

BASKETBALL

Roster melds talent, experience

BY RACHEL ULLRICH
SPORTS EDITOR

Don't ask Roy Williams whether his team is going to win them all. Seriously. Just don't do it.

"First of all, I think it's sort of stupid to talk about," he said at Friday's media day press conference.

"I did say sort of stupid, so if you talk about it, you don't have to say I said you were stupid. I said you were sort of stupid," he clarified.

"But I don't think anybody can in today's game."

There are too many good teams out there, and North Carolina, this year, has too large a target on its back.

Returning all five of last year's starters and bringing in a group of four high school all-stars will do

that to a program.

And though they won't go undefeated, it's the depth that roster brings that Williams expects to help his team win games.

"If we get the game where the seventh man, eighth man, ninth man is a huge factor, I don't know of many teams that can be as talented and as experienced," he said.

North Carolina's depth was considered one of its biggest strengths last year, and this season it will increase with the addition of the new guys — or, as Williams calls them, "those young rascals."

And these Tar Heels won't have any baptism by fire but will have a chance to adapt to the college game at a comfortable pace.

When Deon Thompson and

his class came into the program in 2006, only five upperclassmen were on the roster.

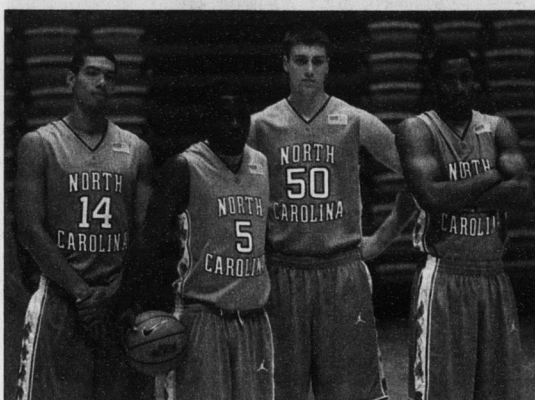
"When we came in, our seniors were just sophomores," Thompson said.

"With us now being juniors (and seniors), it just gives them time to grow into things and not have a heavy expectations or burden on them to play and do great things as soon as they get here."

For a while this summer, it looked as though the newbies on the roster might have some pretty big shoes to fill, as several on the team eyed their chances in the NBA.

Then the unthinkable happened. The entire class of 2009

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North Carolina returns all of last year's starters, plus a talented freshman foursome. Coach Roy Williams calls it "the best of both worlds."

INSIDE ATHLETICS

Just part of the team

Walk-ons are key playmakers for some UNC sports

BY JOE MCLEAN
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

In the world of sports, where the greatest stories focus on the underdog, the walk-on athlete has a special place of honor.

The champion example for walk-ons is Daniel "Rudy" Ruettiger, a 165-pound defensive end whose story was told in the 1993 film "Rudy."

The undersized player who dreamed of playing for Notre Dame earned a spot on the practice squad and was allowed to suit up for his final home game as a senior in 1975.

Ruettiger finished his college career with just two plays on the field, but some walk-ons at North Carolina play a more concrete role on their teams.

Rookie place-kicker Casey Barth has stepped right in to fill the shoes of his older brother, Connor, who kicked for the Tar Heels from 2004-07.

Since the team already had redshirt freshman Jay Wooten on scholarship, the UNC coaches couldn't offer one to another kicker. But they recruited Barth and gave him the next best thing — an offer to play on the team.

He weighed the decision of walking on at UNC against his alternatives, but he said North Carolina just "felt like home."

"I got offered by Air Force. That was probably my other option, but I didn't really want to go to a military academy, so this was the next best thing," Barth said. "I got offers from some smaller schools, but I was trying to play Division I football."

Football remains a decent opportunity for walk-ons because of the

SEE WALK-ONS, PAGE 9

FUMBLLED AWAY

Tar Heels fall to UVa. in overtime

DTH ONLINE: Check out a slideshow of pictures from the UVa. game at dailytarheel.com.

BY POWELL LATIMER
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

CHARLOTTEVILLE, Va. — Just inches away.

With Virginia down one point and needing an extra point to complete an astonishing late-game comeback against No. 18

UNC 13 North Carolina, Virginia 16 Deunta Williams gave a superhuman

leap and got one hand on the ball.

