

And now, introducing the Pack

Talking with D.T. makes you nervous

by Ricky Willenzik
Sports Writer

It's one thing to see an All-American play, but it's another thing to interview one. What do I do, what do I say?
As I walked into the room, I felt the excitement building up in me. David Thompson, I'm Ricky Willenzik, Daily Tar Heel, nice to meet you. We began to talk, and I found my veneration transcending into the utmost respect.

David Thompson, All-American, who has probably had more written about him than the Watergate Seven, was kind, courteous, and responsive.

"I don't think the pre-season build-up (Sports Illustrated, specifically) was so much extra pressure as it was added incentive to go out and play well every game," he said.

But it hasn't been easy for David. He's been surrounded by controversy. First, himself, then his teammates, Burleson and Rivers.

"State has been unlucky so far in that so many things have come up. We've had a lot of things to overcome, basketball, as well as the other problems off the court."

One of State's on-court problems occurred Dec. 15 against UCLA. Even though they lost, David feels it has helped them as a team.

"At the time we played UCLA, we were working more as a bunch of individuals. But after that game, everybody worked for one cause, and that was winning, at whatever price it took."

David was more than happy to talk about another All-American, Bill Walton. "Walton's a great player, but the thing I admired most about him is when he was on the bench, cheering the guys on. You could see it in his eyes, he was dying to get back in."

State has now won their last seven games, setting up another on-court problem for them tonight. David thinks the key to the game will be rebounding.

"Last game we outrebounded them, mainly because Jones was outside on me. They'll probably put Elston on me this game and move Jones back inside," he said.

David talks about Bobby Jones the same way he talks about Walton. I could sense the high regard he has for both players.

Believe it or not, he also holds the Carolina crowd in high regard. "Last year at UNC, the crowd was really good. I don't see how they could get any better."

I asked him to compare Carolina and Maryland. His observations were quite interesting.

"They're two completely different type teams. Carolina uses all five of their players as offensive weapons, whereas Maryland basically uses only two. Lucas and McMillen."


David realizes the importance of tonight's game in the conference race, and he thinks it will be a close one, possibly down to the final few shots.

"I know it will be a tough game, as will all State-Carolina games. The winner will have a big edge in the conference."

Interview concluded . . .
Is it over already? I want to talk more!

"Good night, David, thanks for your time."





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14	Greg Hawkins
22	Dwight Johnson
24	Tommy Burleson
25	Monte Towe
30	Phil Spence
32	Bruce Dayhuff
34	Craig Kuzmaul
35	Bill Lake
40	Mark Moeller
42	Tim Stoddard
44	David Thompson
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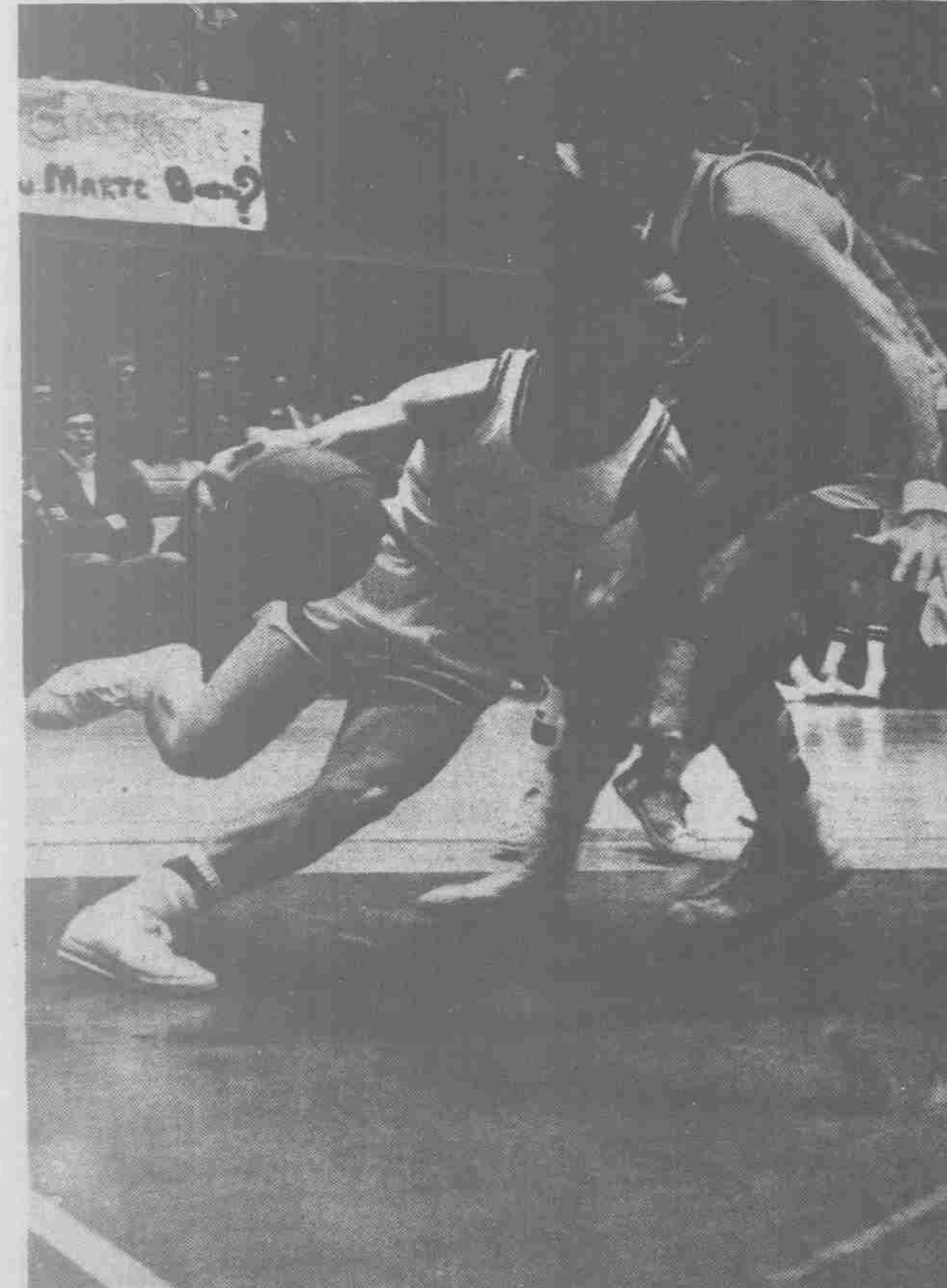
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Towe raps on love, life and basketball

