

Wuycik: out of Miller's shadow

By Al Thomas
Sports Writer

Dennis Wuycik has changed a lot during the past year.

The once self-conscious senior Carolina forward now beams with confidence, the product of a year full of accolades and national attention.

He holds his head a little higher now, speaking freely and at ease.

Wuycik seems to have finally stepped out of the shadow of former Tar Heel great Larry Miller, with whom he is constantly being compared, and is beginning to shape his own very enviable shadow.

The Ambridge, Pa., native still uses almost unstoppable finesse under the basket, as did the Pennsylvania-born Miller, and still wears old number 44, the same as Miller. The difference now is that Wuycik has begun to establish his own unique legend at Carolina, utilizing and enjoying his own particular style of basketball.

He appears to have crossed the line separating the good college basketball players from the great ones.

For his efforts, Wuycik is a pre-season pick to be an All-American as well as the

pre-season choice among the sportswriters to be the Atlantic Coast Conference's Player of the Year.

Success and laurels don't seem to have affected him adversely, however, as so often happens to a 21-year-old college athlete. He remains through all the attention an unselfish team player.

Wuycik only averaged 18 points a game last year, a total he could almost double if given the chance. Standing 6-6 and weighing 215 pounds, Wuycik is always looking for a teammate who may be a foot or two closer to the basket with a slightly better shot.

He is rarely guilty of forcing a shot, hitting over 60 per cent from the field last season.

"In basketball, you're playing to help satisfy the entire team," Wuycik explained. "I feel basketball is a team sport. If someone is only interested in individual recognition, he should play tennis or golf."

"Of course, when you have five or six players who are stars on their high school teams, you have to make some adjustments," he continued. "But as you mature as an athlete, you realize honors come with winning."

"Winning is so much fun," Wuycik added, "and to win you need to work as a

team. Once players realize how great it is to win, it's no sacrifice to work as a team."

Winning is exactly what the Tar Heels and Wuycik have been doing with regularity. Carolina was picked to finish seventh in the ACC last year but combined a pressing defense with teamwork to win the league championship.

The Tar Heels lost in the final game of the ACC tourney by one point, however, and went to the National Invitational Tournament instead of the NCAA playoffs.

The first game of the NIT, against Massachusetts, was almost a disaster for Wuycik.

"I guess it's natural to think 'if only I hadn't been at that particular spot,'" Wuycik said referring to a collision during the first half which not only kept him from playing in the remainder of the tournament but endangered his entire future in basketball.

Wuycik was forced to have surgery on his knee...and then began the long, slow and sometimes doubtful process of recovery.

"All I could do during the summer was lift weights," he said, "and then finally in

August I could run some. I was only able to play basketball four times before practice began in the middle of October.

"Like anything, whether it's roller skating or basketball, when you're away from it a long time you lose your timing, your sharpness," Wuycik continued. "I'm trying to smooth a few things out now but I don't have any physical problems."

Wuycik said each player on the team is given a battery of physical tests during pre-season, including running and jumping, and that he equaled last year's pre-season standards.

"My results were exactly the same as last year this time," he noted, "although they weren't as good as at the end of last year. Overall, though, my pre-season has gone about as well as in the past."

Whenever the discussion began centering on Wuycik himself, he would switch the emphasis to "the team," and what "the team" needs or plans to do.

"It has to be a nice honor to be picked so high in the polls," Wuycik said concerning several pre-season polls picking Carolina among the five strongest teams in the country. "The team will have to band together to make it come true, however. We have the confidence to be a winning team."

Everything is always "we" when talking with Wuycik, seldom "I."

"We have to prove we can live up to those expectations," he continued. "Most of the players realize the polls depend a lot on where the writers are from. We'll just have to play as hard as we can and wait for the final poll."

The Carolina forward also explained why the Tar Heels commit a high number of turnovers, something which has become almost a trademark of the team.

The reason, as with everything else, is "teamwork."

"Turnovers come from passing," Wuycik said, "and we like to pass off to our teammates. We don't have just one guy bringing the ball down the court and shooting. We like to give assists to our teammates."

"We'll have to cut down on some of those turnovers, especially all the ones during the Blue-White scrimmage," he added, looking eager for the season to get underway. "You can never be satisfied with a performance. You have to be hungry to excel."

Wuycik, one of the most team-oriented superstars in Carolina athletic history, appears mentally and physically ready for his last campaign as a Tar Heel. He undoubtedly had a lucrative future awaiting him in basketball, but now all he seems concerned with is winning.



George Karl drives around a Providence defender in the NIT last March. Karl led Tar Heel scoring with 21 points in the semi-final victory over Duke, hitting six of 12 field goal attempts.

