

Lose to Duke and N.C. State at Big Four Tournament

Carolina basketball squad has a tough holiday

by Susan Shackelford
Asst. Sports Editor

GREENSBORO — The Wake Forest Demon Deacons stunned the nation this past weekend when it defeated the No. 1 ranked Wolfpack 83-78 on opening night of the fifth annual Big Four Tournament.

But Carolina fans, many of whom gloried in their arch rival's surprising loss, experienced personal woes as the Tar Heels fell to Duke 99-96 in overtime Friday and 82-67 to N.C. State Saturday.

Wake Forest went on to register a mild 75-71 upset over Duke Saturday for its first Big Four championship. Carolina, which finished first in 1971, slid into its first last place finish in the holiday playoff.

After UNC's setback to State, which almost became a runaway except for Phil Ford's accurate shooting in the final stretch, head coach Dean Smith, though pleased with the UNC effort, said some changes will be made.

"Our offense is in good shape," said Smith, who had nine players in double figures for the two nights, "but we must do something defensively. We may have to make some changes in defense that sacrifices some offense."

Need Quickness

"I think we need a little more quickness to do what we want to do defensively," Smith added Monday after viewing the game films.

Smith suggested he may insert a special defensive team, similar to the "Blue Team" concept used previous years to rattle opponents for a two or three minute period. The nucleus of the five-man force would be Billy Chambers, Dave Hanners and Mickey Bell, he said.

Concerning the Duke game, Smith said, "They (Duke) played an amazing game. We couldn't seem to stop them. But at the same time, I'm very proud of our team and their great comeback. We have a good basketball team."

After leading 41-40 at half, Carolina fell behind 64-56. From the 13:01 mark to 9:31, Duke got four points each from Bob Fleischer on the outside and Tate Armstrong, inside to fuel a 10-point spree of unanswered points.

Then the Tar Heels hit 10 points to Duke's four and tied the game at 66. Duke kept a

two-point edge until guard Kevin Billerman sank a pair of free throws to boost it to four with 1:41 showing on the clock.

Tied at 80

UNC sophomore guard John Kuester then hit an 8-footer following two Walter Davis free throws to tie the game at 80. Blue Devil forward Pete Kramer responded with a back door play for 82-80 Duke with 56 seconds remaining.

Duke substitute George Moses then missed a free throw at the 0:27 mark and Carolina called time out. Freshman Phil Ford, who finished as UNC's leading scorer with 22, tied the score on a 12-foot jumper, sending the game into a 5:00 overtime.

The score was knotted three times — at 88-88, 90-90 and 92-92 — during the extra period, but Armstrong's three-point play with 0:28 remaining put Duke up 95-92. A 24-foot bomb by Kuester pulled UNC within one at 0:21, but the Heels, who were then forced to foul with hopes of getting the ball, succumbed to the foul-shooting of senior guard Billerman, who swished four in the last 10 seconds.

For the winning Devils, who pushed their season record to 6-1 going into the championship game against Wake, Fleischer

led all scorers with 26. For him, Billerman and Kramer, it was their first varsity win over Carolina.

For Carolina, Davis had 13 while Mitch Kupchak, who fouled out during regulation time (1:27) collected 21 and 11 rebounds. Ford's 22 points topped the Heels and 14 each were added by seniors Brad Hoffman and Ed Stahl.

Against State

The next evening in the consolation game against N.C. State, the Tar Heels suffered an extremely poor shooting night with 40.3 per cent from the field. Ford again got high scoring honors with 20, but perhaps most disappointed was Kupchak, who though pulling down 13 rebounds only got four points and fouled out with over two minutes left in the game.

"They got the tempo and got the lead," the 6-9 forward, leaving the Greensboro Coliseum before the Duke-Wake championship game, said. "It's been a bad habit of ours in the last several games. We get behind and can't seem to catch up."

Carolina only trailed 38-34 at the half; Kupchak had eight rebounds, eight points and only one foul. But then All-America Wolfpack forward David Thompson, who

most of the season has led the nation in scoring, found himself after hitting on 4 of nine in the first half and 15 points the previous night against Wake.

In the second half the Shelby, N.C. senior canned seven of 10, including eight quick shots at the start of the final 20 minutes of play.

"Personally I shot really poor," said Kupchak, who hit on only three of seven attempts in the last half. "I don't think I was intimidated, I went up to shoot. I did hesitate a little though. It may have looked like intimidation."

Battling Kupchak underneath was State frosh Kenny Carr (15 points, seven rebounds) and Phil Spence (17 points, 10 rebounds, who was selected to the all-tourney team with Wake's Skip Brown and Cal Stamp, Duke's Fleischer and teammate Thompson.

