

SPORTS FRIDAY

"All those American millionaires covering up their logos, and then these guys. Obviously it was a gas."
— Grateful Dead spokesman Dennis McNally

The Daily Tar Heel/Friday, August 28, 1992/7

THE PITCH



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Remembrances of youth soccer remain bitter

Rec soccer was never my forte. I know I shouldn't be losing sleep over this, considering my career as New Jersey's worst recreational-level soccer player ended more than a decade ago. Now that the burden of playing the game is off my shoulders, I should be able to sit back and enjoy watching soccer games just like everybody else.

But when a UNC soccer game comes on, I get an occasional flashback to my not-so-stellar grade school soccer career. As a fifth grader, I was a little bothered by the fact that I couldn't kick the ball, head the ball, run with the ball, stop someone else from running past me with the ball, play offense, defense or midfield with any degree of success. I was particularly good at knocking the ball down with my hands, but every time I did, the coaches and the referees yelled at me.

I was the type of rec soccer player whose shin guards never stayed still under his socks. Our coach wouldn't even let me pour the post-game Hi-C out of fear that I'd somehow manage to injure one of the team's valuable players.

And this still bugs me. Every now and then Bill Buckner must wake up in the middle of the night with visions of making the most infamous error in the history of sports to lose the 1986 World Series. Once in a while I'm still haunted by a vivid memory of my one career goal. The ball bounced off my knee and past our goalie for the game-winning score in Security National Bank's 1-0 victory against our hapless Sally's Auto Parts team.

That was the only game we came close to winning that year—we were 0-8. I felt like Charlie Brown does when Lucy pulls away the football before he can kick it.

Now I know not everybody can be remembered as a rec soccer superstar. Despite my disappointing athletic career, or perhaps because of it, I grew up as a fan and an admirer of success in sports.

I can remember the headlines from all of the major events in sports. I grew up well north of the Mason-Dixon line but still recall a headline in 1982 that announced the first national championship for college basketball's second winningest coach.

"Buzzer-beater gives Smith his first NCAA title."

Maybe that's in a scrapbook somewhere at the bottom of Dean Smith's footlocker.

Surely not every sports success story can get hyped. So it's only fair that rec soccer takes a back seat to most professional-level sports, with the exception of possibly Arena Football.

And in those rec soccer stories, it's probably only fair that the good players get mentioned more frequently than the bad players, even when the bad player is me.

But one average fall day in 1980 the town newspaper hit our front yard. My own success story was immortalized in the sports pages and I didn't even know it.

Within the sports section of this paper (which has a readership of about 17, or 12 if you count only literate subscribers), way on the bottom of the back page between two ads and below a press release about a fly fishing tournament, was a story about the recreational soccer league.

In the last paragraph of the story, below all of the information about the

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Blue Jays snatch Cone from Mets for stretch run

The Associated Press
NEW YORK — The Toronto Blue Jays moved to solidify their hold on first place in the American League East and to upgrade their shaky pitching Thursday, obtaining pitcher David Cone from the New York Mets. In return, the Mets got infielder Jeff Kent and a minor leaguer to be named later.

Cone, 33-7 with a 2.88 earned run average, leads the National League in strikeouts with 214 and has five shutouts. He has led the league in strikeouts for the last two years and has a career record of 80-48 with a 3.13 ERA, but he will be a free agent after this season, the major reason he was available.

Toronto, coming off a 5-7 road trip, remains in first place, two games ahead of Baltimore. But the Jays have had pitching problems. The staff has only two complete games in its past 44 outings and the starters have an ERA of 7.85 in 22 games prior to Wednesday night, when Todd Stottlemyre pitched a one-hitter in Toronto's 9-0 win over Chicago.

The staff began its downward spiral after the All-Star break when Juan Guzman went on the disabled list with shoulder trouble after building a 12-3 record. In fact, only veteran Jack Morris (16-5) has performed up to expectations, while David Wells (7-8), Jimmy Key (8-11) and Stottlemyre (8-9) have been up-and-down.

