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DTH/NATE SKVORETZ

SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW
SOMETHING BORROWED, SOMETHING BLUE



DTH/LARA CROCHIK



DTH/ASHLYN RHYNE

“ If you want to beat people, sweat more. ”
ROY WILLIAMS

ANALYSIS



DTH/LARA CROCHIK

UNC women's basketball head coach Courtney Banghart speaks to her players during media day in Carmichael Arena on Oct. 12.

'The portal giveth and it taketh away'

Fifth-years and the transfer portal impact ACC women's basketball rosters

By Shelby Swanson

Sports Editor
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Virginia Tech head coach Kenny Brooks may have put it best.

"The portal giveth and it taketh away," he said, rather poetically, at the 2023 ACC Tipoff. "It gives our people the opportunity to build more experienced rosters. It kind of takes away a little bit of the traditional way of building a team with freshmen."

With more women's players taking advantage of extra NCAA eligibility due to COVID-19 — Notre Dame's women's basketball's online roster goes as far as including a separate column next to academic year to log eligibility — the makeup of ACC rosters has drastically shifted.

Virginia Tech, which returns both ACC Preseason Player of the Year Elizabeth Kitley and Cayla King for a fifth year, is benefiting from it. But how about preseason No. 16 UNC?

After not bringing in any transfers ahead of last season (sophomore guard Paulina Paris was the only new face on the roster), UNC head coach Courtney Banghart reached into the portal this offseason and pulled out three new pieces in Lexi Donarski, Maria Gakdeng and Indya Nivar. They have varied skillsets but all share one crucial aspect — experience. And, in today's ACC, that's as important as ever.

One can't just, in Banghart's words, recruit your "butt off with younger guys" — it's simply "irresponsible not to monitor the portal."

"We're always attentive to it," Banghart said. "If the right kid comes into the portal, you're like, 'Huh.' I just didn't know I'd bat 3-for-3 on it."

Banghart got all the players she wanted. This is, of course, much to the dismay of coaches like Brooks, who went on to joke at ACC Tipoff, "What do they have, about 12 McDonald's All-Americans on that team?"

Well, not exactly, but Banghart has called this year's roster "by far, the deepest team" she's coached.

In UNC's first scrimmage this season, Banghart said she didn't pick her starters until about 10 minutes before tipoff. For the team's next scrimmage, it'll likely be a different group, although Banghart hasn't decided on exactly who.

It's an understandably difficult decision when the Tar Heel roster contains two returning first-team All-ACC picks, a former Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year, multiple Gatorade Players of the

Year across various states and a top-10 incoming first-year class.

"It's a good problem to have," Banghart said. "Last year, for a five-game stretch, we had seven kids in uniform. We hope to stay away from that problem."

For many top-20 programs, being able to tap into the portal each year will become an increasingly important piece of the recruiting puzzle.

"We're still recruiting high school kids, but at the same time now, because of the one-time transfer [and] you don't have to sit out, a lot of high school kids aren't necessarily as interested in developing," Jeff Walz, the head coach of preseason No. 17 Louisville said, later adding, "A lot of players, they'll just go someplace else, play for a year, get their numbers, perform, be a first-team all-league and then transfer. I'm not saying that's the right thing to do, but that's what's going on, and as coaches, you just have to accept that."

Wes Moore echoed Walz's sentiments. The N.C. State head coach said the possibility of throwing out 18-year-olds against 23- or 24-year-olds with extra COVID-19 eligibility has "no doubt" impacted recruiting in the ACC, joking that some of the older players "have been around as long as I have."

So, when you see a drastically different Tar Heel team this season — an older, wiser program full of fresh talent plucked from other Division I programs — don't be surprised.

In the words of Walz, "The portal's here to stay."

"We've gotten to the point, we've proven it that we can go in the portal if we want to," Banghart said. "We're not going to recruit freshmen that can't help us play."

X: @shelbyswanson



DTH FILE/IRA WILDER

Then-sophomore forward Anya Poole (31) rebounds against Virginia Tech in the ACC Tournament on March 4, 2022.

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5:30 - 7:00 pm

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Room G100

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BRIEFS

Early voting kicks off in Orange County

Orange County early voting is underway at five locations for the 2023 municipal election, which includes the Chapel Hill and Carrboro town councils and mayors and the CHCCS Board of Education. Turnout during early voting is up over 2021 — the last municipal-only election in Orange County — as of Monday.

With five days left of early voting, 30 percent more Orange County voters have cast ballots compared to 2021. Turnout on the final Monday of early voting was up 102 percent, with 774 votes cast. Overall, 3,597 votes have been counted in the county.

Each location will be open through Nov. 4 for early voting and same-day voter registration. Voter ID is newly required to vote in this election, and residents eligible to vote and affiliated with UNC can use their One Cards as a valid ID.

— Ethan E. Horton

ACC shares new football schedule model

The ACC announced its future football schedule model for the next seven years on Monday evening, which accommodates the new conference opponents — Southern Methodist, California and Stanford — that joined the ACC on Sept. 1.

North Carolina won't play SMU, Cal or Stanford in 2024 or 2026. The Tar Heels will play Stanford at home in 2025 and face Cal on the road, but will not face SMU until 2028.

In 2027, UNC will travel to Stanford. In 2028, the Tar Heels will host the Cardinals and travel to SMU. For the 2029 season, North Carolina will host Cal. In 2030, UNC will host SMU and play Cal on the road.

The approved format will have UNC, along with each ACC school, continue to play eight conference games per season. Beginning next year, all 17 ACC teams will play each other at least twice over the next seven seasons — once at home and once on the road.

— Daniel Wei

The Pit gets new solar powered picnic table

A new picnic table now sits in the Pit between UNC Student Stores and the Undergraduate Library. Unlike the many other surfaces that accompany it, this table does not just provide a shaded study space — it also produces electricity.

The solar table was installed over fall break by the Renewable Energy Special Projects Committee — a student-run committee that manages the money allocated by UNC's Student Renewable Energy Fee. RESPC organized the project in collaboration with Spotlight Solar, an organization that produces solar architectural structures.

The table has an overhead roof with solar panels which power wireless charging stations, outlets and an automatic lighting system on the table.

— Zorie Hollie

Resources for Career Development

These resources will help students prepare for internships, full-time jobs, or graduate school.

Micro-Internships

Unlock your career potential with micro-internships! Discover your dream job and boost your placement rates. Partnered with Parker Dewey, UCS offers UNC students access to diverse micro-internship projects. These paid, short-term opportunities are your stepping stone to success.

Experimental Learning 1:1 Appointments

This appointment type is designed for students seeking assistance with internship opportunities, resume building, and career guidance, including those related to Fall and Spring Internship Credit Courses, Summer Internship Resume Books, UNC-Parker Dewey and Forage sites, UCS Certificates, and referrals from UCS career coaches.

Carolina Career Readiness Certificate

Open to all UNC students, this program boosts your personal and professional development skills. Discover your career interests, engage in professional events, and gain valuable hands-on experience for your portfolio that prepares you for full-time opportunities. Plus, receive a digital badge and certification upon completion!

The Heels Engage Network

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EQUITY

UNC student operates accessible sexual health service

The initiative includes a contraceptive pill distribution project

By Lucy Kraus

Staff Writer

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UNC junior Laura Saavedra Forero said she is willing to put things on hold to make time-sensitive deliveries across campus of emergency contraceptive pills, which should be taken as soon as possible after unprotected sex to prevent pregnancy.

A former co-president of the Campus Y, Saavedra Forero receives texts from students seeking free emergency contraception pills at a phone number posted on the Campus Y's Instagram.

After an individual reaches out, she said she coordinates a drop-off that meets any needs the person may have, whether that is anonymity or leaving the package at a specific location.

Project goal

Saavedra Forero said the emergency

contraceptive pill distribution project started in the 2022-23 academic year as a very personal thing, which she operated and publicized mostly through word of mouth.

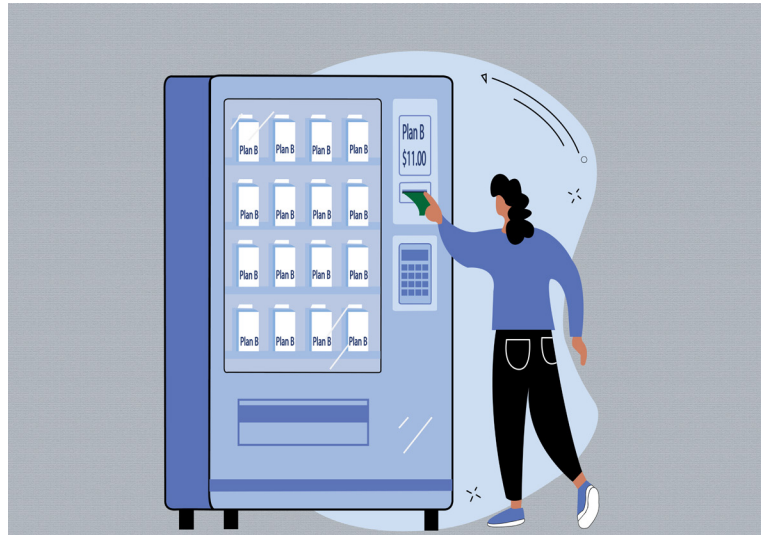
The initiative is now incorporated as part of a larger mutual aid effort based out of the Campus Y that includes a pantry stocked with non-perishable food items located on the third floor of the Campus Y building. Free condoms and menstrual products are also made available in the third-floor bathroom.

Saavedra Forero also said there was initially hesitancy surrounding the initiative, especially concerning the response by the University's administration.

"Which is why I kind of took it upon myself to do it, knowing that if there was any retaliation, I would deal with that," she said.

Accessibility and operation

Saavedra Forero said she started the program with an initial donation of emergency contraceptive pills from Charlotte for Choice, a reproductive justice organization she volunteers



DTH DESIGN/LAURA COUCH

with that operates a similar mutual aid effort in Charlotte.

The name-brand Plan B emergency contraceptive pill costs approximately \$50 over the counter. Emergency contraceptive pills can also be purchased for \$11 in three Healthy Heels To Go vending machines across campus.

Kristy Kelly, the administrative director of Charlotte for Choice, said the price may be unattainable for some students.

"Ideally, the more sexual health products and services we can get into people's hands, the better," Kelly said. "People deserve access to that and hopefully it can make

them able to make choices that are best for their health."

UNC's chapter of Planned Parenthood Generation Action also serves as a liaison for getting donations of contraceptive pills to the Campus Y, Imani Rankins, a senior and current co-president of the Campus Y, said.

"There was no involvement from our [Campus Y full-time employees] or anything in the distribution of medications or any type of resources regarding reproductive health," Rankins said. "That's something that individual students carry out anonymously."

Regarding funding, she added that the Campus Y's position as an institution entwined with state funds and a lot of bureaucracies influences its abilities.

"[Mutual aid is] not charity by any means," Saavedra Forero said. "It's solidarity; it's a way of showing that by taking care of our community, we're usually benefiting each other and everyone involved."

X: @dailytarheel

CONDUCT

Understanding UNC's Honor System

The process begins with an investigation and a hearing

By Catherine Tiddy

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UNC first-year Issy Jakobuss said if she faced an honor court violation, she wouldn't know where to start.

"I'm not familiar with any of the resources that are out there," she said.

Transparency is important in understanding the Honor System and how it affects students, Hailey Desir, a UNC first-year, said.

Though UNC's Honor System has been student-led for over 100 years, many students — like Jakobuss and Desir — are unsure of what happens once students enter the system.

The UNC Honor System is composed of two branches: the Undergraduate Honor Court and the Graduate and Professional Honor Court. They are both tasked with processing infractions of the honor code and the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance. Created in 1974 and heavily revised in 2003, the instrument outlines honor code offenses, rights of all parties, possible sanctions and structural and procedural guidelines for the Honor System.

The charge

Honor code violations include offenses from acts of academic dishonesty and violence to the use of controlled substances. Following the submission of a complainant about a suspected violation, the Honor System process begins with an investigation.

Director of student conduct Jennifer Spangenberg said the preliminary investigation is directed by the student attorney general, who — along with their staff — will charge the accused student if they deem the behavior in violation of the honor code.

"They're going to examine the information that's reported and determine what information they might need to review," she said.

After the student is notified of their charge, they receive information regarding the Honor System process and meet with their defense counsel to prepare for the hearing.



DTH/NATE SKVORETZ

The Old Well sits on East Columbia Avenue.

The hearing

A hearing follows the investigation and is largely dependent upon the plea of the student. If a student pleads not guilty, they face what Sashank Ganapathiraju, counsel in the undergraduate attorney general's staff, called a "fact-finding hearing." In this hearing, five honor court members determine guilt or innocence based upon presented evidence.

If a student pleads guilty, they may have an expedited hearing process granted to them by the student attorney general, or they may participate in a standard honor court hearing. The expedited process is heard by three honor court members.

The sanction

If a student is found guilty of an honor code violation, they are sentenced after the hearing. The instrument details all possible sanctions, such as academic consequences, loss of University privileges and penalties of record including the possibility of expulsion.

In deciding sanctioning for a student, Spangenberg said the honor court examines four specific factors. "They'll look at the gravity of events, the value of learning," she said.

Ganapathiraju said that while he cannot generalize the practice as a whole, an important aspect of ensuring equitable treatment relates to how cases of similar severity are individually sanctioned.

"They want students who have commit[ted] similar offenses to not have drastically different consequences as a result," he said.

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SERVICE

Students bring 'moments of magic' to UNC Children's Hospital

Volunteers dress as beloved characters to encourage patients

By Daneen Khan

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When UNC sophomore Caroline Stillwell first volunteered at UNC Children's Hospital, she donned a brunette wig and yellow gown.

With those two steps, Stillwell transformed into Princess Belle to surprise a three-year-old on her birthday.

"I walked out there knowing I made her day and her day was full of magic," she said.

Now, a year after her first volunteer visit, Stillwell is the event coordinator for UNC's chapter of A Moment of Magic, a national nonprofit organization. Students involved with A Moment of Magic dress up as characters to visit children in hospitals, therapy clinics and outdoor events.

Stillwell said she has organized over 30 visits this semester.

"We're not there to talk about their illness. We're not there like a nurse to prick them with needles. We're simply trying to treat them like a kid," she said.

The volunteers visit as characters that many children watch on TV, so when those same characters come to surprise them, Stillwell said it makes a big difference in their lives.

"There's so much importance to treatment through joy," Megan Hnilica, a new member coordinator for the chapter, said.

UNC Children's Hospital play facilities operations manager Beth Bailey said she "absolutely" agrees with Hnilica.

When the volunteers visit children in the hospital, they fully embody their characters by dancing, crafting and playing with the kids. "One thing that we always say is play is a right and not a privilege of a child," she said.

Bailey said when kids come to the hospital, their lives are completely upended. The act of playing is a very therapeutic tool, she said, and can sometimes help kids get discharged sooner because it allows them to move around.

