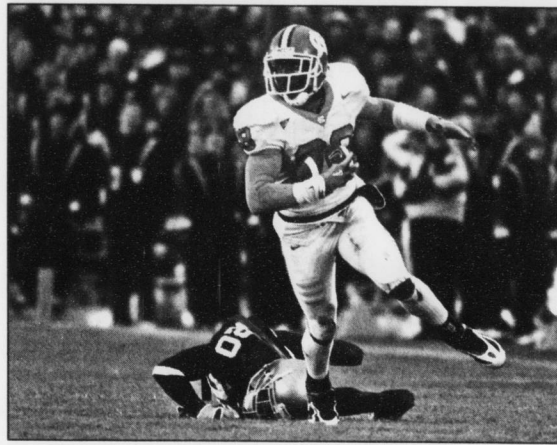
the game freshman cornerback Jermaine Strong found Irish quarterback and Heisman Trophy candidate, Brady Quinn, to congratulate him on the win. Strong said the two spoke briefly, and Quinn told him to keep his head up and keep working hard.

"It's a dream come true," Strong said. "As a little kid you watch Notre Dame, you know about Notre Dame. You never dream about coming to play in the stadium against the coach from the New England Patriots. It's just a dream come true."

## Connor no longer perfect

Junior kicker Connor Barth had not one, but two field goals blocked by the Fighting Irish, which ended his streak of 43 consecutive extra points. Barth's last missed PAT was also blocked in the 2004 game against Duke.

"We did not do a great job in those A-gaps in protection, and we also, I believe, had a couple low kicks," head coach John Bunting said. "Talked with Connor about that on the field a little bit. I think they were low kicks. But also, we knew that they were bringing great pressure. Tremendous effort by those Notre Dame defenders in those A-gaps on



North Carolina true freshman Hakeem Nicks shakes his defender en route to his second of as many touchdowns against Notre Dame on Saturday.

their field goal blocks."

## UNC winless in South Bend

Saturday was the 17th meeting between UNC and Notre Dame, but the Tar Heels still have yet to win in South Bend. UNC's only victory in the series was a 12-7 decision in 1960 at Kenan Stadium.

But the four touchdowns the Tar

Heels did score in the 45-26 rout were significant because it was the first time they have scored in Notre Dame Stadium since 1962. In the previous three games in South Bend, UNC was shut out, including a 16-0 loss in 1971 in which Bunting had 20 tackles.

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.

**BY BRIAN WILLET**  
STAFF WRITER

You've heard of the Mannings, the Griffey's, the Earnhardt's. Maybe you're familiar with the Alis, the Hulls, and the Alous as well.

Across the world of sports, talent sometimes has a funny way of running in the family.

The world of North Carolina women's golf is no exception. Sophomore standout Sydney Crane is continuing a family tradition at UNC, where her mother, Sheree, and her aunts, Page and Amber also golfed.

"My whole family plays golf," she said. "My dad played golf at High Point."

Senior golfer Katie Miller said, "Their family name is well known in Carolina."

But there is more to Crane's game than just family history. She hasn't relied solely on her family for success and has done plenty to make a name for herself.

Since beginning her career in sixth grade, Crane has had her share of victories, playing on the men's golf team in high school and winning the Twin States Junior Girls' Championship and the Gatorade Will To Win Athlete Award in 2005.

"I always wanted to come here," Crane said about choosing UNC. "I didn't need encouragement."

Crane's collegiate career has been one marked by triumph as well — she started in all but one of North Carolina's events in the spring of her freshman year and earned her first top 15 finish this fall.

Family legacy or not, such accomplishments have been all Crane.

"My parents never coached me

or anything," she said. "My mom takes me to tournaments in the summer. And of course, they pay for everything."

Anyone who has seen Crane golf, though, might question the need for any outside assistance.

Her game is marked by consistent, straight shooting and an uncanny ability to maintain rhythm under pressure.

Coach Sally Austin attributes much of Crane's success to her persistent attitude and on-course demeanor.

"Sydney has a great disposition to golf," Austin said. "She assesses herself fairly. She looks at her weaknesses objectively and uses her mistakes to improve her game."

Improvement has been a key factor in Crane's tenure at UNC.

At the Lady Tar Heel Invitational in October, she shot a lower score in each consecutive round and tied for fourth place on the team.

At the following week's Mercedes-Benz Championship, she finished strongly again, moving up six spots in the ranking because of her final round performance.

Crane also has shown progress in areas that cannot be measured merely by statistics. Her teammates have noted a big difference in her game between this year and last.

"She's more consistent and has been growing and maturing," Miller said. "I think Sydney has become truly comfortable."

