

Looking back on '08 baseball

BY POWELL LATIMER
SPORTS EDITOR

Talk about consistency. North Carolina went a third straight season of dominating the ACC and regular season and reached the College World Series in Omaha, Neb., for a third straight time.

But for a third straight time, they came up short of a national championship.

Despite not winning to close out the season, UNC coach Mike Fox was named Coach of the Year by Baseball America magazine.

Fox's honor is the cherry on top of a season's worth of dominance from the Diamond Heels.

"The thing that swayed us was the fact that he turned a program that was an afterthought in this area into a national contender," said Aaron Fitt, Baseball America's national writer.

"He's done a terrific job this season; it's so difficult to achieve that kind of consistency."

Fox is the first ACC coach in the award's 28-year history to earn the honor.

The Tar Heels entered the 2008 season without an on-campus home, as Boshamer Stadium underwent massive renovations.

As a result, the team spent the season traveling 18 miles down the road to a makeshift home field at the USA Baseball Training Complex in Cary — even playing

their regional and super regional NCAA games there.

UNC ended the season with a 54-14 record, tying for the second-most wins in program history.

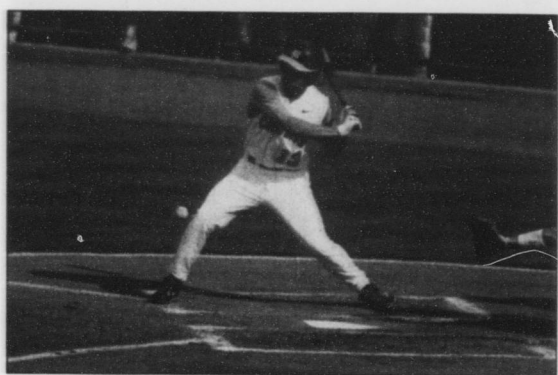
North Carolina went 30-6 at home and 17-4 on the road during the regular season.

The Tar Heels did not lose any weekend series during the season, sweeping the ACC. That included taking two of three games from then-No. 1 Miami in Coral Gables, Fla., and two of three from then-No. 3 Florida State in Cary.

"There's a lot of parity in college baseball, as you've heard us say. It's difficult getting here (to Omaha)," Fox said after the NCAA Tournament. "We're not patting ourselves on the back. Our league prepared us for this level of competition."

Perhaps Fox's capping achievement from his award-winning season was the success he engineered from UNC's bullpen. Decimated after the losses of All-America closer Andrew Carignan and starters Robert Woodard and Luke Putkonen, UNC seemingly had precious little to build on.

But somehow the North Carolina bullpen rose to the occasion, emerging as the nation's best. Bombshell closer Rob Wooten led, finishing the season with an ERA of 2.92, and Brian Moran and Colin Bates became stud middle relievers.



North Carolina's Tim Fedroff takes a swing in the Cary Super Regional. Fedroff hit .524 (12-22) in the NCAA Tournament, including 12 RBI.

With starting pitching, UNC watched Alex White emerge as one of the best pitchers in collegiate baseball. White went 13-3 on the season.

Offensively, Dustin Ackley and Tim Fedroff both enjoyed huge seasons behind the plate. Ackley's 116-hit record was second-best in both school history and the nation — Fedroff's 115 straight were third in school history and in the nation. Both players hit better than .400 for the season and, additionally, turned up the postseason heat.

Ackley and Fedroff ended the year with hitting streaks of 13 and 16 games, respectively.

Senior Chad Flack broke the UNC record for career hits, finishing his career with 328, including 76 this season, and setting the NCAA record for career at-bats in Omaha with 73.

UNC's class of 2008 finished as the winningest in program history. Through each of the last three years, UNC has racked up at least 50 wins and has a total of 165 wins between 2006 and 2008. No other team in the nation boasts three straight 50-win seasons for the past three years.

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu

This one looks like a job for the Underdog

Alright, that's it. I'm boycotting covering UNC sports. Consider this my resignation letter of sorts. Move me to City Desk. I'm tired of this.

