

DEACONS:

Johnson hopes for replay of '77 Carmichael upset

By PETE MITCHELL
Staff Writer

Frank Johnson, Wake Forest's sophomore guard, insists the ACC basketball race this year will come down to the very last week of the conference schedule.

"If that's to happen," Johnson speculated, "it would sure help if we beat Carolina this Sunday. And we're going to be gunning for them as usual."

"As usual" is pretty accurate. It seems that a year never goes by without the pesky Deacons giving Carolina loads of trouble. The two teams meet at noon Sunday for the first time this year in a televised game from Carmichael Auditorium.

Last season, Johnson's first in the conference, is a prime example of the Deacons' fine play against UNC. Wake Forest dumped the Tar Heels for a third straight Big Four championship and then squeezed past them, 67-66, in a crucial regular season game in Chapel Hill.

"It was great to win at Carolina last year," Johnson said. "Winning on the road anywhere in the ACC is tough, and few teams ever win at Carolina. It's the hardest place to play, so that made our win even better."

The one-point victory was in front of one of the noisiest Carolina crowds in recent years.

"It was so loud in there. I'd never heard anything like it," Johnson recalled. "Is it ever that noisy when Carolina plays someone besides us?"

The 9-3 Deacs are led again this year by All-America forward Rod Griffin who ranks second in ACC scoring with a 20.7 points per game average. Freshman Fran McCaffery, the team leader in assists, will join Johnson in the backcourt. Starting center Larry Harrison is averaging 12.6 points and 8.5 rebounds. The other starting forward will be either senior LeRoy McDonald or freshman Will Singleton.

Without Skip Brown and Jerry Schellenberg this year, Coach Carl Tacy's team is taking the ball inside more, leaving the outside shots to Johnson.

"Because of our new game plan, there's much more pressure on me to hit from outside," Johnson said. "Skip was a great teacher. I've learned how to get involved in offense in a number of ways and carry more responsibilities this year."

As a freshman, the 6-foot-2 Johnson averaged 11.6 points a game with a .457 field goal percentage. This year he's hit on 52 percent of his shots while upping his average to 16.6 points.

By the time the two teams face each other Sunday, the ACC standings could take on several changes. Wake plays Clemson Saturday in Greensboro while Carolina, ranked second in the nation, visits Duke. The results of those two games probably will determine how the game Sunday will be played.

"We're just thinking about Clemson right now, of course," Johnson said. "But in the back of my mind I'm thinking about



Duke center Mike Gminski (43) attempted to block this try for two by Tar Heel reserve center Jeff Wolf in the Big Four Tournament in November. The Tar Heels won that game, 79-66. Carolina travels to Duke for a 3 p.m. game Saturday. Staff photo by Fred Barbour.

Carolina, and I know I don't want to play against the four corners. It's so frustrating."

For Carolina, the second meeting of the year with Duke is of primary concern. But the Tar Heels have something in the back of their minds too — they know from experience how frustrating playing against their Winston-Salem rivals can be.

Recycle this newspaper.

DEVILS: Heels enter vicious Cameron to battle much-improved Duke

By LEE PACE
Assistant Sports Editor

Having survived 19 years on the streets and playgrounds of Jersey City, N.J., Mike O'Koren isn't easily intimidated.

But he's not easily fooled, either. He knows a hostile environment when he sees one. And it didn't take him very long one afternoon last winter to discover that the folks in Duke's Cameron Indoor Stadium are more loving to the darker shade of blue and more loathing to the lighter shade.

"I went for a ball in the corner, and my momentum took me into the stands," O'Koren recalled Tuesday afternoon during a break in a light workout in Carmichael Auditorium. "They were yelling all kinds of things at me — obscenities and stuff. I knew they wouldn't fight there and then. You just can't let those things bother you."

O'Koren paused. The atmosphere around him was in stark contrast to the one he and his No. 2-ranked teammates will encounter at 3 p.m. Saturday when they travel to Duke. Several thousand students sat in the stands, waiting to pick up tickets to the home game Sunday with Wake Forest. They applauded and watched with interest as several Tar Heels larked through leisurely games of two-on-two.

"It's a scary place over there. That's for sure." Perhaps the scariest part is that the Duke basketball team is as menacing this season as it's been in many years. The Blue Devils dashed any doubts skeptics may have had by smashing Clemson 107-85 Wednesday night at Clemson.

It took everything the Tar Heels could muster to slip by the Tigers in overtime last week at Clemson before demolishing Virginia on the road Saturday.

"Winning down there will help us," O'Koren said. "Clemson's a hot place to play. Virginia's tough, too. Those wins will sure help. I expect the Duke game to be a close one."

The Blue Devils are now 2-1 in the ACC, Carolina 2-0. Duke's only loss was a 74-50 defeat Saturday at N.C. State.

"If this isn't a crazy game..." Duke coach Bill Foster said after the

strange turn of events Wednesday. "Not many people would have figured the score to be like this."

Indeed, Duke's games at State and Clemson both figured to be close. But Saturday in Raleigh the Blue Devils could do nothing right, and Wednesday at Clemson they could do nothing wrong. Duke shot 69 percent in the second half against the Tigers, a team whose scrappy defense is one of its strong points.

"We just kept the ball moving, looking for an opening, a chance for the five-footer," said Blue Devil Jim Spanarkel, who was a high school teammate of O'Koren's.

