

Camey's losses hurt confidence

by Kevin Barris
Staff Writer

Beside her desk is a poster which reads, "Tennis is not a life and death matter—it's more important than that."

Taped to the bottom of her bookshelf, where many people have history notes or chemical equations, is a paper containing in big block letters "CJ". Notes on how to play tennis against Cindy Johnson (CJ) are written across the letters.

Coming to Carolina last year as the first woman to ever receive an athletic scholarship at UNC, Camey Timberlake has been the personification of a dedicated athlete.

"You just take things for granted sometimes," she says, "and you never really think about how important things are, but I guess just the fact that I've spent so much time playing it (tennis) and enjoying it, that it must be pretty high on the list for me."

She says she enjoys the physical part of the game, the exertion and the strain, but it's the mental aspect she finds the most interesting, and the hardest to cope with.

"I guess the major part of it is attitude," Timberlake said. "I'm sure I have the desire, and I want to play and I want to win, but I guess it has a lot to do with confidence in that there's a barrier there that effects the way I play sometimes."

"There are just a lot of things involved in preparing yourself mentally for a match, like knowing you can beat somebody, and being ready to play each individual point one at a time, and that's the hardest part."

Timberlake's confidence has suffered recently. After a highly successful season last fall, she injured her shoulder and couldn't play for three months, and last spring she was unable to regain her earlier form.



Staff photo by Charles Hardy

UNC scholarship-holder Camey Timberlake

During the summer, she suffered on and off from minor ailments and could not play as much as she wanted, something which she says has affected her play this season.

Her record during the recently concluded fall season was an uncharacteristic 1-6.

Although her competition was tough, in all but one of those six losses she was defeated by people she has beaten before.

"When you don't play a lot of matches," she says, "like I didn't all summer, then you lose a certain sharpness for playing different people, as well as losing a sense of exactly what to do in certain situations."

Besides being unable to prepare as well as she would like, Timberlake has been playing under the pressure of being the only scholarship athlete on the team. Along with this has been the expectation of many people that she must be the best.

"I don't think it should necessarily mean I'm supposed to be no. 1 on the tennis team just because I'm the only one who has a scholarship," she says, "because there are definitely some other good players on the team, any of whom could play no. 1."

"I don't know what people expect, really. Just the fact I know people are expecting me to win, or really do great, or something, does make a difference. I don't get discouraged, but sometimes I get frustrated at the fact people do expect me to win all the time. I don't think they should be unrealistic about it."

"I don't really know how it (her having a scholarship) affects the team. Sometimes I wish I did know. I hope it doesn't really make any difference so far as their attitude towards me, because the way I look at it I was just lucky. I happened to be in the right place at the right time."

Timberlake now faces a winter in which she must prepare for a spring season which promises to be as tough as this past season. More tournaments, new opponents as well as the challenge by some of her teammates for no. 1 singles spot await her in the upcoming year.

Despite the setbacks of the past year, she says she is eager to work on her game, and is optimistic she can do what is necessary to improve it.

"I think just by the fact that I've gone through something like this past year, not really being able to cope with the situation," she says, "that I've learned a lot of what I can't do, and what I have to expect of myself."

"Now, I'll know next time what I'll have to avoid and what I'll have to put up with."

Fencers host foil open; show promise at Cornell

The UNC fencing team hosts a foil open in men and women's competition of the North Carolina division of the Amateur Fencers League of America Sunday at 9 a.m. in Woollen Gym.

The field will include 20 women and 30 men representing most colleges in North Carolina and South Carolina.

UNC won nine of 12 medals in the last local open.

For the sixth year the UNC team took part in the Cornell International Invitational meet, the largest pre-season open in the country, last weekend.

For the first time since the UNC team has been participating in the Cornell meet, it did not win any medals. UNC Head Coach Ron Miller said that this was due to the improved competition, which included the entire Canadian pre-Olympic team and most of the U.S. pre-Olympic team.

UNC's All-American Jim Krauss pulled a ligament in the Cornell meet and will be out for two to three weeks.

Miller said that many of the questions about the men's team were answered at the Cornell meet. He said that the foil and saber teams had an outstanding weekend, but that the epee team's performance remained sporadic. "The men have the promise for another excellent season," Miller said. He added that the women's team has yet to live up to its potential, but that the match Sunday should show a turnabout in its favor.

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