

# The 49ers

## A Catch-22 existence for that 'other UNC'

by Kevin Barris  
Staff Writer

The scene is one so familiar to basketball fans in this area. Over 15,000 people are crammed into the Greensboro Coliseum on a cold January night to watch some hot Atlantic Coast Conference action.

The old gold-and-black-trimmed uniforms of Wake Forest add to the familiarity, as the Deacons are accustomed to playing on this court. But wait, who is that other team? UNCC...what? How did they get here?

In 1965, the Board of Governors for the University of North Carolina decided to establish a campus in Charlotte called, appropriately enough, UNC-Charlotte. Five years later, the 49ers (as they had nicknamed themselves) took to the basketball court for the first time as a major college team. Thus began an effort which is still continuing: the establishment of UNCC as one of the elite in college basketball.

In their last three seasons, the 49ers gave an overall record of 69-13, including a second-place finish in the National Invitational Tournament (NIT) last year. This season, UNCC is on its way to another 20-win campaign and a probable invitation for post-season play.

With a successful basketball program such as this, one would think the 49ers would have few problems. This is not so, however, as UNCC has found that success is not always welcome in the world of big-time college basketball.

You see, no one wants to play the 49ers. Most of the major college teams in the country refuse to schedule UNCC for reasons second-year Coach Lee Rose and his staff have found to be frustrating at best.

"I guess it's the fact that we are so new," Rose said. "Other schools, the established basketball programs, don't want to risk playing us."

"The reason I wouldn't play them is because I have nothing to gain and everything to lose," said Marquette Coach Al McGuire. "It's their game of the year, but my ballplayers wouldn't be psyched."

This philosophy that a good team would be the only team UNCC would have to prepare for has haunted the 49ers in their scheduling efforts. It isn't that UNCC does not want to schedule a lot of good teams, it's just that only a few good teams will play the 49ers.

"When I first came there," said former UNCC Coach Bill Foster, who is now at Clemson, "we were able to build the schedule each year. Mostly this was because friends would schedule you, or the good teams were looking for someone to play at home, so we went there and played them."

"In my first couple of years, we played at places like Iowa, Illinois and other good out-of-state teams," Foster said. "Usually, we got our brains beat out, but occasionally we would slip up on a team."

As the 49ers improved, teams became more and more reluctant to play them.

"Too many college teams are looking to win 20 games a year, and if it means they have to schedule 10 turkeys to do it, they will," said John Kilgo, who does the play-by-play on the UNCC basketball radio broadcasts. "Teams would play the 49ers as long as they beat them by 30 points, but now that they are good, no one wants to play them."

"If I want to play a team where I'm going to have to worry and sweat and get uptight," McGuire said, "then I'll schedule someone like Kentucky or North Carolina, good teams that my fans have heard of. If I'm looking to play a team to beat, then I'm going to make sure they two-hand dribble and wear sneakers."

"The ability of this team (UNCC) is to beat any team in the nation," McGuire said. "But if you lost to them, no one would understand."

UNCC finds itself with a Catch-22 proposition. Teams will not schedule the 49ers because, they say, UNCC is too good but is not ranked so no one has heard of them. Although UNCC has a good team with a record to show for it, the team is unranked because those who vote in the polls say the 49ers play an easy schedule. Thus, the vicious cycle.

"People come up to me and say, 'You don't deserve to be ranked, look who you play,' and I say, 'Okay, here's \$1,000; schedule me a good team,'" Rose said. "They always tell me, 'That's your problem.'"

