

College Basketball	N.C. State 110	Michigan 119	Arizona 89	Ball St. 92	Florida St. 81	Syracuse 82
	Wake Forest 103	Iowa 96	UCLA 86	W. Michigan 79	So. Mississippi 78	Georgetown 76
Virginia 86	Clemson 81	Missouri 66	Louisville 87	Alabama 83	Oklahoma 103	Illinois 70
Maryland 59	Georgia Tech 79	Colorado 65	Notre Dame 77	Florida 63	Nebraska 76	Indiana 67

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UNC crumbles with title on the line

Loss leaves Tar Heels searching

By MIKE BERARDINO
Senior Writer

The critics will say King Rice was responsible for Sunday's 88-86 loss to Duke, and, indeed, the sophomore guard did miss a free throw with three seconds left that would likely have sent the game to overtime.

But in fairness to Rice, North Carolina should never have been in such desperate position, not if the Tar Heels had been able to protect the 10-point lead they had built with 7½ minutes to play. Instead, for the second time in five days, Dean Smith's club abruptly stopped doing the things that put them in front and found a way to lose.

Rice, perfectly healthy, played just 12 minutes Sunday, taking (and missing) his only shot from the floor, a three-pointer, midway through the second half. He was inserted in the final minutes as UNC went to a full-court press in hopes of climbing out of the five-point hole it had somehow dug for itself.

"I knew as soon as I let it go that it would be short," Rice told reporters of his missed foul shot. "I'll definitely be out practicing free throws tomorrow."

If you're going to point a finger at Rice for missing the fateful free throw and for his costly turnover 10 seconds earlier, then also save some blame for Jeff Lebo, who threw a pass away with 27 seconds left.

Lebo, his ankle/foot still apparently hurting, was entrusted with 35 minutes of playing time Sunday — tops on the team — and responded by shooting 2-for-9 from the floor, including 1-for-4 from three-point range.

And while you're looking for scapegoats, how about Scott Williams, so valuable when in the game yet so utterly ineffectual when in foul trouble. Why can't Williams contribute without fouling, as he did five times Sunday en route to an early disqualification at the 6:26 mark?

When Williams exited, North Carolina was ahead 70-63. Four minutes and a 17-5 Duke surge later, the Tar Heels were down by five and scrambling just to force an overtime.

But assessing blame is neither an adequate nor admirable way of coping with the frustration accompanying a loss. Instead, it is best to accept reality and proceed from there.

The prevailing question at this point for the Tar Heels is — to borrow from the collected sayings of W. Axl Rose — "Where do we go now?"

To Atlanta and the ACC Tournament, of course, where, through the cruel luck of Sunday afternoon's conference drawing, North Carolina must face fifth-seeded Georgia Tech in a Friday afternoon quarterfinal.

Beyond that, where the Tar Heels will end up nobody knows. An early ACC exit — indeed, anything less than the championship — could have North Carolina packing its bags for a trip out West when the NAAs start 10 days from now. If so, it would be the third time in four seasons UNC has been given the Horace Greeley treatment and shipped west.

"Now we've got some time to regroup and get our heads on straight before the tournament," Lebo said in the hushed, if not crushed, UNC locker room following Sunday's defeat.

They'll have to do it fast. With six losses in their last 10 outings, that all-important animal known as momentum has long since left the Tar Heel camp, relocating, as it were, in Raleigh and Durham.

However, it's not too late to salvage this season, to make the last go-round of seniors Lebo and Steve Bucknall truly memorable. UNC's 24-7 record is still quite impressive, and a three-game romp through the ACC Tournament field would recapture whatever "edge" the Tar Heels have frittered away in recent weeks.

Whether North Carolina will be able to put one of the worst weeks in the program's history behind it and rediscover the team chemistry Smith is continually railing about is uncertain. But in spite of the seemingly long odds the Tar Heels now face, don't be surprised if they do.



North Carolina's Steve Bucknall stumbles past Blue Devil Greg Koubek in an 88-86 Tar Heel loss

Tar Heels fold to Blue Devils under pressure, 88-86

By DAVE GLENN
Sports Editor

UNC coach Dean Smith called it a game of heavyweights.

Of course, when you have Tar Heels going against Blue Devils, it usually is — and Sunday afternoon's matchup was no exception.

