



SAM PERKINS

THE SHORTER, THE WHITER

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Walking a mile in another's cleats

Putting ourselves in another's shoes is often the only true way to understand what another goes through. It's true for teachers and parents, who rarely get due respect until we pop out a few children and try to raise and educate them.

The same general lack of respect goes for a third group — football players. It might be easy to casually say or think that football players, even on perennially losing teams, play their hearts out. But there's more than that. Young men truly sacrifice their bodies for their goals and your entertainment.

This fall I found out just how true that is, scratching a lifelong itch by joining the UNC Club Football team. Above anything else, my respect for the game and the players went to a whole new level.

It was an interesting perspective to come in and play competitive, full-contact football from essentially the perspective of a fan. Every instance of screaming something along the lines of "CMON, I COULD HAVE MADE THAT PLAY!" was put to the test.

As I learned playing most of the season at defensive tackle and on special teams against other club teams and even Division-III and junior colleges, nothing comes close to the real thing. Not poorly refereed flag football. Not backyard tackle football. Nothing.

Our 30-person squad had practice three days a week, and it almost lasted until 11 p.m. on some nights. There were no worries about just bench-warming, and that was good because these were all guys who wanted to play. No one receives scholarships. In fact, we have to pay more than \$100 in fees just to play. And Coach Lynn Featherstone doesn't get paid a dime — much less \$2 million — for his time.

On the field, football pads seemed to be a bit counterintuitive. They definitely remove any inhibition one guy might have about turning himself into a missile against another guy. The hits don't really hurt any particular spot. Thanks to how pads dissipate energy, hits hurt all over. When they resonate into your head, you lose valuable focus already hampered by a traffic jam of bodies and action in your field of vision.

And pads don't protect everything. My arms quickly had more black and blue than natural pigment — and I don't bruise easily. Especially at defensive tackle, the contact between forearms and facemasks is plenty and brutal.

And then there are places where pads don't matter. Watching football on TV or from the stands, taking a hit at the knees doesn't look too bad. But it doesn't take much force the wrong way on a knee before it feels like walking won't be in your near future.

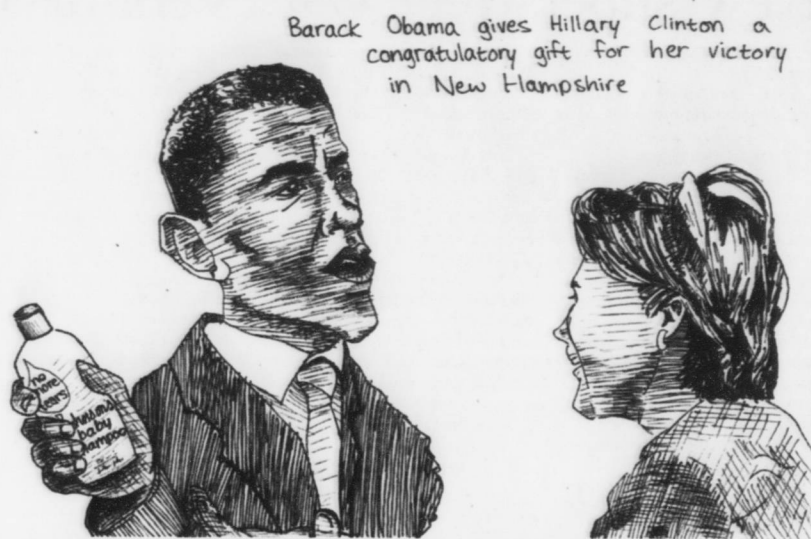
On my very first play in a game, I drew a chop-block penalty, engaging the left guard while the center dove at my knees. It felt like pulling a muscle and hitting a funny bone ... with a lot more pain. Knees might not be able to produce children, but take a hard hit at the knees from even a small guy, and you'll treasure your knees as though they can.

Look, were you to show Duke football players any sympathy, it would have to be for the reason that they go out on the field, know they are going to blow like a hurricane and get about as banged up as a mobile home in one but still go out and play the game for their love of it and the fans' love of it.

My whole experience changed how I watch and write about football. It's more difficult now to listen to sports critics who constantly ride a guy. Am I still critical of players? Of course, but not nearly as much.

Seeing contact and engaging a 300-plus-pound man in contact are worlds apart. So if you're sitting in the stands next fall watching the Tar Heels win 12 games or none at all, feel for the guys out on the field. Otherwise, go put yourself in their shoes, pads and helmet.

EDITORIAL CARTOON By Alex Lee, lobin@email.unc.edu



Contribute to your legacy

Violence in Kenya provides extra reason to donate

When UNC senior class officers took a philanthropic turn and decided to focus the 2008 senior campaign on fixing the slums of Nairobi, Kenya, they never guessed that political uprisings would put a kink in their plans.

Carolina for Kibera, an organization that works to promote youth leadership and ethnic and gender cooperation in Nairobi, is the hub of this year's senior campaign.