Cold Spell

At the 9:57 mark, Carolina suffered from a cold spell, having gone over two minutes without a score and falling 10 points behind 59-49. But a barrage of fouls and turnovers stifled a comeback, as they went another four minutes without stripping the net.

When Davis fouled out (2:53), State's Carr

tossed in the free throws to give the reigning national champs a 15-point command.

"When State went to its spread offense with four minutes to go," Coach Smith said after the game. "From there, it was just chasing."

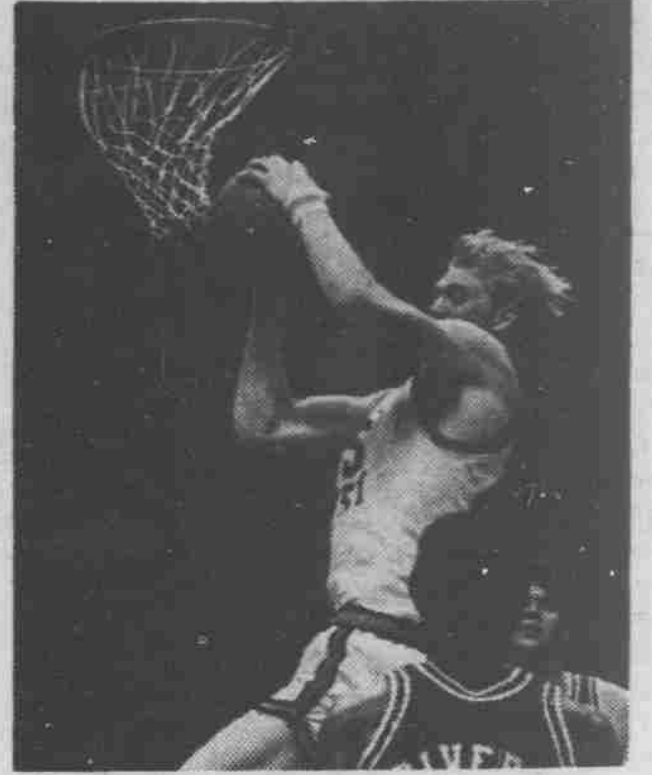
With both Davis and Kupchak out on fouls, Ford assumed the scoring burden, hitting outside jumpers of 14, 15 and 18 feet to limit the hungry Pack's victory margin to 15, 82-67.

"I don't think we deserve to be fourth in the tournament," said Kupchak. "We're just fourth because we lost two games. Yes, it may be the worst start for a season, but other (UNC) teams have had more losses at the end of the season than we have now."

"Only if we had that number of (end-of-season) losses would this be a bad season," the Brentwood, N.Y. junior concluded.

"As far as changing the defense," he added, "Coach Smith has already simplified it. He's made it easier for me. I can't see much more that he can do."

"Execution is the problem. If we can execute and practice a little more," he noted, "we'll be a good basketball team. We really have an explosive team. The ACC is a new season."



Cal Stamp, Wake Forest's center, was a dominant factor in the Deacon's Big Four wins over State and Duke. (Staff photo by Gary Lobraico)

Heels squeak by Utah in Greensboro

by Jim Thomas
Sports Writer

GREENSBORO COLISEUM — With most of the state following the fortunes of the UNC football team in El Paso and the Tar Heel cagers just returned from a three-day tournament trip in Spain, Utah's "Running Utes" were primed for an upset of eighth-ranked North Carolina here over the Christmas holidays.

Led by All-America candidate Ticky Burden's 44 points, the "Running Utes" lived up to their nickname as their fast-paced offense (averaging 96.8 points a game) made the Tar Heels sweat before escaping with an exciting 94-91 victory.

Burden, the nation's seventh leading scorer, entered the game with a 28.1 average, hitting 56.7 per cent from the field. He was held to six of 13 attempts in the first half by Carolina's Phil Ford but hit 14 of 16 in the final 20 minutes.

After the game UNC coach Dean Smith said, "We tried to hold him under 50 per cent of his shots because we knew what a good shooter he was. Freshman Phil Ford did a good job on him in the first half, and we tried everything against him in the second half, but we could not stop his outside shooting."

Fortunately for the Tar Heels, Utah was unable to match up with Mitch Kupchak

inside. The 6-9, 230-pound center muscled his way for 30 points, connecting on 12 of 17 shots from his post position and grabbing 11 rebounds.

"Mitch has been playing like that all year when he has been available," said Smith. Kupchak, who played only sparingly in Spain, has been bothered by an injured back most of the season.