The kick turned into a wounded duck and fell — just inches above the crossbar.

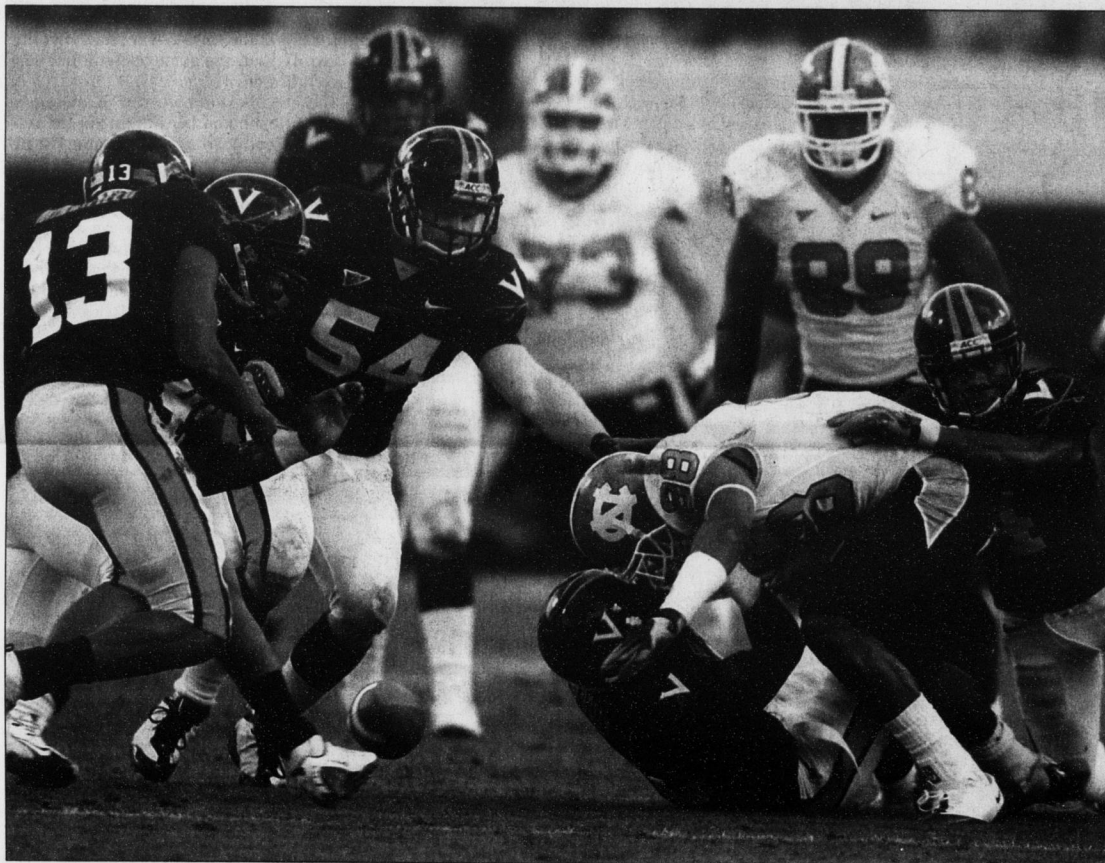
On to overtime, in which halfback Cedric Peerman's two-yard run trumped a UNC field goal, giving UVa. the come-from-behind 16-13 victory against North Carolina.

That late-game surge is doubly painful for UNC since the Tar Heels locked down the Cavaliers for 57 minutes of play.

In fact, the only sustained drive Virginia had was its 82-yard march in the game's final two and a half minutes.

"It's frustrating, losing a game that you've led for the majority of

SEE FOOTBALL, PAGE 9



Hakeem Nicks drops a fumble late in the third quarter of UNC's matchup with Virginia on Saturday. The Tar Heels committed three turnovers in the game, bringing them to minus five in their two losses. "The turnover battle," Cameron Sexton said, "today, that's why we lost."

Tar Heels struggle to finish in UVa. territory



Though Anthony Elzy and the running game excelled on UNC's side of the field, the Tar Heel offense struggled inside the Virginia 40.

