

Big bats for Tar Heels key in win against 'Cats

BY DANIEL PRICE
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

CARY — A third consecutive impressive showing from the North Carolina bats covered up any shortcomings on the mound Tuesday night against Davidson.

The Tar Heels (19-4) rolled to an early 7-0 lead thanks to a five-run second inning highlighted by a three-run homer by Garrett Gore.

UNC led by at least six runs the rest of the way, earning a 12-6 win.

After Davidson (7-13) mounted a small rally in the ninth inning, the UNC victory ended with the rarely successful appeal to third base.

UNC coach Mike Fox said short-stop Ryan Graepel saw Davidson's Zach Kayne miss third base on his way to the plate. But the Tar Heels also got a little help from above — the dugout.

"Old Albert (Tally), our big-time fan up there, he doesn't miss anything," Fox said. "We can hear everything Albert says."

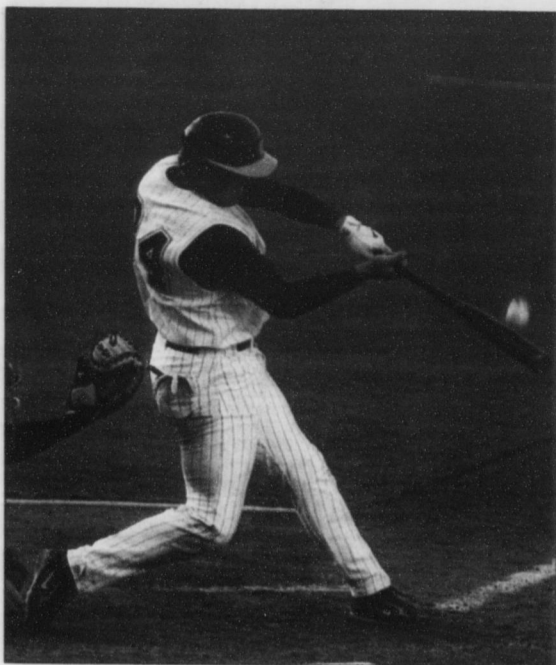
North Carolina's Chad Flack had an impressive 3-for-4 night, bringing him within 12 hits of UNC's all-time hits record.

If Flack continues to have impressive offensive showings, capturing that record on the current 12-game homestand might not be out of reach.

"That would be great because that means I'd be hitting the ball really well," he said. "But I mean, I'm not thinking about that. That's not a big deal."

UNC second baseman Kyle Seager extended his hitting streak to 19 games in the first inning as a check-swing bunt trickled to Davidson second baseman Danny Weiss.

But with what appeared to be a balk called by the home plate umpire, Weiss made no play on the ball. As it turned out, there was no



DTH/KATE NAPIER

North Carolina's Chad Flack belts one of his two doubles against Davidson on Thursday. Flack now sits within 12 hits of the all-time UNC record.

balk. There was a hit — Seager's only one of the night.

"I kind of stole a hit there," he admitted. "It certainly counts."

On the mound, North Carolina pitcher Patrick Johnson got off to a strong start, allowing just three hits in the first four innings. But the fifth inning saw Davidson score three runs on two hits and three walks to force Johnson out of the game without a chance for a decision.

"Coach (Chad) Holbrook has a theory about that, about young pitchers in the fifth inning," Fox said. "They're kind of a black hole. He whispered in there today, 'It's the fifth inning.' I wanted just to

pop him."

The UNC bullpen finished off the Wildcats but not without some trouble. Tar Heel reliever Mike Facchinei gave up three runs in the final two innings before the final appeal call.

UNC plays Gardner-Webb at 6 p.m. today and hosts a three-game series against N.C. State Friday through Sunday.

To reserve a seat for a bus ride to Cary on Friday or Saturday, e-mail your name and PID to carolina.baseball@gmail.com.

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.

Shooting star of Davidson

North Carolina opened its 2007-2008 men's basketball season with a nonconference game against the Davidson Wildcats on Nov. 14.

That night the Southern Conference juggernaut, located near Charlotte and boasting a student body of about 1,700, gave the nation's top-ranked squad a tremendous scare.

The back-and-forth game stayed close throughout, and Davidson led for much of the second half before UNC eked out a 72-68 win.

