

# Defenses to slug it out Saturday

**BY POWELL LATIMER**  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

When No. 19 North Carolina faces No. 22 Georgia Tech on Saturday, two of the ACC's most athletic and talented defenses will square off.

Georgia Tech sits atop the standings in almost every major defensive category. The Yellow Jackets are allowing a miserly 13.3 points per game - fewest in the ACC. They also rank second in the ACC in both rush and pass defense.

But while North Carolina sits behind Georgia Tech in both of those categories, the Tar Heel defense inspires just as much fear.

The reason? North Carolina leads the ACC and the nation in interceptions.

The Tar Heel's defensive secondary has racked up 17 interceptions thus far in the year - taking four back to the house for touchdowns.

That's a big part of the reason

that UNC's offense is ranked as one of the most efficient in the ACC - 17 times they've started with a short field due to an interception.

UNC also has more interception return yards than any other team in the ACC - by almost 200 yards.

Georgia Tech, on the other hand, can generate turnovers and field position through its vaunted defensive line.

Michael Johnson and Derrick Morgan lead the Ramblin' Wreck's defensive pass rush, combining for 11.5 of Ga. Tech's 21 sacks.

On the offensive side of the ball, Georgia Tech has adopted new coach Paul Johnson's triple-option offense and leads the ACC in rushing yards.

Sophomore running back Josh Nesbitt ranks ninth in the ACC in rushing yards per game, but he doesn't top the Yellow Jackets' list of weapons.

Fellow sophomore running back Jonathan Dwyer ranks No. 2 in

the ACC while splitting the work with another of the coferences' top rushers.

Both rank higher than UNC running back Shaun Draughn, the Tar Heels' top rusher.

While not the most balanced offense, the misdirection and originality of the triple option offense makes stopping Georgia Tech a tall task.

Fortunately for the Tar Heels, they have had an extra week to scheme for Ga. Tech as they are coming off their bye week.

UNC will also have made some adjustments to its offense, which leads the ACC in passing efficiency under junior quarterback Cameron Sexton, who took over the starting job when starting sophomore quarterback T.J. Yates went down with an injury.

Now with Yates almost ready to play again, UNC could have two once-starting quarterbacks to chose from.

But it won't matter who throws the ball to Hakeem Nicks, the

leading receiver in the ACC.

Nicks has continued to produce under both quarterbacks this season and will look to do more of the same this Saturday against Georgia Tech's stingy pass defense.

UNC vs. Georgia Tech  
Game time: Noon  
Kenan Stadium  
TV: Raycom

Contact the Sports Editor  
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# Former Clef Hanger to host event this evening

**BY KAMMIE DANIELS**  
STAFF WRITER

Former UNC Clef Hanger Brendan James will return to Chapel Hill to perform his debut album *The Day is Brave* for Homecoming.

His experience as a Clef Hanger, along with the ability to write and perform his own music, propelled this 2002 UNC graduate from an a capella group member to a growing solo star with his first album debuting on the Top 10 Billboard Heatseeker Charts with *Newsweek* and *Entertainment Weekly*.

When you're a Clef Hanger, you feel like you want to give back to the group," said James. "Just because they gave me so much."

This year, Homecoming will focus on rediscovering Carolina, the program seeking to unite Alumni and current students with the Tar Heel association they share.

Anita Walton, manager of Homecoming and Affinity Reunions, was thrilled when James expressed interest in returning for the event.

"People have this amazing connection to the Clefs and there's also the alumni connection," said Walton. "We thought it'd be great to bring him back home."

James returns to Chapel Hill usually about twice a year and in his words "loves it every time."

However, this year's Homecoming will rank among the biggest performances James has experienced to this point in his blossoming career. The program will feature songs from James' solo album, all of which he wrote himself.

"I think music at its core should be created to help people relax," said James. "It should take them to another place."

Current sophomore Clef Hanger Hogan Medlin is excited to see James in concert. The two are friends, performing together periodically when James comes to Chapel Hill to collaborate with the group.

"I definitely plan on going to see him," said Hogan. "We usually all try to make it out to his concerts when he's here."

Having performed many times

with the current Clef Hangers, James has chosen to return Thursday to perform exclusively his solo original compositions. "When I write my music, the stories of the people that are close to me are what inspire me," said James.

The concert will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday in the Great Hall of the Student Union. James said he is excited to play to the local audience he knows so well, expressing his enthusiasm to return to UNC.

The current Clef Hangers also await the event, the group eager to show their support for the former member who continues to keep in contact with many of the singers. This opportunity, one member says, is a stepping stone for James to widen his fan base and notoriety.

"I'm really excited," said Hogan. "Brendan is going to have the opportunity to make a name for himself here," said Hogan. "And we'll be there to show our support."

Contact the Arts Editor  
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