Brad Hoffman dished out nine assists in the backcourt and bombed in 10 points. Ford had 16 points and three assists. Walter Davis, the Tar Heels' leading scorer with an 18.2 average, had 18.

Utah coach Jerry Pimm had hoped the jet-time lag would aid his team's chances, but the Tar Heels showed no signs of fatigue from playing their fourth game in five days.

However, adjusting from the more physical style of play abroad, Carolina's big men got in first half foul trouble. Ed Stahl picked up four fouls in only six minutes of playing time and Tommy LaGarde and Mickey Bell had three each at halftime.

Utah hit 14 of 16 free throws to stay within reach of the Tar Heels, despite going 6:23 minutes without a field goal in the middle of the first half. Carolina led 46-41 at halftime while shooting only 42.5 per cent. Utah connected on 46.2 per cent.

The Tar Heels hit their first seven shots of the second half but Utah kept pace as they hit their first five. After 10 minutes UNC had made 12 of 14 shots and the Utes 11 of 16. Carolina hit 72 per cent in the second half

and Utah 61.5. UNC finished at 55.8 and Utah, 55.2.

After reaching their biggest lead of the game at 79-67, the Tar Heels blew three straight three-on-one fast breaks, as the Utes cut the margin to 81-75 with 6:04 remaining in the game. Smith ordered the four-corner attack with Ford controlling the ball in the middle. Ford, who in a few uncertain moments lost the ball to the Utes' quick hands, penetrated down the middle many times, passing off for easy baskets.

"I thought Ford did an excellent job executing the four corners," said Smith, "and he is going to get better and better at it."

Our points per possession was just fantastic, but the problem was they scored every time, too." With Burden getting 16 of Utah's last 24 points, the Utes cut the deficit to three points on two occasions before the final buzzer.

Utah's record dropped to 7-2 with its only other defeat to sixth-ranked Southern California, 102-82, on the Trojans' home court. The Utes beat 20th-ranked Rutgers earlier in the season, 92-89.

Carolina's record following the game was 5-1. The games abroad do not count in the regular season record.

Against Cuba Walter Davis made a spectacular last-second shot to send the Tar Heels into the finale against host Real Madrid, the European champions. Real Madrid ran away with a 112-101 victory, which was not as close as the score indicated.

Concerning Real Madrid, Smith said, "I believe they could beat most any college team and a lot of pro teams if they played over there and under international rules with their Spanish officials. They are an excellent basketball team. I think the trip helped us a lot. We had the crowd against us, and I feel we still played awfully well over there."

Cagers have a rough time with Yale in New Haven

by Bill Kay
Sports Writer

NEW HAVEN, Conn. — Carolina versus Yale?

Sure enough — the Carolina varsity basketball team was meeting the Eli for only the fourth time in UNC's long heralded history.

So what happens?

The Tar Heels almost lose face except for some dazzling moments by brilliant Walter Davis, the all-around court savvy and hustle of freshman Phil Ford and the noticeable return of Ed Stahl, as they come away with a 70-53 victory.

In Yale's Payne Whitney Gymnasium with a seating capacity of only 1600, the sparse gathering was treated to what was supposed to be a college level game.

But the fact of the matter is — the game resembled more of a high school contest as the teams committed 31 turnovers each.

Yale opened with a spread offense designed to slow down the UNC attack. For awhile, it kept the Tar Heels off balance, leading to easy Yale buckets.

Fine plan

"Yale presented a fine game plan," said Coach Dean Smith after the sloppy victory. "We had to chase the ball on defense and gamble in order to maintain any sort of tempo." Yale had an 0-4 record going into the game and was obviously undermanned.

It is small wonder the Eli tried a slow-down type of ball.

With both teams floundering on the court, UNC held an 11-8 lead with 10 minutes gone.

However, after two Davis free throws, a bomb by John Kuester, two free throws by Tommy LaGarde and one by Mitch Kupchak, UNC opened to a 10-point lead and were never headed.

Davis brought the crowd to its feet when he scored four points in a 10-second span for the game's most exciting moment. He began with a dazzling turnaround lay-up and capped the display with a jump shot from the left on a fast break after bringing down the rebound from the rafters.

Despite an overall ragged performance, UNC used its height advantage, out-rebounding Yale 46-37 and pulling away in the second half.

Ed Stahl contributed poise to the Tar Heel attack, chipping in a game high 11 rebounds and 14 points. Walter Davis led all scorers with 20 and added 10 rebounds. And Phil Ford never stopped his aggressive style of play, despite a poor shooting hand (4-12).

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