

Deacons, Cavs want off bottom

Passing game keys Mackovic's offense

One of a Series
By LEE PACE
Sports Editor

WINSTON-SALEM — At first glance, John Mackovic simply didn't seem to fit in very well. You could easily picture him sucking from a can of Old Mil on the front porch of a fraternity house, asking a freshman where he was from and what he was majoring in and "Do you know Herb Sprinkle?"

It just didn't seem right that this tanned, blond young man was more interested in chasing football players than broods.

Stand near him and listen to him talk football, though, and his job as head football coach at Wake Forest University becomes easier to understand. He seems to be a little more educated than his 34 years would indicate.

Mackovic stood in the classroom of a weathered brick building at Wake Forest one afternoon last week, answering questions from football writers about his 1978 football team. Fourteen years earlier, he sat in the same room answering questions concerning Wake Forest's starting quarterback, a position he played.

Mackovic never played on a winning team at Wake Forest. He's held assistant coaching positions at several schools, the most recent Purdue, and nearly every year since he's left he's looked back at Winston-Salem and seen more losing Deacon teams.

He's come back home to see what he can do about those 1-10 and 3-8 records.

"I won't work any harder at this job than I would any other," he said. "If I took a head job anywhere I'd still try as hard. But it's nice to have people around here that I've known, that are pulling for you."

"The fact that there were people here before me that couldn't get the job done adds some incentive."

Mackovic has made an extremely good impression on his players. It's almost sickening, in fact, to hear them talk and talk about the man as if he were the second coming of Knute Parseghian or Ara Rockne or whoever.

"I really enjoy being around him," says James McDougald, the Deacons' fine tailback. "There's a certain air about him that makes you want to work harder."

Tight end Syd Kitson said, "There's an unbelievable respect on the team for him. There's an air about him. He's open. If you have a problem, he's willing to listen."

All of this doesn't mean, of course, that the Deacons are going to win all of their games, or even have a winning season. But it does mean that after last year's 1-10 disaster, better moments are likely in store for Wake.

"We were embarrassed last year," McDougald says. "I take it rather personally. I know I'll put a lot more effort into this season."

The program of former coach Chuck Mills improved during the 1975 and '76 seasons, and the Deacs entered the '77 season with brighter hopes than any Wake Forest team in years. But after a 24-13 opening win over Furman, Wake was nipped on a field goal by Vanderbilt, 3-0.

"Vanderbilt was the key game," Kitson says. "We lost 3-0 after playing our hearts out. It was tough to lose. After that, it was downhill."

Ten losses later, Mills was fired, and Mackovic was hired from the Purdue staff, bringing with him an intensive passing game. How well the Deacons do in completing the 30 or 40 passes they will throw a game will have much to do with whether they'll improve on Mills' five-year effort.

"I'll really think the passing game is fun," Mackovic says. "I enjoy working the strategy of the passing game. I also think nothing provides an equalizer like passing. You can recruit a quarterback and receivers easier if you're known as a passing team. You can build your offense easier through passing."

Ken Daly, a junior with only marginal experience, will direct the Wake passing attack. He threw only 24 passes last fall, but Mackovic says his progress in preseason drills has been good. The biggest plus on the Deacon offense along with McDougald, who has rushed for 2,005 yards in two seasons, is tackle Jackie Robinson.

The defense should be adequate. Cornerback James Royster who has had nine interceptions in two years, and safety Mark Lancaster, the leading tackler last fall, are the biggest threats.

"Depth is a great concern," Mackovic says. "There aren't a great many players to move around."

"But I think we'll have a few surprises. I think we'll fool some people."

That would be an improvement at Wake Forest.

Grid clubs organize

The Carolina Club football team will begin practice this week at Eagles Field. Anyone interested in playing should attend. Practice will be held at 5:30 today and Thursday and Tuesday through Friday next week. Anyone who needs a ride to this week's practices should meet at 5:15 p.m. in front of Woollen Gym.

