

Wake Forest, Bermuda up next for three Heels

BY ANNA KIM
STAFF WRITER

The Pan American Junior Championships in Mexico City will be a first-time experience for three North Carolina field hockey players.

For Elizabeth Drazdowski, it's also her first trip out of the country.

For Jackie Kintzer, it's her first opportunity to lead an under-21 team.

And for Riley Foster?

"This is the first step in achieving my goals as an athlete," she said.

The Tar Heels will fly to Mexico City on Sunday for the competition after Saturday's game against Wake Forest.

Held once every four years, the tournament hosts eight nations and their top field hockey players younger than 21. The games will run until Oct. 12.

In the meantime, the rest of the UNC field hockey team will take a shorter trip, to play No. 13 Boston College and Yale in Newton, Mass.

"Some coaches might balk at it because they don't like to lose their players in the middle of the season," coach Karen Shelton said.

"We'll miss them, and it will hurt our team's depth. But we'll be a better team for it. It's too good of an opportunity to pass up."

And those opportunities will extend far beyond five days of competition.

The tournament also serves as a qualifier for the 2009 Junior World Cup, which will be held in Boston next summer.

And after six former and current Tar Heels competed at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, UNC's field hockey program is no stranger to international exposure.

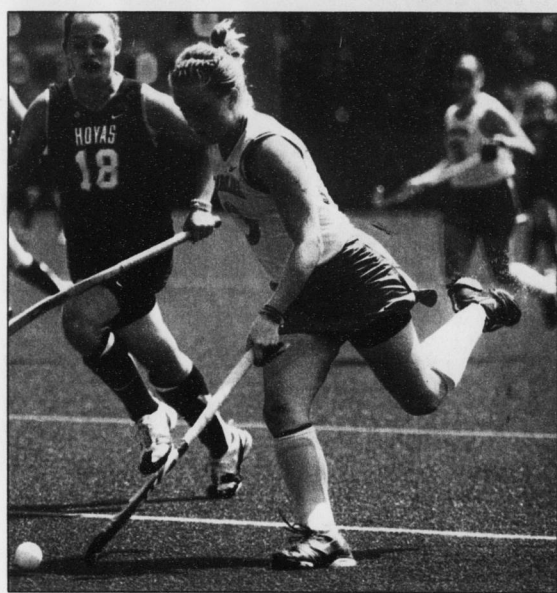
"We like to think we have a developmental pipeline to the national team," Shelton said.

Kintzer, who was a goalkeeper on the nontraveling 2007-08 U.S. under-21 national team, knows the numerous opportunities within her reach.

"This is team-building for the next Olympics in four years," she said. "I'm just happy to be a part of it."

The U.S. team will face Bermuda, Trinidad and Tobago, and Chile in the first four days of their stay. The round-robin games will be followed by two days of playoff competition.

"When you are representing your country, it's a different kind of pressure than just a college game,"



DTH FILE/ERIC VELARDE

Riley Foster is one of three Tar Heels heading to Mexico City to compete on the U.S. U-21 team. The players say the trip is a "dream come true."

Shelton said. "They will come back to us as better players and more competent young women."

The players began a rigorous qualifying process this summer in Boston. A field of about 100 women was narrowed down to a squad of 30.

After competing in innersquad matches at Harvard, players were selected to round out the final roster for Mexico City.

"We played a lot of hockey and watched a lot of video," Drazdowski said. "It wasn't just physically taxing, but emotionally taxing too. We had to be ready every day to compete for that spot."

But all of the work paid off. The Tar Heels were in coaching camp over the summer when news broke.

It happened in appropriate fashion — on the field.

"Someone had checked the Web site and ran out and said, 'Congrats, you made it,'" Drazdowski said. "I was like, 'Made what?'"

It took only a leap and a hug from Foster, who came sprinting out of the locker room, to clear up any confusion.

"We started jumping up and down, and we were really excited,"

Foster said.

Drazdowski said she has tried to imagine what it would feel like to stand on a field with U.S.A. written across her jersey, listening to the national anthem.

She said she can't.

In a matter of days, she won't have to.

"It's just a great honor," she said. "I think that's when it will sink in."

Kintzer, the oldest keeper selected on the team, has competed on a national team. What she hasn't done yet is lead one.

"I'm really looking to step in and lead the U.S. U-21 team," she said. "Then I want to bring everything I learn back and do the same here."

But for all three players, this trip is about more than looking ahead the next few weeks. It's about goals they've had since they first held a hockey stick.

"When you're in high school, college is the next big thing," Kintzer said. "After college, the U.S. team is the next big thing. I can't even explain — it's huge. This had been one of my dreams."

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.

UNC leaves Durham with win

Two late Nogueira goals seal victory

BY JOE MCLEAN
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

DURHAM — The defense of No. 9 Duke started its showdown against No. 2 North Carolina with swagger — and with good reason.

Seven teams had traveled to Koskinen Stadium in the season, and the Blue Devils' defense had sent each one home without a goal.

But the Tar Heels made the shutout streak history Thursday in handing Duke its second loss of the season.

Only four minutes after the opening whistle, Courtney Jones put home a rebound for her seventh goal of the season.

UNC survived a ferocious second half by the Duke offense and solidified its lead with two goals by Casey Nogueira to earn the 3-0 victory.

"I'm sure if we didn't score that early, it would have been much closer," Nogueira said.

"They probably would have had a couple of better opportunities and maybe had us on our heels a little more. But I think the early goal set them back a little bit and helped us a lot."

The Tar Heels (10-1-1) crashed the goal early and scored on their first deep offensive possession of the game, despite Duke showing considerable hustle early.

