

# Wood's effort helps Heels splinter Pack

By LEE PACE  
Assistant Sports Editor

GREENSBORO — As a veteran participant in and observer of the basketball wars waged on the playgrounds of New York and other eastern metropolitan areas, Eddie Fogler understandably was a bit skeptical when he heard there was a youngster in Gray, Ga., whose talents could equal those of the big city kids.

"What is an Al Wood and where is a Gray, Ga.?" he must have wondered one day in the spring of 1976 as he ventured into a state where basketball is merely an interlude between the fall Southeastern Conference football season and the spring off-season practice.

But it didn't take long for Fogler to realize that that was no crank call from the high school coach saying he had a good basketball player who was interested in North Carolina.

"He was only a junior, so I couldn't talk to him, but I could watch him," said the Tar Heel assistant coach. "So I spent an hour or so watching him work out one day, and I could hardly believe my eyes that anyone in Gray, Ga., could play that well. What impressed me so much was that he was the hardest worker on the court, and he could really shot well."

But all that talent was worthless unless Al Wood could fit into Dean Smith's mold of having team-oriented players who could play both ends of the court and behave themselves off the court. So he asked several people around Jones County High School about Al Wood, the person. Once again he was amazed.

"I talked to the janitors, the history teacher, the principal. I couldn't believe what they were telling me about him. All of them told me he's a super kid. The principal told me that Al Wood was welcome to come stay in his house anytime he wanted — he's that kind of kid," Fogler said.

So all that was left was to sign him. But Wood wasn't completely sold on Carolina. Auburn was high on his list, and the War Eagles even were saying publicly last spring that Wood was signed, sealed and delivered.

But eventually Wood opted for the rolling Piedmont of North Carolina instead of the plains of Alabama. And the Tar Heels are happy he did, after the slender freshman's performance in the Big Four Tournament this weekend.

Wood scored six points and grabbed five rebounds in the Tar Heels' opening win over Duke and hit five of six field goals, two pressure free throws late in the game and added five more rebounds in the finals victory Saturday over N.C. State.

He was perfect all weekend on medium-range jumpers and shot with a form smooth enough to impress Walter Davis. He demonstrated he could take the ball to the basket as well as many veterans when he stepped around State's Tiny Pinder, drove to the baseline and banked the ball from under the basket amid a horde of baffled Wolfpack defenders.

"I'm pretty pleased with my play tonight," Wood said as he relaxed with a sandwich and a Coke in the jubilant Carolina dressing room after the Heels captured their first Big Four title since 1971 with an 87-82 win.

"There's always room for improvement, but as long as we win I'm satisfied. State played a heckuva game, but we played well too. I had a couple of silly fouls, like reaching in. I need to improve that."

Two of his four fouls were under the offensive boards, which Fogler said is the best foul in basketball. "If you go to the offensive boards hard all the time you're going to commit some fouls. Those



Tar Heel freshman Al Wood is about ready to pull up for a jumper from the lane in the second half of UNC's 87-82 win over N.C. State Saturday in the Big Four Tournament finals in Greensboro. Defending against Wood, who scored 12 points, is State's Hawkeye Whitney. Staff photo by Allen Jernigan.

kinds don't bother us. That's the best foul to commit. So his fouls were good ones."

Wood said the biggest problem he's had this season is learning the myriad of defensive schemes the Tar Heels use. "In high school you don't have that many plays and defenses like we do here. I didn't expect all of this. But I think I'm improving. I'm learning. I pick up stuff pretty well."

Fogler has noticed his improvement. "His progress has been tremendous. At Carolina it's not so much ability as it is learning, especially defensively. Here someone with a little less talent might play ahead of someone with more talent only because he learns quicker and knows what's going on. Al is an exceptionally good learner."

Other Tar Heels have noted the contributions the 6-foot-6, 187-pound Wood has made. "I'm as proud as I can be of Al Wood," said senior Tom Zlatagiris. "When I was a freshman I couldn't even walk up the court."

# Devils tough in early season action

## Monday Morning

By GENE UPCHURCH

GREENSBORO — Duke coach Bill Foster jumped in the air, landed and started stamping his feet. Then he slowly walked the length of his team's bench and got a drink of water from a plastic cooler, eyeing a referee who had whistled another charging foul on freshman Gene Banks.

For Foster, these little heartaches are minor. Because, before long, his team will contend to be the best team in the Atlantic Coast Conference.

The Blue Devils have now what could develop into the best front line in the conference in Banks, sophomore Mike Gminski and freshman Kenny Dennard. Banks was less than spectacular in his first college appearance against tough competition. But it's easy to see how he received all the plaudits he did while in high school last year. The 6-foot-7, 205-pounder from Philadelphia has the moves and the physical build equal to that of many seniors in the league.

Banks learned several things during the weekend he's likely not to forget soon. For one, they call fouls a little differently in the ACC than they do in Philadelphia. He was called for several that probably would have not been called back home. He learned also that players are not going to jump out of his way when he comes rumbering down the baseline with the ball. Players in both games were able to set up, forcing him to charge them. He fouled out of the Carolina-Duke game with over seven minutes to play.

"I'm still making some dumb mistakes," Banks said after the tournament. "There's still a lot of pressure on me, but the main thing is for me to concentrate on playing team ball."

