

Tar Heels fail to close sets in tough ACC loss

UNC now even in conference play

BY SCOTT POWERS
SENIOR WRITER

One night after recording a comeback win against conference-leading Virginia Tech, the North Carolina volleyball team could not put away middling Virginia on Friday.

The Tar Heels (9-8, 3-3 ACC) dropped the first set before taking the next two and a five-point lead late in the fourth set. But UVa. came back to win that set and the decisive fifth.

After struggling to win points early in the first set of each of its previous three matches, UNC finally managed to get off to a hot start Friday, jumping to a 15-9 advantage.

Four Tar Heels combined for eight kills in that span, led by senior outside hitter Lauren Prussing's three.

"Coach has been stressing that the entire year," first-year setter Erica Behm said of starting strong. "And it's just been a matter of actually coming out and doing it."

But after the Cavaliers (10-8, 3-4 ACC) went on an 8-1 run to take the lead, the teams exchanged points until UVa. led 28-27, neither team ever leading by more than one point.

To end the 56th point, Virginia's Lauren Dickson and Sydney Hill collaborated on the team's seventh block of the set, giving the Cavaliers a 1-0 lead in the match.

"Our passing broke down. We did not get any type of balance on offense from that point on. We had to set every ball to our outside hitters," coach Joe Sagula said of his team's play after taking the early lead.

"Everybody in the gym knew that we were passing poorly. The ball was gonna be set to the outside hitters. They're facing a double block every time after that."

After the first set, Sagula went with Behm at setter rather than senior Stephanie Jansma because Behm had the hot hands.

"The type of ball that Erica puts up, Lauren Prussing could take some better swings," Sagula said. "And I think when we're out of system, when we're not passing well, it seems that Erica puts up a nice ball."

UNC cruised to a 25-17 second-set win to tie the match at one set apiece.

The third set started similarly to the first set as UNC took a 12-6 lead early but UVa. stormed back to take a 16-15 advantage.

Again the teams exchanged points until the Tar Heels led 23-22 and two consecutive Prussing kills clinched the set for North Carolina.

Up 2-1 in sets, UNC led most of the way in the fourth set. But with the Tar Heels leading 22-18, the Cavaliers went on a 7-1 run to snatch the set from North Carolina and force one more.

The fifth set, like its predecessors, was a close one. Virginia led most of the way but never by more than three points. When the score stood at 6-9, a 5-2 UNC run tied it, but then a 4-1 UVa. run put the match away, the Tar Heels' first loss at the Smith Center this season.

"When we were down 6-9, I told my assistants, I said, 'If we get this next point, I think we can win this,'" said Sagula. "We did, and the next thing you knew, it was 11-11 and things were looking good. And we just never got that edge."

The increased playing time for Behm was a trend in North Carolina's past three matches. Sagula's only concern was Behm's defensive play at the net.

"The first game we brought Steph in, try just to create a big block on the right side and have Steph set because she's experienced."

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SHRIVER

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back, we needed to make a step forward as a team," coach Elmar Bolowich said. "Really, we wanted to look for our season and we wanted to advance as a program, and the guys responded."

They responded with 10 shots, a whole lot of defense and two goals from the team's sole striker, after the Tar Heels ran a 4-5-1 while playing without Eddie Ababio, who saw two yellow cards last week.

And Shriver's double was the key storyline in UNC's dominating play against Duke (6-4-1, 2-2-1 ACC).

With a goal in the 18th minute, Shriver started off the scoring for the Tar Heels on a beauty of a header that came from Zach Loyd's cross.

"It was a perfect ball," Shriver said. "And it fell right to my head. All I had to do was direct it to the goal."

Shriver's second goal was a little less perfect.

After he was taken down in the box, play stopped for a few seconds as the Duke defenders waited for the referee's call. But the officials motioned to play on, and the confusion gave Shriver a golden opportunity.

"I think that they stopped and thought it was a PK, because (the defender) took me out," Shriver said. "And the ball was just sitting there, so I figured I might as well just try and shoot it."

"It went in, and the ref counted it."

So the Tar Heels' victory in the second half was complete with that goal in the 74th minute.

As Duke turned up the pressure



DTH/ANDREW DYE
Brian Shriver had the game's only two goals against Duke on Friday. Shriver, who had eight career goals before this year, has scored nine this season.

for the remaining 15 minutes, the UNC backline had more to do, forcing off Blue Devil drives and volleying back to the midfield.

But Duke still notched only two shots in the second-half to UNC's five. And in a game when Duke garnered six offsides penalties — including one that called back a goal in only the game's third minute — seven total shots weren't enough.

"It's really getting people behind the ball in the right positions, that helps for the rest of the game," senior defender Ryan Adeleye said. "We have to do less defending, actually, if we get people in the right spots. Just high pressure."

It was Adeleye who scored the game-winner in double overtime in last year's match in Chapel Hill — a rebound after a corner kick that took the game 1-0 for the Tar Heels.

This time the team didn't need overtime.

"Oh, it's great," Adeleye said with a grin.

"There's just a lot of passion with this team. Not that we lacked that last year, but we just have a different focus. We're all together."

"It's just great. It's a good feeling to be on this team right now."

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SOCCER

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"We try really hard to keep up our offensive pressure," Averbuch said.

"We know that the longer we let them hang in the game, the longer it is 0-0, the harder it's going to be on us."

Having broken the tie, Averbuch widened the margin with a bending goal from 23 yards out that was blocked from the goalkeeper's view until it was too late for her to make a play.

"As it came to me, I was thinking that I want to blast it so bad," Averbuch said.