The 29-year-old Cone, whose best year was 1988, when he was 20-3, is expected to report to the Blue Jays on Friday and will probably start one of the games against the Milwaukee Brewers

Mets' Harazin continues push to the cellar

By John C. Mammel
Assistant Sports Editor

Al Harazin should be ashamed of himself. For Pat Gillick, it's Miller Time.

Gillick pulled the steal of the decade Thursday. The general manager of the Toronto Blue Jays has been trying to bolster his team's sagging pitching for two months, especially since All-Star Juan Guzman went down with a sore shoulder in July.

Thursday, Gillick made his move, sending infielder Jeff Kent — now known in New York as Jeff Who? — and a player to be named later to the New York Mets for pitcher David Cone.

Indeed, the move makes the Blue Jays prohibitive favorites in the three-team American League East race. To his credit, Gillick has turned the Blue Jays' roster over in the last two years, with positive results.

First, he dealt Fred McGriff and Tony Fernandez to San Diego for Joe Carter and Roberto Alomar prior to the 1991 season. Few GMs have the chutzpah to make that kind of a block-

buster deal. He also acquired Devon White to lead off and patrol center field.

Before the '92 campaign, Gillick signed veterans Jack Morris and Dave Winfield to keep the Blue Jays from losing the big games.

After Thursday's move, Toronto's competition must now adopt "wait 'til next year" as their motto.

Harazin, Gillick's counterpart with the Mets, said that potential free agent Cone would have been difficult to resign. The 29-year-old hurler, who currently is paid \$4.25 million per year, wanted a five-year deal for upwards of \$25 million.

Cone, with a 13-7 record and 2.88 earned run average, was the bright spot on a sorry Mets' squad. The defense was expected to draw its share of Bronx cheers, and it has lived up to that billing.

But the Mets figured that Cone, Dwight Gooden, and off-season acquisition Bret Saberhagen would give them ample starting pitching.

And the \$29 million man, Bobby Bonilla, was going to team with fellow free agent pickup Eddie Murray and slugger Howard Johnson to give the Mets a switch-hitting Murderer's Row

for the '90s.

But every move Harazin has made since taking the reins in 1991 has backfired, and the Mets sit 11 games under .500, 14 games behind first place Pittsburgh in the National League East.

Ever since the ill-fated Len Dykstra trade, the Mets have lacked character; dealing Dykstra and funnyman/relief pitcher Roger McDowell for Juan Samuel didn't just cost the Mets' talent, it cost them their soul.

Now the Mets want to trim their \$44 million-plus payroll and build for the future. Attendance at Shea Stadium is already down this year, and it's hard to imagine fans being excited by Jeff Kent.

And of course, there's that player to be named later. Harazin said the player is currently in the minor leagues, but he would not elaborate. The Mets had better hope that player is Guzman, currently on a rehab assignment at Syracuse.

Mets fans had Harazin to thank for one more bad move Thursday and the Philadelphia Phillies to thank for keeping the Mets out of last place.

won a \$4.25 million-a-year contract in arbitration this year, will be in position to seek considerably more.

But Harazin said a bigger stumbling block would be Cone's expected demand for a five-year contract. "Our

track record in terms of long-term contracts with pitchers is a checkered one in relation to injuries," Harazin said.

Of the Mets' stable of star pitchers, only Cone, who last year tied an NL record with 19 strikeouts in a game, has been consistently healthy. Dwight Gooden, who signed a long-term contract two years ago and makes \$4.9 million this season, has missed parts of the last two seasons with a shoulder injury and is currently 7-11. And Sid Fernandez, making \$2.26 million this year, missed most of last season with a broken wrist and knee injuries.

Bret Saberhagen, obtained in a deal with Kansas City last year, has missed most of this season with tendinitis in a finger on his pitching hand and bullpen stopper John Franco has had arm problems.