by Michael Davis
Asst. Sports Editor

On one side of the dorm room sat Monte Towe, North Carolina State's racehorse backcourtman. Monte had a big cat-who-ate-the-canary smile on his face.

On the other side of the dorm room sat a fine little lady named Kirvin who was largely responsible for Towe's jocular frame of mind. Kirvin propped a pillow behind her back and smiled at the boyfriend and the sportswriter. She coughed.

"Sometimes you can get too psyched," said the always explosive Towe. "I wasn't that emotionally up for the (UCLA) game...it was humiliating. I'd like to get a chance to play them again, but it's no crusade to win every game from now on just to maybe play UCLA again."

Towe grew momentarily pensive. "It's hard to say why you lose a ballgame by 18 points. It was early in the season and we looked upon it as an early test or an exhibition. I really think we got as much out of it as they did. It brought us down to earth and we've played real well since then. I'm not so sure that losing was so bad for us."

The grin returned. "We just go out and try to play our game. Once the game starts, we don't even realize there's spectators out there," he said.

He stopped for a moment and reminisced about one uncomfortable predicament that he and his teammates found themselves in at Duke during his freshman year. "They were throwing everything down at the court at us at Duke. Koozmal got hit by a quarter and he picked it up and put it in his shoe to save for later."

The grin reappeared. He started in on Kirvin, his sidekick since his days as a freshman at State.

"She used to hate me," claimed Towe. "Yeah, but then she kept calling me up and asking me out. What could I do?"

Kirvin coughed twice and shook her head in an attempt to convince the sportswriter of the lack of any substance to the ballplayer's rap.

The ballplayer returned to the business at hand. "I think we're becoming a better defensive team . . . we're certainly a better defensive team than we were last year. In fact, I'd say we're farther along at this time than we were last year."

"Three teams (Maryland, State, and Carolina) are pretty well equal," he continued. "We beat Carolina by one point (in the Big 4 Tournament) and that's more-or-less a tie game."

Towe indicated that there would be no radical changes in strategy in tonight's rematch with the Tar Heels.

"The key to the game will be who gets the boards, but we're not doing anything in particular to prepare for it."


In terms of individual preparedness, Towe explained that for him, every game is pretty much the same. "I just try to outthrust and out-think my man," said Towe. "I try to take my game to the man I'm guarding. It's easy for me because we have guys like Thompson and Burleson."

The ballplayer, the sportswriter, and the girlfriend all took a breath and began to contemplate the future. Towe scoffed at a professional basketball offer. He talked seriously of a possible career in coaching, beginning with a recruiting job for a university.

There was a silence as the conversation had begun to take on a more serious tone. With a flash of a smile, the entire mood of the room changed.

"There are so many good times ahead," said Towe as he glanced across the room again at Kirvin.

She coughed once in concurrence.



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