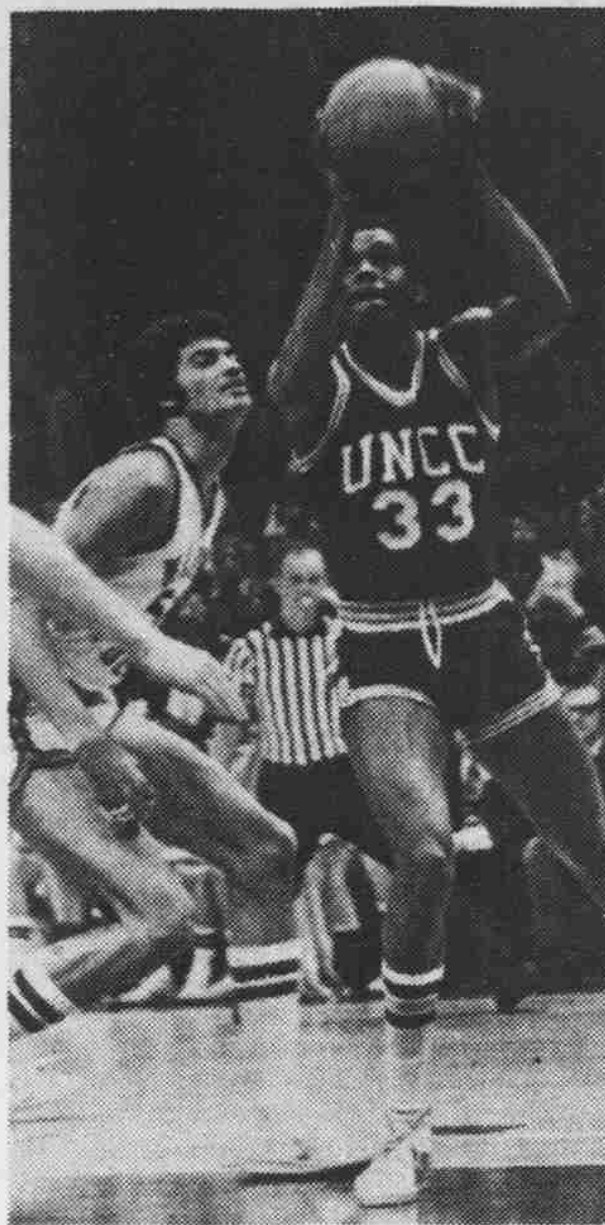
"Whenever we do schedule an established team," Rose said, "it's always a one-shot deal at their place. We rarely get a home-and-home deal set up."

"We can't afford to do that kind of thing anymore," Rose said. "We need to schedule home games, too, so we can make the money necessary to support our program."

The problems of trying to become an established team have reached into recruiting, also. In some cases, such as NIT Most Valuable Player Cedric Maxwell and leading scorer Lew Massey, the 49ers have taken players other teams didn't want.

"When we're trying to recruit a player," Rose said, "we don't have all the things to sell our program like the established teams do. We have a hard time convincing a player to come to UNCC and perhaps sit the bench for a year and learn our system, like they will do at the established schools. Everyone wants to play right away if they come here."

As UNCC has looked to become



Cedric Maxwell

established, it has turned to the ACC for scheduling help, but in most cases the 49ers have been turned away. The one exception was N.C. State, who played the 49ers four straight years (in Raleigh) until last year when UNCC lost by only three, and then beat the Wolfpack in the NIT. Currently, there are no games between the two teams planned.

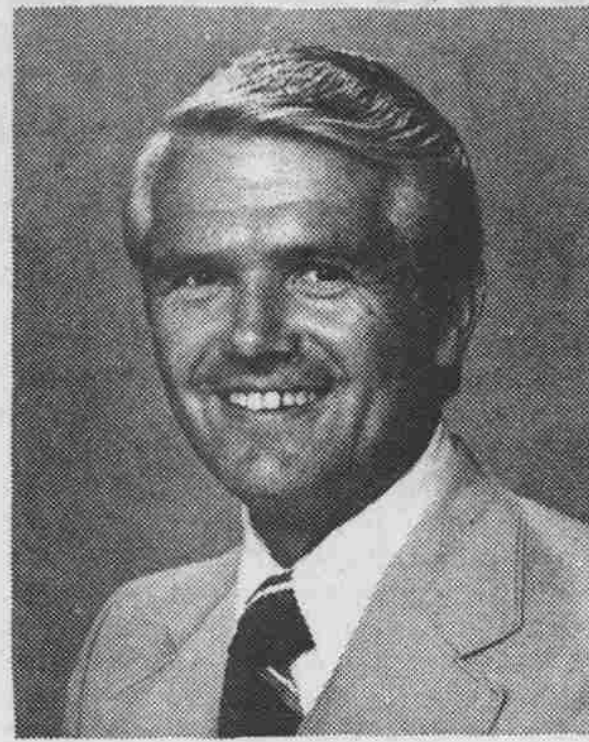
UNCC Head Coach Dean Smith has his own reasons for not playing the 49ers. "I made it a policy when I came here not to play in-state schools other than those in the ACC," Smith said. "When Davidson was good, they always wanted to play us, but we didn't schedule them, either."