On the Tar Heels senior day — UNC seniors Steve Bucknall, Jeff Lebo and David May all started for UNC in the final home game of their collegiate careers — the fourth-year men from both teams had something to prove in this clash of college basketball powerhouses. Before Sunday's game, the series record stood at 4-4 for members of the senior class, and the Tar Heels had visions of using Duke as a stepping stone to the ACC title.

But it was a couple of Duke seniors who stepped forward and answered the bell.

Danny Ferry's 24 points and seven rebounds, coupled with some gutsy three of five three-point shooting by Duke point guard Quinn Snyder, led the Blue Devils to a thrilling 88-86 decision over the Tar Heels before a frenzied sellout crowd of 21,444 in the Smith Center.

The Duke victory, which gave N.C. State the ACC regular season championship, avenged UNC's 91-71 thrashing of the Blue Devils earlier this year in Cameron Indoor Stadium.

The loss dropped the Tar Heels record to 24-7 and tied them with Duke and Virginia at 9-5 for second

place in the ACC race. The Blue Devils upped their record to 22-6, 9-5 in conference play.

A drawing after the game gave the Tar Heels the fourth seed for the ACC tournament in Atlanta next weekend. UNC will face Georgia Tech, seeded fifth, in a home game of sorts for the Yellow Jackets at the Omni in Atlanta.

The Blue Devils, seeded second, will face the Demon Deacons of Wake Forest. N.C. State-Maryland and Virginia-Clemson are the other Friday matchups.

But call this Duke victory a decision, not a knockout.

The Tar Heels appeared to be in control of this game late in the second half, sporting a 70-60 lead with seven minutes remaining in the game.

But Snyder and Ferry led a 20-5 Duke run that turned the game around. When a Snyder three-pointer, his third in the four-minute spurt, found nothing but net from the left wing, the Blue Devils had their first lead since the 15-minute mark of the second half.

Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski said his team showed him a lot with their play after a Duke timeout with 15:30 to play, as the Tar Heels threatened to put the game away. "The thing I really like was the way we reacted when we were down 10," Krzyzewski said. "We showed a lot of poise. We didn't try to get it all back right away."

Instead, Snyder's troikas and Ferry's magic brought the Blue Devils back, along with some help from an unlikely source — sophomore guard Greg Koubek. Koubek's 14-point effort, on 6-of-8 shooting, was his second-highest point total of the year.

When Koubek buried both ends of a one-and-one with 2:23 remaining, the Blue Devils had their lead up to five at 80-75.

But the Tar Heels fought back. UNC guard Steve Bucknall, who led the Tar Heels with 23 points and five assists, drove to the hoop for two buckets and a free throw and Kevin Madden added a layup inside to bring UNC to within two at 85-82 with one minute to play.

After Duke's Robert Brickey, who shot only five of 10 from the charity stripe, converted two free throws, UNC forward Rick Fox gave the Tar Heels new life by nailing a tough three-pointer from the top of the key. The Duke lead was cut to two at 87-85.

After turnovers by both teams, Koubek stole a King Rice pass intended for Fox and Duke had the lead and the ball with seven seconds remaining in regulation.

Seconds later, Rice made up for his mistake by tipping Ferry's inbound pass away from Snyder and heading to the hoop with the tying basket on his fingertips.

But he was fouled by Snyder. Rice, an 81 percent shooter from the charity stripe, missed his second free throw, Brickey grabbed the rebound and the game was all but over.

Only a sophomore, Rice was one of the few UNC players who stayed late to answer reporters' questions. "The first one felt good and it went in," Rice said. "As soon as I let the second one go, I knew it was short. I tried to scream to J.R. and Rick, but, unfortunately, Brickey got the rebound. "I'll definitely be out practicing my free throws tomorrow."

Wrestlers take second at ACC meet

By SCOTT GOLD
Staff Writer

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Lightning does strike twice in the same place.

In the same manner. This weekend, the Maryland Terrapins played host to a strong cast of ACC wrestling squads. The team most in the spotlight prior to the tournament was regular-season champion North Carolina, favored to regain its ACC crown after losing it to N.C. State last year.

Coach Bill Lam navigated UNC to four straight conference titles from 1984-1987, only to be narrowly ousted by the Wolfpack last season, 83.25 to 74.5. This year's tournament resulted in roughly the same outcome.