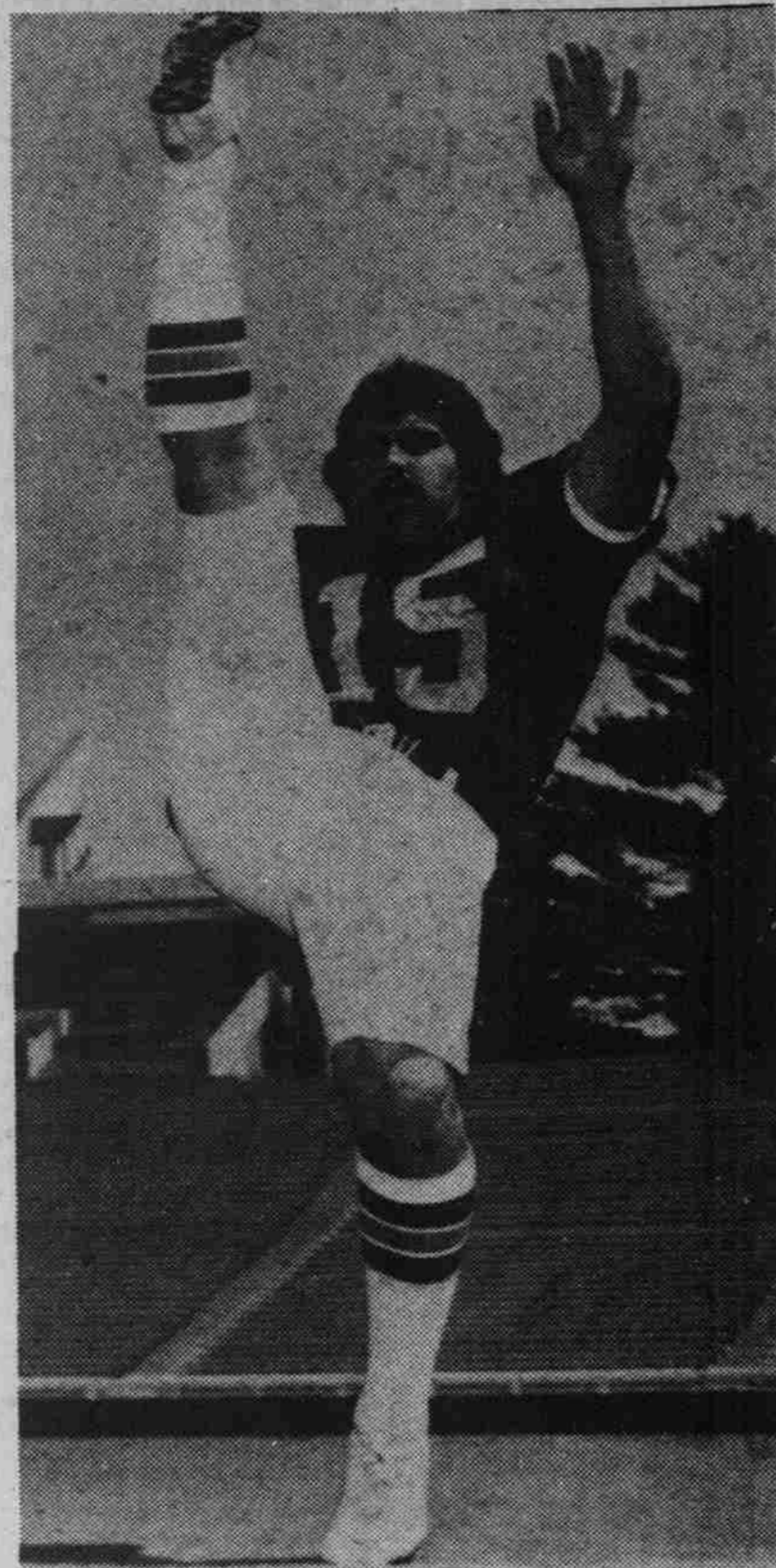
The UNC rugby club is holding an organizational meeting at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday in 111 Murphy. A film will be shown and Bob Reeves, coach of the University of Bristol team from England, will speak. Anyone interested should attend.

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Cavaller punter Russ Henderson ...the less he plays, the better



Deacon Tailback James McDougald ...'embarrassed' by last season

Veer counted on for UVa turnabout

One of a Series
By LEE PACE
Sports Editor

CHARLOTTEVILLE, Va. — If football fans here don't dislike Russ Henderson, they certainly ought to. Thomas Jefferson sure wouldn't want Henderson hanging around the grounds of the school he founded.