"But the back of my head said, 'Anson's going to kill me.' So I focused on bending it and keeping it on goal, and I was happy about the result."

The Tar Heels controlled the game with aggressive play, pressuring Virginia Tech into turnovers, which quelled the building Hokie attack while creating plenty of attacking options for UNC.

"Our girls worked their asses off," North Carolina coach Anson Dorrance said.

"We were absolutely all over the

place, pressurizing their backs, and the midfield pressure was also wonderful."

Regardless of the early struggles, the 4-0 victory represents an impressive win as this same Hokie squad beat No. 8 UVa., considered an ACC powerhouse, three days ago.

"Four to zero against any team in the conference is a quality win, especially against a team that has taken out one of the top tier teams," Dorrance said. "So we are very excited to be where we are right now."

Dorrance made sure his team knew that Virginia Tech would not be a team to sleep on, a point that was not lost on his team.

"We definitely are going to have a lot of respect for any team that can beat Virginia. Virginia is a great team," Averbuch said. "So coming into the game, we know that Virginia Tech can play. They're going to be a quality opponent."

The Tar Heels created numerous shooting chances, and most of their 22 shot attempts were close to the goal.

UNC was in the driver's seat all game and held Virginia Tech to five

shots, and only two of those were on goal. The clean sheet marked the eighth shutout of the season for the Tar Heels.

Hawkins, who registered her first goal of the season as well, wasted no time in deciding which she valued more.

"Oh, the shutout, for sure. The goals are cool, it's cool to score, but the shutouts are what matter."

The redshirt sophomore's last goal for the Tar Heels was Nov. 18, 2006, against Tennessee in the third round of the NCAA tournament.

After starting 25 games in 2006, Hawkins sat out all of last year while recovering from an ACL tear that occurred while playing with the U.S. U21 team.

Sunday the midfielder was the linchpin for the defense while also being involved with two goals.

"Her leadership, as soon as she stepped in the game, was the margin of victory," Dorrance said.

"To see her score a goal was wonderful because I really felt like her performance merited something special."

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DEFENSE

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That also allowed the Tar Heels to get some pressure on Clausen. Linebackers and defensive linemen proceeded to make Clausen's life miserable and legs tired in the second half as the quarterback was constantly chased by blue jerseys.

"We had worked all week in practice on blitzing," Mullins said. "We put a lot of work into it this week, and it really paid off for us."

The payoff? Notre Dame managed only one scoring drive in the second half, as opposed to three in the first.

Three times in the second half, Clausen was brought down in the backfield. Mullins' sack and fumble recovery was the first of those, as UNC's pressure revved up late in

"When you see the frustration in the quarterback's face ... you know you had him then."

ALERIC MULLINS, DEFENSIVE TACKLE

the game. Mullins said Clausen showed the strain of constantly evading rushers.

"When you see the frustration in the quarterback's face and he's getting onto his teammates, you know you had him then," Mullins said.

Despite having more coverage players on the field, the Tar Heels still managed to stymie ND's running game. In the first half, the Irish put up 61 rushing yards on just 12 carries.

In the second half, ND rushed for only 28 yards. Davis was quick

to attribute that to stalwart efforts from the defensive line rotation, pointing out that North Carolina played almost 10 different linemen to keep up pressure and intensity.

"You count the number of times that you saw Marvin Austin or one of those guys turn and make the tackle from behind," he said.

"Those guys get wore out. We were fortunate that we had some depth there."

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

Solution to Friday's puzzle

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

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5 Malcolm _____ Warner	58 Toward dawn	18 Beatty of "Deliverance"	43 Thick-heeled shoe
10 Mach+ jets	59 Cake cut	22 Small drums	44 Smeared or blured
14 Mine entrance	60 Neutral color	24 Word with cry or chest	46 Oozes
15 Shaped like Humpty Dumpty	61 Tot seat	25 Urban honcho	48 Plus
16 Bigfoot's shoe size	62 Goes after	26 Midwest airport	49 Endeavor to obtain
17 "Apollo 13" co-star	63 Facility	27 Tough luck	50 Highlands group
19 Soft mineral		29 Comic Conway	51 Endorse
20 Futile	DOWN	31 Scarlett's last name	52 Teasdale or Gilbert
21 In a remarkable way	1 Capital of Azerbaijan	32 Strong polyester film	53 Notable periods
23 D.C. summer hrs.	2 March's middle	34 Groovy!	54 Eye affliction
24 Japanese horseradish	3 Seedy bar	35 Evergreen droppings	57 Well, fancy that!
25 Minerals scale	4 Steps over fences	37 Explode	
28 List-shortening abbr.	5 Grass beads		
30 Human chest	6 Gardner and others		
33 I figured it out!	7 Buddy		
34 Midding	8 Unmelodious		
35 Like bags under eyes	9 Jay and the missus		
36 Sail support	10 Begin		
38 Kind of reality?	11 Horse of the Year, 1938		
39 Commands			
40 Artist Holbein	RIP A EBBS STYLE		
41 Savings initials	EVIL FRAU HOOEY		
42 Right-hand page	XYZAFFAIR AMUSE		
43 Port or sherry	ZITTO NERFBALL		
44 Deneb or Vega	SHE DRJ ETALII		
45 Villas and bungalows	PERM TUPAC LED		
47 Eccentric piece	FAIRY NATALE		
49 Got a whiff of	PASSRECEPTION		
51 Extra pay	CLOAKS DRLEAO		
	SAC LUSTY EDTV		
	ENAMEL SAP WOO		
	DANABASH NEMO		
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