State's 82.25 to 70 victory was actually decided early on in the tournament, in the first and semi-final rounds. Only three of the squad's 10 grapplers failed to survive the first two rounds and qualify for the finals. The Wolfpack had wrestlers finish in the top three in all but two weight classes.

The Tar Heels held their own, however, placing eight wrestlers into the top three in their respective weight classes: Doug Wyland (118 pounds), John Welch (134), Enzo Catullo (142), Darryl Clark (150), Jay Landolfo (158), Erik Keyser (167), Ben Oberly (177) and Jeff Bradley (Heavyweight).

The Wolfpack was too much for the Tar Heels to handle, however, and by the consolation rounds UNC needed to win four out of five consolation matches and all four of their final matches to have a chance at winning. The pressure was too much, and the Tar Heels lost two consolations and one final match, resulting in the final deficit and second place finish.

Clemson took third place with 54.25 points, Virginia topped the bottom three with 46.5 points, Maryland placed fifth with 33.25 points, and Duke rounded out the barrel with 19 points.

The weekend was hardly a total disaster, with three of UNC's eight top finishers winning the conference title.

Wyland, lugging his 32-1 record and No. 3 national ranking, fought one of his toughest battles of the season in the finals, beating Clemson's nationally-ranked Donnie Heckel, 6-4.

Heckel opened the scoring in the match with an impressive takedown in the first period, forcing Wyland to play the role of the comeback-kid.

Trailing 4-3 going into the final period, Wyland scored a reversal to even the score, then narrowly sealed his 33rd victory of the season with a strong takedown and near pin with less than twenty seconds left in the match.

"Wyland did a great job," Lam said. "Heckel's a tough kid. He won the conference last year, he's nationally ranked and he's only lost one match all season. Dougie really only made one mistake, when he got taken down, but he recovered and came back well. It was a good test for him."

The Tar Heels' second ACC champ of the weekend was Welch at 134 pounds. After a tough overtime victory in the semi-finals over Maryland's Tom Miller, Welch was pitted against the Wolfpack's Mark Mangrum in the finals.

Welch was frustrated by his semi-final match, due to sloppy time-keeping and officiating and unjustly losing points as a result.

He appeared mentally drained from his final match as well, though

he won 3-1. Mangrum, a sophomore, continually shied away from any sort of action in the match, backing off anytime Welch attempted to move on him.