This Henderson fellow plays on the University of Virginia football team. He plays a lot, in fact. And he's not bad at what he does.

It's just that he plays so much and always wins the team's Most Valuable Player award, a prize which should be reserved for someone who gains a million yards rushing or beheads seven offensive guards. Even the drunk alums in the stands should be sick of the mention of his name and tired of watching him trot onto the field at Scott Stadium eight and nine times a game.

Henderson himself is weary of playing. He says he doesn't even pay attention to the game while he's on the sidelines.

So why do they put up with a fellow like this?

They need him, that's why. Henderson is the Cavalier punter. He punts and punts and then punts again. Boring, isn't it?

"I hope we can get away from that monotony this year," Henderson says. "That three downs and a punt gets old. We've got two quarterbacks who we hope will get the offense going."

Henderson only punted 85 times last fall. That's nearly eight times a game.

The Virginia offense only scored 56 points last fall. That's just over five a game.

So the moral of the Russ Henderson story is that the less he's needed, the better off the Cavaliers are in attempting to celebrate the 10-year anniversary of their last winning season with another winning season. Virginia was 7-3 in 1968 and has lost ever since. The team has won four games in the last three years.

"I just hope I'm not called on as much this year," Henderson told football writers last week on their annual tour of ACC schools. "They've voted me MVP the past two seasons. That's pretty unusual for a punter."

Unusual even for a punter who's finished within the nation's top 13 punters all three seasons he's been here. In 1976 Henderson's 45.9 average was fourth best in the country. He dropped off to 42.5 last season because of leg problems but still made all-ACC.

"I think I can improve on last year," he says. "I had a bad knee. It really hurt to kick. I'd been kicking so much for so long that I got calcium deposits on my knee. They operated last April, and it feels a lot better now."

Henderson's activity this fall will depend on how well the Cavalier offense switches from the I to the veer, a move made by head coach Dick Bestwick to better utilize the talents of runningbacks Tom Vigorito and Greg Taylor.

"Taylor played wingback for us in the I," Bestwick said, "and we just didn't think that was the best position for him. The only way we could play him and Vigorito is to go with the split backs."

"We also are going to make ourselves put the ball on the corner. That's where defenses break down the most. That's why we're running the veer."

Bestwick is troubled at the moment over who will direct the new offense. Junior Phil Spencer and sophomore Mickey Spady are both inexperienced. "There's a question as to what they can do," Bestwick said. "They just haven't played that much. Right now it's a toss-up."