For example, Bailey said a child may respond to play differently than standard physical therapy. "It's a lot more fun to go play air hockey or pool when you're doing that kind of movement and motion," she said.

Since A Moment of Magic works closely with kids with chronic diseases and children who are



DTH/HANNAH ZINN

A superhero from the UNC chapter of A Moment of Magic surprises local preschooler Graham on Thursday.

neurodivergent, Hnilica said the executive board hosts weekly training meetings to ensure each volunteer understands how to speak and play with every child they meet.

When UNC junior and chapter president Emma Whitaker first became involved with A Moment of Magic in 2021, she said members told her that volunteering with the organization would be the most intimate service opportunity she would receive.

Now, Whitaker said she understands what they meant.

"There's nothing as impactful as this because you get to build relationships with these kids. They really believe that you are a Disney princess that's come to visit them," Whitaker said.

Although she thinks the UNC Hospitals volunteers are amazing, she said her organization does a different type of work.

They talk with the kids, play with them, take pictures and do crafts with them, she said. Then, after the volunteers say goodbye, she said they hide to keep the magic of the day alive before walking back to their cars.

Recurring visits allow students to make personal connections with the children they meet, Whitaker said. She recounted how a child once gave her a portrait he had drawn for "Rapunzel."

Though she will not be able to keep her costume after she graduates, she said she will keep the drawing as a memory of her impact through the organization.

"This kind of service, I truly believe, is life-changing," Whitaker said. "I'm not going to forget these experiences."

X: @dailytarheel

N.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Gov. Cooper increases funding for school breakfasts

Federal dollars to grow student school meal involvement

By Sophie Baglioni
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On Oct. 24, Gov. Roy Cooper announced he is directing \$1.4 million in federal funding to expand school breakfast programs. Each school district can receive a maximum of \$50,000 in grants.

The grants will help implement innovative programs to increase student involvement in school breakfast. The governor is partnering with North Carolina Alliance for Health and Carolina Hunger Initiative on the program, which uses money left over from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief fund.

Andrew Harrell, the program and communications manager with the Carolina Health Initiative, said people in Cooper's office who knew about the school breakfast programs asked the Carolina Hunger Initiative for ideas on how to best utilize the funds to support school nutrition.

"This is something that we have worked on for a long time, Gov. Cooper has been really interested

in for a long time, so it was just a good culmination of a lot of different efforts," Morgan Wittman Gramann, the executive director of the North Carolina Alliance for Health, said.

Breakfast in the Classroom, one of the most effective school breakfast programs according to national campaign No Kid Hungry, allows students to eat breakfast while working on lessons with teachers.

Harrell said Glenn Elementary School in Durham — where Cooper announced the funding — has added 30 minutes of instructional time to the morning by moving breakfast into the classroom.

"We're hearing from principals and teachers and superintendents who are really passionate about [school breakfast programs] and who have seen the effects they've had on their classrooms and their students," he said.

Wittman Gramann said districts and schools can choose where to focus the programs and how to structure them in a way that works best for their schedule, staff and students.

Districts with schools that are new to the federal Community Eligibility Provision program — which provides free meals to students in schools with high rates of low-income and at-risk students — will be given

priority for the grants.

Harrell said equipment is an important use of the funding — including kiosks to serve meals from hallways and transportation to move meals out of the cafeteria to the kids, classrooms and hallways.

Wittman Gramann said students who qualify for free and reduced meals at school often don't take advantage of it because they are worried about the stigma of doing so.

"Not only going up to the counter and realizing that there's no money on your account, and then the impact of that, but also this differentiation between the students who eat school meals and the students who bring meals from home," she said.

She also said expanding school breakfast programs will eliminate the stigma because every student is eating the same thing together, which increases a sense of community and opportunity for students.

Barry Popkin, a professor of nutrition in the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, said school breakfast programs are a model for children for what they should be drinking and eating.

"The fact that they'll get some milk, the fact that they'll get a balanced meal that will be more real food than

not, is really quite critical," he said.

He also said an absence of breakfast leads to learning and behavioral difficulties in school-aged children. The first years of school set children's trajectory for learning, he said.

Popkin said school breakfast programs are an important addition for families with children — the provided meal can serve as "extra income" for many low-income North Carolina residents.

"We can all agree that no child should go hungry, and we all do better when all children have access to the nutritious meals that they need to learn and thrive," Wittman Gramann said.

Editor's Note: Andrew Harrell is a former staffer of The Daily Tar Heel.

X: @sophbgli



DTH DESIGN/CATE MCLAMB

ELECTIONS

Application reopens for institutional identification to count as voter ID

UNC One Cards have already been approved for use at polls

By Kaitlyn Cano
Staff Writer
city@dailytarheel.com

The N.C. State Board of Elections plans to open a new round of applications for eligible educational institutions and government agencies to approve employee and student IDs as photo identification for voting.

The application will be open from Nov. 13 to Dec. 15 for all colleges and universities in North Carolina. Public universities will also be taking applications for their employee IDs to be considered for approval.

UNC already had its IDs approved in July for the ongoing municipal election — UNC One Cards count as a valid form of voter ID.

Karen Brinson Bell, the executive director of the NCSBE, said rolling out another application cycle is a routine procedure to ensure that as many institutions and government entities can have their ID accepted for federal ID purposes as possible.

"Those that have been approved will continue to be recognized through the end of 2024, and so we wanted to have another application period to the 2024 election cycle," she said.

Bell said the process for approval is a simple one. As long as institutions meet the requirements and submit the application along with a picture of the ID, Bell and other NCSBE members can approve them.

Bell said there has been a positive response to the previous rounds of applications and that they have had around 100 entities — including the entire UNC system — submit applications in advance of the 2023 municipal elections, with many being approved.

"I think that having access through

campus, it's just one more way that campus life is elevated to the importance it has in civic life," Randee Haven-O'Donnell, a Carrboro Town Council member, said.

Haven-O'Donnell said, in terms of registering more voters and those who are already registered, it is sensible to have easily accessible photo IDs through University-issued One Cards.

"If we don't have civic engagement with students in academic environments, then we really lose the opportunity to create lifelong voters," they said.

Damon Seils, the mayor of Carrboro, said that while he is glad that the state is allowing student IDs to be used for voter photo IDs, he does not agree with the requirement of photo IDs.

Photo IDs will be required for the first time since 2016 in this year's municipal elections, and it also applies to absentee ballots. For their mail-in-ballots to count, voters must attach a photocopy of their ID.

Seils said if the voting system requires photo identification, a wider breadth of IDs that are

accepted is important. He said this is especially true for students and other groups that face barriers in getting to polling places.

Seils said he thinks having more options for students and more voter education has helped students feel more comfortable with the process and opened up more voting opportunities.

"I just hope that students will remember that they can in fact register to vote in the community where they live — if that's what they choose to do — and I hope that they will participate and get out and vote," he said.

He said if photo IDs are necessary, having college IDs eligible to count toward that requirement is a good thing.

"Students make up a third of the population at the town of Chapel Hill," he said. "Students make up about a sixth or so of the population of the town of Carrboro. Students are an incredibly powerful voice in our communities if they choose to use it — so please use it."

X: @dthcitystate



DTH FILE/BRENDAN TIERNEY

A UNC student uses their One Card to get into Chase Dining Hall on Feb. 5.

WHERE to VOTE EARLY

Orange Works at Hillsborough Commons

Location: 113 Mayo St., Hillsborough

Nov. 1-3 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Nov. 4 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Carrboro Town Hall

Location: 108 Bim St., Carrboro

Nov. 1-3 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Nov. 4 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Chapel of the Cross

Location: 304 E Franklin St., Chapel Hill

Nov. 1-3 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Nov. 4 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Seymour Senior Center

Location: 2551 Homestead Road, Chapel Hill

Nov. 1-3 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Nov. 4 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Chapel Hill Library

Location: 100 Library Drive, Chapel Hill

Nov. 1-3 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Nov. 4 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.



CAROLINA™

VOLLEYBALL

vs. VIRGINIA TECH

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD, 6 PM

CARMICHAEL ARENA



CAROLINA™

FOOTBALL

vs. CAMPBELL

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH, 12 PM

KENAN STADIUM

Fall 2023 Phi Beta Kappa Initiates



Abigail Rose Adams – Public Policy / Political Science
 Andrew Clark Adams – Political Science / Peace, War, and Defense
 Senam Mwiza Yawo Adedze – Geography
 Oyinkanola Ajasa – Political Science
 Andreea Elizabeth Alece – Political Science / Communication Studies
 Hana Ali – Political Science
 Helen Johanna Alvis – Biology
 Malika Amoroso – Biology / English and Comparative Literature
 Lindley Bradyn Andrew – American Studies / Latin American Studies
 Numair Attar – Nutrition / Biology
 Emily Anne Baker – English and Comparative Literature
 Lizabeth Oreoluwa Bamgboye – Global Studies / Political Science
 Aryaman Bana – Chemistry / Mathematics
 Aydin Bandukwala – Biostatistics
 Jordan Opal Barish – Media and Journalism
 Jenna LeAnn Barnes – Global Studies / Medical Anthropology
 Erica Bass – Political Science / Dramatic Art
 Sarah Grace Beck – Political Science / Interdisciplinary Studies
 Sophia Raja Bellavia – Medical Anthropology
 Elizabeth Bennett – Biology / Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures
 Kathryn Elise Blair – Psychology
 Aidan Michael Blevins – Interdisciplinary Studies
 Andrew W. Boettcher – Economics / Environmental Studies
 Alyssa Lauren Braddy – Political Science / Romance Languages
 Albert Bright, III – Statistics and Analytics / Economics
 Hannon Lydia Brown – Biomedical and Health Sciences Engineering
 Sarah Broyhill – Biology
 Zachary Buckler – Political Science / Economics
 Anna Marie Butler – English and Comparative Literature / Global Studies
 Alessandra Caroline Caceres Torres – Political Science / Public Policy
 Zachary Cairns – Computer Science
 Paige Mary Cameron – Political Science / Psychology
 Avery Grace Carrick – Exercise and Sport Science
 Nicholas Chay Carter – Computer Science / Mathematics
 Olivia Grace Cassidy – Biology / English and Comparative Literature
 Emile Charles – Nutrition
 Isabella Chase – Political Science / Communication Studies
 Ila L. Chilberg – History / Archaeology
 Eugenia Chow – Public Policy / Interdisciplinary Studies
 Sean Christian Joseph Clayton – Public Policy / Peace, War, and Defense

Emma Pearl Cohn – Public Policy / Global Studies
 Dalton Connolly – Clinical Laboratory Science
 Charles John Constantine – Economics / History
 Margaret Austin Cook – Media and Journalism / Political Science
 Ethan Michael Crook – Computer Science / Physics
 Meredith H. Daughtridge – Neuroscience / Chemistry
 Dex Dexter – History / Political Science
 Kamryn Denise Dixon – Communication Studies
 Adrian Glenn Donatelli – Media and Journalism / Political Science
 Elaine Dong – Computer Science / Information Science
 Adam Doyle – Music / Computer Science
 Corinne Drabenstott – Biomedical and Health Sciences Engineering
 Yinchen (Rebecca) Du – Business Administration / Philosophy
 Alexandra Kaitlin Dunbar – Business Administration / Exercise and Sport Science
 Sydney Durner – Psychology / Communication Studies
 Madeline Kate Ellis – Mathematics
 Emily Renee Esposito – Nursing
 Sebastian Parker Farris – Russian / Peace, War, and Defense
 Anna Jiajing Feng – Nutrition
 Annabelle Virginia Fisher – Public Policy / Psychology
 Anne Flanagan – Human Development and Family Science / Music
 Caitlin Ceili Flanagan – Environmental Studies / Public Policy
 Ganrong Fu – Psychology
 Taylor Ann Gailunas – Business Administration
 Gabrielle Wells Garner – Neuroscience / Psychology
 Hannah Garner – Psychology / English and Comparative Literature
 Quintin Avery Gay – Public Policy / Russian
 G. R. George – Linguistics / Asian Studies
 Christina Elizabeth Georgiou – Biology / Religious Studies
 Julian R. Goldner – Environmental Health Sciences
 David Alejandro Gonzalez Chavez – Information Science / Religious Studies
 Gwendolyn Gowan – Psychology
 Collin McKinney Graves – Neuroscience / Economics
 Maya Groff – Chemistry
 Jose David Guevara Hernandez – Economics / Political Science
 Foster Hager – Psychology
 Lauren Ainsley Haines – Public Policy
 Adelaide Ingram Harper – Neuroscience
 Caroline Frances Heffern – Peace, War, and Defense / Communication Studies
 Arwen Helms – Biology / Romance Languages
 Ryan Helms – Statistics and Analytics / Mathematics
 Carly Herndon – Business Administration / Exercise and Sport Science
 John Edgar Hinkle – Biology

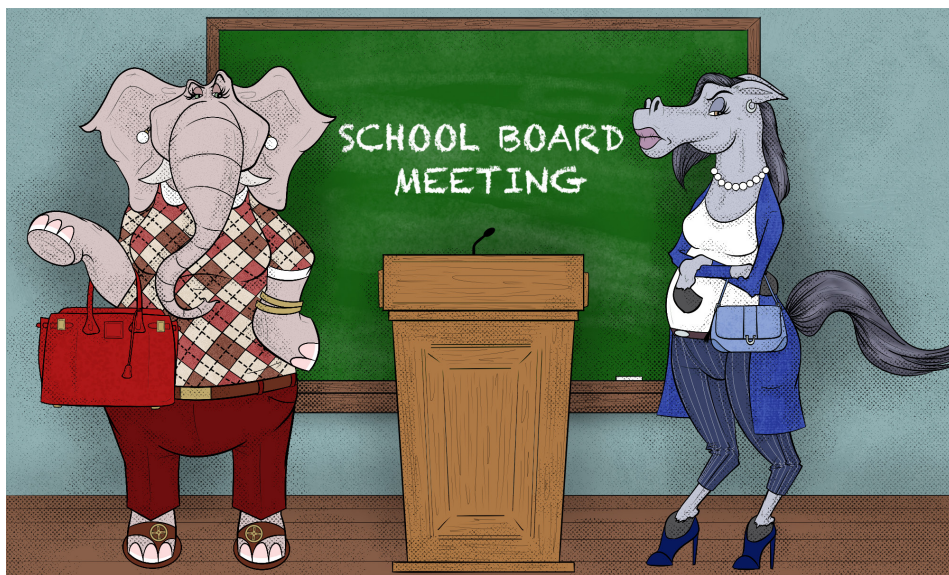
Rachel Caroline Hodakowski – Biology / English and Comparative Literature
 Andrew James Hoffman – Mathematics
 Emmaus William Holder – Sociology / Music
 Christopher Gantt Holliday – Economics / Exercise and Sport Science
 Caroline Hoover – Peace, War, and Defense
 Karissa Ming Hoover – Biomedical and Health Sciences Engineering
 Elias Horowitz – History / Public Policy
 Emerson Fant Harrison Houser – Economics / Political Science
 Leah MacKenzie Howell – Applied Mathematics
 Bennett Lathan Hubbard – Peace, War, and Defense / English and Comparative Literature
 Elsa Z. Huebsch – Chemistry
 Spencer Thomas Hurley – Chemistry
 Aubrey Ella Hyldahl – Psychology / Exercise and Sport Science
 Adaeze Ashley Rosemary Ibeanu – Information Science / Political Science
 Jacob Michael James – Public Policy / History
 Ruth Elizabeth Jeffers – English and Comparative Literature
 Joanna Nithila Jayachandran – Biology
 Andy Jin – Business Administration / Economics
 Anna (Huizi) Jin – Biology
 Eleanor Jones – Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures
 Zoe Millicent Kang – Environmental Health Sciences
 Patrick Kaper-Barcelata – Global Studies
 David Karash – Computer Science / Mathematics
 Joshua Kasheri – Political Science / History
 Andrew Kay – Biology
 Conor A. Kerr – Statistics and Analytics / Economics
 Jason Thomas Kerr – History / Political Science
 Ethan Joseph Kim – Communication Studies
 Adrian Gray Kirkman – Classics / Italian
 Sarah Tova Kirsh – Environmental Health Sciences / Biology
 Evelyn Grace Kitchens – Psychology
 Ava Klissouras – Biostatistics / Mathematics
 Lea Klissouras – Biomedical and Health Sciences Engineering
 Willem Kloempken – History / Peace, War, and Defense
 Srihaa Kolanukuduru – Neuroscience
 Marvin Burke Koonce, IV – Mathematics / Music
 Pranav Krishnan – Biostatistics / Computer Science
 John Kurz – Biomedical and Health Sciences Engineering
 You-Wei Lai – Psychology
 Kathleen Arann Lane – Neuroscience
 Anna Elizabeth Lassiter – Mathematics / Statistics and Analytics
 Jessica Grace Lee – Biology / Medical Anthropology
 Tiffanie Ann Lee – Biology
 Abigail Caroline Lehr – Chemistry / Biology