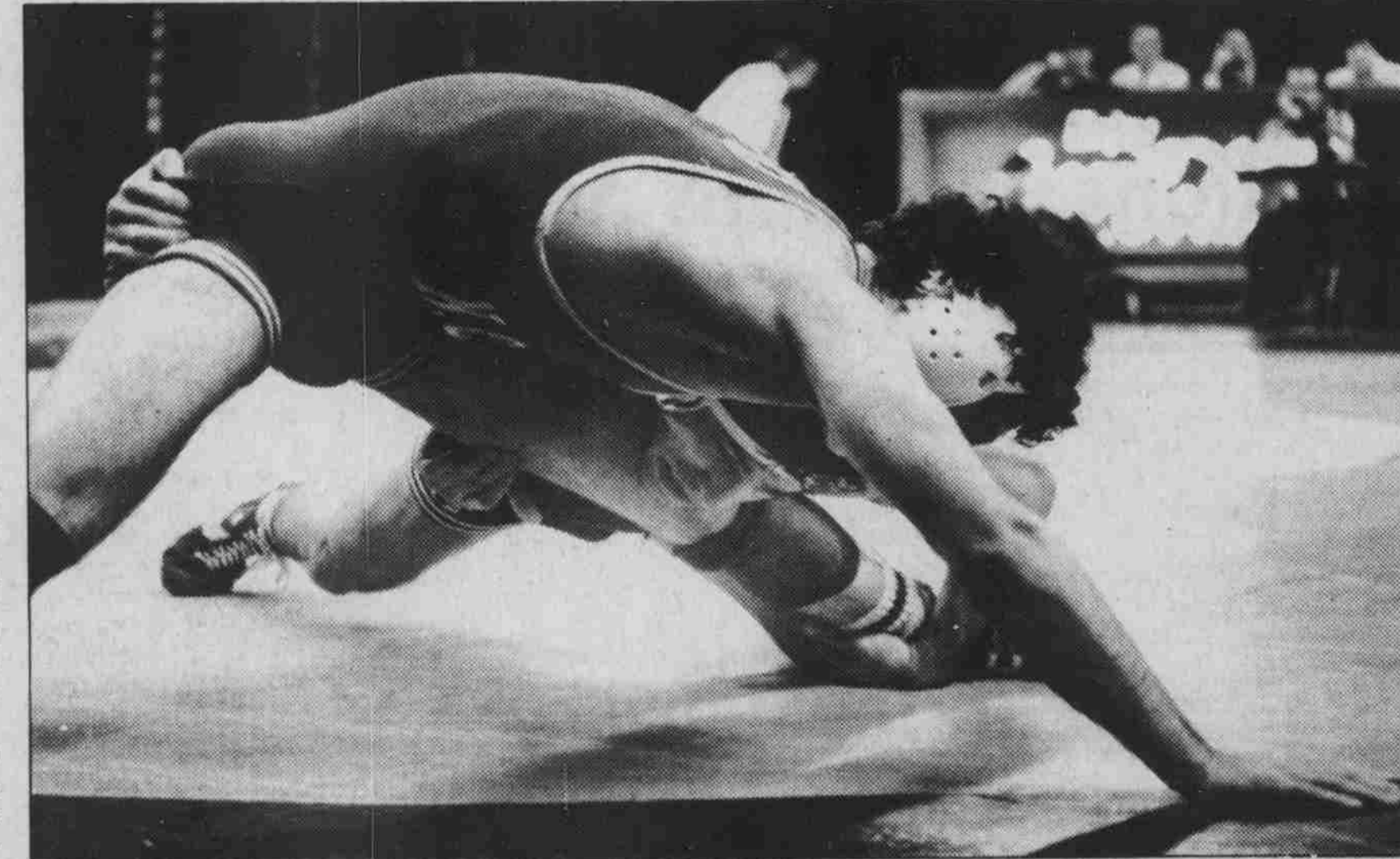
"The kid wouldn't wrestle him," Lam said. "When your opponent keeps his distance like that, it makes it hard. He did a great job, though."

Welch, however, didn't let it bother him for too long. The Tar Heels' final ACC championship was undoubtedly the sweetest. Catullo, a senior at 142 pounds, was gunning for his first ACC title in his last chance, after sliding into the runner-up position behind N.C. State grapplers each of his first three years.

Catullo, currently ranked ninth in the country, was pitted against defending champion Joe Cesari in the finals after blowing away any inkling of the Terps' R.C. Papa's upset hopes in the semi-finals, 12-4.

No one in Cole Field House really needed to watch Catullo's final match: you could tell exactly what was going to happen by seeing the look in his eyes.

In the end, the eyes were right. Catullo jumped out to a quick 2-0



Senior Enzo Catullo tops defending champ Joe Cesari, 5-2, for the ACC crown at 142 pounds

Men's Basketball

Sunday
Duke 88, UNC 86

Duke — Smith 1-3 0-0 2, Ferry 10-18 2-2 24, Laethner 2-3 0-1 4, Henderson 6-12 4-6 18, Snyder 5-4 2-4 15, Brickey 2-5 5-10 9, Davis 0-0 0-0 4, Buckley 2-2 0-0 4, Koubek 6-8 2-2 14. Totals 34-59 15-25 86.

UNC — May 0-0 0-0 0, Fox 3-10 3-4 10, Reid 6-13 2-4 18, Bucknall 9-15 6-8 23, Lebo 2-9 4-4 9, Williams 4-5 2-2 10, Madden 3-6 2-4 8, Rice 0-1 1-2 8, Chislett 3-4 1-2 7, H. Davis 0-0 0-0 0, Derry 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 32-65 21-30 86.

Halftime Score: Duke 41-39. Three-point goals — UNC 3-10 (Lebo 1-4, Bucknall 1-3, Fox 1-1), Duke 5-13 (Snyder 3-5, Ferry 2-5, Henderson 0-2). Turnovers — UNC 18, Duke 21. Rebounds — UNC 38 (Williams 6, Duke 33 (Laethner 8, Assists — UNC 19 (Bucknall, Lebo 5), Duke 16 (Ferry 6, Fouts — UNC 22, Duke 25. A — 21,444.