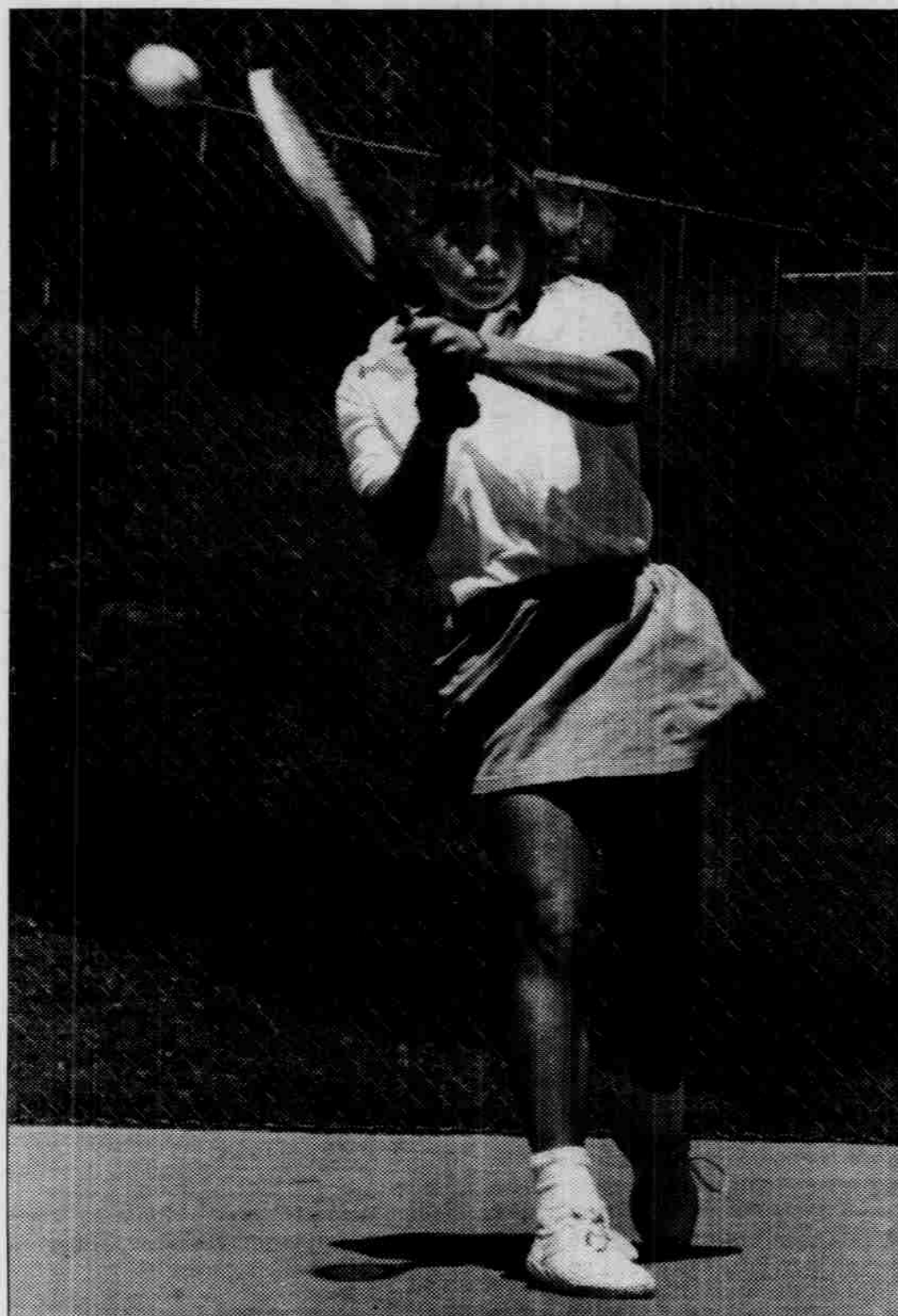


Newcomers, Gurney hope to serve up ACC title

Harrison lobs two freshmen into mix with veterans in search of smashing success



DTH file photo
Senior co-captain Dana Kanell finished 22-12, 7-2 in the ACC last season at No. 5 singles

By Doug McCurry
Staff Writer

Head women's tennis coach Kitty Harrison and her Tar Heels have their sights on a rather lofty goal: an ACC Championship.