Grace Olivia Lena – Political Science / Public Policy
 Zhan Lin – Economics / Statistics and Analytics
 Eliza Jean List – Psychology
 Michelle Liu – Public Policy / Political Science
 Ashley Kathleen Logue – Political Science / Romance Languages
 Madeline Loops – Biology
 Matthew Lu – Biology
 Sophia Terese Luna – Public Policy / Romance Languages
 Elizabeth Anne Maguire – Archaeology / Anthropology
 Zan Jake Maley – English and Comparative Literature
 Shriya Mandal – Computer Science / Geological Sciences
 Christopher Stephen Manzano – Business Administration / Psychology
 Madison Reilly Marks – Music (Performance)
 Gianna Louise Maroney – Political Science / Anthropology
 Carsen Olivia Masterton – Political Science / Sociology
 Baylee Rose Matera – Neuroscience
 Caroline Elizabeth Mays – Music / Communication Studies
 Shelby Marcella McDuffie – Exercise and Sport Science / Biology
 Lacy McKee – Media and Journalism / Communication Studies
 Mary Slade McKee – Communication Studies / English and Comparative Literature
 Madelyn McLain – Sociology / Religious Studies
 Duncan Craddock McLean – Economics / Public Policy
 Makayla McMinn – Peace, War, and Defense
 Aarav Mehta – Computer Science / Biology
 Ethan Joshua Meyerhoffer – Biology / Physics
 Mary Stewart Miller – Business Administration / Political Science
 Anika Mittal – Biology
 Marilyn Elizabeth Mohr – History / Religious Studies
 Shourya Mukherjee – Physics / Computer Science
 Evan Murray – Computer Science
 Chigozirim Jessica Ndulwe – Psychology
 Emma Elizabeth Neal – Business Administration / Psychology
 Alec James Nipp – Computer Science / Neuroscience
 Yi Niu – Economics / Mathematics
 Erik David Norloff – Biology
 Torin Kathleen O'Brien – Biology / Asian Studies
 Benjamin Anthony Oh – Environmental Sciences
 Hannah Min-Young Oh – Nutrition / Economics
 Jonathan Paul Osborne – Political Science
 Shreya Patel – Psychology
 Tulsi Patel – Neuroscience / Medical Anthropology
 Yehsa Patel – Biology / Neuroscience
 Alexandra Margaret Patton – Biomedical and Health Sciences Engineering
 Alexandra Florence Peeler – English and Comparative Literature / Dramatic Art

Selah Grace Bekele-Piper – Human Development and Family Science
 Jared Seth Pittman – Political Science / Public Policy
 Lauren Elise Poore – Management and Society
 Alexander Orion Prakken – Biology
 Mallie Clara Purvis – Interdisciplinary Studies
 Emily Qiu – Nutrition
 Vidya Ramesh – Business Administration / Computer Science
 Alycin Ray – American Studies
 Kelly Ann Ray – English and Comparative Literature / Psychology
 Adithi Reddy – Global Studies / Interdisciplinary Studies
 Siddharth Babu Reddy – Peace, War, and Defense / Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures
 Katherine Grace Redenbaugh – Psychology / Religious Studies
 Alexander Forbes Reid – Statistics and Analytics / Economics
 Allison Nicole Reilly – Political Science
 Thomas Robert Reinhardt – Biology / Chemistry
 Ciara Renaud – Women's and Gender Studies
 Julia Marie Renberg – Psychology / Romance Languages
 Zachary Todd Revulbach – Psychology / Political Science
 Rachel Ann Reynolds – Human Development and Family Science / Psychology
 Taner Allen Richards – Biology
 Bradley Sadowsky – Comparative Literature
 Victoria Sagasta Pereira – Statistics and Analytics / Studio Art
 Abel Antonio Salas – Chemistry
 Yingning Sang – Biology / Economics
 Victoria Sansone – Political Science / Economics
 Jose Martin Santiago – Political Science
 Hannah Marie Santos – Neuroscience / Women's and Gender Studies
 Shaista Sayeed – Health Policy and Management
 Sara Schaecher – Neuroscience
 Jasper Munro Schutt – Global Studies / Cultural Studies
 Kaylee Alexis Scott – Biology
 Shreya Dutta Selvavel – Neuroscience
 Aditya Alagu Senthil – Biostatistics
 Pratyush Seshadri – Economics / Mathematics
 Ethan Kim Severson – Biology
 Amir Shaheen – Interdisciplinary Studies
 Neil Sharma – Public Policy / Political Science
 Alina Shcherbakova – Neuroscience
 Allen Shen – Business Administration / Computer Science
 Ahmed Shezad – Biology / Sociology
 Emlyn Zoe Shopmyer – Psychology / Media and Journalism
 JNathaniel Gregory Shue – Political Science
 Isabella Jade Siesel – Environmental Health Sciences
 Lydia Silverstone – Political Science

Brett Rutledge Smith, Jr. – Biology
 Tyler Patrick Smith – Political Science / Peace, War, and Defense
 Abigail Marie Smits – Psychology
 Isabella Sofia Soluri – Sociology
 Carson St Denis – Neuroscience
 Megan Ruth Stanfield – Psychology
 Callie Stevens – Psychology
 Trevor Clark Sumlin – Geological Sciences
 Hanji Sun – Mathematics / Statistics and Analytics
 Madison Grace Swanson – Political Science / Psychology
 Nicole Alaina Tamol – Psychology
 Kaibo Tang – Biostatistics / Mathematics
 Evan Davis Tarr – Philosophy
 Caroline McKenzie Teague – Political Science / History
 Brooke Katherine Thibault – Neuroscience
 Lauren Anice Thompson – Exercise and Sport Science / Communication Studies
 Kristen Hannah Thrower – Political Science / Geography
 Mason Tyler Tilly – Political Science / Public Policy
 Ashley Renaud – Women's and Gender Studies
 Ashley Titus – Neuroscience / Environmental Sciences
 Josiah Stephen Townsend – Peace, War, and Defense / History
 Payton Tucker – Human Development and Family Science / Psychology
 Hallie Turner – Environmental Sciences
 Rachel Elizabeth Turner – Biology
 Zoe Renee Turner – Political Science / Public Policy
 Nicholas Tutwiler – History
 Mackie Tate Tygart – Art History / Peace, War, and Defense
 Fiorella Villegas – Political Science / Medical Anthropology
 Steven John von Dohlen – Computer Science
 Jacob Wallihan – Political Science / Global Studies
 Tian Zi Wang – Biomedical and Health Sciences Engineering
 Gibson Anderson Weber – Public Policy / Political Science
 Aaron Wei – Nutrition / Chemistry
 Olivia White – Biology
 Leah Rebecca Whitfield – Biology / Neuroscience
 Masita Amalia Wicaksana – Psychology / Human Development and Family Science
 Riley Erin Wojcik – English and Comparative Literature
 David Gentry Wood – Exercise and Sport Science
 Samuel Woodhouse – Peace, War, and Defense / Political Science
 Aimee Yan – Public Policy
 Jada Cimone Young – English and Comparative Literature
 Jiangyuan Yuan – Computer Science
 Alexander Amin Zamani – Computer Science
 Yordana Alizah Zeledón – Global Studies
 Diana Zhou – Neuroscience

EDUCATION



DTH DESIGN/GRACE DAVIDSON

N.C. faces rise in partisan school board elections

Local officials discuss how party affiliation changes the voting environment

By Abigail Keller
Senior Writer
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In North Carolina, partisan school board elections are on the rise.

A partisan election includes the political party of candidates on the ballot.

More than 50 school boards in the state are partisan or will be by 2024. A recent law passed by the N.C. General Assembly made school board elections in Catawba, Hickory, Newton-Conover and Polk districts partisan, starting next year.

Since achieving majority control in the General Assembly in 2010, Republican lawmakers have gradually shifted the makeup of school boards by filing local bills — legislation that affects fewer than 15 counties and does not require approval from the governor.

School board members establish and maintain policies for schools in their district, as well as hire and collaborate with the district superintendent. They are responsible for setting direction, ensuring accountability and providing community leadership as advocates for schools.

Jeff Taylor, a Catawba County Schools board member eligible for reelection in 2024, has no doubts about running again. Unlike the last time he ran in the predominantly Republican county, his name will be on the ballot with “Democrat” beside it.

“I personally don’t feel like the school board should be partisan, but I understand why they did it,” Taylor said. “They did it so that the agenda that they want to push can be consistent and so they can get people’s votes without people really examining the candidates and looking into the issues.”

According to Michael Bitzer, the politics department chair at Catawba College, increased partisanship in school boards stems from

polarization — especially within state legislatures — and the inclusion of national issues in local educational debates.

“With super-majorities in the state legislature, Republicans are seeking to align as many offices within their grasp as they can, to ensure partisan politics are apparent when voters cast their ballots for these offices,” Bitzer said in an email.

What about Chapel Hill?

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools district is not partisan. Over a week after the CHCCS Board of Education candidate registration opened on July 7, no one filed to run for a seat.

A few days after local blog Triangle Blog published a piece about the lack of candidates and the possible threats that entailed, the list grew to 16 candidates.

Although some dropped out, 13 candidates, including three incumbents, are running for the four available seats on the board this year.

The CHCCS board is composed of seven members elected to serve four-year terms.

Rani Dasi, the current CHCCS board chair and also a candidate in this year’s election, expressed concern over the changing environment around school board elections.

“It really saddens me because these kids are our community,” Dasi said. “What becomes of their lives if they don’t have appropriate and sound basic education to enable them to navigate the world.”

Taylor said lawmakers making Catawba County’s school board election partisan shows they don’t want voters to think critically about their voting choices.

Candidate Vickie Feaster Fornville said she believes the increase of partisan school boards is being used as a tool to “dismantle” local public education.

“The more people we have at the table with different views and different voices, the better and the stronger that table will be,” Fornville said.

X: @dthcitystate

IN MEMORY OF

‘He really wanted to help make the world a better place’

Gene Pease remembered by family, former Chapel Hill Town Council colleagues

By Emma Hall
Staff Writer
city@dailytarheel.com

“Everybody who knew Gene Pease thought he was a great guy,” his wife Pamela Pease said.

Pease, a former Chapel Hill Town Council member, died in his home in Marina del Rey, Calif., on Sept. 10 from prostate cancer. He was 73 years old.

He is survived by his wife Pamela, his two daughters Tiffany Grandstaff and Heather Pease, his three siblings and his daughters’ families.

He was born in Toledo, Ohio in 1950. He studied architecture at the University of Cincinnati and received his MBA in entrepreneurship from the University of Southern California.

When he was attending Cincinnati, he met Pamela, a sweetheart for his fraternity and a fellow design major.

“We just sort of hit it off,” Pamela Pease said. “I mean, we both had such an interest in design, which is one of the things that drew us together.”

The two married and moved to Los Angeles in 1975 and had two daughters by 1984.

The Pease family moved to Chapel Hill in 1996 so Gene could be the CEO of sports apparel company Chalkline, Trench & Rival.

In Chapel Hill, he became involved in the community through public service, serving as the president of the Chapel Hill Public Library Foundation, the founding chair of the Triangle Community Foundation and as a Chapel Hill Town Council member. Pease served on the council from 2009 to 2013.

Former Chapel Hill Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt said because of Pease’s expertise in organizational development, he was interested in finding new ways for

municipal systems to work better.

“Before he became a council member, he began to demonstrate a lot of interest in how the town was managed,” Kleinschmidt said.

Kleinschmidt said that though the two were on opposite slates during election season, they always showed each other mutual respect.

He said that their different views allowed them to become close friends on the council and to see the bigger picture of how they could best serve Chapel Hill.

“What I bonded with Gene over was that we both recognize that our different views and perspectives on things actually, when brought together, created a clearer picture of what was the best route to take,” he said.

Laurin Easthom, who ran for town council with Pease in 2009, said that he was a pleasant person to be around. She described him as affable, creative and thoughtful — but what stood out to her the most during their time together was his sense of humor.

“He could just keep us really laughing,” she said.

Tiffany Grandstaff said that her father was a person who could light up any room.

“When he would arrive, the whole dynamic would change,” Grandstaff said.

She said this was especially true at family reunions and everyone would gravitate toward him.

“He loved to have a good time with family,” Heather Pease said.

Four months ago, Gene Pease posted on LinkedIn, explaining his fight with cancer and reflecting on the people who were important in his life.

Pam, Tiffany and Heather said they would miss the little things Gene did — like bringing his wife flowers, playing with toy trains, watching Tom and Jerry with his grandkids and giving advice to his daughters.

“He really wanted to help make the world a better place in so many ways,” Pamela Pease said.

X: @dthcitystate



PHOTO COURTESY OF TIFFANY GRANDSTAFF.

