

Homer Rice: man who makes the program go

by Don Morris
Sports Writer

Do you know exactly what you will be doing from 7 a.m. until midnight a year and a half from now? Homer Rice does.

The Carolina athletic director follows a schedule that should awe anybody but the President. By just looking at a date on one of three bulletin boards of calendars, by following a sheet of instructions that is lined off in hours, and by glancing at a daily checklist, he knows for sure what he should be doing every hour of the day, five days a week.

Rice simply doesn't give in — not to vacations, not to stress, and only sometimes to untimely interruptions, such as a growling stomach or NCAA meetings.

And two straight Carmichael Cups and

a runner-up finish in three years haven't come about from coincidence. "I don't want to take credit for the cups," he said, "because it's been our players, coaches and the personnel in the department who have been responsible for our success."

Rice, only 45, brought a fabulous coaching record with him to Carolina in 1969, and it's easy to see why several universities have tried to lure him away from Chapel Hill, including Rice University, who last year was ready to thrust into his lap the double duties of head football coach and athletic director.

His 11 high school football teams racked up a sensational combined 101-9-7 record before he became Head Offensive Coach at the University of Kentucky. After four years there, Coach Rice made a jump to the University of Oklahoma as

head offensive coach. During his one-year stay there, the Sooners set a Big-8 passing percentage record (Rice himself starred at quarterback in high school and Centre College in Kentucky.).

Then he went to the University of Cincinnati where he was Head Coach for two years. His 1968 team, paced by star quarterback Greg Cook and receiver-place kicker Jim O'Brien, the number one scorer in the nation, shattered 58 school and seven NCAA records. It was the number one passing team in the nation and ran up the second highest total offensive yardage in NCAA history (335.8 a game).

Finally, he came to Carolina, where the Tar Heels finished second in the Carmichael standings his first year; now, they are in hot contention for a third straight Cup in his fourth year.

Just a few days ago, Rice reached the "biggest peak" of his UNC career, when the Tar Heels were placed first in the nation in a composite ranking of football and basketball teams for 1972. UCLA finished second to Carolina.

Surrounded by two big office desks as well as overhanging pictures, the tireless executive said that the secret behind Carolina's success is "a matter of management." He commented on one of his managerial novelties, saying that "the organizational chart is a big change, because it helps people understand whom they should report to and through which channels to report."

The organizational chart is an 11x16 sheet of paper on which a myriad of lines and boxes represents the hierarchy of the Athletic Department.

Rice, who serves on several NCAA committees, said that his job "gets more intense every year." He said, "There are more and more things to do, and I serve on more and more committees, and I get involved in more and more national programs as well as my own program."

Rice's work day is extremely long. So what is it that keeps him at his office from seven a.m. until midnight? According to his one-and-a-half year old schedule, he indulges in the following: department policies, future football scheduling, public relations, facilities, the education foundation, and speaking engagements ("I am called to speak all over the country.")

Coach Rice is a national figure as well as a University figure. He serves on the NCAA classification committee; the National Association of Collegiate

Directors of Athletics; the Television Committee, on which he represents the southeast; and the Committee on Athletics and Education, which keeps contact with Congress to see that the policies of the NFL do not conflict with college or junior college programs.

And that's after only four years in the position.

The Council of the NCAA recently proposed that the NCAA should split up into two bodies, one made of the colleges, the other comprised by the universities. Thus, national issues would be acted upon depending upon the needs of the colleges as a whole and upon those of the universities. Homer Rice voted for that, but "the small colleges outnumbered us."

However, a special session will be called before August 1 for reconsideration of the matter, and Rice predicts that "it (the NCAA) will split in some fashion."

Rice didn't get his way on another issue. In "a real shocker," the NCAA recently voted out the 1.6 rule, ruling that athletes who do not keep up a 1.6 average can now receive financial aid. The smaller schools, he says, were the villains this time, too.

As a result of Rice's fanatical planning and organization, talented personnel, and strong support, UNC is running a neck-and-neck battle with Duke for the Carmichael Cup. But the Carmichael Cup and national championships are not the purpose of the Athletic Department, he says.

"It's hard to explain it to people. My number one concern is what the program does for the young man who participates," he said. "So we keep records and follow up on those who leave us to see what effect the experience had upon their lives and their successes."

He pointed out that over 90 per cent of UNC's grant-in-aids graduate. "This is about the highest percentage in the country," he said. "I would challenge anybody about it."

Play here tonight

Women split two games

The women's basketball team split two games last week to bring their season record to 4-3. The women lost to Meredith College of Raleigh, but came back to topple Winthrop College of South Carolina.

The women, coached by Jeanne Eller, traveled to the capital city for the bout with the powerful Angels. The Tar Heels fell to a cold 22 per cent from the floor as Meredith held on for a 46-44 win.

Marsha Mann, the sensational center, popped in 21 points in the losing effort and led all rebounders with 16. B. J.

Woodard chipped in 13 points for the losers.

Leading scorers for the Angels were Kathy McNeill with 16 and Vivian Craig with 10.

The girls of UNC returned to Carmichael Auditorium Feb. 9 to defeat Winthrop, 51-43. The Tar Heels shot a blistering 41 per cent from the floor to down the southern visitors.

Mann again led the Heels with 25 points and an amazing 20 rebounds. Both are near her average. Beth Black had eight points for the Carolina women, and Jenet

McCall grabbed eight rebounds. Linda Goyak led the visitors with 11 points.

Coach Eller called the Meredith loss "disappointing," but added that she was pleased with the win over Winthrop. "It was their finest and strongest performance of the year," Eller said.

The women will have their last home game of the season tonight in Carmichael. They will host the Angels of Meredith at 7:30 p.m. in an important contest. Carolina fans will have their last chances to see Mann before she takes off for a Moscow tour next summer.

The women will head for Peace College in Raleigh Feb. 22-23 for the DUMP tournament. The tourney features Duke, Carolina, Meredith and Peace. Then the team travels to Elon College for the state tournament Mar. 2-4.

The girls have scored four wins this season.

Pinmen grab second

The University of North Carolina bowling team finished second in a field of 18 teams in the Association of College Unions championships last weekend in Knoxville, Tenn.

Greg Verhulst was high scorer for the Heels and finished second in the entire tourney. He was third in doubles. This

feat merits him a trip to the American Bowling Congress nationals this spring in Syracuse, N.Y.

Alan Mann was the next highest scorer for the UNC team, finishing fifth in all events. He averaged 215 for the first five games.

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