

Fullback Geof Hamlin

Hamlin Happy Blocking Back

Filling Shoes Of Saulis Zemaitis

by Rick Brewer
Special to the DTH

Geof Hamlin has been getting little applause or glory this season, but Carolina's starting fullback is happy with things just the way they are.

Hamlin, a star running back in high school and for the 1968 Carolina freshmen, has been used mostly in the unglorious role of blocking back this season.

But, while the fans usually pay little attention to blockers, Tar Heel coaches and players are quite aware of the role Hamlin has played in helping UNC to victories in its first three games.

In the Tar Heel offense it is the fullback who leads tailbacks Don

McCauley and Ike Oglesby on their runs. And thanks to the blocking of Hamlin and the Carolina offensive line, the Tar Heels have already gained over 1,000 yards on the ground this season.

Hamlin, a junior from Ottawa, Ontario, was the back-up man to Saulis Zemaitis at fullback last season. Although he saw considerable action, Geof lacked the blocking experience of Zemaitis.

During the spring and fall practices, Carolina Coach Bill Dooley expressed concern over the loss of the graduated Zemaitis. Dooley felt Zemaitis was the best blocker in the Atlantic Coast Conference last fall and knew he would be hard to replace.

But, Hamlin has quickly developed into a top-flight fullback and now rates as one of the key men in the UNC line-up.

"Geof is improving constantly," says Dooley. "His blocking gets better every game and, of course, he is a fine runner and pass receiver as well."

Hamlin, in fact, scored Carolina's first touchdown against N.C. State in a 19-0 win with a 12-yard pass reception from Paul Miller.

But making the switch from running back to blocking back has not been an easy one for Hamlin. It has taken a lot of hard work.

"I'm now approaching the game completely differently than before," Geof explains. "As a ballcarrier I tried to run away from people. As a blocker, of course, I have to run at them. Believe me, there's quite a difference."

"I'm really still learning how to block. And, of course, it helps to have McCauley

and Oglesby running behind you. They can cut so quickly, I can make a poor block and still get the job done."

One man who is quick to heap praise on Hamlin is McCauley, the star running back who was ACC Player of the Year last season.

"I think Geof's blocking now is as good as Saulis' was at the same time last year," says Don. "Geof is taller than the other fullbacks I've run behind and actually his height sometimes helps screen me from the defense."

So while the fans may not recognize all the contributions Hamlin makes to Carolina victories, his Tar Heel teammates and coaches do. And to Hamlin, like most athletes, they're the only ones who really matter.

Frosh Lack Linemen Have Plenty Of Backs

by Howie Carr
Sports Writer

On the wall of the freshman football office is a position-by-position depth chart. On the right hand side of the chart are the backfield positions, with every position at least three deep. The left side contains the line assignments, with most slots filled with only one name, or at the most two.

That sums up Coach Moyer Smith's problem on the eve of the Tar Babies' opening game against the N.C. State freshmen: a surfeit of good backs and a plethora of linemen.

Of 40 scholarship players on last year's undefeated team, 25 were interior linemen, compared with four of 33 on the '70 edition.

Coach Smith, able to pick from a field of twelve quarterbacking candidates, has tabbed 6-2, 204 pound Russ Strait, from Bordentown, N.J., as his starter.

Complementing Strait in the backfield

will be 5-11, 175 pound Phil Daly, from Danville, Va., wingback Tommy Bradley, a 6-0, 175 pound converted signal caller from Gastonia, and fullback Kevin O'Rourke from Hyattsville, Md.

Strait's top receivers figure to be split and Earl Chesson, an Edenton native (and brother of Duke's Wes Chesson, currently the nation's number two pass receiver) and Colt Hitchcock, a 6-5, 230 pound tight end.

The interior line is centered by David Ulicny, of Youngstown, O. He'll be flanked by guards Bob Pratt and Billy Newton, both of whom hail from Richmond, Va.

Rounding out the offensive team are tackles John Frerotte, of McLean, Va., and Darryl Craig, an Ottawa, Ont. native and the latest in a long line of Canadian players at UNC.

On defense, Coach Smith likes the looks of his linebacking corps. All of them, however, are new to their positions, and they'll have to mature quickly to handle a State squad that ran

up 64 points in its season opener against East Carolina.

Middle linebacker Dave Wall, from Albany, Ga., will call the defensive signals. The outside linebacker slots are filled by Tom Kennedy, from North port, N.Y., and Dennis Kelly, of Florence, Ken.

Defensive tackles Pete Talty, a native of Don McCauley's hometown of Garden City, N.Y., and Warren Miller, from West Islip, N.Y., have the job of blunting State's powerful ground attack.

They'll receive help from middle guard Lee McLaughlin and monster-man Bobby Johnson, from Weldon.

One of the starting ends for the Tar Babies will be Ted Leverenz, from Alexandria, Va. Phil Bracco, of Brooklyn, N.Y., figures as a starting safety.


Thus far, the Tar Babies have lost two players with injuries. Jimmy Jerome, a promising back from Teachey, N.C., has been sidelined for the season with a broken arm, while tight end James Steele of Thomasville is out for an indefinite length of time because of a broken hand.

Lacrosse Practice

"Football is king, basketball is great, but lacrosse is fun." That's the slogan of the Carolina lacrosse squad as fall practice gets underway.

Some 75 boys are currently working with the squad at James week days at 4 p.m.

Month-long workouts will conclude with the traditional Blue-White game.



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Allen Meet Director

Plans for the fifth annual North Carolina Interscholastic Soccer Tournament were announced this week by meet director Marvin Allen, Carolina's head soccer coach.

Regional tournaments will be held at four sites Friday and Saturday Nov. 13 and 14. Then the state championship event will be staged Friday and Saturday, Nov. 20 and 21 at Pfeiffer College.

Sites for the regional competition will be UNC at Wilmington, N.C. State, Charlotte Independence High School and Campbell College.

Meanwhile, Allen is hoping for cooler weather but the same results when his Tar Heel booters play Appalachian here

Monday in their second match of the season.

Carolina opened the campaign last Friday with a 4-0 over Belmont Abbey in sweltering 90-degree heat.

"We rested our players as often as possible," said Allen. "The weather was just too hot. I don't think anyone could have gone all the way."

Allen had special praise for sophomore forward Towney Anderson and senior halfback Pete Seggel.

Anderson scored the first UNC goal of the year in the first period. Seggel had two goals and senior forward Louis Bush got the other on a penalty kick.


They said it couldn't be done, and they were right for a week, but we will open this Friday, October 2.

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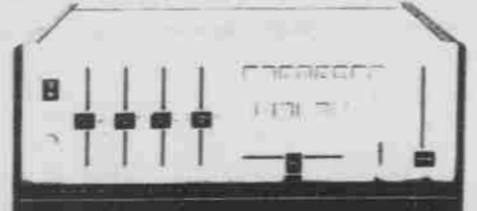
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