LOCAL ELECTIONS

Mariela Hernandez running for one of four seats on CHCCS Board of Education

Carrboro resident says she will prioritize equitable resources, communication

By Lola Oliverio
Staff Writer
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Editor’s Note: This story is part of a series on Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Board of Education candidates. The Daily Tar Heel is not endorsing any CHCCS school board candidates.

Mariela Hernandez, a Carrboro resident running for a seat on the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools Board of Education, said she hopes to bridge gaps between families in underrepresented communities and the district, and to help those families receive the support they need.

Hernandez works for Orange County’s Rapid Re-Housing Program,

which aims to quickly return unhoused individuals and families to permanent housing. Before working with the Rapid Re-Housing Program, she previously worked as a family navigator for Orange County’s Family Success Alliance, an organization that aims to help families in poverty gain access to helpful resources.

She was also involved in the McDougale Middle School Parent Teacher Association when her child attended the school.

“I advocate for community,” Hernandez said. “I might not be an educator — I want to hear from educators and understand what their struggle is going through the school system themselves.”

During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Hernandez said she and her fellow PTA members sent out a Google Form questionnaire to the entire school to gauge the needs of students and families.

“We were able to connect families to rental assistance, build assistance [and] materials that the teachers could send out to kids in school,” Hernandez said.

One concern Hernandez has is the attitude of educators toward children — specifically nonwhite children — in regard to post-high school plans.

“We have faculty that tells our kids that either they’re college material or not, and words are big — they can influence a child when they don’t have 100% belief in themselves,” Hernandez said. “I want that to change. I want teachers to be teachers, faculty to be trained to be culturally adequately knowledgeable and not to have assumptions on our children.”

Lori Carter, former McDougale Middle School PTA president, said that Hernandez has “her finger on the pulse” of her community.

Carter said McDougale has a substantial Spanish-speaking population, and that families have to deal with a language barrier along with other needs.

While she was on the PTA, Hernandez, who was born in Mexico, created two WhatsApp groups to communicate with English and Spanish-speaking parents of McDougale Middle School students, helping to spread information regarding events.

“She’s always somebody who’s kind and approachable, and always has a heart for service,” Carter said.

Mariela has three children — one is a graduate of CHCCS, one is currently in high school within the district, and one is about to enter the system and struggles with learning disabilities.

“I have worked with community members that have had a lot of challenges getting their kids

[Individualized Educational Plans] or 504s,” Hernandez said. “Just getting special education for their children has been really tough, so one of my big passions is providing excellent education for those kids who are exceptional.”

Hernandez also worked as the co-chair of the Orange County Food Council, an organization that aims to improve food access in the local area.

“It is striking to me how much I have been able to trust Mariela, and how willing she is to navigate difficult things, repair when necessary — she’s not like, ‘I’m perfect, I can do no harm,’” former Orange County Food Council coordinator Ashley Heger said. “It’s her willingness to be okay with the messiness and to always pull out the other side as someone that you can truly trust.”

X: @LolaOliverio

Sports

The Daily Tar Heel

COMING HOME

Sophomore guard Indya Nivar returns to N.C.

Apex native hopes to make an impact during her first year at UNC

By Matthew Maynard
Senior Writer
sports@dailytarheel.com

Two years ago, Courtney Banghart had to cut ties with Indya Nivar, but it wasn't the end of their relationship.

Nivar, an Apex native, was heavily recruited by the UNC women's basketball head coach in high school. However, the guard ultimately chose to play basketball at Stanford, where she spent her first year.

Due to NCAA tampering rules, Banghart couldn't keep in touch with Nivar. But when she hit the transfer portal after just one year in California, North Carolina was the first school to contact her.

"I recruited [Nivar and transfer Maria Gakdeng] the first time, so I have a pretty good sense of who they are, but then they left," Banghart said. "So then you literally break up and you're like, 'Alright, see you never.' And then here they are."

Entering her sophomore season and first at UNC, Nivar hopes to make a big jump in production this year in a new environment that's closer to home.

Welcomed with open arms

Out of high school, Nivar was one of the highest-ranked recruits in the 2022 class. After a year at



DTH/LARA CROCHIK

UNC sophomore guard Indya Nivar (24) practices during the women's basketball media day in Carmichael Arena on Oct. 12.

Stanford — where she said she didn't grow enough — it was time for a change.

When she hit the portal, UNC was at the top of her list and she hoped the Tar Heels would give her a call.

Since coming to North Carolina, Nivar has been welcomed with open arms by the team and they are already pushing her. According to her, the approach to coaching at UNC is different from Stanford — Banghart is very intentional and sets goals for each practice — something that Nivar has embraced.

For Nivar, UNC provides her with everything she wants: the ability to grow, be around people she trusts and, in her words, return to the player she used to be.

"I hope, and I feel very confident that she will return to the kind of wide-open, aggressive style of play that she played for four years in high school," Scott Campbell, Nivar's high school coach said. "She was always the best kid on the floor."

In high school, Nivar's teammates referred to her as a "unicorn." Campbell believed that to be true, stating that Nivar knew

her strengths and had a unique ability to read the game.

Nivar is a threat on both ends of the court, something that has led Banghart to previously describe her as "dynamic." Her ability to shoot the three, attack off the dribble and guard the opponent's top offensive player will help add extra depth to an already deep Tar Heel squad.

"She's also a great defensive player as well," senior forward Alyssa Ustby said. "That's something that we're really trying to amp up this year because we want to make it a lot harder for teams to score."

Nivar said she wants to improve her shooting ability and earn the chance to play more — she logged just one start with Stanford.

'Support system'

Nivar played high school basketball at Apex Friendship — just a 30-minute drive from Chapel Hill. Since returning to North Carolina, her friends and family have already gotten to see her practice at UNC.

No longer across the country, Nivar can now easily go home for a quick break whenever she needs to, something that she couldn't do last year.

"I just feel like having that right now, that support system so close, it's already gonna be beneficial for me throughout the season," Nivar said. "When times get tough, I can just go home for the day and reset and then come back ready to get back at it."

Nivar also has the opportunity to go watch her sister, Jasmine, play high school basketball back at her alma mater.

"Seeing familiar faces, people I used to go to school with, I think that was just pretty interesting and exciting," Nivar said. "You know, [in North Carolina] people [are] always cheering for me and wanting to support me. I felt like that was a different feel than what I had at Stanford."

X: @mdmaynard74

SWITCHING SIDES

Iowa State transfer draws on experience, excitement for first year at UNC

Lexi Donarski brings competitive drive, elite two-way game

By Daniel Wei
Assistant Sports Editor
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When the Tar Heels and Cyclones met last November, UNC women's basketball coach Courtney Banghart recalled that preparing to play Lexi Donarski was "so annoying" because of the guard's abilities to be both a lockdown defender and a prolific shooter.

So when the Iowa State talent entered the transfer portal this offseason, Banghart reached out with a simple pitch: "Hey, I'm tired of guarding you."

It worked.

In her first season as a Tar Heel, Donarski will likely make an immediate impact with the same versatility that previously gave Banghart headaches. In three seasons with the Cyclones, Donarski averaged 13.2 points and earned Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year honors in 2022.

Aside from her dynamic skillset, Donarski is bringing her intangible competitive drive.

"[I'm] a hard worker," she said. "I'm gonna give it all I have on the offensive and the defensive end every game."

'That's just how we were'

Donarski's morning routine wasn't exactly ordinary for a first grader. She started with the basics (wake

up at 6 a.m., brush your teeth) and then went straight into 15 minutes of stationary ball-handling.

A bit odd for the typical 6- or 7-year-old, sure. But for Lexi and her sister Macy, now a first-year guard at Montana, this daily pattern implemented by their parents felt normal. After all, both Pam and Dave Donarski played college basketball.

The sisters were convinced that every other kid was getting up to do these drills.

"We brainwashed these kids at a really early age," Dave joked.

Everything was a competition in the Donarski household, from the card game Euchre to ping pong, P.I.G. and more.

One winner, the rest losers. Each victory is still denoted by tally marks posted on the Donarski's refrigerator, updated whenever the sisters come home from college.

"Some people think that's wrong," Pam said with a laugh. "But that's just how we were, I guess."

The 'shot club'

When Lexi was around 12 years old, Pam and Dave started a "shot club." Each year, Lexi and Macy had to make a certain amount of shots in their home half-court gym by the end of the summer. Pam, a math teacher, charted each make via spreadsheet.

As the annual number of makes grew grew, with Lexi and Macy constantly trying to one-up each other, so too did the club. The sisters' teammates joined, and their siblings eventually participated as well.

"Our kids were a little crazy,"

Pam said. "They definitely weren't satisfied. It started at 2,500 [makes], then 5,000, then 10,000, then 15,000."

According to Dave, around 75 kids ultimately partook in the shot club. Each benchmark of makes had its own incentive, like Dairy Queen runs, pool parties, go-karting and mini-golfing. Naturally, there was merch, too: shot club T-shirts, their sleeves denoting how many makes one had. The works.

"We were getting what we wanted," Dave said. "Because obviously the more reps you get, doing them at a game-like speed, you're gonna become a better shooter."

Lexi's ability to shoot from deep complements North Carolina well.

Last year, Eva Hodgson and Kennedy Todd-Williams' 102 combined threes accounted for half of UNC's 3-point shooting production. Hodgson has since graduated and Todd-Williams transferred, leaving a shooting gap on UNC's roster that Lexi is looking to fill.

Lexi alone made 88 threes at a 37.1 percent clip in her sophomore season with the Cyclones. In practices, her teammates are well aware of her multi-level scoring ability.

"People are flying out, trying to block her shot and she'll do a pump fake and dribble pull-up," senior forward Alyssa Ustby said. "Or, she'll do a sidestep and still shoot the three or two."

'Do they always go this hard?'

During her visit to UNC, Lexi watched the Tar Heels in spring practice. Intrigued, she turned to



DTH/NATE SKVORETZ

UNC graduate guard Lexi Donarski (20) makes her entrance at Live Action in the Dean E. Smith Center on Oct. 13.

Banghart and asked, "Do they always go this hard?"

"Yeah," Banghart replied. "That's what we do."

Lexi was drawn to North Carolina's fast-paced, free-flowing style of play. At Iowa State, she was more or less a shooting specialist on offense. While Lexi saw success in that role, she's eager to bring more to UNC's offense.

"When we get to practice, coach is very happy to let us do what we've been working on and to get better," Lexi said. "There isn't really anything that's limiting the shots that we take. She wants us to just score, play together and have fun."

On the other end, shutting down opposing guards is a challenge Lexi embraces. Given that UNC hasn't had an all-conference defender

since 2013, Lexi should turn North Carolina's good defense — which finished third in the ACC in scoring defense through conference play — into a great one.

Whatever the task is, the highly touted transfer has both the willingness and talent to do it. As the preseason No. 16 Tar Heels pursue a Final Four appearance, Lexi's grit and two-way versatility might just make her the missing piece they needed.

"She really is only concerned, truly, with winning games," Dave said. "So this is her opportunity to go and potentially play for a national championship. She's crazy excited about it."

X: @danielhwei

BOSTON COLLEGE TRANSFER

New junior center aims to fill defensive gap

Maria Gakdeng brings shot-blocking, low post game to team

By Caroline Wills
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Watching junior center Maria Gakdeng block a shot in Carmichael Arena is a daily occurrence in the UNC women's basketball practices. In those moments, head coach Courtney Banghart said the team can only watch, laugh and say, "Whoa."

Soon, it will be a sight that fans can expect to witness. Gakdeng, a transfer from Boston College, is looking to fill a gap in the UNC roster — an inside threat who can help the team reach its Final Four aspirations. Ranking third in blocked shots and top-25 in scoring in the ACC last season, the 6-foot-3 Maryland native provides North Carolina with a two-way player who can combat physicality in the paint.

"This is the spot," Gakdeng said. "It was a top-25 team that needed someone like me."

Senior guard Deja Kelly said the team lacked a solid rim-protector last season. Its 3.8 blocks per game ranked 77th in the nation.

"Playing against her, it wasn't that fun because I couldn't get to the rim much," Kelly said. "It's great to have that on our team now."

Gakdeng averaged nearly two blocked shots per game last year, tallying 131 blocks in two seasons — for reference, senior forward Alyssa Ustby, the Tar Heels' leading shot-blocker, has 63 in

her career.

"I like to block shots," Gakdeng said. "[It's] one of my favorite things to do. It's easy to track the ball. It just comes natural to me."

Redshirt sophomore guard Kayla McPherson can easily pinpoint her first memory of a Gakdeng block.

The women's team frequently competes against a select group of male players, and on this specific day, a soon-to-be Gakdeng victim drove in for a layup. In response, the transfer jumped up and, in the words of McPherson, "she sent it."

"I'm telling you, not a lot of layups are going to be going up against us," McPherson said.

While defense is what Banghart is currently "harping" on in practice, Gakdeng's low-post scoring ability matches her defensive prowess. In her final season with the Eagles, the junior averaged 11.3 points per game, shooting 57.8 percent from the field.

According to Banghart, Gakdeng's length and ability to finish around the basket — what's been lauded by her teammates as a "crazy touch" — will only add to her impact.

"I think [she was] one of the good, young bigs last year in the country," Banghart said. "And she's only gotten better."

By competing alongside players who can give her more space on the floor, the UNC head coach believes Gakdeng will only continue to improve on the offensive end.

The transfer has already garnered national attention. In October, Gakdeng was named to this year's Lisa Leslie Center of the Year Award watchlist.



DTH/LARA CROCHIK
Junior forward Maria Gakdeng (5) stands on the court during women's basketball media day in Carmichael Arena on Oct. 12.

"On offense I run the floor, get the ball in the paint, finish around the rim pretty well and then am able to shoot mid-range," Gakdeng said. "Also rebounding is something that we're working on that we need to get better at. That's something that you guys can expect from me."

From the moment she arrived at UNC in June, the junior transfer said she quickly meshed with the other players. Chapel Hill is everything she was looking for, and in turn, the Tar Heels are finding everything they were looking for in Gakdeng.

In Kelly's words, the transfer is "the biggest missing piece that we've needed for a while."

"I'm like the president of the Maria fan club," Banghart said. "But I've got a lot of people fighting me for that."

X: @carolinewills03

TEAM BUILDING

Tar Heels compete together on different court: pickleball

Offseason spent bonding, learning to trust each other

By Ben McCormick
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How do you get a group of 15 highly competitive athletes to bond in just a few months? You let them compete against each other.

The UNC women's basketball team sought to build strong connections among its mix of new players. To achieve this, they encouraged competition off the basketball court. The team — which includes five first-years and three transfers — engaged in various activities to foster camaraderie.

Coach Courtney Banghart said at the 2023 ACC Tipoff that meshing the entire team was something she worried about, but ultimately, this group was the "easiest team so far to coach."

The Tar Heels spent the offseason playing "Minute to Win It" and "Family Feud." Sometimes they would venture off campus and participate in atypical activities like whitewater rafting, wiffle ball, water polo and even golf, which first-year Ciera Toomey allegedly dominated.

