

Rugby gains appeal at N.C. high schools

UNC gets more experienced recruits

BY AARON TAUBE
STAFF WRITER

UNC rugby coach Andy Richards grew up in England, where the sport is traditionally more popular than it is in the United States. But the game is starting to catch on in North Carolina, said Richards, who is coaching the team for his third year.

After recruiting more experienced players this year, the team could make a run at its first post-season appearance since 2003.

"Because there's so many more high school teams being set up, there are a lot of guys in-state coming here with rugby experience," Richards said.

During the past three years, the team has added four starters from North Carolina's growing high school rugby league.

The Chapel Hill Highlanders, a team for high school students, was created in 2003 and has won the

state championship three years in a row.

"That's who I try to recruit from, primarily, because one, they've got really good players and two, they all live in Chapel Hill," Richards said.

The game is growing in popularity especially in Charlotte, where three more schools will create rugby programs this season, bringing the city's total to nine.

"The growth is tremendous, and we're getting bigger and bigger all the time," said Myers Park coach Thomas Connor, who's seen his squad grow from 14 to 60 players since taking over two seasons ago.

Connor said his team also has generated increased interest among Charlotte community members as well, with game attendance reaching as high as 1,500.

UNC rugby recruiting chairman and player Evan Raczkowski believes the game's growing appeal lies in the sport's universality.

"Anybody can play rugby. ... There's a position for everybody out there on the field, no matter how big, how small, any shape, any size."

EVAN RACZKOWSKI, UNC RUGBY RECRUITING CHAIRMAN AND PLAYER

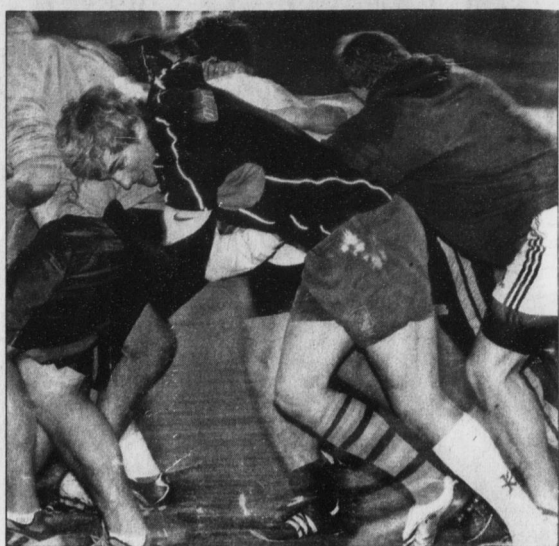
"Anybody can play rugby. The game really adheres to everybody. We have a guy who's 5'4", 140 and then a guy who's 6'4", 295," he said.

"There's a position for everybody out there on the field, no matter how big, how small, any shape, any size."

In addition to recruiting from high schools, the team looks to grab athletes from within the University athletic community.

Raczkowski was a UNC heavyweight wrestler before joining the team.

He had never played rugby before his roommate talked him into trying out for the team. And though he was able to grasp the game's basics early on, he said he still has a lot to learn.



Members of the UNC club rugby team practice the maul — a play about strength and power — before the first preseason tournament. DTH/CHESSA RICH

TRANSFER

and crossed their legs.

The board reopened the search for a waste transfer station site last November after residents of the Rogers-Eubanks community protested original plans. The station will be used as a daily collection point for the county's garbage before it is shipped to an out-of-county landfill.

Last month, commissioners narrowed the list of potential sites to three, all within a mile of each other just west of Orange Grove Road on N.C. 54.

Strong applause followed many attendees' requests that the board delay site selection for at least 90 days and investigate other sites.

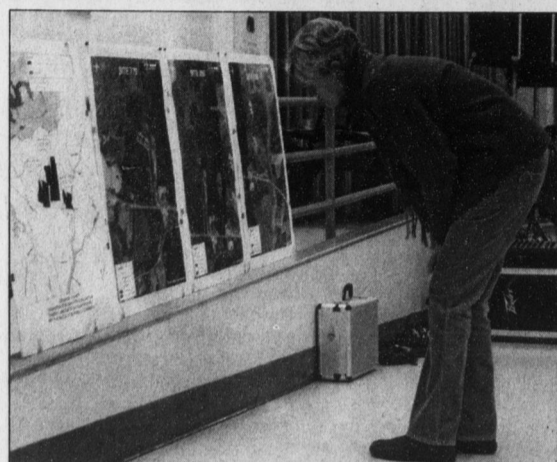
Board Chairman Barry Jacobs said the tentative deadline for a decision is Dec. 11, nearly a month after the original date.

Many reiterated the concern that commissioners are ignoring more sustainable solutions for disposing of solid waste besides shipping it to a landfill.

Commissioners received a report in September from a waste management consultant that concluded the county does not generate enough waste to consider options like generating energy by burning garbage.