Karl: 'Coach Smith is a father to team'

By Mark Whicker
Sports Editor

George Karl, in some ways, was the embodiment of everything good about Carolina basketball last year.

As a sophomore, the 6-2 guard scored 12 points a game, hit 52.4 per cent of his shots and played adequately in all other departments.

But when you think of George Karl, you think of a ball bouncing out of bounds and Karl skidding recklessly across a floor, bad back, knee and all, to recover it. Or you think of George Karl driving down the lane against two 6-10 men for a layup.

In short, total effort. This fall, Karl came to Chapel Hill with two goals: "to be a smarter player all around and to improve defensively."

"I feel like I'm passing a lot better this year, and I'm calling defense better," Karl says. "The whole team has been reminding me of last year in its unselfishness and defense, at least during the last two weeks."

"Maturity" is a key word when Karl describes what he expects in the season ahead. And, like the other Tar Heels, he praises Coach Dean Smith in talking about maturity.

"He reads me and all the rest of the players. He knows us and our psychological and emotional approaches to the game. For instance, he knows I'm confident of my ability, and when something happens to shake that confidence, I play bad."

"But I credit him with my becoming a man. Understanding and love — those are the words to describe the program under him. We feel like on big family, and he's the father."

Karl's combative streak shows through when rankings are mentioned; he admits he enjoys "reading my name in the papers and our high pre-season rankings. Like I really got mad at one magazine that picked us 16th, because I think we're better than that."

"Then we were picked second, which is good to read, but really I hope we don't play just to protect the rankings. I hope we feel as we did last year, that every team we play can beat us, because we have respect for any college basketball player that plays on a team against UNC."

Maturity also comes in on a team basis. "We're more mature in that we're looking for the best shots," Karl says. "We will not need my scoring, although I will not pass up an easy shot. We've got so much scoring talent this year."

That includes Dennis Wuycik, Bill Chamberlain, Steve Previs, Kim Hubbard,

Donn Johnston, Billy Chambers, sophomore John O'Donnell, and the big newcomers, 6-9 soph Bobby Jones and 6-9 transfer Robert McAdoo, who rooms with Karl.

According to Karl, the new talent should be even more impressive on defense. "McAdoo and Jones are both super, fabulous shot-blockers and defensive players. Previs is, of course, the best defensive player around, and everyone else has improved in that department."

"Mac has really come around well. I couldn't have picked up the intricacies of our system as well as he has."

Karl, Wuycik and Previs will go home Saturday to play Pittsburgh — "a team entirely capable of knocking us off" — and then Princeton, with All-American Brian Taylor. "This is a big test for us," Karl estimates. "If we get by these two we'll be ready for the Big Four tournament and the Spain trip during Christmas."

And then, the conference season, with its punishing basketball and its exasperating off-court controversies. "Coach Smith, again, has instilled poise within us. He has never really criticized anybody, and he came out of all this Tom McMillen criticism beautifully."

"I'm not glad South Carolina's out of the conference because I think we could have beaten them this year. As far as last year's two losses go — well, I think we had a better team."

The NIT victory (and the ring that all the players got Tuesday, signifying the tournament championship) has not completely made up for the ACC tournament loss to South Carolina.

"Our goal is the NCAA," Karl says. "We wanted to show the nation that North Carolina is one of the best, and I think we proved it in the NIT. Still, I think we could have represented the conference better in the NCAA, even though the NIT win was a big thrill."

Karl's plans when he graduates in '73 are still taking shape. "I'd like to achieve a financial soundness with a pro contract," he says. "But then there are so many things to do to help people, which to me is very important. I'm also thinking about seminary, the Peace Corps, and law school."

Karl and friends are also active in Genesis House, which helps people with drug problems.

Right now, Karl faces another rough season, this time with everyone shooting at the Tar Heels. "We have great talent, and we could have gotten a little cocky," he says. "But we're too mature for that right now. I think."

There's that word again.

Smith produces pros

There are six Carolina graduates who played college ball under Dean Smith in the professional ranks.

Probably the most famous two are Charlie Scott and Bill Cunningham, who have achieved stardom in their respective leagues. Scott, of the ABA's Virginia Squires, leads his league in scoring and last year pushed Virginia to the Eastern Division title as a rookie. He was on the All-ABA team and, of course, was named rookie of the year.

Cunningham has been a fine player for many years with Philadelphia in the NBA. "The Kid" started on the NBA team in the NBA-ABA all-star game last summer in Houston.

Other former Tar Heels in the pros have made impressions as well. Larry Miller, an All-American in 1968, is slowly becoming an All-Star guard for the

Carolina Cougars. Miller is second in scoring on the team and has turned in outstanding defensive performances this year.