The secret to building good team rapport for this year's group of Tar Heels was to do everything together besides just putting an orange ball in a basket.

One of the main sports they tried their hand at was pickleball. In August, the Tar Heels met at the courts on South Campus and picked up some paddles. As pickleball made its way onto UNC's smorgasbord of bonding

activities, the players quickly got competitive over the game.

But it was their coach who may have been the most notable pickleball player out there. When told that many of her players deemed her the best pickleball player at UNC's team media day in October, Banghart had a quick and confident response: "Facts."

She said that the pairing of senior forward Alyssa Ustby and first-year guard Sydney Barker gave her a run for her money, but the consensus among the players was that Banghart runs the pickleball courts.

"She's the master at it," McPherson said. "We follow her lead."

Sophomore guard Paulina Paris said she has had a lot of time to bond with the first-years — she lives with or near all five of them. Her pickleball partner was first-year RyLee Grays, and even though she and Grays fell short of winning, Paris said she knew how important outings like these are.

"I think just being out there for an hour thirty, doing something else that wasn't basketball, it just brought us closer throughout the summer," Paris said. "And even the trust thing, it got us to trust each other. It was a good offseason."

While some of the activities, like playing pickleball, are organized by Banghart and the coaches, the bonds are organic.

"TikTok dance-offs, I mean, you name it," Banghart said. "We kind of do it all. This group really likes one another. They go to the football games, or they go to the soccer games or the field hockey games together, and I'm sure they're competing on who can get in first and who has the better seat."

X: @BenMcC33

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Have you already forgotten me?

By Savannah Clay

I leave the back door unlocked
even though you'll sneak through the front
and try to tiptoe past my room.
The creak of the fourth floorboard
always gives you away.
I wait for the yellow light
to outline my door frame
to hear you open the pretzel jar
and a can of Coca-Cola.
I lean my head against the door
hoping you'll turn the knob
whisper Savannah
and crawl into the twin bed next to me
to tell me how "your friend" left you at the party
for some dude you think is ugly
and wheeze at his pictures
and corny Instagram captions
until we think we hear Daddy coming down the hallway.
I'll tell you where your bonnet is
tell you to wipe the greasy foundation off your face
and ask you to stay like when we were little
even though I know you won't.
But the knob never turns
the strip of yellow light turns to blackness
and I slip back into bed.
I'll ask you in the morning.

I am Savannah Clay, currently a junior here at UNC-Chapel Hill. I'm majoring in Human Development and Family Science with minors in Education and Creative Writing. Poetry has played a significant role in my life, and I've always loved how therapeutic and freeing it is. In the future, I want to potentially publish my writing alongside my career as a K-12 teacher. Whether to a tee or partially, I hope my work speaks to everyone as much as it speaks to me.

BASKETBALL PREVIEW

A loaded deck: Meet the UNC basketball players

ROB LANDRY
GUARD #22
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
DUWE FARRIS
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
GAS/FUEL
 GO TO WARM-UP SONG?
WHATEVER IS PLAYING

PAXSON WOJCIK
GUARD #8
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
DUWE
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
SMART WATER
 GO TO WARM-UP SONG?
FIREMAN - LIL WAYNE

CORMAC RYAN
GUARD #3
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
HARRISON "HE'S A GOODBALL"
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
ITALIAN FOOD
 GO TO WARM-UP SONG?
KEEPS A ROTATION LIKES THE NEW DRAKE ALBUM

JAE'LYN WITHERS
FORWARD #24
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
ZAYDEN AND HARRISON
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
MONEY
 GO TO WARM-UP SONG?
NO GO-TO; MIXES IT UP

JALEN WASHINGTON
FORWARD #13
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
SETH TRIMBLE
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
FOOD
 GO TO WARM-UP SONG?
SOFTER DRAKE MUSIC

SETH TRIMBLE
GUARD #7
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
PAXSON WOJCIK
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
GRAPES
 GO TO WARM-UP SONG?
ANY DRAKE

ARMANDO BACOT
CENTER #5
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
CORMAC RYAN
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
CROCS
 GO TO WARM-UP SONG?
FEIN BY TRAVIS SCOTT & PLAYBOI CARTI

ZAYDEN HIGH
FORWARD #1
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
HARRISON INGRAM
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
BARBECUE
 GO TO WARM-UP SONG?
DREAMS AND NIGHTMARES - MEEK MILL

CREIGHTON LEBO
GUARD #14
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
ARMANDO BACOT
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
LEMON-LIME GATORADE
 FAVORITE MOVIE?
LORD OF THE RINGS

ELLIOT CADEAU
GUARD #2
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
HARRISON INGRAM
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
MONEY
 GO TO WARM-UP SONG?
FANETTO - CHIEF KEEF

REYD FARRIS
FORWARD #34
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
THE WHOLE TEAM
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
GUITAR PICKS
 GO TO WARM-UP SONG?
WHEN THE LEVEE BREAKS - LED ZEPPELIN

JAMES OKONKWO
FORWARD #32
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
HARRISON
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
VC ON ZK
 GO TO WARM-UP SONG?
SHUFFLES BETWEEN AMERICAN AND UK RAP

RJ DAVIS
GUARD #4
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
HARRISON
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
CANDY
 GO TO WARM-UP SONG?
ANY SONG BY LIL DURK

HARRISON INGRAM
FORWARD #55
 WHO WOULD YOU GO ON A ROAD TRIP WITH?
RJ AND ZAYDEN
 LIFETIME SUPPLY
EXTRA TOASTY CHEEZ-ITS
 GO TO WARM-UP SONG?
ANYTHING RIMANFRA OR BEYONCE

MARIA GAKDENG
CENTER #5
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
DAENERYS TARGARYEN
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
EFFECTIVE
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
RUN TRACK

ALYSSA FITSBY
GUARD/FORWARD #1
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
KIM POSSIBLE
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
GRITTY
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
SOCCER OR SOFTBALL

DEJA KELLY
GUARD #25
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
IDORA THE EXPLORER
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
"PLAYER-COACH"
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
MODELING FULL TIME

PAULINA PARIS
GUARD #2
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
SUPERHERO
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
INSPIRING
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
VOLLEYBALL

KAYLA MCPHERSON
GUARD #11
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
PACE
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
JUMP ROPE

ANYA POOLE
FORWARD #31
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
ANYONE GABRIELLE UNION PLAYS
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
STRATEGIC
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
PLAYING SOCCER

LEXI DONARSKI
GUARD #20
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
ANNA FROM FROZEN
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
PASSIONATE
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
HANG OUT WITH FRIENDS; PICK UP A NEW HOBBY

RYLEE GRAYS
FORWARD #22
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
COMING OF AGE COMEDY CHARACTER
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
DIRECT
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
PLAYING COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

ALEXANDRA ZELAYA
FORWARD #0
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
FLINT LOCKWOOD
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
PASSIONATE
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
SCUBA DIVING OR ARTIST

RENIYA KELLY
GUARD #10
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
LISA SIMPSON
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
BALANCED
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
SWIMMING IN COLLEGE

LAILA HULL
GUARD #4
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
DOROTHY FROM WIZARD OF OZ
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
VERSATILE
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
RUN TRACK (SPRINTS)

INDYA NIVAR
GUARD #24
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
HAKA IN BLACK PANTHER
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
INTENSE
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
PLAYING COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

TEONNI KEY
FORWARD #13
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
ZENAYIA
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
PASSIONATE
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
PLAYING VOLLEYBALL

SYDNEY BARKER
GUARD #15
 MOVIE/TV CHARACTER?
MADAMA
 BANGHART'S COACHING STYLE IN ONE WORD
"SMART-ORIENTED"
 WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING INSTEAD OF BASKETBALL?
READING SWIMMING OR READING

ONE LAST RUN



DTH/OLIVIA PAUL

UNC graduate center Armando Bacot (5) walks on to the court during Live Action in the Dean E. Smith Center on Oct. 13.

‘Don’t let him get the ball’

Fifth-year center Armando Bacot is feared, respected

By Shelby Swanson

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“This is the last time y’all are gonna see me.”

Those were the first words out of Armando Bacot’s mouth as he spoke to the media at the 2023 ACC Tipoff. If you listened closely, you could probably hear the collective sigh of his conference opponents. Or, in the case of UVA coach Tony Bennett, it was a sarcastic, “Who’s that?”

In Hubert Davis’ mind, Bacot’s performance is directly correlated to UNC’s success. That’s why the head coach said on the “College Hoops Today” podcast that the big man needs to be dominant. Not just good or occasionally great — he needs Bacot to dominate each game and be the country’s best rebounder. And if you’re one of North Carolina’s opponents, the key to shutting down the Tar Heels — despite seven new faces — remains the same: stop Bacot.

Easier said than done. Just ask any ACC big man and his coach.

“I don’t know what it is about that guy,” N.C. State’s DJ Burns said. “Boxing him out is a fun task. I don’t know how he does it, but he’s in a great position every time.”

For ACC Preseason Player of the Year Kyle Filipowski, combatting

Bacot’s size was a challenge last year. Per his coach, Duke’s Jon Scheyer, you “better make sure you put a body on him” because “he’s one of the best rebounders in college basketball.”

Miami’s Norchad Omier took it a step further: “Don’t let him get the ball.” And if he does? “Take a charge.”

But for Miami coach Jim Larrañaga, it goes beyond just Bacot. He said the post player’s supporting cast is the key to his success.

“When the other team can just sic their whole defense on a big guy, it makes life miserable,” Larrañaga said, later adding, “He catches the ball eight feet from the basket with a crowd around him. When you have good players around you, you can pass it out to them. When they make shots, then all of a sudden, there’s not as large a crowd around you the next time.”

That was Bacot’s experience against Pitt last year, the ACC team he said defended him the best — sending double teams and providing various looks so the center “couldn’t find a rhythm.”

“I hate playing against coach [Jeff] Capel,” Bacot said. “He always finds ways to make it tough on me. I thought last year, after the way they guarded me, teams copycatted that because I struggled with it a lot. They used that against me. But I think this year I won’t have any problems with any defenses.”

With a new crew surrounding him, it’s safe to say Bacot’s confidence is at an all-time high. At the 2023 ACC Tipoff, he casually threw out the accolades he was chasing — “ACC

Player of the Year, National Player of the Year, First-Team All-American, something, I gotta find a way to get my jersey retired” — and later detailed his post-basketball career aspirations to start a private equity fund.

But before he begins his professional ventures, he’s got one final ride. His final chance to terrorize conference foes and, later down the line, take a stab at that elusive national championship. Unless...

“You don’t want to stay another year?” Davis turned to ask Bacot at the 2023 ACC Tipoff with a laugh — to be clear, this is Bacot’s last year of eligibility — before telling a story about his first interaction with his star center. Davis was supposed to be heading to New York, but the recruit didn’t play, so Davis traveled down to Richmond, Va., where he met Bacot.

The two are now inextricably linked, and what started as mere happenstance has fostered a relationship bonded by both humor and hard expectations.

As Davis answered a question about Bacot in a ACC Tipoff breakout interview, he was interrupted as laughter broke out. He took a glance at Bacot — the last time he’ll share the spotlight with him at one of these preseason media events — and returned to the question at hand.

“He’s probably making people laugh [right now],” Davis said. “Well, he can hold a crowd. I want him to hold a crowd on the floor. I want this to be his best year.”

X: @shelbymswanson

FULL CIRCLE

Paxson Wojcik transfers from Brown

Graduate guard to add shooting depth, is ‘good fit’ for team

By Matthew Maynard

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When he was a baby, Paxson Wojcik had a picture taken of him in the Dean E. Smith Center wearing a Santa hat with a basketball between his legs.

When he got the opportunity to play in the Dean Dome in 2021 as a guard for Brown, Wojcik recreated the picture — albeit with a Bears practice jersey on.

In March, Wojcik became the first player to transfer to UNC for the 2023-24 season. Now he’ll have the chance to recreate that picture once more, this time as a Tar Heel.

“[It’s] pretty special seeing myself here when I was younger,” Wojcik said. “I didn’t even really remember, I was so young. And then being back here, it’s a full circle thing.”

Paxson’s dad, Doug, was an assistant coach for North Carolina under Matt Doherty from 2000-2003.

“It was an environment that Paxson certainly remembered,” Doug said. “But at the same time I don’t know if he really remembered, you know what I mean?”

But Paxson’s first game in the Smith Center wasn’t for the Tar Heels. As a junior at Brown two years ago, he posted 14 points in a seven-point loss to UNC.

“It was such a close game and competitive game,” Paxson said. “It gets brought up a lot. It’s really funny now just being here and being in the locker room with RJ [Davis], Armando [Bacot], guys who I’ve played since high school.”

When recruiting through the transfer portal this offseason, head coach Hubert Davis said the team looked for players they didn’t want to play against. He found exactly what he was looking for in Paxson.

This season, Paxson will have the green light — a sign of respect in regards to one’s decision-making and shooting ability within the UNC

X: @mdmaynard74



DTH/LARA CROCHIK

UNC graduate guard Paxson Wojcik (8) dribbles the ball during the scrimmage against St. Augustine’s on Friday.

basketball program. Legendary UNC head coach Dean Smith, according to Davis, made players earn his trust before being given the green light, something Davis himself had to work towards while playing at North Carolina.

Paxson’s comfort from beyond the arc is something that UNC lacked last season. The Tar Heels shot 31 percent from three in ACC play, placing them last in the conference.

“The three green light guys are RJ and Pax and Cormac [Ryan],” Davis said. “The reason why they’re green light guys is for a number of reasons, but one [is] they’ve earned it.”

Off the court, Paxson has fit right in with the team — from surfing in the Outer Banks over the summer to team meals at Davis’ house to golf outings with graduate transfer Cormac Ryan.

“How he’s been in the community with everyone has been great,” graduate center Armando Bacot said. “Everyone knows him and he’s loved by everyone.”

As the season quickly approaches, Paxson is looking forward to that first game in a UNC jersey.

“I think it’s gonna be another one of those special moments,” Paxson said. “I’m definitely gonna take a second to take it in — it’ll be hard not to smile.”

FORWARD ADDITIONS

Harrison Ingram brings personality, movement to team

Stanford transfer was aggressively pursued in offseason

By Brendan Lunga

Senior Writer
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When Harrison Ingram entered the transfer portal this offseason, seven words from head coach Hubert Davis sold him on coming to UNC: “We don’t want you. We need you.”

The junior forward for the UNC men’s basketball team will bring his versatility from Stanford to a struggling North Carolina offense that ranked 13th out of 15 ACC teams in field goal percentage last season. Off the court, his humor and fun-loving attitude have helped create a sense of brotherhood in the locker room, which goes far for a team with seven new faces.

As a McDonald’s All-American out of Dallas, Ingram’s future seemed bright. His college decision came down to UNC, Purdue and Stanford, where he ultimately committed.

Ingram said he and former head coach Roy Williams were close during his recruiting process, but also joked that when he tried calling Williams to tell him he wasn’t coming to UNC, Williams never answered the phone.

