

Jones Going Strong For UNC Netters

Kings Mountain's Bryan Jones is continuing in college his tennis success story which began at an early age on the courts of Kings Mountain High School.

Jones, a freshman at the University of North Carolina, is playing the number three singles for the Tar Heels and sports the team's best record (15-1) so far. He appears to be well on his way to making All-Atlantic Coast Conference in his first year.

"Bryan has meant a great deal to our team," says UNC Coach Allen Morris. "He's a strong competitor, a fighter, and he's played some outstanding tennis for us. He has a winning attitude, and that's helped him pull out a lot of matches at the end."

Jones' only loss thus far was a close three-setter against Notre Dame, and that match could have gone either way, Morris said.

The Tar Heels have met some outstanding teams thus far and recently returned from a trip to the west coast. Now, they're getting into the meat of their conference season.

"I'm really surprised with the way I've been playing," says Jones, who won the North Carolina high school championship his junior season at Kings Mountain High School. "I thought I'd do well during the spring season, but I never expected to have such a good record. I could be 11-4 or 10-5, but I always seem to get the breaks near the end of the match."

Jones is a student of the game, and Coach Morris says that's to his advantage in the close matches. "He knows how to play the game, and he knows how to dictate the tempo," Morris says. "He never gets down on himself and he always seems to make the right decisions in crucial situations. That's something you don't normally expect from a freshman."

Jones was head and shoulders above most of his high school competition, but he says all the athletes are about equal in talent in college.

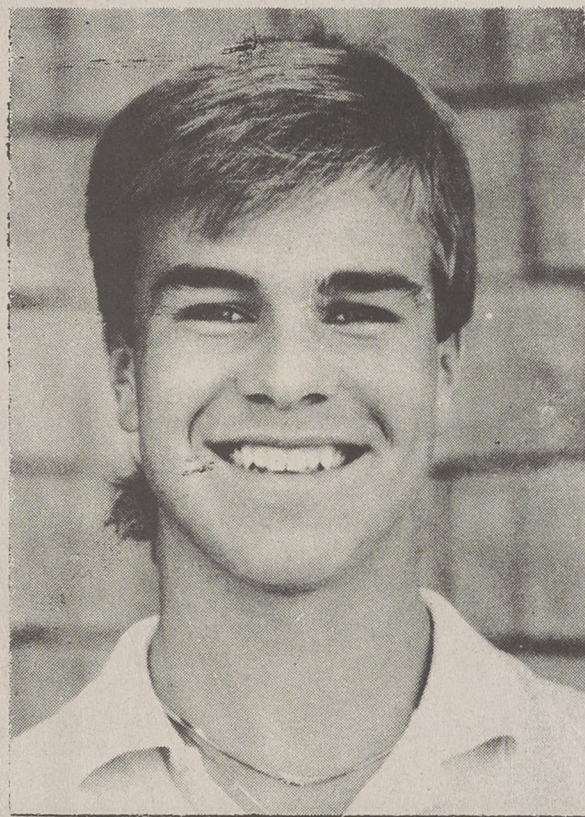
"Once you reach this level, so much of it is a mental game," he says. "There's not a big difference in the players physically, so you have to be mentally tough. You can't give up cheap points, and you never want your opponent to get the edge."

"When I fall behind, I try to rely on my consistency," he added. "I never give up, and I try to let the other guy make the mistakes. If you can get your opponent frustrated, then you can usually gain the advantage and come away with a victory."

Jones credits a hard work attitude, which was instilled in him by his father, Bob Jones, and the help of Shelby tennis player Jim Corn as the big keys to his success in tennis.

"My dad always told me that you can't make up a missed day," he said. "If you don't feel good and don't want to practice one day, you've got to push yourself to go out and play. There are always going to be days when the ball doesn't feel good on your racket, but you've got to overcome that and still give your best effort. Anyone can win on a good day, but the mark of a champion is overcoming a bad day and still coming out on top."

Jones says he has also carried his dad's philosophy over to the classroom. He's always been an excellent student as well as an top-ranked tennis player. "If



BRYAN JONES

you're dedicated and always give 100 percent, then you can be successful in everything you do," he says. "I put my academics first because that's what I came to college for. Tennis isn't always going to be there for me, so I've got to do well in other aspects of life."

Jones' father, former KMHS coach and athletic director, suggested to Bryan at an early age that, because of his small size, he should consider an individual sport such as golf or tennis.

He began playing with his dad at the KMHS tennis courts at the age of eight or nine, and then at age 12 began playing in junior tournaments. From then until he signed with UNC, he went all over the United States competing in junior tournaments, winning many and placing high in several others.

He began working with Corn, a former UNC tennis player and one of the area's top amateurs, at the age of 15. He gained his first national ranking (56th) at age 15 and improved his ranking each year until topping out at as number nine nationally and number one in the south at the age of 18.

Jones was the Southwestern 3-A Conference's Tennis Player of the Year his freshman, sophomore and junior seasons at KMHS, and was North Carolina's Prep Player of the Year and All-American his junior year. Because of his participation in a number of national tournaments, he did not play high school tennis his senior year.

He was one of the most heavily recruited tennis players in the nation but chose Carolina because its strong academic program and its improving tennis program.

With the quick progress he's made so far, Carolina fans look for him to eventually play the number one position.

Myers Bowls 427 Set Thursday

Allen Myers bowled one of his highest sets ever Thursday night at Dilling Heating Lanes as Our Guys gunned down the Sharpshooters in Mixed Duckpin Bowling League action.

The old typesetter had single games of 141, 143 and 143 for a 427 series as his team won two of three games and total pins. Ken Bridges added a 130 line and 359 set for the winners. Jerome Grant had a 126 line and 346 set and Ronnie Scruggs a 121 line and 339 set for the Sharpshooters.

Several high scores were also

recorded Tuesday night as John Dilling won three from Johnny Dye and Wally Mocanu won three from Betty Hullender.

Dilling rolled a 162 line and 408 set and Jack Barrett added a 118-335 to lead Dilling's team over Dye. Lib Gault had a 129 line and 375 set and Dye had a 123 line and 324 set for the losers.

Wally Mocanu's 162 line and 390 set and Dot Mobley's 127-341 led Mocanu's win over Hullender. R.W. Hullender led the losers with a 129 line and 364 set.

Several high scores were also bowled last Tuesday night. Mocanu rolled a 146 line and 412 set to lead his team to a sweep of Johnny Dye. Lib Gault had a 139-376 and Dye added a 126-355 for the losers.

R.W. Hullender rolled a 131 line and 355 set and Ethel Tignor added a 131 line and 331 set to lead Betty Hullender's team to three wins over John Dilling. Dilling led his group with a 124-356 and Jack Barrett added a 126-323.

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