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DELAY OF GAME

Welcome to the inaugural 'Louies'

66 To uckle your seatbelts. It looks like the next 11 weeks will be wild."

That's how I ended my first column of the year, just in time for week four of the season. And a wild 11 weeks it has been.

Now, in the final SportSaturday column of the year, it's time to give out some year-end awards. So without further ado:

The Al Gore Award for Most Stunning and Complete Turnaround from a Devastating Loss goes to Virginia. The Cavs came back after getting trashed by Duke to win three straight games against ACC contenders - and a fourth against East Carolina.

The Britney Spears Furthest Fall from Superstardom Award goes to storied programs Florida State and Virginia Tech.

As late as two years ago, the tandem began the season in the top 16 in the land, much like Britney broke into the music world at 16. Now both teams are on the outside looking in on the championship race. And Britney, well ...

Moving on, the Milli Vanilli Does Anyone Want to Win This Thing? Award goes to — the entire Atlantic Coast Conference. Yes, I'm aware that Milli Vanilli hasn't been heard from since the early '90s, but it's hard to find precedent for a group of people



LOUIE HORVATH THE CHAMP IS HERE

that seem to have zero interest in winning awards - or in this case, conferences.

Whenever a team got on top in the ACC, it immediately failed to stay there.

Want proof? 3-10 - that's the record of ranked ACC teams when playing unranked teams in the conference, not counting Clemson - more on them later ranked teams are 1-9 in such games.

Before this week, the two teams with division leads right now have combined to spend a total of two weeks in the top 25. (Maybe that is why they are in the lead.)

Not one of the 12 ACC teams wants to stay on top and win this thing.

The only anomaly in this reasoning is Clemson. First they lost as a ranked team to start their ACC campaign, and they then proceeded to hand victories to two ranked teams when they were out of the top 25.

They were the only team that suppos-

edly "good" teams could consistently beat.

For this reason, I deem Clemson the recipient of the Staples Easy Button Award for all of the opposing fans who filed out of stadiums after their teams beat Clemson and thought, "That was easy."

This year's Little Lebowski Urban Achievers Award goes to Duke. They were spoken highly of, and everyone seemed to like them. But they didn't really play a role in the resolution of the story.

The Oprah Award for Most Seemingly Random Fluctuations goes to Miami. The 'Canes quickly went from lightweights (losing three out of five early) to heavyweights (five wins in a row).

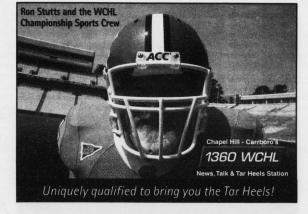
And of course, since this publication is distributed at North Carolina, there must be an award for the Tar Heels.

UNC wins the Villain from "Die Another Day" Award for its change of face after a simple noninvasive surgery.

Without T.J. Yates and Brandon Tate, the high-octane Tar Heels transformed into a grind-it-out ball-control team and did so with mixed reviews.

Like the villain from "Die Another Day," they had their goal right within their grasp, but they still managed to let it get away.

Because ... well, they always do.



During the Week...

Monday

7:00 AM Monday Press Conference with Coach Davis

Tuesday

7:00 PM **Butch Davis LIVE**

Thursday

7:00 PM The official kickoff with Jeff Hamlin

SAFURDAY **UNC vs. NC State**

Kick-off at 12pm Gameday Lineup

Pre-Game

9:00 AM Countdown to Kick Off with Ron Stutts Off the Top Sports, Live from Top of the Hill 10:00 AM 11:00 AM Tar Heel Sports Network Pre-Game

Post-Game

3:00 PM Tar Heel Sports Network Post-Game Show 4:00 PM Ham's Postgame Party

THE MOST COMPLETE COVERAGE OF UNC FOOTBALL ON THE AIR!