At Stanford, the forward averaged 10.5 points per game, earning Pac-12 Freshman of the Year honors in 2022. When push came to shove this offseason, though, he had to do what was best for his basketball career.

“I feel like the spot was wide open,” Ingram said, later adding, “You can’t get better than this.”

He said Davis recruited him every day while he was in the portal, calling and FaceTiming him. Davis even tried to come to his house twice.

The day Ingram arrived at UNC’s campus, he ran into Williams for the first time since the phone incident.

“Finally, you’re here,” the legendary coach told him.

Ingram’s ‘welcome to UNC’ moment came about a week after moving to Chapel Hill. Still jet-lagged and laying in bed at 2 a.m., he was bored and went to the gym. That was where it finally hit him — standing there all alone.

“I’m looking around like, ‘This is crazy,’” Ingram said. “It was like a dream.”

In practices so far, Ingram said Davis has him “doing a little bit of everything” — coming off ball screens, isolating on the wing and guarding one through five.

Ingram’s passing ability, though, could be his biggest asset. His 121

assists ranked top-15 among all forwards last season. For a UNC team that finished 310th nationally in assist rate in last season, Ingram’s playmaking could prove a much-needed addition.

“When you mention RJ [Davis], Elliot [Cadeau] and Harrison, instinctively, yes, they can score, but instinctively they like the pass, they like to be a playmaker,” Davis said. “And so when you have that type of player out there on the floor, it really helps with sharing the basketball.”

Ingram is also ready to demonstrate some new additions to his game. He said he has been working on his athleticism, losing 18 pounds from last season. And after working out with Brandon Payne — Stephen Curry’s trainer — he noted his shooting “has gotten way, way better.”

Most importantly, though, Ingram wants to prove that he’s a winner — he interrupted reporters at UNC’s media day in October to emphasize that point. It’s something he said he wasn’t able to showcase at Stanford, which finished last season with a 14-19 record.

Ingram’s chemistry with his teammates has grown organically. He lived with transfers Jae’lyn Withers and Paxson Wojcik in a dorm over the summer, and they moved into an apartment together for the school year.



DTH/LARA CROCHIK

UNC junior forward Harrison Ingram (55) fights for a rebound at the men’s basketball exhibition against St. Augustine’s on Friday in the Dean E. Smith Center.

“[Ingram’s] my homeboy,” Withers said, later adding, “He’s hilarious. He has the most spontaneous and random personality ever.”

His “goofy” nature is the thing most of his teammates noted first about Ingram. He knows when he needs to be serious, but in general, he’s a light-hearted guy that likes to crack jokes.

“He lights the day up just with his personality,” forward Armando Bacot said. “We’ve been so fortunate to have him, and he’s been a great teammate and a great competitor, and he does all the right things.”

Despite coming in a month late from Stanford, Ingram said the team “was a family right away.” He said getting to know former players and seeing UNC greats like Williams and Tyler Hansbrough come back so often made it feel that way.

Ingram will play his first game in Carolina Blue on Nov. 6. And, as Davis told him during the offseason, this team doesn’t just want Ingram to be a big part of a national championship run — they will need him to be.

X: @brendan_lunga18

MEN'S SCHEDULE PREVIEW

UNC basketball to face challenging foes in non-conference slate

Tough lineup will test the Tar Heels' resiliency, staying power

By Cade Shoemaker
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After missing the NCAA tournament last March, the preseason No. 19 UNC men's basketball team will look to right the ship this season.

That path won't be easy. The Tar Heels' schedule includes matchups against fellow blue bloods, the reigning national champions and plenty of ranked Power Five programs.

Here's a breakdown of the 2023-2024 schedule.

UNC will open its season in early November with three home tune-up games against mid-majors Radford, Lehigh and UC Riverside.

The Tar Heels will then travel to the Bahamas over the Thanksgiving break as they compete for the third time in the Battle 4 Atlantis tournament. After a matchup against Northern Iowa in the first round on Nov. 22, UNC's second game should prove to be its first real test of the season, facing either No. 22 Villanova or Texas Tech. The final game in the Bahamas will see the Tar Heels face off against one of the following opponents: Memphis, No. 14 Arkansas, Michigan or future ACC member Stanford.

Traveling back home, North Carolina will welcome preseason No. 9 Tennessee on Nov. 29 in the ACC/SEC challenge. Deep depth from the Volunteers, coupled with point guard Zakai Zeigler's potential return from injury, will test UNC's defense early in the season.

North Carolina will host Florida State on Dec. 2 to open ACC play. A quick three-day turnaround will

then take UNC to Madison Square Garden in New York, where the Tar Heels will face the defending national champions, the Connecticut Huskies, in the Jimmy V Classic.

Preseason No. 6 UConn will return with most of its offense from last year, with key players like sophomores Donovan Clingan and Alex Karaban looking to expand their roles.

An 11-day break will allow North Carolina to regroup ahead of this year's CBS Sports Classic in Atlanta, where UNC will face No. 16 Kentucky. The last meeting between the Tar Heels and Wildcats was in the 2021 CBS Sports Classic, with UNC losing 98-69, despite a 22-point double-double from then-junior Armando Bacot.

North Carolina will play its third consecutive neutral-court game on Dec. 20 in Charlotte, facing Oklahoma in the second annual Jumpman Invitational.

After a final nonconference game against Charleston Southern, the Tar Heels will dive into ACC play in early January with a three-game road stretch against Pittsburgh, Clemson and N.C. State. The rebuilding Wolfpack team will be looking for new pieces alongside center D.J. Burns after star guard Terquavion Smith left for the NBA.

On Jan. 13, UNC will return home to play Syracuse for the first time since the retirement of their longtime head coach Jim Boeheim. After matchups against Louisville, Boston College, Wake Forest, FSU and Georgia Tech, the Tar Heels will compete in one of the most anticipated matchups of the season — a home game against preseason No. 2 Duke on Feb. 3. Since the Blue Devils got the better of the Tar Heels in both meetings last year, North Carolina will be looking to defeat Duke for the first time in the Jon Scheyer era.

After that rivalry matchup, UNC will face Clemson at home, travel to face No. 13 Miami and Syracuse and then return home against Virginia Tech — all in the first half of February. The Tar Heels will then make the trek up to Charlottesville to take on Virginia on Feb. 24 — facing the team that ended the Tar Heels' season last March, after North Carolina lost 68-59 in the ACC Tournament quarterfinals.

UNC will once again match up against Miami and N.C. State at home before facing Notre Dame on March 5, which will see graduate guard Cormac Ryan match up against his former team.

The final game of the regular season will feature none other than Duke on March 9. The following Tuesday will mark the start of the ACC Tournament which will be held in Washington, D.C.

X: @cadeshoemaker23



DTH/KENNEDY COX

Men's Basketball Notable Matchups

HOME
NOV
6
Radford
AWAY
DEC
16
Kentucky

HOME
NOV
29
Tennessee
AWAY
DEC
20
Oklahoma

HOME
DEC
2
Florida State
AWAY
FEB
10
Miami

AWAY
DEC
5
UConn
AWAY
MAR
9
Duke

DTH DESIGN/HAILEY PATTERSON

SEASON AT A GLIMPSE

Looking ahead at the UNC women's basketball schedule

Tar Heels expect strong opponents, more attendance

By Lydia Kampe
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The preseason No. 16 UNC women's basketball team, joined by eight newcomers, is ready to tackle yet another tough set of opponents this season.

Tipping off on Nov. 8, the Tar Heels will face their first competitor of the season, Gardner-Webb, in Carmichael Arena. UNC will then face three more teams — Davidson, Hampton, and Elon — at home on Nov. 12, Nov. 15, and Nov. 18, respectively, for a busy week of play.

After getting comfortable at home, UNC will travel down to Estero, Fla. for the Gulf Coast Showcase. There, the Tar Heels will face Vermont on Nov. 24, as well as two other undetermined competitors — which could include No. 3 Iowa led by Caitlin Clark.

Coming back up to Chapel Hill, the Tar Heels will play one of their toughest matchups of the season in the ACC/SEC Challenge against No. 6 South Carolina. The Gamecocks finished 36-1 last season after losing to Iowa in the Final Four. With the addition of All-Pac-12 Honorable Mention Te-Hina Paopao from Oregon, South Carolina is anticipated to have even more consistency from behind the 3-point line this season.

That game is expected to draw plenty of fans to Chapel Hill.

"I mean, South Carolina, I think there's under 1,000 tickets left already and it's not until November," UNC head coach Courtney Banghart said at the 2023 ACC Tipoff. "And we haven't even put it on sale for the general public yet."

After the Gamecocks, North Carolina will face No. 2 UConn on Dec. 10 in the Hall of Fame Women's Showcase in Uncasville, Conn. That game is expected to feature a recovered Paige Bueckers, who missed last season with an ACL injury and was named a preseason All-American heading into this year.

The Tar Heels will then return to North Carolina to play Oklahoma on Dec. 19 in the Jumpman Invitational in Charlotte before moving into conference play on Dec. 31 against Clemson.

UNC will come across several other preseason top-20 teams throughout conference play, including No. 8 Virginia Tech, No. 10 Notre Dame, No. 17 Louisville and No. 18 Florida State — all teams that pose unique threats.

After taking down the Tar Heels in two close games last season, Virginia Tech center Elizabeth Kitley decided to return for her fifth year of eligibility and will look to make the Hokies a force to be reckoned with once again. Kitley is a two-time ACC Player of the Year and has an 8-2 record against North Carolina during her time with the Hokies.

North Carolina beat the Fighting Irish, 60-50, last season. The fight Notre Dame is expected to put up this season is heavily dependent on whether or not its star guard

Olivia Miles successfully rehabs her knee injury before the teams face off.

Louisville lost one of its key players, guard Hailey Van Lith, to the transfer portal, but used the same tool to take on California transfer Jayda Curry, who is expected to be a big contributor to the team this season.

To finish off their regular season, the Tar Heels will face rival Duke for the second time on March 3, this time in the comfort of their own home at Carmichael Arena. The team will then look to make its way through the ACC Tournament from March 6 to March 10 in Greensboro before potentially earning a berth in the NCAA Tournament.

X: @dthsports



DTH/ASHLYN RHYNE

Women's Basketball Notable Matchups

HOME
NOV
8
Gardner-Webb
HOME
DEC
31
Clemson

HOME
NOV
30
South Carolina
HOME
JAN
21
Louisville

AWAY
DEC
10
UConn
HOME
FEB
4
Virginia Tech

AWAY
DEC
19
Oklahoma
HOME
MAR
3
Duke

DTH DESIGN/HAILEY PATTERSON

FRESH FACES



DTH/LARA CROCHIK

UNC first-year forward Zayden High (1) shoots a free-throw during the men's basketball exhibition against St. Augustine's on Friday in the Dean E. Smith Center.

First-year recruit earns his spot

Zayden High brings new energy to basketball team

By Caroline Wills

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It's easy for Zayden High to pick out his "welcome to college" moment.

At a summer practice, the UNC men's basketball first-year forward was matched up with graduate center Armando Bacot. Zayden couldn't help but talk a little smack, prompting the kind of response only an upperclassman can give.

"[Bacot] came down and kind of dunked," Zayden said. "I wouldn't say on me, but like over me — around me. He started talking [back]. He was like, 'Welcome to college!'"

Rest assured, there's no bad blood at the moment. The veteran center said he has been impressed by Zayden's physicality, toughness and fearlessness in practice — traits a team usually expects from fifth-years, not rookies.

"I'm a huge fan of him," Bacot said. "I love playing with him." Zayden joins UNC's roster of seasoned players as one of only two first years on the team. As an all-around threat, Zayden is both active around the basket and capable of knocking down outside shots. While he isn't exactly sure what his role will be yet, he's happy to be plugged in anywhere to help the team.

"I think he's going to play a lot this year," Bacot said.

Zayden quickly found his place in the 'Carolina Family.'

Across his forearm in black, cursive ink, a tattoo reads, "Family > everything."

His parents, Mike and Tawney High, share the same tattoo — the three decided to get the matching ink for Zayden's 18th birthday. Zayden said his family are the heart of his game and that his first collegiate season is for them — a repayment for their support throughout his basketball journey.

The first-year said he chose North Carolina because of the way head coach Hubert Davis treated Zayden's family.

Mike said Davis was consistently honest about what Zayden's role on the team would look like. At the time of his offer, UNC was targeting top-ranked recruit GG Jackson.

The Tar Heels didn't necessarily need Zayden, but Davis wanted him.

In April 2022, Davis watched Zayden drop 27 points on Jackson's team in the Nike EYBL tournament. Tawney said Davis likely made the trip to scout Jackson, but after witnessing her son's explosive performance, he quickly reached out about his interest.

"There's not a lot of people that know what Zayden brings to a team," Mike said. "That's kind of the thing we're waiting to see, so everybody can see what we know he can do. You guys got a little glimpse of it in the scrimmage. He's one of those guys that does all the intangibles. He rebounds. He plays defense. Anything the coaches ask of him, he's going to do."

So, what should a scouting report on Zayden look like?

In his own words, which nearly mirror his father's, Zayden is everywhere on the court. He loves to rebound, and he'll take shots when he's open. Although he's mainly been practicing as a stretch four, Zayden said he'll take on whatever role Davis needs him in — on and off the court.

"[I want to] be at the right spots when they need me to be and be the energy off the bench," the first-year said. "I'm very loud, and I like to make noise."

Davis said at an October press conference that first-years Zayden and Elliot Cadeau each bring a youthful competitive fire to the team and skill sets that the team needs. Zayden stands out to the head coach for his passing and shooting ability.

"He's not a freshman," Davis said. "He's almost like a junior, in terms of being in the right spots defensively, understanding concepts and being able to retain information and listen and being able to apply it out there on the floor."

Junior forward Harrison Ingram said Zayden's versatility allows him to defend any position — he can stay in front of guards and also contest bigs in the paint.

After watching last season's team fall from preseason No. 1 to missing the NCAA Tournament, Zayden said it has given him and the other Tar Heels an edge.

"I just want to bring the national championship to the school," Zayden said. "I want to do whatever the team needs me to do, and I want to have great energy while we do it."

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TRANSFER TALENT

'In his blood': Jae'Lyn Withers comes home to North Carolina

Graduate forward has big goals for upcoming season

By Harry Crowther

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While the Louisville Cardinals were one of the Power Five's worst teams last season with a 4-28 record, it still wasn't easy for forward Jae'Lyn Withers to leave.

"I felt like I needed to give it one more shot," Withers said. "But I think that I gave Louisville a lot of, not only my mental [energy], but as well as my physical [energy]. I think it was time for a change."

What was easy? Coming home. A Charlotte native, Withers returned to North Carolina after transferring from North Mecklenburg to Cleveland Heights in Ohio for his senior year of high school and playing his first three collegiate seasons at Louisville. Over those three years for the Cardinals, he averaged eight points and 5.6 rebounds in 81 games, making the graduate student an under-the-radar addition as part of an influx of transfers for UNC.