Those are among the reasons the team has fallen 14 games out of first place. Despite sweeping a three-game series in San Francisco, the Mets are 11 games under .500 after being one of the favorites to win the NL East.

"I felt I had to make the deal," Harazin said during a conference call Thursday. "At best, we'd have a 50-50 chance of signing David at the end of the season and that could even be optimistic."

The Blue Jays have made a habit in recent years of trading for a pitcher during their drive for the playoffs.

They got Bud Black from Cleveland in 1989, John Candelaria from Minnesota in 1990 and Tom Candiotti from Cleveland in '91. None of them resigned with the Blue Jays for the following season.

this weekend.

Kent, 24, is a rookie who can play second and third base. He's hitting .240 with eight home runs and 35 runs batted in 65 games. Mets' general manager Al Harazin said the other player is cur-

rently in the minor leagues but would not identify him.

Cone, one of the few bright spots for the Mets in a disappointing season, becomes a free agent after the season. With his success this year, Cone, who

From the home office: top ten things a true UNC fan must do

There are things you must do in college.

You must study hard and try to make good grades. You must call home every now and then. You must eat three balanced meals each day, and you must do your laundry at least once a month.

Those are all nice. However, for the sports fan, there are things you MUST DO — especially at a sports lover's heaven such as UNC.

So to all the new UNC sports fans, here is a list of the top 10 things you MUST DO while in college:

1. **Camp out for N.C. State or Duke basketball tickets.** Some people can't get up for an 8 a.m. class, yet the same people can be found every Sunday when ticket vouchers are distributed at 6 a.m. What's wrong here?

One guarantee is that when students camp out for State or Duke tickets, it will be either cold, rainy or both.

2. **Enjoy the pre-football game festivities at Kenan Stadium.** This will mean giving up your usual snoozing in on Saturday morning and strolling in during the second quarter. Show up early! Watch the two teams stretch and take light drills. Listen to the band play. Grab some food from the concession stand. Then be part of the excitement as the wave of Carolina Blue jerseys storms out of the locker room and races for the sideline.

3. **Go see the women's soccer team in action.** Simply getting to see stars

Kristine Lilly and Mia Hamm in action would be worth the money — if admission were charged. The program, which has won nine of the last ten national championships, is full of superstars, and some think head coach Anson Dorrance invented women's soccer.

4. **Sit in Beshamer Stadium and second-guess Mike Roberts.** The 15-year veteran of UNC baseball always has a trick up his sleeve. Roberts loves double steals and suicide squeezes, and he thinks nothing of telling his power hitter to bunt in the fourth inning. Don't

yell too loud, though. He's been to the College World Series twice.

5. **Play one of the intramural sports with a funny name.** Come on, you can play football or soccer with your buddies any old time. Why not try something like Napoleon Basketball or Inertube Water Polo?

6. **Watch a track meet.** UNChad the 55-meter indoor national champion in Allen Johnson last year and the runner-up (Lynda Lipson) in the javelin. Head out to Belk Track and find out who the next superstars will be.

7. **Go to a Durham Bulls game.** OK, so the Bulls are not a UNC team, but students attending summer school often adopt the Atlanta Braves' farm team as their own. Better go soon — 1993 will be the last year for quaint old Durham Athletic Park.

8. **Attend a fencing meet.** The fencing team is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

sary as a varsity sport at UNC. Because it is a non-scholarship sport, students who have never fenced in their lives can make the team and even become stars.

9. **Work out in the Woollen Gym weight room.** It's hot and it stinks. Yet no student should let his UNC career pass by without getting sore there at least once.

10. **Be a part of the Franklin St.**

mob after a big basketball victory. This would have ranked higher on the list except there is no guarantee that a given year will produce a win big enough to make the fans congregate. A crowd has gathered downtown once in each of the last four years — three times after beating Duke and once when the Tar Heels beat Temple to advance to the Final Four.



David J. Kupstas
Senior Writer

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