"You find that teams only want to play you when they think they can beat you," Smith added. "If we played UNCC, East Carolina might be good in a few years, and they would want to play us. It's not the kind of situation I think is best for this University."

"UNCC is a good team," Smith said. "If I could vote for the top 20 teams (coaches who vote in the UPI poll vote only for the top 10) I would put them in the top 20."

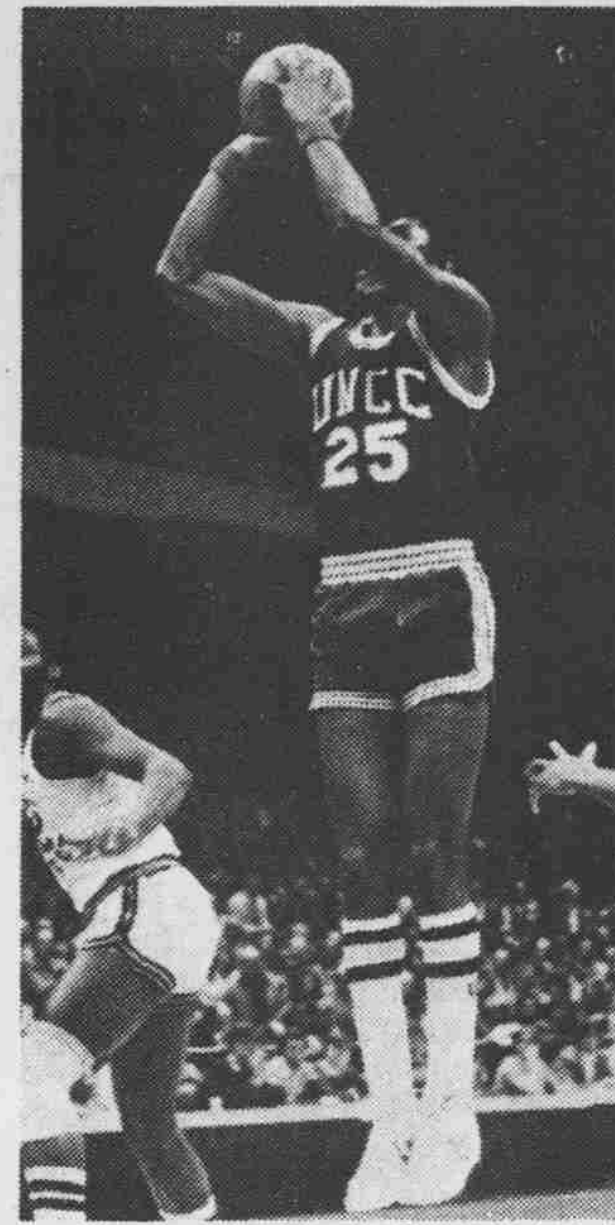
"There is no way it (UNCC) is going to break through into the established teams," McGuire said. "What they're trying to do is a no-no; it's a society thing. The only way you could do it is to play UCLA at UCLA every year with Pac 8 officials, and if you were ever fortunate enough to win, no one would play you."