"They'll be ready Saturday, and we'll be ready. They were more ready in the Big Four (Carolina beat Duke, 89-76). They adjusted to adversity better than we did. And they have a great team. It's going to be a great game."

Starting center Rich Yonaker has contracted mononucleosis and probably will not play Saturday against Duke, coach Dean Smith said Thursday.

Duke, now 11-3 overall, has been strengthened in the backcourt by the addition of point guard Bob Bender, who became eligible last week after transferring from Indiana. He scored 10 points at Clemson, but is still listed behind current starter John Harrell. The Blue Devils have experimented some by using Bender and Harrell at guard and moving Spanarkel to forward.

The other Duke starters include sophomore center Mike Gminski, who scored 28 points at Clemson, heralded freshman forward Gene Banks and freshman forward Kenny Dennard, an excellent outside shooter.

State ticket distribution

Tickets for the UNC-N.C. State basketball game next Wednesday night will be distributed at 10 a.m. Saturday in Carmichael Auditorium. Students must present a valid ID and athletic pass.

IM basketball signup changed

The entry deadlines for intramural basketball competition in men's, women's and Co-Rec divisions have been extended through today.

Grail mural basketball resumed this Thursday. Schedules are posted on the bulletin board outside the IM department.

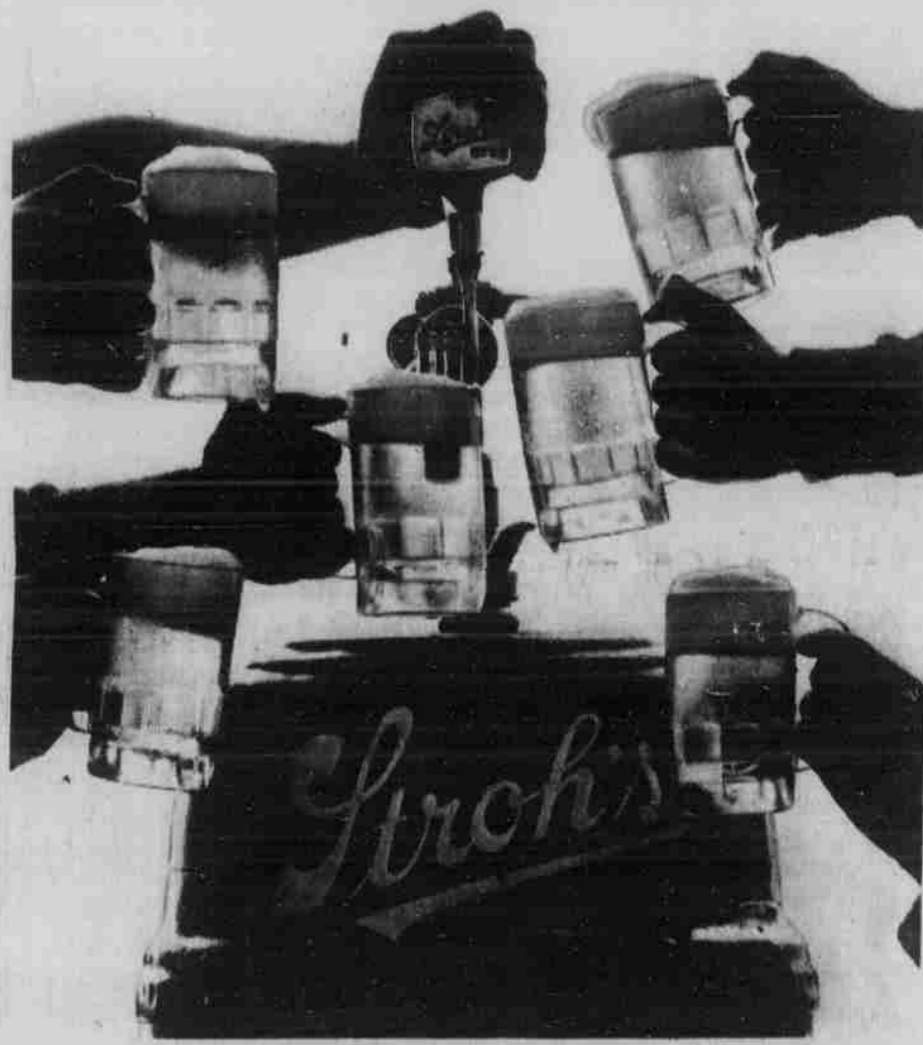
Team racketball entries are due today. The teams consist of four players.

A UNC group of 40 students ventured to Beech Mountain Ski Resort Jan. 2 through 6 on a ski trip designed by the French-Swiss Ski College.

The Carolina group joined 900 other persons from other colleges from the South including N.C. State, East Carolina and South Carolina.

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Mon. 9:00-1:00 p.m.
Intermediate
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Advanced
Tues. 8:00-7:00 p.m.

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Tennis meeting set today

There will be a meeting of all persons interested in trying out for the freshman or varsity tennis teams today at 3 p.m. in Room 302 Woolen Gym.

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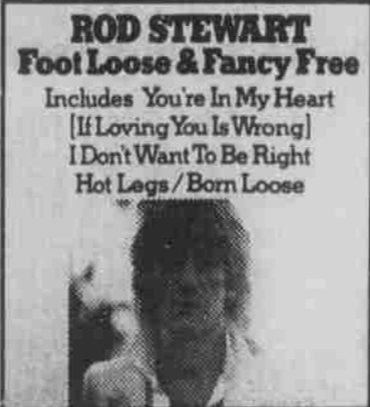
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