The decision was made about 20 minutes after Tywon Lawson, Wayne Ellington and Danny Green made UNC the most favored team in the history of NCAA basketball.

I can't take it. Do you have any idea how boring it'll be to watch the dream team in Chapel Hill roll over teams such as Clemson? Seriously. You can only write a "UNC won by 40" story like 15 times before you get an aneurysm trying to be creative.



POWELL LATIMER
SAY WORD

The juggernaut thing is something that UNC has rocked for quite some time. Since 1953, there have been two — count it, two — losing seasons for UNC basketball. Yeah, I know, one of those was 2001's 8-20 quagmire of a season. But I think the three Final Fours and one national championship makes up for that, maybe.

Or the 19 national championships in women's soccer. Or the undefeated field hockey national championship this year. Or the annual trips to Omaha, Neb., for UNC's baseball team.

some soccer, I want to see the Turks going crazy out there. I want to look around after the match and say, "How the hell did they win that game?"

That's what's really awesome about sports. It's not the continued dominance. Give me an underdog. Give me someone going up against impossible odds.

Don't give me North Carolina. Give me George Mason. Give me Villanova, the eight-seed that was a Rashad McCants travel (watch the tape, the kid walked) away from ending UNC's 2005 national championship run.

Sure, watching Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal dominate tennis for the last few years has been great. But I'd much rather see Andy Murray, the 12-seed from Great Britain, flex his pasty bicep to the crowd yet again. Is that too much to ask?

Maybe it's just because I hang out with this kid from Philadelphia, but I'd much rather just watch "Rocky" next year than tune in to North Carolina's 140th dunk against Virginia, or Lawson's 10th steal and layup in every game.

Give me Davidson. Give me Stephen Curry running through a dozen screens and burying a jumper over a triple-team. To me, at least, that's infinitely better than watching North Carolina — or Georgetown, or Kansas or Memphis.

Dominance is boring, Chapel Hill.

So, give me City Desk.

Contact Powell Latimer at tlatimer@email.unc.edu

White blossoms into hero of 2008

BY POWELL LATIMER
SPORTS EDITOR

Alex White, North Carolina's right-handed ace, was asked yet again after defeating LSU in the opening game of this year's College World Series: What changed?

"They're just not gonna let you forget last year, are they, Alex?" coach Mike Fox chuckled.

Though anyone who watched the UNC's 14-4 loss to Rice in last year's series will remember the freshman's epic flameout of a five-hit, six-run second inning, White seems to have no memory of it.

That wily freshman became a powerful sophomore and blazed through Omaha, Neb., in 2008 with three wins, tying a College World Series record.

Three times in Omaha, White came in for middle relief — unusual for him, the regular Friday starter for UNC — and each time managed to get out of a bases-loaded jam.

"Last year he'd walk a couple of

guys, give up a hit here and there, ... it would just kinda snowball into this big inning," said Aaron Fitt, Baseball America magazine's national writer.

"This year he'd walk a guy here or there, but he'd work around the damage and be back on track the next inning."

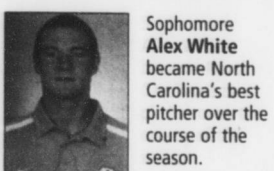
White's performance in Omaha rocketed him into the national spotlight as one of the top prospects in the 2009 draft.

"He's starting to scratch the surface," Fitt said. "He's got so much projection in that frame, a big pitcher's body. I would be really surprised at this point if he's not a top-five pick."

White's postseason wizardry was the culmination of a season's worth of excellence. For the year, White went 13-3 with a 2.83 ERA.

After his dismal outing in Omaha in 2007, White spent the offseason improving his command with his slider and added a split-fingered fastball.

Though White was always quick



Sophomore Alex White became North Carolina's best pitcher over the course of the season.

to talk about the movement of his favorite "splitty," his success might have had more to do with the fact that by the end of the season, the sophomore could locate a 96 mph pitch anywhere he wanted.

White's heat was even enough to outlast the humidity in Cary — the site of UNC's regional and super-regional games. And White pitched a complete game against UNC-Wilmington in the second game of the regional.

Through the course of nine blistering innings, White struck out eight and allowed only one run in one of UNC's most dominating performances of the year.