The level of comfort Crane has reached allows her to overcome the pressure and expectations of having a prominent family in the North Carolina golf community.

"There's probably some pressure there, but she uses it as more of a motivating factor," Austin said. "But she's not doing this because of her mother or aunts. She's doing it for Sydney Crane."

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.

# Tar Heels nab two wins in dual meet

**BY BRIAN WILLET**  
STAFF WRITER

The North Carolina swimming and diving teams faced more tough competition as they hosted a double-dual meet with the University of Minnesota and the University of Richmond on Friday and Saturday at Koury Natatorium.

The UNC women posted impressive victories, defeating Minnesota 212-158 and Richmond 284-86. The team won five events overall, with junior Lindsey Marck finishing first in the 100-yard butterfly and 400-yard medley relay.

"Last year this meet was really close, so coming into it we knew we were going to have to swim fast," Marck said.

The intensity paid off, as the UNC women led both opponents through the first day of competition and never looked back.

Marck continued her unbeaten streak in the 200-yard butterfly Friday, while senior Lauren Karatanevski took first in the 3-meter diving competition and freshman Alison Clemens won the 100-yard breaststroke.

"We were elated about the women's performance," coach Frank Comfort said. "They were 16th and we were 22nd in the rankings, so it was a significant win."

Freshman Megan Steeves swam strongly on both days of competi-

tion, placing second in the 100-yard backstroke Friday with a time of 56.75. Steeves also placed first in the 100-yard freestyle Saturday.

The UNC women also claimed first place in the 200- and 400-yard free relays Saturday, and freshman Ashley Howard won the 200-yard backstroke.

"We swam awesome," Marck said. "We knew we were going to have to swim our fastest to beat them."

Victory eluded the North Carolina men for the second time this season, as they were defeated by the University of Minnesota 238-132.

The weekend was not without successes for the UNC men though, as they took first in three events Friday and four more Saturday.

"We all did really well," junior Ryan Funderburk said. "A lot of us did personal bests."

Funderburk was among that group, posting personal bests of 371.95 in the 1-meter dive and 388.40 in the 3-meter dive and winning both events.

Sophomore Yi-Khy Saw also won two events for the UNC men. Saw placed first in the 200-yard butterfly Friday and the 400-yard individual medley Saturday. His medley performance was particularly impressive, as he shaved more than four seconds off of the time he posted against Georgia.

Freshmen Chip Peterson and



Freshman Annie Norton competes in the women's 200-yard breast stroke during the Tar Heels' double-dual meet on Saturday at Koury Natatorium.

Jeff James also took home first place finishes, in the 1,000-yard freestyle and 200-yard backstroke, respectively.

Despite the highlights, Minnesota proved to be too much for the Tar Heels.

"Minnesota is one of the best teams in the country," Comfort said. "That's all there is to it. We raced well, and we're thrilled to have such great competition."

Though faced with two tough

teams so far this year, the UNC squads are far from discouraged.

"We start off the year with the toughest teams we can, and that's our intention, to get the ball rolling," Funderburk said. "It puts us in the right direction."

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.

# Men's basketball ranked No. 2

FROM WIRE REPORTS

The North Carolina men's basketball team was ranked No. 2 in the preseason Associated Press poll for 2006-07.

The Tar Heels, who also were ranked second in the preseason ESPN/USA Today Coaches Poll, trailed only defending NCAA champion Florida in the first AP poll of the season.

Florida received 63 of 72 first-place votes and Carolina received the other nine. Florida tallied 1,788 overall points in the poll, while the Tar Heels had 1,704.

No. 3 Kansas, No. 4 Pittsburgh and No. 5 Louisiana State rounded out the top 5.

The rest of the top 10 is No. 6 UCLA, No. 7 Ohio State, No. 8 Georgetown, No. 9 Wisconsin and No. 10 Arizona.

Other ACC teams in the AP preseason poll include No. 12 Duke, No. 15 Boston College and No. 23 Georgia Tech.

UNC will tip off its 2006-07

season on Nov. 14 in Charlotte against Sacred Heart in the opening round of the Dick's Sporting Goods NIT Tip-Off.

## Yael Averbuch nabs honors

Top Drawer Soccer named North Carolina sophomore midfielder Yael Averbuch as its 2006 Women's College Player of the Season on Monday while awarding Averbuch as well as senior

forward Heather O'Reilly status on its first-team All-America squad.

Averbuch pulled the strings for the once-beaten Tar Heels as they won another ACC regular season and tournament championship.

Last week Averbuch, a native of Upper Montclair, N.J., was named the Atlantic Coast Conference's Offensive Player of the Year. She leads the team in goals.

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