After Nikki Washington beat two defenders on the far right of the box and forced the keeper away from the goal, the scrum was on.

The junior took a difficult shot to force a save off the keeper's gloves, and the ball bounced loose to the center of the box.

Jessica McDonald's shot was blocked by a defender, but Jones tapped home the rebound from 10 yards out for the score.

"To get an early goal is a wonderful feeling of relief," coach Anson Dorrance said.

"And then of course you get greedy. Then you want another goal to separate."

With the streak shattered, Duke's defense lost its urgency and let the Tar Heels run wild.

UNC piled on nine shots, but a bullet by Yael Averbuch that bounced off the crossbar was the closest the Tar Heels would get to opening up the lead.

DTH ONLINE: UNC's backline held off a more talented Duke team than its seen in years.



The second half was one of the few tests the Tar Heel defense had seen all year, as the Blue Devils (9-2-1) came out with a sense of urgency and a willingness to sprint.

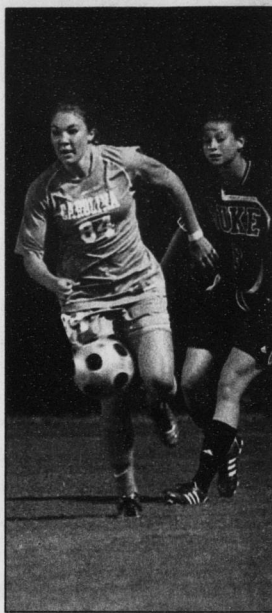
Duke outshot UNC 7-6 in the second period but despite maintaining several long possessions, the Blue Devils were unable to tie the game and had only one shot on goal.

Nogueira put her team ahead for good with a goal on a counterattack with 19:34 remaining and then iced the game with another goal in the game's last two minutes.

The closing scores made the junior forward the ACC leader with nine goals this season.

"We were actually trying to coach in conservative mode and then Nogueira just took matters into her own hands and decided to pound the third one in," Dorrance said.

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.



DTH/DANIEL VAN NIEKERK

UNC striker Courtney Jones scored her seventh goal of the season and helped the Tar Heels to a 3-0 win against No. 9 Duke on Thursday.

THIS WEEKEND

TODAY

SWIMMING

Intrasquad meet
TIME: 4 p.m.
LOCATION: Koury Natatorium

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

at Duke
TIME: 7 p.m.
LOCATION: Durham

MEN'S SOCCER

vs. Virginia*
TIME: 7 p.m.
LOCATION: Fetzer Field

WOMEN'S GOLF

Tar Heel Invitational
TIME: All day
LOCATION: Finley Fields

SATURDAY

CROSS COUNTRY

Hagan Stone Classic
TIME: 9:30 a.m.
LOCATION: Greensboro

FIELD HOCKEY

vs. Wake Forest*

TIME: Noon
LOCATION: Henry Stadium

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

at Wake Forest
TIME: 6 p.m.
LOCATION: Winston-Salem

FOOTBALL

vs. Connecticut*
TIME: 7 p.m.
LOCATION: Kenan Stadium

WOMEN'S GOLF

Tar Heel Invitational
TIME: All day
LOCATION: Finley Fields

SUNDAY

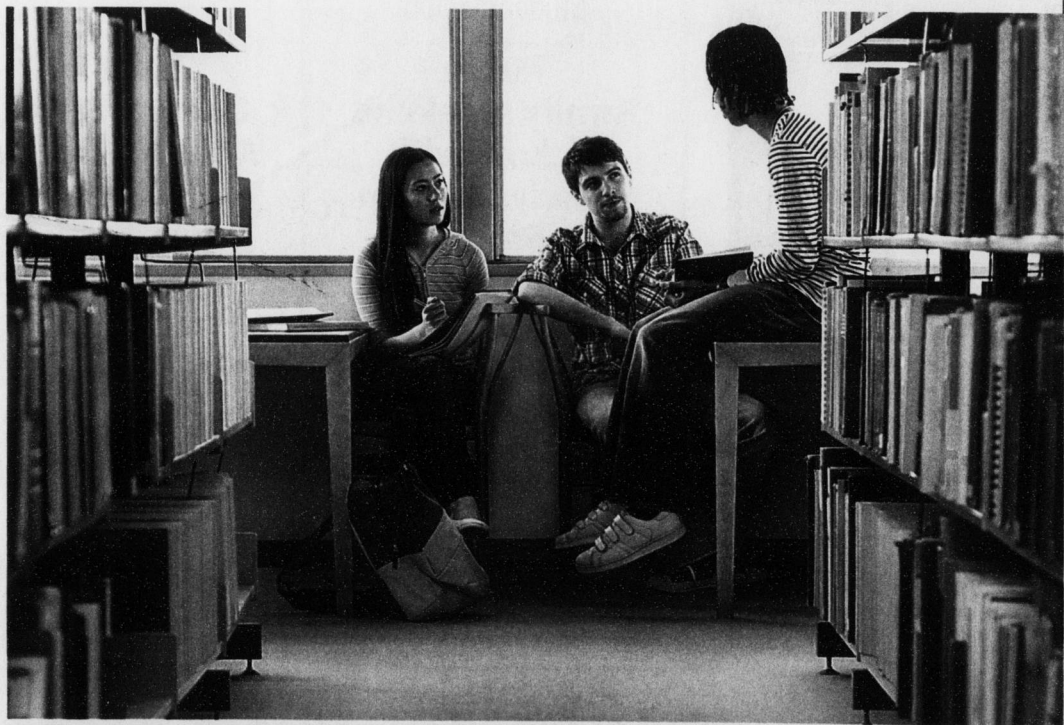
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*denotes Carolina Fever event



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