

SPORTS

UNC football seniors discover life is a challenge on and off the field

By JEFF BRODY
Tar Heel Staff Writer

The college football player is often typecast as a student without direction, but this year UNC seniors are already proving they can plan for themselves.

Kelvin Bryant was the first UNC player this year to experience the promotion from the college ranks to pro football, or from fantasy to reality, since he joined the United States Football League. Bryant has survived the introduction magnificently as well as his Philadelphia-Stars team.

He has been a brilliant performer, and has supplied a spark plug to the new league. So far, Bryant leads the league in scoring touchdowns with 14, and his average of 4.8 yards per carry is second in overall rushing.

Yet, the Philadelphia Stars were not the only team interested in the former North Carolina player. The defending Superbowl champions, the Washington Redskins, seem to think that Bryant has a very promising football future. The Redskins selected Bryant in the seventh round of the draft this year, and will have exclusive rights to Bryant during the next four years.

However, with all of his instant success, Bryant has not forgotten the university that helped his football talents. Bryant recently established a \$10,000 academic scholarship fund in his name to the Department of Recreation Administration.

Although former quarterback Rod Elkins suffered a knee injury this past season, he is enthusiastic about the possibility of returning to football. Elkins said he has a desire to play in the USFL, which he thinks would be in his "best interest."

"I think the League is doing well and has firmly established itself," Elkins said. Although the Philadelphia Stars have exclusive rights to Carolina players, Elkins believes that he would not have to negotiate solely with them since he was not drafted out of college.

Elkins is presently living and working in the Chapel Hill area and will attend second session summer school. Elkins said he will also be assisting at Coach Dick Crum's summer football camp, and will work as a student-assistant-coach for North Carolina in the fall.

Linebacker Chris Ward is another player who will seek to enter the ranks of pro football when he attempts to negotiate a contract with the Philadelphia Stars in August. Ward was originally drafted by the Stars and had formed a tentative contract with them. Yet he felt that it would be wise to delay his pro career in order to recover from a minor Sun Bowl injury which he thinks left him with about 60% of his true ability.

Fully recovered now, Ward is weightlifting and running to stay in shape while completing his undergraduate studies. The completion of his degree seems to reflect Ward's belief that there is more to life than football.

"There are a lot of things that you don't get to see when playing," Ward said. Consequently, he is now enjoying his brief break from football to "take in more of the Chapel Hill sights." However, Ward is anxious to get back to football soon, and is excited about the USFL and the Philadelphia Stars.

Ward said he was satisfied with his college career because he feels that North Carolina is a place where college sports are appreciated, unlike his home town of Cincinnati where the Bengals and Reds are the primary sports attractions.

Boshamer Stadium will be empty this summer; North Carolina State Baseball League cancelled

The familiar sounds of college baseball won't be heard this summer in Boshamer Stadium, due to the cancellation of the North State Collegiate Baseball League.

The 11-year-old North State League, which gave college players a chance to hone their skills in the summer months, was discontinued because of financial reasons.

While inadequate finances plagued the league, UNC Coach Mike Roberts said keeping the better players around to play in the summer also contributed to the decision to discontinue the league. "Basically we felt that the money could be used much more wisely during the regular school year," Roberts said. "A lot of our players, like other athletes on other teams, wanted to be away from Chapel Hill

for the summer." Many of North Carolina's current players will play in more competitive summer leagues along the East Coast, such as the Cape Cod League, the Shenandoah Valley League and the Jersey Shore League. Three players, Jeff Hubbard, Pete Kumiega and Greg Schuler, hope to be drafted by the major leagues.

In the past, the level of play in the league has suffered because many of the better players from the schools involved chose not to spend the summer months playing ball at school. Last year's league was made up of teams from UNC, Campbell College, N.C. State, East Carolina and UNC-Wilmington.

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