Larry Brown, who graduated in '63 and for a brief moment held the head coaching job at Davidson College, is also one of the best guards in the ABA. He now plays for the Denver Rockets.

Bill Bunting is Scott's teammate on the Squires after playing for the Cougars and New York Nets. Dick Grubar served with Indiana before retiring with a bad knee; he now coaches at Chapel Hill High. Bob Lewis has played with the San Francisco Warriors and Cleveland Cavaliers.

Dave Chadwick is presently playing in Belgium and scoring high, and center Lee Dedmon was cut by the Utah Stars, is recovering from pneumonia and may try again next year.

Chamberlain: better defense

By Howie Carr
Assistant Sports Editor

When Coach Dean Smith's Tar Heel basketball team opens its 1971-72 season at home tonight against Rice, senior forward Bill Chamberlain won't even be in Carmichael Auditorium.

"I'll be taking a make-up exam Thursday night," he says.

Chamberlain was suspended from the team last Friday for apparent disciplinary reasons, and although he returned to practice yesterday, Smith had already decided not to use him against the visiting Owls.

The Rice game, though, will probably be the only time this season when Chamberlain, a 6-6, 185 pound native of New York City, does not figure prominently in the Tar Heels' plans. He was picked to the pre-season All-conference team by the Atlantic Coast Sportswriters Association, and television broadcaster Chris Schenkel selected him as a first team All-American.

Chamberlain enters his final varsity season coming off a brilliant performance last spring in the National Invitational Tournament, where he was named Most Valuable Player after scoring 34 points in the Tar Heels' 84-66 rout of Georgia Tech in the tournament finals.

Although he finished last season as the Tar Heel's second leading scorer (14.4 per game average and rebounder (6.9), the NIT marked the first time that Chamberlain had really come into his own for Carolina. Hampered by various ailments during most of his first two seasons, he had been somewhat overshadowed, initially by Charlie Scott and then by Dennis Wuycik.

"It's a different feeling this year to be in good shape at the start of the season," Chamberlain says, although he missed the first ten days of practice when he underwent a tonsillectomy "just before October 15."

"I got back into shape and caught up with the team pretty quick, though," he



Bill Chamberlain

says of his illness, "Coach Smith even says my defense has improved this year."

Chamberlain, who worked in Burlington last summer, attended Smith's basketball camp in July, but he admits that he "didn't play very much this summer."

So why the improvement? "Well, I've been listening to Coach Smith's principles for three years now," Chamberlain says, "and I guess they're finally starting to sink in."

Molding the talented Tar Heel sophomores and junior college transfer Robert McAdoo into the traditional "principles" of Carolina play has been the coaches' main concern in the pre-season, and Chamberlain believes they've succeeded.

"They already fit in with the rest of the team," Chamberlain says. "We're going to be all right, even though everybody in the conference is really tough this year."

Some basketball observers have predicted that the Tar Heels' major problem this season would be

"senioritis," i.e., Chamberlain and teammate Dennis Wuycik looking ahead to next year and the lucrative professional contracts that await them.

"That's not going to be a problem," Chamberlain answers. "Looking at it from that perspective, we realize that it won't be as nice if we aren't winning. You have to win to be noticed, and if we're doing well, then next year will take care of itself."

Chamberlain came to Chapel Hill in 1968 after a phenomenal high school basketball career at Long Island Lutheran in Brookville, N.Y. Most of the major colleges in the nation — including every school ranked in the wire services' pre-season top twenty this year — tried to recruit him.

Today, married and only a few courses away from completing his major in recreation administration, Chamberlain says he'd tell a potential recruit "the pros and cons of this place as I see them. But I wouldn't try to influence him one way or the other. It would be his own decision, and he'd have to be the one to make it."

Mark Whicker

Tournament is bush

Tonight Carolina's talented basketball team opens another regular season, the first game of a 30-game schedule.

High spots on the schedule include three games in Spain during Christmas, the Sugar Bowl tournament in New Orleans, a trip to Pittsburgh and Princeton this weekend, and a 12-game Atlantic Coast Conference schedule.

And it all means very little. The Tar Heels could go undefeated, and if they lose in the Atlantic Coast Conference tournament in March they have no chance for the NCAA championship.

The NIT is still there, the prestigious tournament of second placers that the Heels won last year, but, in comparison to the big prize it means about as much as the Runner-Up Bowl the NFL had a few years ago. Okay if you win, terrible if you lose.

Even for the winner of the three-day game of Russian roulette in Greensboro, NCAA chances are seriously damaged. The tournament exhausts the winner, physically and emotionally. It is like the fictional Greek wrestler, Arrachio, who died as he vanquished his opponent.

