

Tar Heels take two from Chanticleers

Strong pitching keys UNC wins

BY PENN ELY
STAFF WRITER

The No. 15 North Carolina softball team continued its march toward the postseason Wednesday night, sweeping Coastal Carolina in back-to-back shutouts.

The Tar Heels won the first game 3-0, complimentary of right fielder Jennifer Jacob's three-run blast in the bottom of the third inning.

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FIVE INNINGS



DTH/ERIC VELARDE

North Carolina's Lisa Norris whips the ball toward the plate during UNC's 3-0 afternoon win against Coastal Carolina on Wednesday.

Although the Tar Heels blanked the Chanticleers (18-30), UNC coach Donna J. Papa was not satisfied with her team's performance.

"We've struggled during the week games," she said. "I thought we played very uninspired and it showed."

The Tar Heels (42-8-1) won the second game in five innings, 8-0. Amber Johnson allowed two hits in four innings of work.

North Carolina's performances on the mound have been one of the primary reasons for its success this season. The team's four hurlers have gone a combined 42-8, accumulating 469 strikeouts.

"I think our pitching has been huge," Papa said. "I think once we score some runs, they've been able to shut some people down."

"They really haven't given up that many hits and runs. They have been a big reason behind our success."

Calling North Carolina one-dimensional would be unfair. The Tar Heels have done more than just throw heat. The team has seen a surge in its offensive statistics from last year. North Carolina is hitting .311 as a team this year. The 2007 squad only hit .264.

"I think (pitching) has had a lot to do with our success," Johnson said. "But our offense has been incredible, it doesn't even compare to last year."

Papa said the Tar Heels need to get more consistency if her team wants to continue to be successful as it rolls into the postseason.

"I think the difference between the first game that we played and

the second game shows that," Papa said. "It's like night and day."

And what better way to gain some consistency than playing a three-game series against rival N.C. State this weekend. Although you won't find the Tar Heels approaching the game differently than any other series.

"If we want to continue to be successful, we need to come out with a consistent effort every single at-bat," Papa said.

The UNC coach has her sights set on hosting one of the 16 regional sites for the postseason, something North Carolina has never accomplished. The Tar Heels have made the NCAA Tournament the past five years, but always had to travel to other regional sites.

The N.C. State series is another hurdle in North Carolina's march to the postseason. The squad has a record of 27-2-1 in the past thirty games and appears to be steam-rolling into the matchup.

"We are going to approach this game exactly the same as we have been approaching every other game," Johnson said.

But the memory of last year's sweep to the Wolfpack may still linger in the minds of the Tar Heels.

"Yeah, it's N.C. State. They're right down the road. Whatever, I don't want to make a big thing about it, it's another opponent. We just want the sweep," she said.

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu

UNC beats Charlotte in 12 innings

BY MIKE EHRLICH
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

CARY — Kyle Shelton had stepped to the plate six times Wednesday night. And six times, he was sent packing back to the dugout.

But for the senior left fielder, the seventh time was the charm.

With the UNC 5 bases loaded in the bottom of the 12th inning

of a marathon contest against Charlotte, Shelton drove a high chopper to third base. It was fielded and thrown home, but not in time to nab Garrett Gore, who scored to win it for UNC, 5-4.

The unusual end — a walk-off fielder's choice — was topped only by the unusual hero, who wound up with a 0-for-7 stat-line.

"It was a curveball, low and away," Shelton said. "I got a little out in front of it, and I beat it into the ground just enough."

"I hit probably the weakest ball

I've hit all year, and it's a hit and we win the game."

The contest didn't even look like it would reach the decisive frame, as Charlotte (27-8) jumped ahead in the 11th by scoring two runs.

But No. 4 UNC (31-7) would rally. An RBI single by Chad Flack brought it within one and brought the tying run to third. Then, on an 0-2 count and his back against a wall, Kyle Seager drove an RBI single up the middle to force a 12th frame.