"I hope for their sake they can do it," McGuire added, "but I'm afraid it's just a pie in the sky."



"If the ACC won't play us, then we'll schedule teams outside this area. We can't afford to just sit still, we have to keep moving."

—Lee Rose



Kevin King

When the 49ers do get an established team on their schedule, they realize they must make the best of it. Thus, that cold January night at the Greensboro Coliseum was an important game for UNCC.

Behind the play of center Maxwell, who had no problem scoring over Deacon center Larry Harrison, the 49ers moved to an early 26-16 lead. But as they have done so often this season, the Deacons rallied to take a 40-31 half-time lead.

With Wake ahead 70-62 late in the game, the 49ers charged back to find themselves with the ball trailing 73-72 with 18 seconds left. Unfortunately, an official ended the game early with a questionable charging call on UNCC guard Melvin Watkins, turning the ball over to Wake Forest with three seconds remaining.

In the post-game interview, Wake Coach Carl Tacy called UNCC a "fine team," but refused to give the 49ers full credit. "They prepared for this game a lot differently from us," Tacy said. "We have to take this game in perspective with our tough conference schedule in January."

Q: Are you planning to schedule UNCC again in the future?

A: No, I'm certainly not planning to.

Q: Why not?

A: I thought I explained that. At this time of year, we can't afford to play tough non-conference teams.

Q: How about earlier in the season?

A: Yes, we like to get all our non-conference games over with in December.

Q: Would you play UNCC in December?

A: I don't care to discuss it.

"We knew going into the game that if it was a close one, they'd probably not play us again," Massey said. "I think we have one of the best teams in the country, but talk is cheap."

Rose commented after the game that it was probably the last one UNCC would play against an ACC team, but Foster offers some hope at Clemson. "After the players I recruited at UNCC graduate, we'd be interested in playing them. I think there would be a lot of interest in a Clemson-UNCC game, both in Charlotte and here in Clemson."

"We might trade them two games at Clemson for one in Charlotte," Foster said. "I guarantee you that's more than any ACC team will do. I bet Wake won't play them again."

But Rose and UNCC can't wait on promises for the future and must plan for today. "If the ACC won't play us," Rose said, "then we'll schedule teams outside this area. We can't afford to just sit still, we have to keep moving."

The 49ers enhanced their chances for an NCAA bid this season when they blew open a close game in the second half against Florida State, breaking the Seminoles 29-game home court winning streak. "If we could get into the NCAA playoffs, we'd have it made," Rose said.

"To say they'd have it made is not quite right," UNC's Smith said. "You find that once you are an established team, everybody is gunning for you."

Tar Heel fans certainly know that feeling. The 49ers would love to know what it's like.

# Gridders aid track efforts

by David Squires  
Staff Writer

Still savoring a victory over Duke and N.C. Central last week, the UNC indoor track team will host William and Mary at 2:30 p.m. Saturday in the Tin Can.

UNC track coach Joe Hilton said that although his team has a few injuries, it will be helped greatly by the football players who have joined the team. Also, the rest of the team continues to improve as it prepares for the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) meet.

"The addition of the football players has certainly added depth to our team," Hilton said. Sprinters Delbert Powell, Alan Caldwell and Ken Farris are expected to relieve Chip Wilson of his sprinting duties, so Wilson can concentrate mainly on the hurdles and the mile relay. Wilson was injured last week and is a doubtful competitor for the meet this weekend. Earlier, sprinter Steve Coleman was injured, and it looked like Wilson was the Heels' only hope in the sprints.

"Last week Farris and Caldwell finished one-two in the 60. Powell had the fastest time but was disqualified," Hilton said.

"We are pretty strong in the sprints, but we'll have a problem trying to replace Chip in the hurdles. Bob Walsh and Gerald Miller are steadily improving in this event, and I guess we'll have to count on them," Hilton said.

William and Mary will be the Heels' toughest opponent since State, who defeated Carolina earlier this season. Hilton said his team has improved greatly since then.