South Carolina endured last year, barely beating the Tar Heels in the finals. Depleted of incentives, they lost disgracefully to Penn in the first round of the regionals. There you have the situation of a lesser team winning the ACC tournament, as State did two years ago. The Pack had no chance against St. Bonaventure in the regionals.

A few more flops like that and the conference will lose its automatic bye, having to play one extra game in the regionals to make the national finals. And it's all because of the tournament, and the significance behind it.

Carolina proved to most people that it had the best team in the ACC last year. It dominated the regular season and after a close loss in the tournament finals, the Tar Heels victimized the NIT, thrashing Georgia Tech in the final game.

Why shouldn't Carolina have the chance to play the best teams in the NCAA tournament? And why didn't South Carolina have the chance two years ago, when the Gamecocks accomplished the staggering feat of winning all regular season conference games?

There are remedies to the situation. The tournament survives, like a lovable dinosaur, because it makes money. Greensboro Coliseum seats over 15,000 people for basketball, and that's a lot of money for seven games in three days. Especially when the whole world, or at least four states, is watching.

For one thing, you can schedule the tournament in the third weekend of December. Then the schools can take off to New Orleans, New York and Philadelphia for their holiday classics, and don't tell me that the Coliseum wouldn't be filled even if they played the tournament on the Fourth of July.

The winner of the tournament would still have an advantage. If the team that wins is not the regular season winner, then there would be a one-game playoff (on the regular season winner's home court) to decide the NCAA representative. NIT bids might also go to as many as three different ACC schools after that.

Or, you could invite a really classy outsider, like St. John's, Marquette, Houston or UCLA to Greensboro. Match the other seven schools in there for an eight-team tournament. If the two survivors in the finals are ACC schools, then use the winner of the regular season as a gauge, much like the scheme mentioned above.

The last plan would faintly resemble the Dixie Classic, one of the finest Christmas tournaments in the land, that was sabotaged by a gambling scandal 11 years ago.

The ACC has great teams, great fans, great arenas to play in. It has all the potential of being the finest league in college basketball. But UCLA's John Wooden said this summer that the ACC didn't have the finest teams in the nation — at least, not represented as such in the national tournament.

Blame the ACC tournament. It alone keeps the conference from being great — in fact, sometimes it makes the ACC look downright bush.

Tar Heel schedule one of the toughest

Carolina's outside schedule this year may be one of the toughest in the country, aggravated by a grueling holiday itinerary.

Rice has a good shot at the Southwest Conference title, or so Don Knodel, the coach, says. Then, Saturday and Monday, the Heels go to Pittsburgh and Princeton.

The Panthers hope to go to a post-season tournament, and guard Kent Scott and forward Mickey Martin will be the main reasons if they succeed. Princeton depends on Pan-American team captain Brian Taylor (24.2), a fellow guard Ted Manakas and 6-10 Andy Rimol.

Virginia Tech arrives Dec. 11 under new coach Don DeVoe. Tech has high-scoring forward Allen Bristow, whose brother Butch swam at Carolina last year, and 6-6 captain Charlie Lipscomb.

Harvard, the Heels' opponent Dec. 27 in Charlotte, may have a good chance to upset the Heels. Carolina will be coming back the day before from a three-game international tournament in Spain, representing the United States. Harvard has potential All-Americans James Brown and Floyd Lewis, plus former Duke freshman Jim Fitzsimmons.

Then the Sugar Bowl tournament starts Dec. 29 in New Orleans, with South St. Joe's the first round opponent. St.

Joseph's was 19-9 last year and returns 6-7 forward Mike Bantora (18.1) and Pat McFarland (17.0). Bradley and Purdue are also in the tournament.

On Jan. 8, in Chapel Hill, Joe Williams brings his talented Furman team to Carmichael. Roy Simpson was the equal of Robert McAdoo at Vincennes JC, and he was taken by Williams. The Paladins also have 6-7 Russ Hurl, guards Bernie Collier and Don Jackson, and five good freshmen.

Georgia Tech, whom the Heels play Feb. 12 in Charlotte and Feb. 25 in Chapel Hill, may not be as strong as last year, when they went 23-9 and lost to Carolina in the finals of the NIT.

Rich Yunkus is gone, but 6-2 Peanut Murphy and 6-1 Frank Somoyto return. Junior college newcomer Karl Binns is marked to take Yunkus' place at center.

Notre Dame was almost as dangerous in basketball last year as they were in football, going 20-9, finishing third in the Midwest Regionals and upsetting UCLA. Austin Carr and his friends have left, however, and Digger Phelps, coach of Fordham last year, goes a tough task.

His two best returnees are hurt, leaving the burden on guard John Egari, forwards Gary Novak and Tom O'Mara and guard Bob Valibus. Notre Dame meets UNC in New York Feb. 19.