

# Sheets: healthy defense can equal 1977

By PETE MITCHELL  
Assistant Sports Editor

It's really no secret. After leading the nation in scoring defense a season ago, Carolina's defense this fall has quite an act to follow.

You can talk about the veer and the new coaching staff and even all the ticket sales, but what many persons want to know is if the Carolina defense will ever be as tough as in 1977. Ken Sheets, a pre-season All-America choice at defensive end, has an answer.

"Yeah, we can be just as good, but only if nobody gets hurt."

That would be quite an oddity in the world of college football, but Sheets and the rest are counting on staying healthy and taking UNC to another ACC championship, even with the departed Dee Hardison, Rod Broadway and Alan Caldwell.

"We might not hold the points down as well, but I think the offense will score a lot more too," Sheets said. Along with Sheets' pre-season nomination for All-

America by *Playboy* magazine came the consensus opinion that Clemson, not Carolina, would win the ACC. Sheets isn't too concerned about either prediction. "Being pre-season All-America is fine, but I don't think about it. I've seen people not make it at the end of the year, and that's when they remember you," he said. "They can say all they want about Clemson. It's good for them to be in the driver's seat, but somebody's got to take it away from us first before they're No. 1."

The 220-pounder from Woodbridge, Va., is counted on as both a senior leader and a player to improve a rather uninspired pass rush of a year ago.

"We're working on the pass rush and pass coverage more than ever before," Sheets said.

But it all depends on how healthy the defense can stay. Donnell Thompson and Bunn Rhames were reliable replacements on the line last year, but Coach Crum is not blessed with great depth this season.

"Nobody can get hurt," Sheets said. "We just don't have anyone with enough experience to replace them yet. They've got to get into a few games first."

Crum's defensive innovations have gone almost unnoticed with the introduction of the veer to his offense, but Sheets said there would be a lot more stunting with the linebackers and ends to confuse opposing offenses. Carolina will be concentrating on clogging up the middle and forcing ballcarriers to the outside more in order to take advantage of its good pursuit.

"Everybody's used to not giving up any points, but it's important that we don't lose our confidence if a team jumps out in front on us early."

ECU's explosive wishbone poses that threat when Carolina plays the Pirates in the opener Sept. 16.

"Last year when we almost beat Kentucky after losing 21-0 in the Peach Bowl the year before, it gave us the confidence we needed for the rest of the season," Sheets said. "Some of the ECU players were up here for summer school talking junk about how they were going to beat us. The first game is real important. And if we lose, some guys will be fearing practice more than the rest of the teams."



Tar Heel defensive end Ken Sheets ... 'the first game is real important'

# Blue Devils *Dunn wants to be league's best QB, but he'll need support from his mates*

Last of a Series  
By LEE PACE  
Sports Editor

And now, ladies and gentlemen, in the backcourt for the Tar Heels, at one guard, 6-foot-4, 187 pounds, a senior, from Hampton, Va., Mike Dunn!

At that point Dean Smith would adjust his cuff links and his necktie, the next Tar Heel would psyche himself for his introduction to the Carmichael Auditorium crowd and Norman Sloan or Lefty Driesell—whoever happened to be in town that night—would be arguing with an usher.

Basketball in Chapel Hill, as usual.

Or at least it could have been that way.

In the spring of 1975 Mike Dunn was offered a scholarship to play basketball at Carolina. He would be a senior this year along with Dudley Bradley and Ged Doughton. But there was something he wanted to do more—throw a football rather than shoot a basketball.

Mike McGee, the football coach at Duke, was delighted.

"Sometimes I sit back and wonder what the situation would be if I'd chosen basketball and gone to North Carolina," Dunn, Duke's senior quarterback, told a group of touring sportswriters early this week. "I liked Coach Smith; I liked the program. Basketball was my first love. I miss it. At times, I wish I'd gone out here. But I'm so banged up in November I knew it would be too hard."

"But football was what I really wanted. I've had great success."

But not quite enough success to satisfy Mike Dunn and his bittersweet career with the Blue Devils.

Dunn has set six Blue Devil records and is within reach of nine more as he continues his present pace. He's rushed for more than 100 yards in one game six times, and has rushed and passed for more than 200 in one game seven times. He's won back of the week honors, he's been named team most valuable player, and he's earned honorable mention All-America awards.

But he's never been named the ACC's top quarterback. Mark Manges of Maryland won that two seasons ago and Steve Fuller of Clemson was rated tops last year.