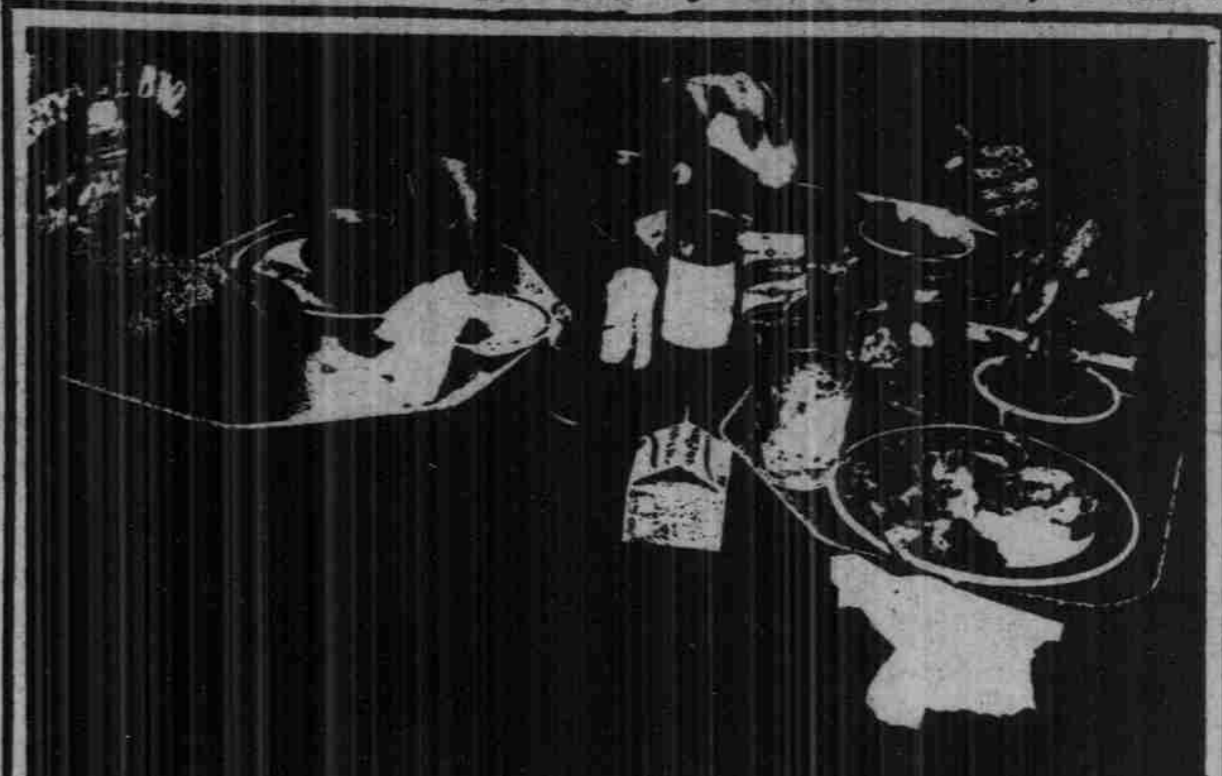
Two other things are keys if the Cavaliers are to have a good season: a good start and a lack of injuries.

"It could really help us if we could go down to Wake Forest that first game and win, particularly if we could win two weeks in a row," Bestwick said.

The Virginia schedule isn't too tough, at least not the first four weeks. Following Wake Forest are Navy, Army and V.M.I.

"We can't get many people hurt," Bestwick said. "Our depth is better than it has been in the past, but we still don't have as many quality athletes as other schools."

And if all these things go as Dick Bestwick wants Russ Henderson will playing a lot less this fall.



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Just thinking about it is enough to make a lot of us let out several notches on the belt buckle. But that's the way the 105 UNC football players eat every day at training table in the basement of Ehringhaus dormitory.

Assistant training table manager Gene Robinson orders up 10 cases of eggs a week, 30 dozen to the case.

"I guess they eat about five eggs a day apiece," Robinson said. "And then they have bacon, sausage, grits, cereal and toast every morning for breakfast. And it's all they want, there's no limit."

For lunch, there's always a meat, maybe chicken or roast beef and gravy, and assorted salads, soups and fruits.

"Every Saturday we give them hamburgers and hot dogs at lunch. I think that's their favorite," Robinson said. "Some of them have four or five of them."

Head coach Dick Crum sets no guidelines as to what foods his players should eat, but occasionally suggests certain items. After Monday's practice in the 90-degree heat he ordered eight watermelons and dozens of cantaloupes.

James Whitener, who everyone calls "The Captain," checks players' names off a list as they enter the training table cafeteria. He used to be in charge of making sure the players ate their peas and carrots while discouraging that extra piece of bread.

"When Coach Dooley was here he'd make me sit down at the end of the line and make sure they ate at least two balanced meals a day," Whitener said. "Coach Crum says they can get whatever they want. All salads or even peanut butter and jelly sandwiches if they want."

And as much as they want. This Friday they'll eat shrimp for supper. Robinson said most of the players eat 22 or 24 shrimp, nearly a pound's worth.

"And a potato or rice and gravy at every meal. They drink lots of milk, fruit punch, lemonade and eat peas, peaches and pineapples every day," Robinson said. "We have our own ice cream machine, too. They help themselves; there's no limit on anything."

Two nights a week the players are fed eight ounce steaks, baked potatoes and a tray full of accessories.

"They almost all eat two steaks and then pile on the rest," Robinson said. "I know it sounds like a lot, but I imagine if you went through what Coach Crum puts them through every day you could eat that much too. Couldn't you?"

—PETE MITCHELL

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