But with the organization's operations temporarily ceased because of recent post-election violence in Kenya, seniors might be unsure of what to do with their money.

However, seniors should remember that CFK is not completely defunct, just temporarily halted, and will surely need money more than ever to help rebuild and restore the war-torn area once violence subsides.

With the ability to donate to many different causes, only seven of the 71 seniors who have donated so far have earmarked their gift for CFK.

But that number is actually

higher than last year's numbers, when only 46 seniors contributed first semester, Senior Class President Ashley Shores told The Daily Tar Heel.

Despite the moderate success in getting early donations, the violence in Kenya still puts a slight hitch in the senior class officers' plans, making their job a bit more difficult this semester.

Donations to the senior campaign or gift traditionally have increased closer to the end of the year, when students are thinking about graduation.

But because of the problems CFK is facing, that trend might not have the same intensity. It will be up to the senior class officers to push the senior campaign even harder, ensuring that seniors know that they can still donate to CFK.

At a first glance, rampant violence in an area would certainly make a donor think twice before sending money to help with aid efforts.

But with the right publicity, the senior class officers can work this to their advantage.

After the fighting ends,

CFK will be able to resume its operations.

CFK will need donations from the senior campaign to help combat the adverse effects of the post-election violence.

The senior class officers were already planning on promoting the campaign more during the spring semester. Now they just need to persuade seniors that the violence in Kenya provides more of a reason to give, not the opposite.

Once the violence subsides in Nairobi, the donation made from the senior class fund will go toward helping clinics in Kibera and sending UNC volunteers directly to the Kenyan slums. The class of 2008 officers are encouraging students to continue donating, promising that their money can still be put to use.

The temporary roadblock in Kenya should by no means prevent seniors from donating to CFK; they should take the aggression and difficulty there as a sign that the organization needs help now more than ever.

Arid proposals

Raleigh mayor's drought proposals were rightly beached

Raleigh, like Orange County and much of the state, is in a severe drought. With only 120 days of water left, it's possible the city's main reservoir will not be replenished by the time summer rolls around.

But rather than calling up Lil' Wayne or relying on ancient tribal rain dances to help end the water shortage crisis, Mayor Charles Meeker brought a host of legislative measures before the Raleigh City Council this week to help combat the issue.

Although we admire Meeker's gung-ho attitude toward water conservation, his proposals aren't the most effective solutions.

Foremost among these measures was a recommendation suggesting each person limit his water usage to 25 gallons per day and a proposal to increase water and sewer rates by 50 percent temporarily.

Few people feasibly can limit their water use to 25 gallons per day — that's one-third of what the average resident consumes.

Also, it is unclear that the suggested rate hike, which would cost the typical single-family home about \$180, would have much effect other than making people who are trying to make ends meet choose between decreasing water consumption and breaking the bank.

While five of Meeker's less draconian ideas passed on Monday, these two dried up before the council but likely will be brought up for another vote in two weeks.

Instead of trying to cut all water usage across the board, a better solution would be to try to cut down on people's unnecessary water consumption, such as washing the car. This is something most people can certainly do without.

Raleigh could also take a page

from Los Angeles' book and follow its successful Drought Busters program, which has city employees follow up on reports about excessive water use.

However, the best means of limiting water consumption would be to implement a rate surcharge plan, whereby any person with water usage over a certain — ideally reasonable — amount would see an increase in their rate on the water they use over the limit.

This would help suppress excess water usage and would be a fairer alternative for everyone, especially the poor, who can ill-afford a 50 percent rate hike in their water bill on top of rising prices for food and gasoline.

Still, even if their council doesn't make them, the residents of Raleigh — and the rest of the state — need to conserve as much as water as they can. Arguments against doing so simply don't hold water.

License to verify

DMV right to finally enforce license regulations

North Carolina might lose its reputation for being one of the easiest places in the nation to obtain a driver's license, thanks to a recent crackdown by the state Department of Motor Vehicles.

While the extra precautions might inconvenience some, the increased security from scrutiny in giving out driver's licenses is worth any minor pains.

The DMV's crackdown coincides with the enactment of the REAL ID Act, a federal program that creates minimum standards for federally accepted forms of identification.

It requires, for instance, a complete match between the information in a would-be driver's Social Security record and the information contained

within the DMV's files in order to obtain or renew a license.

Checking driver's license information against Social Security records ensures that the people who receive IDs are who they say they are, something that has not always been the case in the past.

An examination of DMV records last year revealed thousands of licensed drivers without valid Social Security numbers.

The state's reputation for attracting illegal immigrants desiring driver's licenses with few questions asked should be evidence enough that the DMV should have been taking these measures all along.

It isn't that illegal immigrants are less safe on the road, but with driver's licenses counting

as an official form of identification, it's absolutely vital that we ensure that there are no fraudulent licenses issued.