"Besides Wilson and Coleman, our pole vaulter John Sinnott is out with a broken foot, but our other people are coming along real well," Hilton said. "Last week Miller reached his personal best in the triple jump, and Gary Hofstetter broke Ralph King's freshman record in the two mile." Miller leaped 46 feet 1 1/2 inches, and Hofstetter won with a time of 8:55.9 compared to King's old mark of 9:04.

"If we can stay away from the injuries, we'll have a pretty solid team," Hilton said.

Compared to the other ACC schools, Hilton feels the Heels are on the same level as Virginia and State. "Maryland is still out front," he said. "Wake didn't look that impressive in Richmond, and we don't know that much about Clemson," he said. "We, Virginia and State will have a tough battle for second," he said. The other ACC school, Duke, has been beaten by the Tar Heels rather handily on two separate occasions.

The women's track team will not compete this weekend. Last week the girls duled Duke. "I was real pleased with the girls who did run and jump," Coach Gail Sailer said of the team. "We've been having some problem with illnesses, but the girls who did run gave 180 per cent, and I was real pleased with their performances."

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Week of Feb. 5-11 Record thru Feb. 1: 79-17

	Point spread		Point spread
Feb. 5	Maryland over Duke 2	Feb. 8	Wake over Clemson 1
	Wake over UVA. 4		
	NCSU over Ga. Tech. 10	Feb. 9	Duke over UVA. 2
	UNC over Furman 12		NCSU over Davidson 21
Feb. 7	UVA. over Hofstra 9		UNC over Maryland 4

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# Injured wrestlers pin Blue Devils

by Pete Mitchell  
Staff Writer

UNC junior Barry Billett had Wayne Taft's arm nearly wrenched out of its socket in an attempt to get Duke wrestler turned on his back. Blue Devil Coach Bill Harvey screamed for the official to stop the "potentially dangerous hold."

He hurled a roll of tape at referee John Walker and screamed, "Why don't you let him pull it all the way off next time!"

That was only the start of Duke's frustrations. Walker took one team point away for Harvey's outburst, and the Tar Heels won the next four bouts to defeat Duke, 23-17, Tuesday in Cameron Indoor

Stadium with a lineup composed mainly of junior varsity wrestlers and second stringers. "We weren't up for the match, and they made it look close," Carolina coach Bill Lam said. "That's what happens when you put jayvees in, though. If we wrestled our normal lineup, we would have won every match but one."

As it was, the Tar Heels won seven of the 10 matches, but the three they lost, they lost via the pin. Je Galli, Dee Hardison and Billett were all put on their backs to give the Blue Devils 18 points—minus one for Harvey's misconduct.

Lam gave Walker a verbal thrashing of his own following the heavyweight match and was given a one point penalty to reduce the

UNC total to 23. Scott Conkwright, Chris Conkwright, Jeff Reintgen and Charlie Quaille were in street clothes for the away match, the Tar Heels' fourth in a row. Add to that the absence of injured starters Dave Casale and Dave Juergens, and the UNC lineup was a rather unfamiliar one.

Sophomore Rocky Wing started the visitors off with a 4-2 victory over John DiMaio after the 118-pounders had gone scoreless in the first two periods.

That 3-0 lead was quickly erased when Doug Sumner pinned Galli with 1:55 left in the second period. Carolina's Mike Starkey regained it for good, however, pinning his 134-pound opponent, Steve Weiner.

Junior Tim Reaume beat Chris Curry 4-1 in the 142-pound match.

After Taft came from an 11-3 deficit to pin Billett, Carter Mario, Mike Benzel, Dean Brior and Norm Walker scored consecutive victories to clinch Carolina's eighth dual match win of the year against four losses.

Heavyweight Frank DeStefano pinned Hardison to give the Blue Devils their final six points.

Carolina returns home for the first time since the N.C. State match when Maryland, a 34-8 victor over Duke, visits Carmichael Auditorium Saturday.

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