Residents of Bingham, a township just north of the three sites, said rural Orange County has been unfairly targeted for public facilities.

The Cane Creek Reservoir, located



Lynne Jaffe examines maps for proposed Carrboro waste transfer sites. Hundreds attended the public meeting to review the proposed sites. DTH/NUSHMIA KAHN

about 2 miles west of the proposed transfer sites, supplies water to Chapel Hill and Carrboro. The Orange Water and Sewer Authority also uses land in the area as part of its biosolids management program, which residents describe as spreading "sludge" in open fields.

Resident Connor Blakemey said he thought that two potential transfer sites in Hillsborough were removed from consideration because of undue preference to the county's towns.

"The pure volume and number of Hillsborough's objections do not

make them right," he said. "Only Bingham residents said they were concerned a transfer station would jeopardize the rural character of the township and compromise resident safety on the area's small roads.

"One can only hope that an OWASA sludge truck would not collide with a waste truck," resident Myra Dodson said. "Now that would be an embarrassing mess."

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QUARTERBACKS

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quarterback for Saturday's N.C. State game until both have had a chance to compete for the spot this week.

"The approach is that we are not gonna name a starter as to this Saturday," he said.

"That I'm going to meet with both of the quarterbacks this afternoon, as is (offensive coordinator) John Shoop, and we're going to sit down and talk to them."

"And say, OK, look, you both need to be prepared. And we'll try to make a decision at some point later in the week."

Since Sexton became UNC's go-to guy during Sept. 27's Miami game, the QB has thrown nine touchdowns and four interceptions, averaging more than 175 yards a game.

But Sexton struggled on Saturday, going only 10-for-24 for 166 yards, with one touchdown — tipped by a defender first — and one interception, plus a lost fumble.

"I never got into a rhythm," Sexton said after the game. "I just, I was off. I don't know how to explain it. It just wasn't my day today."

But this decision isn't made solely on Sexton's performance

"The most important thing at all positions is who gives us the best chance to win."

BUTCH DAVIS, UNC FOOTBALL COACH

Saturday, Davis said.

"It's no disrespect to Cam. Cam's done an outstanding job, for the most part. He's come in, we've won games with him, he's performed well."

But so did Yates, for 12 games last year and the first three this season.

After talking about the offense with his staff for four or five hours Sunday, Davis said they chose to open up the competition.

Wide receiver Cooter Arnold, who caught his first touchdown pass Saturday on Sexton's tipped throw, said Yates has looked sharp in practices the past few weeks but that he hasn't played as much as Sexton.

"Well, he hasn't been practicing too, too much, but whenever he's been in there, it's just like before he left. He's doing good," he said.

Yates now has been practicing for two full weeks, Davis said, though Sexton still has been getting about 70 percent of the throws.

This week that number will even off.

"That's one of the things that we've been trying to evaluate as T.J. came back, was at what point he would be in a position to somewhat compete," Davis said.

"So we're going to watch them both practice, we're going to put them into situations, and see how the week unfolds before we try to decide who might be the quarterback."

Before his injury, Yates was leading the ACC in pass efficiency and was third in yards per game and total offense. In his three games, he picked up six touchdowns and only one pick on 65 yards.

Fullback Bobby Rome knows either QB would get the job done — the competition is actually a good thing, he said.

"I mean, I think it's a great problem to have, to have two starting quarterbacks, that either one can go in, and the team's gonna back either one 100 percent."

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.

HOMECOMING

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Association member, a professor, and an officer of the University.

"We tried to comprise a committee that was a good representation of the community," Knowing said.

Blake did not pass the interview round.

"They were looking for the best candidate in terms of passion or conviction for Carolina in their interview," she said.

"I think it was fair, but I think the problem with it this year was that they're moving Miss UNC into a different direction. It's more of a public figure spotlight and being an ambassador for UNC."

Blake said she thinks the interview panel should have better clarified what its expectations were.

"They should emphasize their purpose for Mr. and Miss UNC," she said. "They need to have more public guidelines in terms of the interview so (applicants) are going to know specific criteria of what they're looking for, because questions weren't consistent."

Senior Mia Barnes, who is black, also applied for Homecoming queen but did not make the ballot. She had a similar interview experience.

"I don't necessarily think it's racial or anything," she said. "I think the criteria are not set in place, and it's not very transparent for the student body to see."

Barnes said all students who want to run for Mr. or Miss UNC should be able to have their names on the ballot, and she questioned the selectivity of the interview panel.

"Black, white, brown, it doesn't matter, put them all out there," she said. "We are the students, and we get to pick who we want to be Homecoming king or queen."

Senior Maya Mitchell, co-chairwoman of the BSM's political action committee, added that she thinks all

"Black, white, brown, it doesn't matter, put them all out there. We are the students, and we get to pick who we want to be Homecoming king or queen."