After the game, one obnoxiously loud bar patron at Four Corners said to his buddies, "I told you North Carolina isn't that good — they almost lost to Davidson."

Biting my tongue hurts, so my words deliberately reached said bozo's ears: "Or maybe it just means that Davidson is that good."

Clearly, he missed Davidson's performance in the 2007 NCAA Tournament when freshman shooting guard Stephen Curry scored 30 points in a valiant loss to a solid Maryland Terrapins team.

Read on and eat crow, Bozo. Last Friday, 10-seed Davidson upset seventh-seeded Gonzaga, 82-76. Stephen Curry, son of former NBA sharpshooter Dell Curry, dropped 40 points on the Bulldogs — 30 in the second half — and carried Davidson to its first NCAA Tournament victory in 39 years.

Sunday my dad took me to Raleigh for the second round of March Madness. We bought the tickets to watch the Tar Heels play the second game. We saved the stubs because we saw the



SAM ROSENTHAL
THE GARDEN STATE OF MIND

Wildcats in the first one.

Davidson, an underdog playing in its home state, faced two-seed Georgetown, a powerhouse playing in front of Tar Heel fans who vividly remembered losing to the Hoyas in last year's Elite Eight.

"Pops," I said, "this is a road game for Georgetown."

But in the first half the underdog — Georgetown's small cheering section — made itself heard as the Hoyas held Curry to five points and entered halftime with a 38-27 lead.

Early in the second half Davidson trailed by as many as 17 points, and Georgetown's defenders shadowed Curry's every move.

The sophomore Wildcat's teammates stood around and waited for their savior to turn water into wine.

"Son," Papa Rose said, "Georgetown's defense looks too good."

Davidson's goose was cooked. Its curtains, closed. Its daisies, pushed up.

Then Curry walked on water — or at least the basketball equivalent.

Down the stretch, he found a lot more open space — and mesh netting. It seemed as though the rim told him, "Okay, Stephen, my lid is off now. Fire away."

He scored 25 second-half

points, reminding me of LeBron James versus the Detroit Pistons in Game 5 of the 2007 Eastern Conference Finals.

As Curry ignited a la King James, so did the other Wildcats, who realized that — Eureka!

— they can score, too. As a team, they turned a 17-point deficit into a five-point lead with 2:56 to play.

The fans also fed off Curry. One of my tournament brackets had Georgetown picked to make the Final Four, but my vocal chords wore themselves out for Davidson.

"It's hard not to get caught up rooting for them," Pops said.

The more you watched, the more you wanted — no, needed — Davidson to pull off the upset.

The seconds ticked by like snail steps, but the Wildcats never faltered. After they won, 74-70, their bench cleared, and they stormed center-court.

In the middle of the throng, a 20-year-old kid with a 15-year-old's face pranced around like a 10-year-old on a playground, and the RBC Center joined him for recess.

In person I've never seen a comparable individual performance. Basketball fans across the nation, especially in North Carolina, will remember it for years.

You know what, though? Maybe Bozo was right to slant UNC for almost losing to Davidson. Maybe Davidson and Stephen Curry aren't really all that good.

After all ... they almost lost to Georgetown.

Contact Sam Rosenthal at samrose@email.unc.edu.

Build hours & your GPA. Summer School at Carolina. summer.unc.edu

cameron's

A gallery of gifts, jewelry, cards, bath, toys & highly entertaining off the wall stuff.

locally owned. globally cool.

university mall • 201 s. estes drive • chapel hill, nc 27514
www.camerons-gallery.com

Top seed in your career bracket

50 BEST PLACES TO LAUNCH A CAREER
BusinessWeek

BusinessWeek ranks Deloitte #1 in "50 Best Places to Launch a Career," September 2007. Join our team.

To discover your opportunities with Deloitte and find out why BusinessWeek ranked us the best place to start a career, text "Deloitte" to 78573 or visit www.deloitte.com/us/LaunchYourCareer.

Deloitte.

Audit • Tax • Consulting • Financial Advisory.

As used in this document, "Deloitte" means Deloitte LLP and its subsidiaries. Please see www.deloitte.com/us/about for a detailed description of the legal structure of Deloitte LLP and its subsidiaries.
Member of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu
Copyright © 2008 Deloitte Development LLC. All rights reserved.

We're #1