BY DANIEL PRICE
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

CHARLOTTEVILLE, Va. — It looked easy. Shaun Draughn for seven yards, eight yards, 18 yards. Line 'em up. Knock 'em down.

Ten plays. Eighty-three yards (48 from Draughn). Touchdown Tar Heels.

North Carolina 7, Virginia 0.

After a Virginia three-and-out, the second in as many opportunities the UNC defense had seen, the Tar Heels were headed for an ACC rout. Or so it seemed.

While UVa.'s offense was sputtering early, UNC's seemed unstoppable — even without Brandon Tate.

But with the Tar Heels on the verge of penetrating deep into

Cavalier territory for the second straight drive, it happened.

The UVa. 40-yard line bulked up, and the Cavalier 3-4 defense in front of it shut UNC down.

In the shadow of its own goalpost, UNC amassed impressive numbers. Most of Draughn's career-high 138 yards came on that side of midfield.

Discounting the first downfield march of the game, only 15 of Draughn's yards in regulation came on UVa.'s side of the field. Inside Virginia's 40, Draughn had one carry — a rush for loss.

"We as a team just have to capitalize on opportunities," Draughn said. "We had a lot of opportunities. We just didn't capitalize on them."

North Carolina only crossed the UVa. 40-yard-line three times in regulation after that first scoring drive — and only put three points on the board in those chances.

"Too many of our drives ended at about fourth and three at about the 40-yard line and having to punt and trying to down it inside the five," UNC coach Butch Davis said.

"Every time that you don't take advantage of really good field position by capitalizing on it by scoring touchdowns ... or putting yourself in position to kick field goals, it'll come back to haunt you. I've seen it way too many times."

He saw it again in Charlottesville.

SEE DRIVES, PAGE 9

Scholl's goals lead UNC to two victories this weekend

BY DANIEL PRICE
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

Something had to break.

The North Carolina field hockey team faced off against No. 6 James Madison on Sunday in a clash of styles bound to produce some exciting play.

FIELD HOCKEY
Virginia 0 JMU led the nation in goals against average at 0.79 heading into the game, while the No. 7 Tar Heels ranked second in the ACC in goals scored, with nearly four goals per contest.

"It was kind of a little bit of a chess match in the first half," UNC

coach Karen Shelton said. "Both teams were kind of trying to figure each other out."

The Tar Heels ended up beating the Dukes at their own game, taking a 1-0 victory — UNC's second of the weekend against a top-15 team.

The Tar Heels defeated No. 13 Virginia 3-0 Saturday.

The game Sunday was controlled by JMU in the first half as pressure on North Carolina's forwards kept the ball on the Dukes' side of the field for most of the game.

"They're a really good team and a really aggressive team," senior Kate Scholl said. "So we knew that they were going to come out hard

so we just really focused on passing it around and working it to our strong side."

The second half was a different story.

A strong Tar Heels attack saw North Carolina take penalty corner after penalty corner, eventually scoring on a rebounded corner from Scholl.

"The corner we called didn't really work," Scholl said. "So it was just kind of improv."

The goal was Scholl's second of the weekend as she got her first of the season against Virginia.

"It's been a very long streak, actually, since I've scored," Scholl

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Senior Kate Scholl scored her first goal of the season against Virginia and backed that up with the game-winner against JMU on Sunday.

ACC SCORES

FLORIDA STATE 26, N.C. STATE 17

Christian Ponder threw for the go-ahead touchdown and Antone Smith ran for a score Thursday.

GEORGIA TECH 21, CLEMSON 17

Josh Nesbitt threw for one TD and rushed for another to lead Tech to a 21-17 victory against Clemson's new coach Dabo Swinney.

MARYLAND 26, WAKE FOREST 0

Chris Turner threw for 321 yards to back a strong defensive showing by Maryland, which struck a high note in an up-and-down season by beating No. 21 Wake Forest.

MIAMI 49, DUKE 31

Jacory Harris threw four touchdown passes and ran for another, accounting for three third-quarter TDs.

BOSTON COLLEGE 28, VIRGINIA TECH 23

Rich Gunnell returned a punt 65 yards for a touchdown, and Boston College overcame an off-night by quarterback Chris Crane to beat No. 17 Virginia Tech.