As an added precaution, beginning in July all drivers will leave the DMV with "temporary driving certificates" and will receive their actual licenses by mail within 20 days.

This will give the DMV the time it needs to compare Social Security information with the documents drivers present to the DMV without hindering their ability to drive in the meantime.

With identity theft becoming an increasingly widespread problem and terrorism becoming the new great threat to Americans, the minor inconvenience of extra scrutiny is worth it.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"She was always positive. ... She's going to climb that mountain."

PATRICIA DECATOR, UNC CLINICAL NURSE, ON CANCER PATIENT HARRIET FARB'S PLAN TO CLIMB MT. KILIMANJARO

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To read the full-length versions
VISIT <http://dailytarheelpublic.wordpress.com>
Post your own response to a letter, editorial or story online.
VISIT www.dailytarheel.com/feedback

Quit your whining about the cost of blue books

TO THE EDITOR:

I am amazed at how crazy it is to complain about such a small amount to pay (for testing supplies) ("Students now must pay up to take tests," Jan. 10).

When I was in school here in 1977-81, blue books were \$.25 cents each, and buses were \$.50 per ride on campus bus and \$.75 for other buses.

To register for class you stood in huge lines; to buy books you stood in huge lines; to drop a class and add a class you stood in even bigger lines; no dorms were air conditioned except one. You have it made, dear students.

Yes, tuition is more expensive, but in relation to the amount of money people made then, it was still expensive.

You should feel very fortunate you get free bus rides throughout the city and have all the tech luxuries that you have now that we did not have then. Get over it.

Kathy Morgan
Student Services Assistant
Friday Center

CFK, even more than ever, is now a great class gift

TO THE EDITOR:

I was disappointed by the suggestion in "UNC's Kenya NGO Closed," (Jan. 9) that seniors would or should reconsider their contribution to Carolina for Kibera.

CFK underscores Senior Class President Ashley Shores' appeal, urging seniors not to abandon the cause at this critical moment in Kibera. Indeed, I can think of no other moment in which gifts from the class of 2008 would have a greater impact in the lives of the people CFK serves than now.

CFK is not closed but has temporarily suspended its regular activities in order to provide emergency relief.

Because CFK has local leadership, we are in a unique position to participate in relief efforts with the generous support of our donors.

We began food distribution, are providing emergency medical treatment and have plans to begin clothing distribution and temporary shelter activities.

The summer volunteer selection process will continue as planned, and the application deadline has been extended to Jan. 18.

Every structure around CFK's offices and clinic was burned to the ground. Kibera residents banded together and fought a gang of machete-bearing thugs to save CFK from the same fate.

CFK's programs, which reach more than 5,000 youth, promote ethnic reconciliation through sport. The willingness of the community to risk their lives for this mission is a sign of the value of CFK's work.

From SUDAN to Nourish International, UNC students have a remarkable history of supporting international victims of crisis.

If the seniors were to choose another fund based solely on the current violence in Kibera, it would be the first time, that I can recall, UNC students turned their backs on the tradition of bringing hope to those who need it most.

Emily R. Pierce
Vice President
Carolina for Kibera

Kvetching board

Kvetch:

v.1 (Yiddish) to complain

Seriously, you're dedicated enough to secure yourself a spot in the first row of risers, but you think TEAL is an acceptable substitute for Carolina blue? You must be one of those color-blind sorority girls that goes to football games just to stand around and send text messages.

So I have to pay an extra \$1,000 for being out-of-state, and I still get e-mails asking me to donate to the school. YEAH FREAKING RIGHT!

Thanks to everyone's complaints that led to a stronger UNC spam-filtering system, I now have to read my e-mails from my spam trap because the only e-mails it lets through to my inbox are informationals.

If the couple in front of me in chemistry lecture don't stop canoodling, I'm going to projectile vomit all over them both. And yes, I'm bitter.

I understand that you're just having a good time and "party-ing your way through college" ... but drunken screaming down the hallways on any given week night? Some of us actually like sleeping and have to wake up early for classes, so try to be respectful.

Would the health inspector please refrain from waking up my suite to make us get our "oh my gosh they have a rug" out of our bathroom because it is a health hazard. If it is such a hazard, why did it take you until December to say something?

If I'm too sick to leave my room to take an exam, why does the registrar's office think I'm well enough to pick up a note and physically deliver it to my professor? Thanks for making me feel worse.

Attention Ron Paul acolytes: your little demigod went to DUKE!

Start taking showers before class, or I'll drop a chain saw on top of you from the top of the stairwell.

Perhaps, if you checked your mail on a regular basis, you wouldn't be "excited" to have mail or have a mailbox full of advertisements! After all, don't forget an actual mail carrier has to stand there and put those advertisements in your box on a daily basis, and I honestly don't think they or anyone else cares if you complain or not. Recycle, build a bridge and get over it.

Send your one-to-two sentence entries to editdesk@unc.edu, subject line "kvetch."

The Daily Tar Heel

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of editorial freedom

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