MIA BARNES, SENIOR WHO APPLIED FOR HOMECOMING QUEEN BUT DIDN'T MAKE THE BALLOT

applicants are qualified to run and that eliminating people before the election by students is unfair.

This year's Mr. BSM, Donovan Livingston, did make the ballot for Homecoming king, but did not win. He said race did not impact his campaign or the results.

"I don't believe race was ever a factor," he said. He added that he and Crouthamel, the winner, have more similarities in character than differences.

Crouthamel also said he didn't think race played a major role in the election, though people talked about it.

"I did notice people saying, 'Wow, you're brave to run,' or that I'd have a hard time winning because it is a crown predominantly worn by African-Americans," he said. "There were racial comments like, 'Oh, you're crazy, you're a white person.'"

But Crouthamel said the main focus of the Homecoming campaign was the candidates' platforms.

"People looked at platform this year and voted based on that," he said.

Crouthamel said he and Martindale appealed to the Greek system for support, which could have balanced with BSM voters.

But fewer BSM members voted, out of frustration with not having a candidate on the ballot, said BSM President Shaniqua McClendon.

"I don't think students were consciously making an effort not to elect a black student," McClendon said.

"I think the fact that we didn't have one of our own members there had a lot to do with people

participating less than they would have had if our Miss BSM candidate had been on the ballot."

Terri Houston, director of recruitment and multicultural programs, said she hopes race did not influence the election but noted that race is receiving more attention than it has in the past.

"I think people are more acutely aware of factors and dimensions about race because of our new president, and if they're not, they need to wake up," she said. "The election has opened our eyes to ideas revolving around race, so hopefully we'll be able to talk more and be more open about these things."

But Livingston said he doesn't want to dwell on the past.

"For the most part the black community had some disdain for how Homecoming was run this year, but we just need to accept it for what it is, accept the problems and the shortcomings and figure out how we can improve the process in years to come," he said.

"Running for any public office is no easy feat, and Jeremy's a good friend of mine now. This experience has been amazing, and I've been blessed and I have no right to complain about anything."

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TESTIMONY

FROM PAGE 1

the jury — with a 5-inch kitchen knife by his side.

The man referenced Player 1 by name and said that he was in his room with girls.

"I didn't think anything of it in terms of it being a threatening situation whatsoever," Player 3 said.

Player 3 went into the room thinking it would be a good way to make fun of Player 1, he testified.

"The next day it would be a good locker room story for the guys. They usually enjoy stories like that."

In the room, he saw Player 1 in the bed with a woman on top of him, but did not hear signs of struggle or sexual conduct.

Another woman came to the door, took off Player 3's shirt and put him on the same bed. She broke his belt, bound his hands with it and blindfolded him with a tie.

"It's a situation where you're not really counting minutes because every second feels like an hour," Player 3 said.

When the woman began to fondle him, he lost control and tried to push her away, he said. That is when Lewis rushed in and put a knife to his neck, breaking skin. "It was serious. I honestly thought I was going to die," he said.

Player 2 said he was pretending to be asleep when he heard the commotion from the other room.

He stayed in bed the first two times a man walked in but sometime later he made a profanity-laced 911 call.

While calling, he saw Lewis, who came in and put a knife to his throat and bound his hands with a belt.

Police came soon afterward and apprehended the two women while Lewis got away.

The victims' statements shortly after the crime differed from what they said in court Monday, defense

"It's a situation where you're not really counting minutes because every second feels like an hour."

A UNC FOOTBALL PLAYER WHO SAYS HE WAS BOUND AND BLINDFOLDED

attorney Russ Hollers pointed out on several occasions.

Player 1 made a statement with much more detail the morning after. Players 1 and 3 both said the women punched them in the face, which they denied Monday.

The prosecution concluded its evidence with the testimony of the three players. Hollers made a motion to

dismiss all charges based on lack of evidence; Assistant District Attorney Morgan Whitney agreed to drop at least one felony charge.

Both sides will make their closing arguments today and the jury is expected to deliberate.

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REGAL CINEMAS

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Adv. Tx on Sale BOLT (PG) ★ 9:33-8:00

Adv. Tx on Sale TWILIGHT (PG-13) ★ 11:14-10:20

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG-13) ★ (11:45-10:20) 7:30

MADAGASCAR 2: ESCAPE TO AFRICA (PG) (11:50-10:20) 4:30

ROLE MODELS (R) - 10 REQ'D (11:55-10:20) 7:35

ZACK AND MIKE MAKE A PORNO (R) - 10 REQ'D (12:00-10:20) 7:40

HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL 3: SENIOR YEAR (G) (11:40-10:20) 4:35

W (PG-13) (200-445) 7:25

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MADAGASCAR ESCAPE 2 AFRICA (PG) 12:45-2:50-4:55-7:00-9:10

ROLE MODELS (R) 1:20-4:15-7:20-9:25

HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL 3 (G) 12:30-2:45-5:00-7:15-9:30

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