Then again against Coastal Carolina in the super regional, White blazed through seven innings, giving up only three runs and striking out six.

"They're a great team; best pitching staff in the nation," CCU's Tommy Baldrige said after that game. "Pitching like that, a couple runs is really not going to win."

White's three straight relief appearances this year were almost enough to lead UNC to another championship series.

If he works this offseason as he did last, he will return next year as possibly the best pitcher in college baseball.

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu

AMBER ALLEY

FROM PAGE 3

Some who frequently use the alley are concerned about what renovations might do to the character of the alleyway, and some question if they are necessary at all.

Kirk Francis, who recently graduated from UNC, said he doesn't think the alley is too unsafe to use.

"I think the stairs kind of weed out anyone who would be suscepti-

ble to falling in wet conditions," he said. "But I guess the stairs would be hazardous when wet."

Charles Jones, who grew up in Durham, has been using Amber Alley almost all of his life.

"I've never been worried about slipping and falling or anything," Jones said. "I like the fact that it feels funky. It's old Chapel Hill. I'd miss the old stairs if they took them out."

Jones said a lack of lighting shouldn't be such a concern any-

way. "If my daughter was coming home from the bars at 2:30, I'd tell her not to take an alley anywhere."

Drapear said one of the main challenges of the renovation project is to make the walkway safer but "keep the old flavor."

"We're trying our best not to change the character," he said. "Just clean it up."

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

CNORTH

FROM PAGE 3

the campus is not expected to raise enough revenues for the services it will require for any portion of the 20-year time horizon considered.

And town officials noticed that when accounting for job movement, consultants had failed to "backfill" new employees on the main UNC campus, resulting in underreported impacts, a sign that the numerous variables involved in the study could be interpreted several ways.

But TischlerBise models predict that indirect revenues will more than offset these costs to the surrounding communities, a goal touted by University officials on the project.

"It's one of the most incredibly

fruitful economic development projects I've ever seen," said Jesse White, director of the office of economic and business development at the University and a member of Carolina North's oversight committee.

"It's very clean, it's non-polluting, it's high tech," he continued. "It's the project almost every community in the country would kill for. I see it as a win-win for the University, the city, the county, the region and the state."

Defining 'benefits'

A significant point of misunderstanding sprang from the term "benefits" to describe effects that could accrue from development.

The quirk of semantics irked some town officials.

"I think there are some underlying differences in what we consider to be benefits," said Carrboro Alderman Jacquelyn Gist. "You talk about adding a bunch of new housing units and that's not necessarily a benefit to us."

Impacts are projected to extend well beyond local towns, extending in a "sphere of influence" that stretches to Wake Forest and north as far as Roxboro.

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

LIGHT RAIL

FROM PAGE 3

rail system in Charlotte, which opened in December 2007, has been 136 percent higher than estimated.

Charlotte funded its light-rail system with state and federal grants, as well as a half-cent sales tax akin to the commission's proposed hike for the Triangle.

The recent transit proposal follows a Triangle Transit Authority plan that was proposed in 1995 and died in 2006. At that time, the TTA planned an \$810 million light-rail system to connect Durham and Chapel Hill.

The failed plan wasn't Triangle-wide, and the projected ridership numbers were too low to justify its construction, commission co-chairman George Cianciolo told The Daily Tar Heel in February.

Staff Writer Greg Smith contributed reporting. Contact the State & National Editor at statdesk@unc.edu.

Safe shopping from home. Shop from the safety of your home or office.

www.robertjamesgifts.com

STIPENDS

FROM PAGE 3

But some student leaders are content to fulfill their position and do not expect any compensation.

"I don't think the job would be any easier if I were paid," said James Shelly, senior class president. "It would be nice, but it isn't something that is a big deal for me. I think the position will pay dividends in lots of other ways."

