

Giant George proves tall task

BY NICOLE LUKOSIOUS
SENIOR WRITER

Throughout Wednesday's game, Tyler Hansbrough stood at the top of the key and was met with an unfamiliar sight — someone taller than him. Ten inches taller than him, to be exact.

But at the start of the second half, he gave UNC-Ashville's 7-foot-7 center Kenny George a little head fake and then he took off to his left. Seconds later, Hansbrough proved that size really doesn't matter as he brought down a

forceful two-handed dunk over the top of George that sent the crowd into a frenzy en route to the Tar Heels' 93-81 victory.

"I felt like I had an advantage quickness-wise," Hansbrough said. "I didn't know if he was going to be able to get there or not. It was just a chance I took, and it went down for me my way."

Junior Marcus Ginyard was pretty impressed as well.

"I was excited, I was really excited," he said. "I was just glad somebody finally made a shot on him. ... It got things going a little bit, which is the biggest thing."

Although Hansbrough was able to blow past George for the dunk — and two of his team-high 23 points — George was certainly a distraction in the lane all night for UNC.

The Tar Heels' big man trio of Hansbrough, Deon Thompson and Alex Stepheson were up against a wall — a 360 pound wall — and it showed.

At the end of the first half with UNC leading 53-40, the three had only 12 points combined.

There was no doubt that George — who finished with four blocks — made the Tar Heels readjust their shot selection, which kept UNC-A in the game. On multiple occasions, UNC players seemed frustrated by the center's immense size and would stop to gather themselves before eventually looking to pass the ball.

"The big fella is a load inside, there is no question," UNC coach Roy Williams said. "He blocked a couple of shots, but he changed about a million."

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ROY WILLIAMS, ON KENNY GEORGE

vious two contests due to an illness in his family. He had a tough assignment in George on the defensive end, and eventually fouled out with 5:47 remaining with two points.

"It was a frustrating night for him, but we are happy to have him back," Williams said.

Stepheson's return is just in the nick of time, too. With a tough ACC matchup come Saturday, North Carolina will be looking to make adjustments defensively, but George certainly kept the Tar Heels off their game Wednesday night.

"He's definitely improved and gave them a good edge," Ginyard said. "Altogether we just needed to come out more intense about things we were doing defensively."

Contact the Sports Editor
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North Carolina muscles past Bulldogs in victory

Tar Heels face N.C. State next

BY GRAY CALDWELL

SENIOR WRITER

UNC-Ashville's 7-foot-7-inch center Kenny George had a night as big as he is, but that won't be what people take away from the game.

Instead the enduring image from the night is 6-feet-9-inch North Carolina forward Tyler Hansbrough posterizing George on a thunderous tomahawk dunk.

The No. 1 Tar Heels (16-0) closed out their non-conference schedule with a 93-81 win against UNC-Ashville (11-4).

The Bulldogs' George, the tallest player in college basketball, did his fair share of disrupting in the paint. He

MEN'S BASKETBALL

UNC-A 81
UNC 93

finished with 14 points, 11 rebounds and 4 blocks.

In a play that will certainly live in highlight reel infamy, Hansbrough took the ball at the free throw line, pump faked and drove by George before rising up and dunking over his outstretched arms.

"I just drove him, and I went up, and I just dunked the ball and he happened to be there," Hansbrough said. "I kind of knew he was there. I just felt like I could drive around him."

UNC coach Roy Williams said it was about time Hansbrough, who had six points at the half, took it to the basket.

"If you have a guy that's 7-7, 7-8, blocking everything you bring in there, you've got to go strong in there or come sit over next to me," Williams said. "That's what I told him. Don't give me a finger roll, that stuff went out with Ice Gervin."

The Tar Heels gained plenty of momentum from the play and from Hansbrough, who finished with 23 points and eight rebounds.

The Tar Heels got another strong game from guard Wayne



UNC 93, UNC-Ashville 81

UNC-Ashville 40 41 31

UNC 53 40 93

UNC-Ashville (81)

fg ft rb

min mre mre g ft

Augst 20 1-6 5-2 0-3 1 2 4

Jones 22 3-7 5-6 0-2 0 2 11

Hicks 14 1-3 5-0 0-2 1 4 2

Garnett 28 7-13 0-1 0-4 1 2 6

Smithson 27 10-15 3-2 1-2 5 3 25

George 24 7-10 0-1 1-1 4 4 14

Smith 18 1-2 0-0 0-0 1 0 6

Williams 23 3-4 0-3 0-1 1 0 6

Total 260 33-62 8-19 10-17 81

Percentages — FG 52.3%, FT 33.3%, 3-point field goals

— 7-19, 36.8% (Garnett 3-6, Garland 1-3, Smithson 1-3, George 1-3, Williams 1-3). Blocked shots — 0 (George, Williams).

2. Turnovers — 10 (James 6, Smithson 4, George 4, Garland 3, Smith 3). Steals — 6 (Augst 2, James, Smithson, Williams).

UNC (93)

fg ft rb

min mre mre g ft

Thompson 30 5-14 3-2 6-9 0 8 32

Hansbrough 30 7-13 3-2 3-10 2 3 35

Ginyard 20 2-6 1-4 3-7 1 3 20

Ellington 22 6-11 4-4 3-4 1 0 39

Lawson 26 8-12 4-4 1-6 2 0 37

Stephenson 8 1-2 0-0 0-2 0 5 2

Green 23 6-14 0-0 0-4 1 1 24

Thomas 11 1-1 0-0 0-1 1 0 2

Graves 2 1-2 0-0 0-0 0 0 2

Coppeland 3 0-1 0-0 0-1 0 0 1

Tanner 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Campbell 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Wood 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Wooten 1 0-1 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Little 0 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Moody 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Total 260 33-77 20-23 19-45 30 15 83

Percentages — FG 42.3%, FT 78.6%, 3-point field goals

— 7-19, 36.8% (Ellington 3-6, Green 2-6, Lawson 1-4, Graves 1-2, Wooten 0-1). Blocked shots — 1 (Thompson).

Turnovers — 9 (Hansbrough 3, Ellington 2, Green 2, Thompson, Coppeland, Graves — 1; Lawson 3, Green 2, Hansbrough 2, Thompson, Ginyard, Ellington — 1).

Technical fouls — None. Attendance — 20,326.

The lead was double digits the rest of the game.

"We have got to guard people better," Williams said. "Against Clemson we made turnovers that weren't forced, so that was one of the things we wanted to look at."

Though UNC led throughout, the Bulldogs kept fighting back and kept the game fairly close for much of the night. The offensive attack was led by guards K.J. Garland, who finished with 16 points and 6 assists, and Bryan Smithson, who led all scorers with 25 points.

The UNC lead was as few as three points with 7:49 remaining in the first period, and the Bulldogs hit a buzzer-beater to close the half down to 13. After scoring the first basket of the second half, it looked like momentum was on the Bulldogs' side.

Then the dunk happened, and

The Tar Heels got the win in typical Tar Heel fashion: They won the rebounding battle 45-34, shot well from the free throw line, caused 18 turnovers and only

committed nine.

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Ellington as well, fresh off his 36-point performance at Clemson. He finished with 19 points, going 3-for-6 from the three-point line.

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