The 18-year-old Gminski proved last season that he's a force to deal with. And Dennard proved this weekend that he will become a force soon. He plays rough but was effective near the end of the Duke-Wake consolation game in the Big Four Tournament and had 19 points in both games.

Bob Bender, a guard who transferred to Duke from Indiana, where he was a reserve on the 1976 national champion team, is expected to add some much-needed backcourt strength. His ball-handling is what the team needs now to be more potent. Bender is ineligible to play for Duke until Jan. 9 because he transferred.

One of the interesting calls in the game was when Banks was called for a technical foul on a dead-ball dunk, when a player stuffs the ball after a whistle blows. Banks was moving the ball on a fast break when Wake's Mark Dale was called for a foul on him. Banks kept

running and slammed the ball through the basket.

"Gene said he never heard the whistle, even though the officials said the crowd was quiet enough for him to hear it," Foster said after the game. "He came up to me during the timeout for Wake to shoot the free throw and said he didn't think he'd been fouled, either."

Three officials were used during the Big Four Tournament just as they will be in all conference games this season. Reaction from the coaches in the tournament was similar: they all like the idea of having better coverage on the courts. But they paid for the better coverage: 192 fouls were whistled during the four-game tournament.

"I think it will be a help," State coach Norm Sloan said. "I like it better than two officials so far."

"Three officials are healthy for the game," Dean Smith said, adding that he always has been for three officials.

# When Life goes to the movies, you'll see pictures that were never on the screen.



NOW PLAYING AT YOUR LOCAL BOOKSTORE. IN PAPERBACK.

POCKET BOOKS

# Tar Heels win Big Four championship

Continued from page 1.

Duke got good play from its freshmen starters, Gene Banks and Kenny Dennard, in the 97-84 consolation game win over Wake Saturday night. They combined for 34 points while sophomore center Mike Gminski scored 20, and Spanarkel had 16.

Wake led by 15 in the first half of that

game, but Duke came back to within two at the half, 45-43. The teams fought head-to-head for most of the second half until Banks and Dennard took control, combining for 15 points in the late minutes of the game.

"It was a great comeback for us," Duke coach Bill Foster said. "When we were down by 15, I heard a bugle in my head playing 'Taps.' At halftime, I

thought we had a good chance of winning it.

Carolina last won the Big Four Tournament in 1971, when it finished third in the NCAA Tournament. The Tar Heels now face the possibility of facing Duke or State as many as three more times this season, including a possible meeting in the ACC tournament.

## DOONESBURY

by Garry Trudeau



WESTERN
SIZZLIN'

**MONDAY!**

**No. 1**  
**The Sizzlin**

75¢ Off Broiled Sirloin 75¢ Off  
Baked Potato or French Fries

(Not good in conjunction with other specials.)

Offer valid Mon., Dec. 5

**TUESDAY!**

**TUESDAY is Student Night**

Anyone presenting a valid UNC ID and a copy of this ad will receive

**50¢ off any** regular entree. (Except "Big Tex," Diet Plate and Childs Plate)

Offer valid Tues., Dec. 6

**SPECIALS**

Open 11 a.m. 7 days a week  
324 W. Rosemary 942-1116

# The WQDR Listener Poll Vote For The 20 Best Albums Of 1977.

Now is your chance to vote for what you think are the best albums of 1977. We've nominated 30 albums, based on airplay, listener response, and sales in the Triangle area. If your favorites are not on the list, write them in. Any album released in 1977 is eligible. Fill in the blanks below and send it to: **WQDR Listener Poll, 410 South Salisbury Street, Box 1511, Raleigh, N.C. 27602.** Be sure to include your name, age, phone, and address, because your ballot registers you for a chance to win free albums, to be given away all day, New Year's Eve. Plus at midnight, a lucky listener will win a complete set of the year's best albums.

## Nominated Albums:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Jackson Browne - The Pretender                     | Fleetwood Mac - Rumors                                    |
| Foghat - Love                                      | Eagles - Hotel California                                 |
| Doobie Brothers - Living On The Fault Line         | Stevie Wonder - Songs In The Key Of Life                  |
| Steely Dan - Aja                                   | Boston - Boston   |
| Rita Coolidge - Anywhere, Anytime                  | Earth, Wind & Fire - Spirit                               |
| Dan Fogelberg - Netherlands                        | Peter Frampton - Frampton Comes Alive                     |
| Brothers Johnson - Looking Out For Number One      | Rod Stewart - A Night On The Town                         |
| Marshall Tucker Band - Carolina Dreams             | Wings - Wings Over America                                |
| Al Stewart - Year Of The Cat                       | Crosby, Stills & Nash - CSN                               |
| George Benson - In Flight                          | Steve Miller - Book Of Dreams                             |
| Kansas - Leftoverture                              | Jimmy Buffet - Changes In Latitudes, Changes In Attitudes |
| Joni Mitchell - Hejira                             | James Taylor - J.T.                                       |
| Led Zeppelin - The Song Remains The Same           | Linda Ronstadt - Simple Dreams                            |
| Santana - Festival                                 | Kenny Rogers - Celebrate Me Home                          |
| Atlanta Rhythm Section - A Rock & Roll Alternative | Boyz n the Bunch - Silk Degrees                           |

# Official Ballot

1 _____	Artist _____	Title _____
2 _____		
3 _____		
Name _____	Age _____	Telephone _____
Address _____		
Zip _____		

The Album Station 94FM WQDR