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

varsity 967-8665
123 E. FRANKLIN

MONCO
FRI 4:20, 7:00 only
7:00, 9:20, SAT-SUN 2:00, 4:20

GET SMART
FRI 4:30, 7:15 only
7:15, 9:30, SAT-SUN 2:15, 4:30

Chelsea Weaver Dairy
968-3005

A BLAST OF UNADULTERATED MOVIE PLEASURE

reprise
7:10, 9:20, SAT-SUN 2:10, 4:20

ROMAN DE GARE
7:00, 9:10, SAT-SUN 2:00, 4:10

OSS 117
7:20, 9:30, SAT-SUN 2:20, 4:30

games SUDOKU
THE SACRAMENT OF PUZZLES By The Mepham Group
© 2008 The Mepham Group. All rights reserved.

Level: **1** 2 3 4

4		9					7
				2			3
	7			6	5		
	3	1		8		9	
9						2	
8	2		3	4			
	4	1		7			
2			5				
9				7			6

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit 1 to 9.

TRIBUNE MEDIA SERVICES
www.tribunemedia.com

Solution to last week's puzzle

9	4	7	1	6	5	2	8	3
1	6	3	2	9	8	7	4	5
8	5	2	7	3	4	9	1	6
3	9	8	4	1	2	6	5	7
2	7	4	6	5	9	8	3	1
5	1	6	3	8	7	4	2	9
7	3	9	8	4	1	5	6	2
6	8	5	9	2	3	1	7	4
4	2	1	5	7	6	3	9	8

Music to your ears
PlayMakers has established a program allowing area kids the chance to perform. See pg. 3 for story.

Locally grown
Festival emphasizes the importance of local food and businesses. See pg. 6 for story.

God bless America
Check out a list of ways to celebrate the Fourth in the area. See pg. 1 for story.

Golden armed
UNC righthander Alex White has become the team's top prospect. Look up for story.

You're it!
Camp gives elementary students the chance to play tag all across campus. See pg. 5 for story.

what the heck are we going to do with this old couch?

DTH Classified Ads
bringing people together

919-962-1163
www.dailytarheel.com

where the heck are we going to find an affordable couch?

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- Bagnold and Blyton
- Racing sled
- Soup serving
- Twelve: pref.
- Uniform in all directions
- Celestial simians?
- Aware of
- Bulk
- Nail hitter
- Open container
- Tampa Bay pro
- Mideast nat.
- Celestial zanies?
- Lodging chain
- Baker or Loos
- Celestial warfare?
- Peachy keen!
- Having a love of beauty
- Celestial E.T.?
- Afore
- One heart, e.g.
- Attention getter
- Hepburn of Hollywood
- Actress: Gilpin
- City on the Aker River
- Celestial visitor?
- Got drunk
- Minneapolis suburb
- Chart toppers
- Cogito sum
- Actress Winona

DOWN

- Key-punch bus.
- Lon ___ of Cambodia
- Director Lupino
- Durable fabric
- Act subdivision
- Maned cat
- Tampa sch.
- Grotesque genre of fiction
- Sweet-smelling gas
- Gravy server
- Antithesis: abbr.
- Michelle of golf
- Pre-World Series abbr.
- Ump's relative
- Bulks of bodies
- Live noise
- Letters on many cars
- Imaginary sea creature
- Assault and ___
- Raised bubble
- Most remote, briefly
- R.E. Lee's nat.
- School grp.
- One of the Three B's
- Huber of tennis
- Cost per unit
- Press
- Half a fly?
- Military command
- Catch red-handed
- Yale booster
- High dudgeon
- Ron of the hot corner
- Seat of power
- Young cow
- Open sore
- TV puppet Howdy ___
- Advanced degs.
- DDE's command
- Cry of despair
- Final degree
- Sundial three
- Retrieve
- Dress
- Halfway, briefly
- U-turn from WSW
- Black goo

HESS SPOT MAJZE
ACTH LOVE AUDEN
LOBO ALEX SNARE
ONEWAYORANOTHER
RYNE NAN OXO
PIN DRAM ISM
OMARR KARL IOET
THREETIMEBALADY
SODA OMAN BOMER
MEXI STUN ORO
ABA XIS NEMO
FIVEOCLOCKWORLD
LLOYD ASHE ODIE
ADIEU OHAP REEF
CARDS KART ERST