"We're just going to shoot to win the ACC," Harrison said. "I think that there is always a chance we can win it. Anything beyond that, if we can get somebody into the nationals or the team into the nationals, that would be wonderful."

The team has the talent to compete successfully in conference play. The Tar Heels return four of six singles starters, including the players who competed at the number one, three, five and six slots last season. This veteran nucleus is enhanced by the arrival of three freshmen and two junior transfers. Two of the freshmen, Nicole Transou and Scotti Thomas, have already worked themselves into the starting lineup.

Transou, now playing in the two slot, relies on her 5-foot-11 1/2 frame and an effective serve-and-volley game to literally tower over her opponents. Harrison said that although Transou had tremendous physical ability, she could have problems with inconsistency and confidence in match situations.

Thomas won the 4-A state tennis championship last season at Jordan High School in Durham. Harrison said Thomas is one of those special players who is able to rise to the occasion and play big points well. Anchoring the number six spot, Thomas is working on strength conditioning to improve her game.

Juniors Susan Stanley and Tiffany Harting are both transfers from Peace College in Raleigh. They are solid players who Harrison says could help the team in practice and match play. Kelly Richardson, a freshman walk-on from Chattanooga, Tenn., rounds out the incoming players.

Harrison said the freshmen and transfers had blended in wonderfully with the rest of the team, and she credited senior co-captains Dana Kanell and Dianna McCarthy with fostering this sense of team togetherness.

Kanell has moved up from the fifth seed last year to No. 4 this season. As well as being named to the ACC Academic Honor Roll twice, she was 22-12 overall and 7-2 in the ACC last season.

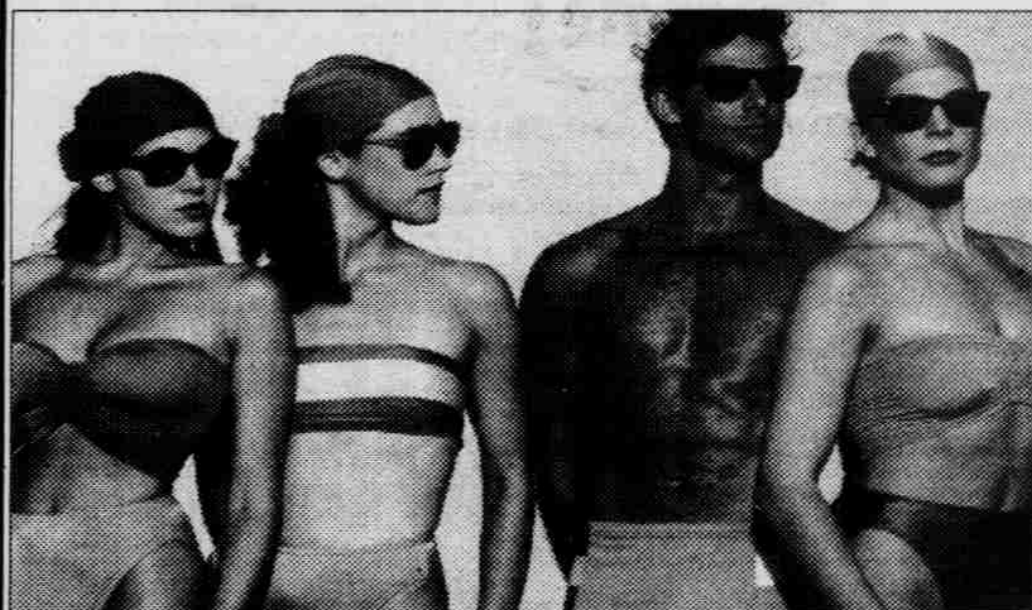
McCarthy is a doubles specialist, having teamed with Gigi Neely to compile a 20-9 record last year.

See WOMEN'S TENNIS, page 13

Women's Tennis

Head Coach: Kitty Harrison (Texas 1956)
Career Record: 283-123 (15th year)
Record at School: same
Assistant Coach: Emily Taylor
1990 Record: 17-7, 5-2 ACC (third)
Starters Returning/Lost: 4/2
Top Returnees: Cinda Gurney (So.), Alisha Portnoy (So.), Dana Kanell (Sr.), Gigi Neely (Jr.), Dianna McCarthy (Sr.)
Top Newcomers: Nicole Transou (Farmington Hills, Mich.), Scotti Thomas (Durham)
Facility: UNC Tennis Center (1,000)

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