"This is a lifelong dream," Withers said. "Who wouldn't want to play for Chapel Hill? It's so much history that goes into these colors and this program. Being able to play here and being from North Carolina, it's amazing."

While he played recreational and AAU basketball when he was younger, Withers said he didn't take the game seriously until eighth grade.

Once he realized he couldn't rely on his height and athleticism, he started to work harder. His jump shot, however, came naturally.

"I could always shoot the ball pretty good," Withers said. "I always used to practice circus shots and they would be normal whenever it came game time."

After all, basketball is in his blood.

His dad, Curtis Withers, was a college star at Charlotte. He was named All-Conference for the 49ers three times and went on to play professionally overseas. Jae'Lyn's dad has pushed him to get better and



DTH/NATE SKVORETZ

UNC graduate forward Jae'Lyn Withers (24) pauses during the scrimmage at Live Action on Oct. 13 at the Dean E. Smith Center.

provided a lot of motivation and perspective.

"Every day he tells me [to] stay in the gym," Jae'Lyn said. "Don't let nobody get a step ahead of you. He says, day in and day out, whenever I talk to him, enjoy the moment because this is an experience he always wanted to have."

Family is very important to Jae'Lyn. A big factor in his transfer to UNC was to be closer to his family so they could attend more games. Given he was born when his dad was only 16, he has grown up alongside his parents.

"My mom is definitely my mom, but I definitely see my dad as like a brother to an extent," Jae'Lyn said. "We grew up and experienced a lot of the same things."

In his junior year of high school, Jae'Lyn averaged a double-double, was named first team all-state and led North Mecklenburg to a 27-2 record. In his senior year at Cleveland Heights, he averaged 19.8 points and 9.7 rebounds. Despite a successful high school career, UNC did not recruit him then.

Head coach Hubert Davis did this time.

Davis directly reached out to Jae'Lyn after he entered the transfer portal. His pitch was simple. The Tar Heels needed a 4-man who could make a big impact this season, and Jae'Lyn will look to do just that.

He brings versatility on both ends to the power forward position. In addition

to highlight reel dunks, he can also stretch the floor, having shot 41.7 percent from three last season at Louisville. Jae'Lyn hopes to take his game to the next level this year by improving his efficiency and consistency.

Defensively, Davis has helped him get better. Jae'Lyn's length and strength, combined with his quickness, allow him to guard any position. He compared himself to Leaky Black on the defensive end and set a personal goal to win ACC Defensive Player of the Year.

But Jae'Lyn, what do you really want to get out of your time in Chapel Hill?

"That's a rhetorical question," Jae'Lyn said with a chuckle. "Of course a natty. Everybody wants that whenever they come here."

He is just one of 14 working towards a common goal. The culture and chemistry are strong. And Jae'Lyn said everyone has made strides so far and that everyone brings pieces to the court that make him and the team better.

So, what will Jae'Lyn and his teammates need to do to achieve that goal?

"I think that through the tough days and the storms, we have to stay together," Jae'Lyn said. "I think that's honestly what gets it to where teams can hang up banners. We pick each other up whenever we fall. And I think that, if one through 14, we do that, I think that'll take us a decent amount of the way."

X: @dthsports

CAMARADERIE

'My friend group is my team': Players work to reset chemistry

With seven new teammates, group builds new bonds

By Ben McCormick

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The UNC men's basketball team lost nine of its 13 scholarship players after last season. How do you even begin to reconcile team chemistry after that many losses? You go to the beach.

Returning sophomore forward Jalen Washington said it's been different adjusting to seven new faces on the team — five transfers and two

first-years. However, he said the adjustment is going well because of the efforts the team has been making to bond.

In July, the team took to the waters of the North Carolina Outer Banks for a brief break from the gym. The team didn't take a trip like that last season.

Washington, a native of Gary, Ind., had never had the opportunity to go to the beach before this offseason. Wearing sunglasses and McDonald's All-American shorts, Washington made the best of his first beach trip. They broke out the jet skis, surfboards and footballs, and they built bonds.

"It doesn't necessarily matter

how good of a team you have. If you don't glue and build that proper team chemistry, things don't go well," sophomore guard Seth Trimble said. "I'm not even saying that as a diss to my old teammates. We all loved each other, we all hung out, we all just had a great time, but I just feel like we didn't have the proper chemistry on the court to succeed."

This year's team is working to build that chemistry. Graduate student Armando Bacot and senior guard RJ Davis were leaders on last year's team. They decided to stay, but not many underclassmen on the roster made that same decision, except for Washington and Trimble.

"We made a commitment to be here," Washington said. "We're two guys that stand on what we say and we want to be here, and we want to be a part of this program."

The four returners on this team have been through adversity. The journey for Bacot and Davis has been especially rocky — from empty stadiums due to COVID-19 to an improbable run to the national championship in 2022 to missing the 2023 tournament after being the preseason No. 1 team — and now, they are the two longest tenured players on the roster.

For the last four to five years, all they have done is

adjust. And they will continue to adjust until their career at UNC comes to a close.

Still, they said it's been odd to see so many teammates come and go.

"I came as a freshman with six other freshmen," Davis said. "Going into my senior year, just to have none of them here is kind of weird, a little bit. Kind of heartbreaking because those are guys that I've created relationships with."

Although the influx of new faces has created a different team, a lot of the additions have similar backgrounds to Davis and Bacot and have provided common ground.

Cormac Ryan was part of a Notre Dame team that went 11-21 last season and had a 3-17 record in ACC play. Jae'Lyn Withers came from a Louisville team that had the fourth-worst record in all of Division I.

Just like the returners, they are buying into building chemistry. Transfer Harrison Ingram said that he didn't live with his teammates when he was at Stanford, but at UNC, the team spends more time together.

"My friend group is my team," Ingram said. "So it's a lot more organically created chemistry."

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FIRST-YEAR SPOTLIGHT

Elliot Cadeau brings pass-first mentality to UNC

The ACC Preseason Rookie of the Year was a top prospect

By Noah Monroe
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Up until he recently had surgery in Chapel Hill, Elliot Cadeau was basically blind in his left eye due to a genetic disease called keratoconus.

Yet, despite this, Bill Armstrong, Cadeau's coach at Link Academy, would tell you his court vision is "unlike anybody I've ever coached."

When it comes to the first-year guard, most things about him are unlike anybody else. He'll tell you that.

When asked who he'd compare his playing style to, Cadeau didn't offer an answer — he doesn't think anybody plays exactly like him. He understands and speaks Swedish. The list of his favorite musicians doesn't consist of popular choices, but instead of "underground" artists like Destroy Lonely.

Now, the ACC Preseason Rookie of the Year will look to bring his unique personality and play style to an experienced North Carolina roster, providing the Tar Heels with a pass-first point guard for, arguably, the first time in over 10 years.

After head coach Hubert Davis brought in Will Shaver in January during the 2021-22 season, he swore off accepting players who left high school early.

So why'd that change with Cadeau? "I want guys that want to be a part of a team and want to be about the 'We,' not just about the 'Me,'" Davis said. "Not that we didn't have that in the past but



UNC first-year guard Elliot Cadeau (2) dribbles the ball during the men's basketball exhibition against St. Augustine's on Friday in the Dean E. Smith Center.

that's in general for anyone. That's what Carolina's about."

'He always did make the big play'

With Link Academy and Saint Frances tied in the City of Palms Classic last December with less than a minute remaining, and Link's undefeated streak on the line, Armstrong needed the ball in the hands of someone he knew would make a play.

The choice was obvious: Cadeau. The point guard drove to the rim to get the go-ahead bucket en route to a 68-64 victory.

"[He] always did make the big

play," Armstrong said. "I can't think of one time where he didn't."

But it wasn't his shooting or slashing ability that made him a top prospect. It was his passing ability. "He's unique," Davis said of Cadeau. "[The only person I've] seen in college somebody like him, similar, has been Kendall Marshall in terms of his ability, not only to pass but to get it to his teammate in the perfect position to be able to do something on the offensive end."

It's safe to say UNC needs that kind of playmaking ability.

Last season, the Tar Heels averaged 11.2 assists per game, the lowest total in program history.

The North Carolina offense ranked 310th out of 366 teams in Division I in assist rate per KenPom.

"I realize that something that sets me apart from everybody else is that I can [make plays]," Cadeau said. "There's a lot of scoring guards. You can find a scoring guard everywhere, but you can't really find an unselfish playmaker in a lot of places."

'He's ubertalented'

While many of Cadeau's teammates hadn't seen the first-year play before this summer, fellow newcomer Zayden High previously had a front seat.

Last April, Cadeau and High faced off in the GEICO High School National Championship, with Link beating AZ Compass, 67-61, and Cadeau setting a tournament-record 29 assists throughout three games.

"We weren't cool until we both got to campus, but it's no bad blood between us," High said. "I love Elliot — my roommate, my dog. I knew what he was capable of before we both came in, so nothing really surprised me about his game because I knew how talented he was."

Since he's been in Chapel Hill, Cadeau's impressed his veteran teammates with his passing ability.

"He's ubertalented," graduate guard Paxson Wojcik said. "He's a great basketball player, super skilled, super fast. He makes passes that not many people can make. He can really pass and has a high feel for the game."

The vision from Cadeau extends past the basketball court as well.

He said he sees himself as being on a two-year plan due to reclassifying, which will allow him to play more freely. While it's unclear whether or not he'll start — in UNC's secret scrimmage against FAU he didn't — Armando Bacot said he's ready to make an impact.

"He looks definitely ready," Bacot said. "Being a freshman guard, it's way tougher now than it was when I was a freshman because so many guys like me stay back. So he'll definitely have some growing pains, but I think he will be good and he's already starting to figure it out more [the longer he's playing]. By the time we're in ACC play, I expect him to be one of the best guards in the ACC."

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DEFENSIVE SPIRIT

Cormac Ryan is the 'ultra-competitor'

The sixth-year, two-time transfer recorded 41 steals at Notre Dame

By Gwen Peace
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After any given practice, Cormac Ryan can be found on the court of the Dean E. Smith Center, shooting spot shots.

He has a quota. When he doesn't meet that quota, he gets angry. Ryan doesn't like to lose, even in a competition against himself.

Senior guard RJ Davis remembered a certain post-practice session where the graduate transfer failed to meet his self-imposed standards. As a result, he said Ryan grabbed a basketball and punted it into the stands — almost up to the ceiling of the arena.

According to his former teammate at Notre Dame, forward Matt Zona, Ryan is the "ultra-competitor."

He doesn't settle and demands the most out of everyone around him. As a sixth-year, 25-year-old, two-time transfer, Ryan brings leadership, experience and all-around skill to the UNC men's basketball team — all stemming from his cutthroat attitude on the court.

"There's no holding back," Ryan said. "Because all that's doing is doing your teammate a disservice if you're not going your hardest."

'A different type of fire'

Ryan's antics aren't limited to outside of practice. Head coach Hubert Davis recalled an instance when the New York City native got kneed in the thigh during a scrimmage and then knocked over a water cooler.

"I like that emotion," he said. "He kicked it and then two seconds later he came back on the floor and knocked down a three, so it is what it is — that's just his personality and I love it."

Ryan is relentless in his search for perfection. He wants to win, badly, and he's willing to do whatever it takes to get there. Last season at Notre Dame, he averaged 12.3 points per game and recorded 41 steals and 13 blocks. In the Fighting Irish's 2022 first round NCAA tournament win over No. 6-seed Alabama, Ryan made seven of nine from three and racked up 29 points.

Armando Bacot said this type of relentlessness has been missing from the Tar Heels.

"I mean it's a different type of fire," Bacot said. "It's something we haven't seen since [I've] been here — guys that really care about winning. So I feel like that, it may sound a little crazy, to have a guy punt the ball, but sometimes you need stuff like that to kind of get the team going."

Bacot said this year's practices have been "bloodbaths."

In one scrimmage, Bacot said he ran through Ryan after being hit with a hard screen on the previous play. He joked he "probably broke [Ryan's] ribs."

On the next play, Ryan was right back all over him, trying to block him again.

"Armando can't break my ribs, as big as he is," Ryan said of the moment. "I'm a little too tough for that."

Guarding the best man on the team

In 2018, when Ryan was a senior in high school, his Milton Academy coach Lamar Reddicks



Graduate guard Cormac Ryan (3) shoots a 3-pointer during the men's basketball exhibition against St. Augustine's on Friday in the Dean E. Smith Center.

told The Boston Globe that Ryan was "better when he covers the best player on the other team."

That still applies today. "I've felt that way my entire career," Ryan said. "So I'm always up for the challenge. I always want to guard the best guy on the other team, and I take defense very personally."

Most big-time scorers don't care as much about defending, but Ryan is an exception. His competitiveness won't let anything slide — something that was showcased last year when he faced off against North Carolina in the Smith Center.

With just over seven minutes left in the second half, Ryan ran up

behind Puff Johnson, who had the ball, and attempted to smack it out of his hands, causing both of them to fall to the ground.

Caleb Love immediately came over, getting into Ryan's face and forcing an altercation that caused both teams to have to be separated on the court. The moment stands as a testament to how hard Ryan is willing to go on defense — no matter the cost.

"I play hard," he said of the incident. "I play hard, stuff happens in a basketball game. It just goes to show you life's funny in that way, and here I am sitting here as a Tar Heel."

A Tar Heel that punts balls

out of frustration, kicks water coolers in practice and gets into altercations during games. But also a Tar Heel that gives it his all on every single play.

Some might see his behavior as divisive, but his teammates view it as a strength.

After RJ saw Ryan kick the ball into the rafters, he sat back and reflected on the moment.

"I'm like, 'I never seen that before,' so it definitely shocked me," he said. "But you can just see that he wants to be great, so I think that's where that competitiveness comes from."

X: @PeaceGwen

BY THE NUMBERS

Women's basketball sees surge in attendance

Carmichael Arena limits capacity to 6,800, creating inherent demand

By Lauren Weider

Staff Writer

sports@dailytarheel.com

In January, more than 6,300 fans watched as the UNC women's basketball team defeated N.C. State, 56-47, at the first Carmichael Arena sellout in eight years.

At the end of last season, the Tar Heels stood sixth in the ACC and reached a top-five ranking in average attendance per game.

Carmichael Arena was consistently a packed house. At times, the venue had to resort to standing room and even turned students away. For games against top-ranked opponents, UNC students queued in lines spanning from Carmichael to Student Stores, waiting for the entrance to open.

The fans' continued engagement has created an undeniable home court advantage for the Tar Heels. The Tar Heels went 13-2 at home in 2023, and more than 1,300 season ticket passes have already been purchased so far for the 2024 season — surpassing the 844 sold last year.

"It's now become kind of a thing to do among the student body, while women's basketball definitely wasn't that in the past," Matt Krause, the North Carolina women's basketball play-by-play broadcaster, said.