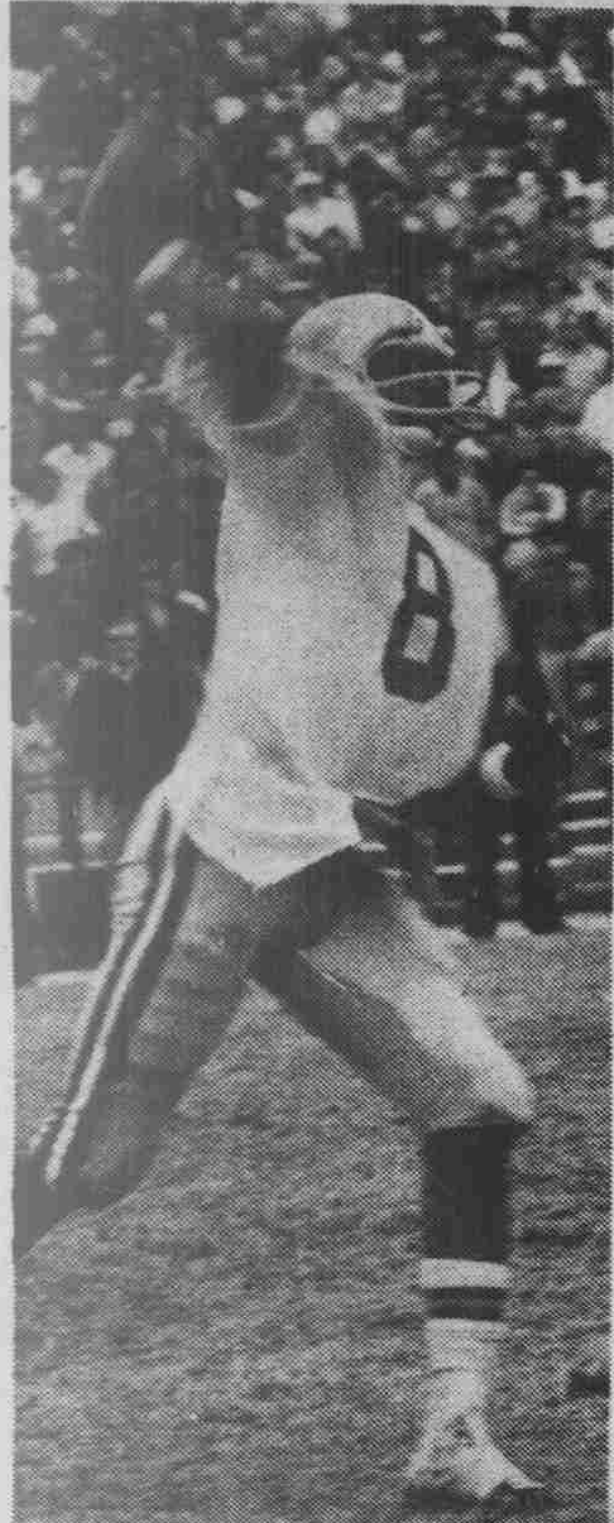
"I wanted to be all-ACC quarterback three years in a row," he said. "But I've been a close runner-up two years."

He hints that one reason he didn't earn more votes was that Maryland in 1976 and Clemson in 1977 were better than Duke's teams both years. Which brings up another reason Dunn isn't completely happy with his years at Duke.

The Blue Devils have not had a winning season since he's been there. They've never been awful; they've always been mediocre. Duke's record the past three seasons is 14-16-3.

"I sure hope we can have a much better season than 5-6," he said.

To do that, Dunn will have to outdo his performance of the past two seasons to make up for a young, inexperienced front line, and the Duke defense will have to be as good or better than it's expected to be.



Duke quarterback Mike Dunn, shown at left in action in a 39-38 loss to Carolina in 1976, jammed his thumb Tuesday in the Blue Devils' second intrasquad scrimmage of the season. He's expected to return to action in time for the Blue Devils' season opener Sept. 9 at home against Georgia Tech. Stanley Driskell is running first team quarterback in Dunn's place.

DTH/Allen Jernigan

## Media picks Tigers for ACC title

Area sportswriters and sportscasters who recently completed a tour of the ACC football training campus voted Clemson as their pre-season favorite to win the conference title.

The Tigers received 140 1/2 points in the poll based on the votes of 21 media representatives while UNC got 119 1/2. N.C. State was next with 100 1/2, then Maryland, 97 1/2; Duke, 63; Wake Forest, 35; and Virginia, 32. Clemson got 16 1/2 first-place votes with Carolina getting two and N.C. State 1 1/2.

Members of the Operation Football tour also picked a pre-season All-ACC team, with Clemson landing seven players on the 26-player offensive and defensive squad. UNC, State and Maryland each had four players on the team.

Five were unanimous picks: Guard Joe Bostic of Clemson, running backs Ted Brown of N.C. State and Amos Lawrence of Carolina, defensive lineman Jonathan Brooks of Clemson and punter Russ Henderson of Virginia.

All 13 players returning from last season's All-ACC team were awarded places on the pre-season selection. The squad is comprised of 14 seniors, 10 juniors and two sophomores.

In addition to the five unanimous choices, all of whom earned All-ACC honors during 1977, the other returnees are receiver Jerry Butler of Clemson, guard Mike Salzano of UNC, quarterback Steve Fuller of Clemson and running back James McDougald of

Wake Forest on offense. On the defensive team are lineman Ken Sheets of UNC, linebackers Randy Scott of Clemson and Buddy Curry of UNC and back Steve Ryan of Clemson.

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by Garry Trudeau  
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