

North Carolina ekes out road win

BY JESSE BAUMGARTNER
SENIOR WRITER

CHARLOTTEVILLE, Va. — Thanks to additional injuries, foul trouble and players testing out new positions, No. 5 North Carolina was anything but conventional Wednesday night at Virginia.

But as has become the norm the past two games, the Tar Heels (23-2, 8-2 ACC) were able to embrace the new identity and piece together a nail-biting 75-74 victory on the road at UNC John Paul Jones Arena.

With 22 seconds remaining and the Cavaliers (11-12, 1-9) down by two, it was fittingly a banged-up Marcus Ginyard — who was questionable with a sprained ankle until tipoff — finding Tyler Hansbrough down low for the decisive two points.

A Sean Singletary 3-pointer with 10 seconds left gave the Cavaliers hope, but they took seven seconds to foul Wayne Ellington and failed to control his missed free throw as the clock ran out.

"Well, we feel very fortunate, and I have no problem saying that," UNC coach Roy Williams said afterward.

The ailing Ginyard ran the offense

for large portions of both halves with senior Quentin Thomas on the bench in foul trouble.

While Ginyard might never earn Jason Kidd-esque grades in offensive administration, he displayed more confidence with the ball and allowed the Tar Heels to survive the absence of a true ball handler by dishing out three assists and surrendering only two turnovers in 35 minutes.

"(Ginyard) came up big for us," Danny Green said. "Had a couple of turnovers here and there, but he did a good job. ... He's been controlling the team for us."

Ginyard said he gets input from injured point guard Bobby Frasor as he learns the new position.

"It definitely is interesting — it's all an experience for me," he said.

"And I'm just taking it in as much as I can, really trying to learn as much as I can. I'm out there making mistakes here and there, but the biggest thing is just trying to give the best effort that I can."

Although Ginyard survived his stint as point guard, neither he nor any other Tar Heel could slow down Singletary. Whether he was stroking a 3-pointer or setting up a teammate in the Cavaliers' stagnant offense, Singletary kept his team in the game all night and ended with 27 points

and seven assists.

"He's really a good player," Williams said of Singletary. "You look at all those charts in the Virginia history, where he is in points, assists, rebounds, all those. ... He's a big-time player."

Using 17 first-half points from Hansbrough as well as Ellington's rejuvenated 3-point stroke, the Tar Heels jumped out to an early advantage and finished the half strong to lead 38-31 at intermission.

But UNC's already limited depth took another hit early in the half after Thomas and Green each picked up his fourth foul.

Despite acceptable production from Ellington and Deon Thompson — who limped through the second half with an injured left knee — the Tar Heels struggled to pull away from a Virginia team that committed no turnovers after halftime.

But even at the end of the game with the score close, UNC held true to its mix-and-match formula.

With the shot clock winding down, it was the perimeter-oriented Ellington who caught the ball in the post and jumped between two Virginia defenders for a hard-nosed layup to put UNC up 73-68 with 1:30 left.

"I am extremely proud of how



DTH/NICOLAS GULLETT

North Carolina's Danny Green slams home a two-handed dunk in UNC's 75-74 win at Virginia. Green finished with nine points.

tough our kids are," Williams said.

"I am not extremely proud of how we handle the ball and those kinds of things, but that is a tough bunch of kids in that locker room."

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu

Injured Heels lean on Hansbrough

BY GREGG FOUND
SENIOR WRITER

CHARLOTTEVILLE, Va. — While Quentin Thomas has played more minutes and Marcus Ginyard has switched positions, it's Tyler Hansbrough who has really picked up the slack during Ty Lawson's absence.

Averaging just more than 21 points before last Wednesday's game against Duke, Hansbrough scored 28 against the Blue Devils then followed it up with 39 against Clemson.

At Virginia, Hansbrough racked up the points when his team needed them the most.

As North Carolina clung to a two-point lead and tried to run down the clock, Hansbrough dropped in one of his signature shots to extend the Tar Heel lead to four points with just 22 seconds left.

"Tyler Hansbrough was something else again," UNC coach Roy Williams said, "cause they aimed their defense at him to say the least and he still came through for us."

A day after sitting out of practice because of an ingrown toenail — Williams said it was one of the few practices he could remember Hansbrough missing — he showed no ill effects.

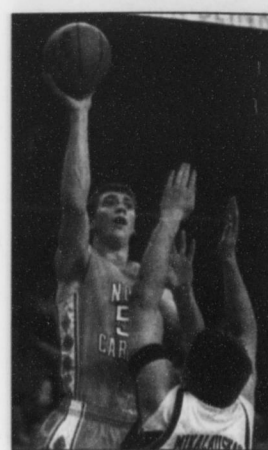
The way he scored his final basket, a one-arm shot with his shoulders sideways to the hoop, was vintage Hansbrough.

"We like to think it's a jump hook, but it's not," Williams said. "It's a shot put, jump hook, Hansbrough special. Whatever you want to call it."

Regardless of verbiage, the shot capped another fierce Hansbrough performance, albeit one that was derailed for a long stretch in the second half.

Hansbrough roared to 17 first-half points on a mix of his typical inside moves and several jump shots from all across the court.

Well on his way to another high-scoring performance, the power forward came out of the locker room at halftime and didn't score a point for 15 minutes.



DTH/NICOLAS GULLETT

Tyler Hansbrough rises above a Virginia defender and releases the ball en route to 23 points to lead the way for the Tar Heels.

After demanding the ball in the post, his teammates found him again with five minutes left in the game.

He converted a spin move into a layup, and less than a minute later he hit two free throws to get himself firmly back on track.

"My team needed me in that situation," Hansbrough said.

"Coach said get the ball inside, so I took it upon myself to get the ball and do some things inside."

Not usually one to attempt to block many shots, Hansbrough swatted away two of Sean Singletary's tries — the second leading to a fast-break layup for Ginyard.

And though his stats were atypically low for rebounds (seven) and free throws (3-for-5), Williams was proud of the way Hansbrough again led the team in Lawson's absence, finishing with 23 points.

"The bottom line is, the sucker can really play," Williams said. "He's been a load for a lot of people."

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