The offensive production of the last two frames was not indicative of the previous nine. UNC continuously stranded runners on base, failed to lay down bunts and couldn't muster a clutch hit.

The pitching staff, though, kept the Tar Heels in a position to win. A solid start out of Mike Facchinei was followed by more than six innings of relief. Colin Bates, Brian Moran and Tyler Trice pitched the middle innings before Matt Harvey slammed the door shut in the 12th.

"We had a lot of opportunities

to score, but our pitching staff did a great job of keeping us in the game the whole time," Seager said. "Our pitching's been unbelievable all year, and sooner or later we're going to come through."

UNC coach Mike Fox would have preferred sooner, though, as he was disappointed in his team's play for most of the game.

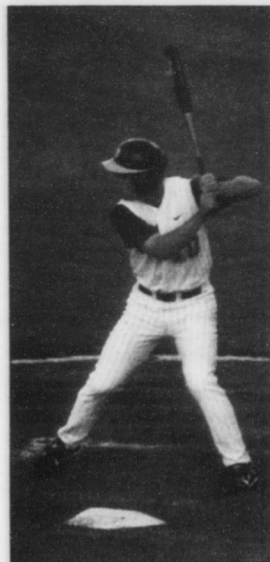
"I've never been more excited that we won and upset at the way we played," Fox said after the game.

"Our offensive execution tonight was just horrendous — the worst I can remember in a long, long time."

"Thank goodness for our pitching; our pitching has been phenomenal. It kept us in the game and gave us a chance. I didn't think we'd score there for a long time."

UNC will take the momentum from an emotional victory into a three-game set against Boston College this weekend.


Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.



DTH/JULIE ELLIOT

North Carolina's Kyle Seager winds up to take a swing during UNC's 5-4 victory against UNC-Charlotte on Wednesday night.

Dan B. Allender, PhD



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Dan B. Allender, PhD, serves as president and professor of counseling at Mars Hill Graduate School (mhgs.edu) in Seattle. A therapist in private practice he is also a frequent speaker and conference leader. Dan received his M.Div from Westminster Theological Seminary and his PhD in Counseling Psychology from Michigan State University. He and his wife, Rebecca, are the parents of three adult children.

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CARTOONISTS

FROM PAGE 3

UNC during the '70s.

"When I first started out at the DTH there was kind of a built-in audience," he said.

Branch said after graduating he realized writing for a professional newspaper required more work on his part. He said the sense of connection with his readers was not as natural and automatic.

In his professional career, Branch honed his craft by "boiling the cartoons down to the essentials." He zeroed in on his audience and simplified his message, which he said makes a more effective cartoon.

And Branch said despite the surge of digital and broadcast media, the combination of humor, satire and graphics has carved out a permanent niche for his medium in the news.

"Today there's just a lot more choices, but I still think that cartoons are unique and serve a purpose that no other medium does,"

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benefit from the resulting increased safety precautions," EQ spokesman Robert Doyle said.

Orange County Solid Waste Planner Blair Pollock said increased regulations wouldn't affect the county because the independent contractor that manages such waste is contractually obligated to regularly tell local officials what is being stored.

Pollock said the county also has an advanced dry chemical fire suppression system installed in storage facilities. "We feel like we've done due diligence."

Contact the State and National Editor at stntdesk@unc.edu.

COLLEGES

FROM PAGE 3

for privileges," said Sen. Harris Blake, R-Moore.

Although Sen. Ellie Kinnaird, D-Orange, was also unfamiliar with the potential bill that Lancaster described, she said debate would be a moot point.

"There are U.S. Supreme Court cases that say very clearly that you cannot deny government services to aliens of any status," she said.


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Branch said.

Jacobson held a similar sentiment.

"They help start a campuswide dialogue, including faculty, staff, administrators and anyone else in the community who reads the DTH," she said.

Contact the Arts Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.



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