

No place to hide

Secondary: You know it when they blow it

by David Zucchino
Sports Editor



Halfback Lou Angelo

You don't need game films or a video-tape replay to know when they've blown it. Even on clear, chilly autumn afternoons they get burned. And when they do, there's no place to hide.

They're defensive backs and they live in mortal dread of slippery turf, missed tackles and long fly patterns. They're the last crucial stronghold against enemy penetration — penetration that exploits the slightest weakness and moves stealthily, patiently to the goal.

No pussyfooting is required. Only boldness, brains, tenacity and just a touch of anxiety.

"We're always worried, no matter who we happen to be playing," says Carolina defensive backfield coach Billy Hickman. "We get especially nervous when we go up against a team with a good passing quarterback. That can be a great equalizer, you know."

Well, maybe you do and maybe you don't. But you can bet that Lou Angelo and Phil Lamm do. Both Angelo and Lamm were in Kenan Stadium last fall when Tulane quarterback Mike Walker brought the weight of the world down on Carolina's defensive backfield with four first-half touchdown passes en route to a

37-29 upset.

With Tulane still in the back of their minds, Angelo and Lamm are back for more this year. There's no Tulane on the schedule this season, but there is Maryland and Florida, two teams with slick passing quarterbacks. For Angelo and Lamm, the two men with the inside track among the eight players fighting for three backfield berths, everybody is Tulane this fall.

"Any quarterback, regardless of his ability, presents a problem to us," says Hickman. "This makes experience especially important. Our defensive backs have to make quick decisions after the opposition has already lined up, so they naturally have to have good football minds, too."

Then there's the pressure. A defensive back has more to lose on any single play than any other defensive player. If a defensive lineman or a linebacker is cleaned out on a play, it generally shows up only in the game films.

When the other team scores on a pass play, though, everybody in the stadium asks, "Who the hell was supposed to cover him?" All the experience in the world won't answer that question.

Still, experience can keep the question from being asked and Hickman will go with the seasoned players. Weighing

experience, football savvy, quickness and adaptability, he'll decide on UNC's three starters for Saturday's game with Richmond sometime this week.

Angelo and Lamm should start, mainly because they've been through it all before. Both are halfbacks. Angelo gained a limited fame of sorts for his ability to knock the wind out of people during Carolina's Peach Bowl loss to Arizona State two years ago, but the fiery Italian has been burned badly with long passes on occasion.

Lamm, the surest tackler among the defensive backs, is probably Carolina's best all-around secondary man. He stays with his man well, keeps his cool and has a good football head. Lamm should man the right halfback slot, and Angelo the left.

The man who makes the calls, however, is the lone safety. He's also the last man between the opposition and the goal line, which doesn't help the pressure situation.

"Out safety has to be a smart football man, and that's all there is to it," says Hickman. "He has to make split-second evaluations and decisions, in addition to making sure that other people are in the right spots."

Which again brings up the old experience thing. Senior Greg Ward

appears to be the man for the job and will likely start Saturday. Ward started several games as a sophomore when Rusty Culbreth was knocked out of the lineup with a knee injury, so he's felt the pressure before.

Hickman has four health players, all new at the position, as back-ups. Frank Townsend, the only one of the four with previous secondary experience, is injured. Townsend started at defensive back for last year's freshman squad and was developing rapidly at the safety slot before he got hurt.

The remaining back-up men all started their football careers at Carolina on offense, and the transition hasn't been easy. The coaches were faced with a surplus of first-class running backs and wide receivers, so several were moved to defense to shore up the secondary.

Sophomores Bobby Myrick and Kip Arnall, along with junior Earl Chesson, are all switch-overs from offense. Chesson saw considerable action as a wide receiver last season, while Myrick and Arnall were pass receivers for the freshman team. Myrick also averaged 48.3 yards per kickoff return.

Arnall is on the small side at 5-11, 169, but he's fast and can stay with his man. He can also return punts — an average of 22.8 yards per return for the freshman squad last fall.

"All of these boys have the inclination and attributes for defensive backs, and that's why we decided to switch them from offense," Hickman says. "We gave them a lot of work during Saturday's scrimmage, but it's still gonna be a matter of time before they're ready."

And time stretches infinitely when there's no place to hide.



Safety Greg Ward

Dooley's record improves with age

by Winston Cavin
Sports Writer

As the 1972 campaign opens, UNC head football coach Bill Dooley will again be striving to improve on last season's record — something he has made a habit of doing.

Dooley, last year's ACC and NCAA District III coach of the year, has bettered his win-loss record every year since 1967. That's something no other major college coach has been able to pull off.

UNC sports publicity director Jack Williams discovered Dooley's admirable feat recently. "We've checked the records, and we can't find anybody else who has done what Coach Dooley has," Williams says.

Overall, Dooley is sitting squarely at .500 for his head coaching career. He has won 27 and lost 27, including bowl losses to powerful Arizona State and Georgia. Year by year, however, he has gone up with amazing consistency.

Dooley's first year, 1967, saw Carolina finish with a record of two wins and eight losses. After that, his teams have gone, in order, 3-7, 5-5, 8-3 and 9-2.

Last season's mark was a peak for Carolina football, as well as for Bill Dooley. No Carolina team had posted nine victories in a regular season since 1948, when legendary Charlie Justice starred for UNC.

During Carolina's successful 1971 season, Dooley received a measure of praise for the strong program he had constructed here. When he came to the University in December, 1966, he said he planned to recruit heavily in North Carolina and Virginia. He has done just that.

In fact, the overwhelming majority of Carolina's footballers are from the two states. On the 1972 roster, 62 of 86 players listed are either from North Carolina or Virginia. In recruiting homegrown talent, Dooley has probably saved the athletic department some

money, as the cost of a football grant is considerably less for an in-state student-athlete.

Another area Dooley said he would concentrate on was the running game. Dooley believes a sound ground attack is essential to any team's success. And Carolina's ground attack the last couple of years has been devastating. Two years ago, UNC had one of the best running backs in college football — some said the best — in All-American Don McCauley.

The strong running offense, along with a tough defense, is still an integral part of Dooley's football philosophy. "As a team, you're nothing if you can't run the football on an opponent," he has said. "Football is a game for men. You've got to be able to out-tough people."

Dooley knows what hard-nosed football, Southern style, is all about. He was reared in Mobile, Alabama, and played his collegiate football at Mississippi State. Dooley was an all-Southeastern conference guard in the

mid-1950's. Before coming to Carolina, he coached in the SEC at Georgia and Mississippi State.

Dooley is a strong believer in discipline. He's known for the tough football camp he runs. "I believe you have to have discipline in anything if you are going to be successful," he once said. "Football is one of the last places in our society where you have complete discipline and I think that's just great. The men who are a part of a football program gain more from it than can every be put into words."

Any time a coach loses 14 starters and still finds his team picked to win the conference title, he knows he must be doing something right.

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