UNC's nail-biting 66-65 victory over Louisville at home in 2022 caught fans' attention. Following the Tar Heels' notable wins against Notre Dame, N.C. State, and Duke the following season, there seemed to be an increased momentum and draw for the women's basketball team.

"Being able to sell out games that aren't even rival games or big games just says that, you know, we've done our part in bringing people in and making people feel welcome and having them enjoy the games," senior forward Anya Poole said.

Carmichael Arena limits capacity to 6,800 fans, creating inherent demand among the student body and general public as tickets are not always readily available. The arena gets loud easily, and the game day experience feels more intimate for both the athletes and the fans.

"Home court advantage is a real thing, especially when you have a packed house," senior forward Alyssa Ustby said. "And so we're really grateful for the Carolina Fever that continuously show up and support us and again, like I said, the community at Chapel Hill does a phenomenal job of being consistent throughout the season."

The Tar Heels' improved winning streak has attracted a loyal and consistent fan base that, paired with the iconic local rivalries with Duke and N.C. State, has transformed North Carolina into a women's basketball state.

The rise of women's basketball at UNC has caught the attention of incoming recruits.

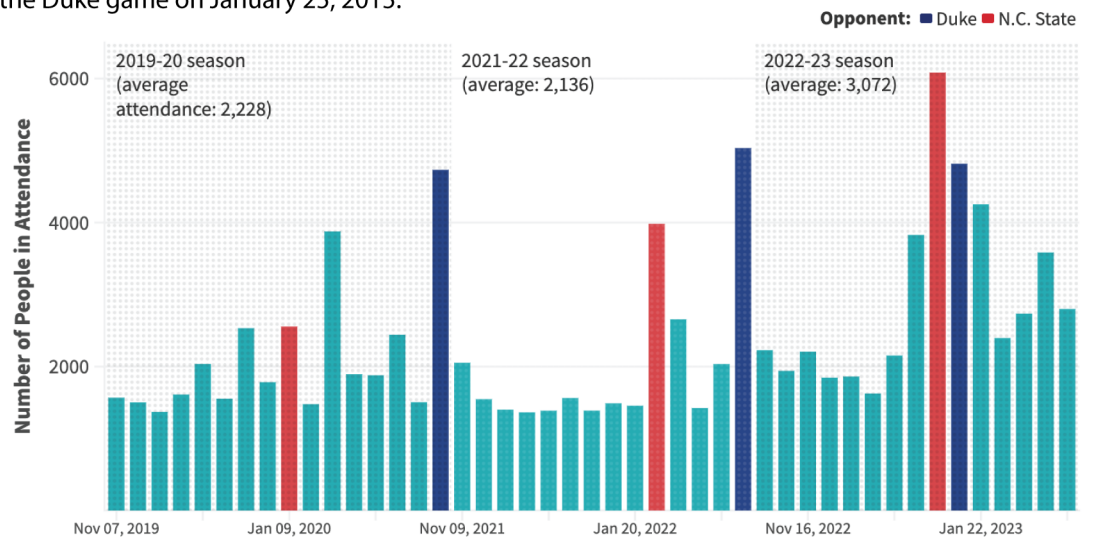
"Coming from Alabama, [which is] really a football state," first-year guard Reniya Kelly said. "I think coming into a different atmosphere with all of the sports basketball-wise, I think it was really good for me."

Currently ranked preseason No. 16 in the AP poll, the Tar Heels enter this season with goals to continue elevating their game.

This November, Carmichael will host the 2023 ACC/SEC Women's Basketball Challenge between UNC and South Carolina, marking the first time the Gamecocks have visited Chapel Hill in 36 years. The Tar Heels expect a sellout.

UNC women's basketball saw a resurgence in attendance at the end of the 2022-23 season

Last season's Jan. 15 game against N.C. State had the highest attendance with 6,319 attendees since the Duke game on January 25, 2015.



Attendance data is only for home games at Carmichael Arena. The 2020-21 season was not graphed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. | Source: GoHeels Athletics

DTH DATA/PRITHIKA ROY

"The work [of selling tickets] is kind of done by the community," general manager Liz Roberts said. "It's like word-of-mouth marketing. South Carolina's coming to town. The town itself is excited about that, so it makes my job easy."

Rather than conceding to the added pressure, head coach Courtney Banghart and the players perceive this new attention as a huge opportunity for growth.

"When you are the head coach of the University of North Carolina and you want to win a national championship and you are driven to grow our game, this is my responsibility," Banghart said. "Luckily I've got a bunch of fighters who are up for the task."



DTH/JAY'LA EVANS

UNC women's basketball fans cheer on the team during the game against Virginia Tech on Feb. 23 at Carmichael Arena.

X: @laurenweider

THE WALK-ON

Fulfilling a lifelong dream, Sydney Barker joins the team

First-year holds her own in ninth-ranked recruiting class

By Cade Shoemaker

Staff Writer

sports@dailytarheel.com

When UNC women's basketball first-year guard Sydney Barker was two months old, her parents brought her to Carmichael Arena to attend her first basketball game — with ear plugs in hand to help muffle the noise.

Now, playing in Carmichael hasn't felt as unconventional for Barker as it has for other incoming first-years on the roster. Instead, it feels like every other summer for the Durham native, who fondly remembers attending Sylvia Hatchell's Beyond Amazing Basketball Camps. To Barker, it was the highlight of her summers and an experience that would later inform her decision in the recruiting process.

"Growing up, I just always had that love for [UNC]," she said. "So when it was really time to sit down and consider [college], I feel like the only option for me was going to UNC."

Today, Barker is a walk-on for the women's basketball team, fulfilling her dream to play for UNC in the same building that introduced her to the sport. However, securing a spot in the ninth-ranked recruiting class in the country was easier said than done.

After turning down multiple mid-major offers and entering the North Carolina admissions process, she's now someone her teammates call a "bucket," looking to make an impact



DTH/NATE SKVORETZ

UNC first-year guard Sydney Barker (15) dribbles the ball during the scrimmage at Live Action on Oct. 13 at the Dean E. Smith Center.

off the bench for the preseason No. 16 Tar Heels.

"There was a lot of mid-majors and I gave interest, I looked at them, and some of them I was really considering going to," Barker said. "But in my heart, nothing added up to UNC."

Despite her numerous accolades from her high school basketball days, the recruiting process was not smooth for the undersized Barker, who stands at just 5 feet, 7 inches.

A graduate of Charles E. Jordan High School — a 10-minute drive from UNC's campus — Barker was a local star, setting multiple school records in her senior season with 1,626 career points, 777 points in a season and 49 points in a game. She earned first-team all-state honors

by HighSchoolOT.com, as well as an appearance in the N.C. East-West All-Star game.

"She's a special kid who I believe will probably wind up in our hall of fame one day," Jordan High School athletic director Joe Sharrow said. "She's our most decorated girl's basketball player in 60 years."

Barker received offers from schools like UNC Wilmington, Furman University, Wofford College and East Carolina University. However, none could convince Barker enough to give up her lifelong goal of playing for North Carolina.

Without a scholarship to give, head coach Courtney Banghart laid out essentially the only path for Barker: becoming a walk-on for the Tar Heels.

After talking to Banghart, Barker decided she was willing to take the risk. Instead of committing to another university, she applied to North Carolina through the normal academic process. After submitting an application in the fall, she had to wait to hear back about her decision before she could pursue the spot on the roster.

On Jan. 31, she was accepted through general admissions. Barker called Banghart to tell her the good news and started the process of becoming the only walk-on for the Tar Heels this season.

Attending practices all summer, Barker's bubbly personality quickly brightened a locker room filled with many new faces — eight, to be exact.

"She has made a direct impact on our team already, just with her constant positivity and her commitment to just being a good teammate," senior forward Alyssa Ustby said. "Those are some things that go a long way."

First-year forward RyLee Grays mentioned how helpful Barker has already been academically. She and Barker share a few classes with each other, and she mentioned that it is often Barker who keeps her in line.

"She's always helpful," Grays said. "She's like, 'Hey don't forget we have that thing to turn in,' and I'm like 'You're right.' If I [was] without Sydney, I don't know where I'd be."

Don't let her easygoing personality fool you, though — Barker is still a cold-blooded competitor. With her sharp-shooting abilities and high basketball IQ, she isn't your typical walk-on.

During the women's basketball open practice earlier this month, it was clear that Barker can play alongside the loaded talent of this year's roster. She displayed her efficiency from beyond the line in a drill focused on playing off of two feet. After a driving guard jump stopped in the paint, a shooter would fill behind the play looking for a shot from the top of the key or corner.

Seemingly every time Barker filled this role, she would find nothing but nylon with a perfectly-rotating shot.

"She's a baller," redshirt sophomore guard Kayla McPherson said. "She might be a walk-on, people have their own opinions of walk-ons, but she's a bucket and I can just see her getting better."

X: @cadeshoemaker23

Opinion

COLUMN

You can survive the sophomore slump, too



DTH DESIGN/SHAMIL LUQMAN

By Shea McIntyre
Columnist

“Slump,” verb: To fall or sink suddenly.

Alternate definition: When students who have just survived their first year fall into a rapid overtaking decline. Everything feels disconnected, motivation doesn’t exist, frustration is high and grades are low.

This is, of course, the “sophomore slump”: a period where college life isn’t living up to the newness of our first year.

Yes, it is real. If, as a sophomore, you’re questioning whether or not you’re in it, it’s probably safe to say you’re in it.

Side effects include burnout, potential academic decline and loss of morale. Everything is hard. You’re feeling beaten down

and tired. You ask yourself, “Why didn’t I feel this way last year?” or “Why do I feel the need to compare this year to last year?”

It’s human nature to grow attached to a routine. I still vividly remember the air freshener scent of my first-year dorm and the fall playlist I stayed loyal to while walking everywhere on campus.

I only knew UNC through those attachments. I only knew of living in my dorm and I only knew of mediocre dining hall food. In the beginning weeks of this new year, my sophomore year, it felt like I didn’t know how to do college because I wasn’t in my usual routine.

This is normal. You don’t need to feel enthusiastic about going to a frat party where “No Hands” by Waka Flocka Flame will undoubtedly play — you did that last year. You also don’t need to

feel embarrassed if you still want to do those things; they were fun last year!

But to attempt to get over my slump, I had to acknowledge that I’ve aged out of some experiences. I also needed to grasp that becoming an adult continues to get hard — even after what some argue is the hardest year away from home.

So, the idea came to me: what if I tried to make each day a little different?

My mission became to make every day a unique UNC day. I wanted to prove to myself that there were still firsts after my first year.

So far, it hasn’t been hard (or costly) to make my seemingly mundane days of study-eat-scroll different:

I went to both a women’s and men’s soccer game. These were my first soccer games in my life.

I revisited a favorite on-campus spot, The Meantime Coffee Co., but decided to order hot chai instead of the usual iced oat milk latte.

I started going to the Student Recreation Center, a gym I was too scared to venture to last year. I began challenging myself to even meet new people by attending group exercise classes. Cardio dance has become my favorite.

Adding an extra special activity, even if only for an hour, has separated each day from the next and helps me remember the magic of the new and the old. I’ve come out of my slump by embracing that I was even in it.

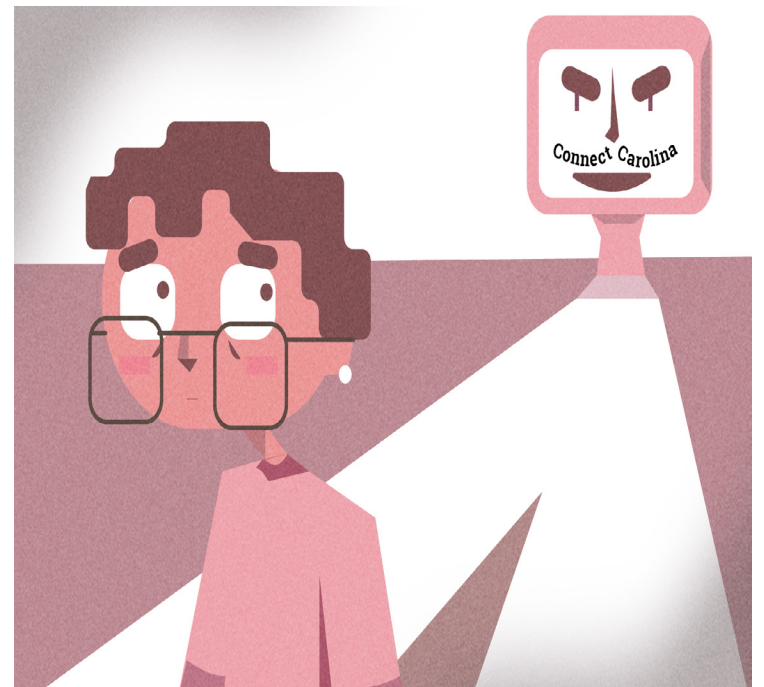
Candidly, I never thought I would say goodbye to the honeymoon phase of college. I had to acknowledge some good things may not stay the same, but there’s also still so much good to come.

X: @dthopinion

The Daily Tar Heel

SATIRE

How to get your dream schedule on ConnectCarolina



DTH DESIGN/SHAMIL LUQMAN

By Katelin Harmon
Columnist

You’re halfway through the fall semester slogging through another week of endless midterms when you get the dreaded email.

“Dear student, Undergraduate spring registration begins on...”

Panic sets in. You scroll further and realize the game’s rules have changed. Now, you can waitlist up to 12 credit hours without these hours counting toward your enrollment limit. Also, a Gimghoul member must endorse your spot on the waitlist.

You get over the initial shock. Go through the five stages of grief. You reach out to your academic adviser, who you have yet to speak to since your old one quit. After rotting in the drop-in advising queue on standby, it’s time to figure out your schedule.

It looks like you still have 50 general education requirements left; it’s almost like they keep adding new ones every year. Before you know it, you’re talked into changing your pre-med track to an English major with a creative writing concentration. It looks like you’ll graduate only five years after you intended!

Ready to take on a new personality to go with your new major, you start shopping for classes. You realize most of the courses you need haven’t been offered since the fall of 2009, thanks to an attack on tenure. You somehow add enough

classes to your cart with over 20 backup plans in Coursicle, just in case something falls through.

It’s now the night before registration. You’ve carb-loaded, you’ve stretched, you have refreshed and closed the ConnectCarolina tab to make sure that green circle is shining back at you. You have prepared in a way you know your peers haven’t. This is your March Madness.

You imagine yourself coming out on top, walking through the quad to your perfect classes, crossing paths with your campus crush and having a lunch break that lines up with all of your friends.

In the middle of the dream of securing your ideal schedule, your alarm goes off at 6:45 a.m., in just enough time before your 7 a.m. registration. Before you know it, the clock ticks one second until you can enroll. You refresh the tab and you click as fast as you can, but the page won’t load; it buffers and buffers until you get an error message.

You get flashbacks to the nightmare Taylor Swift Ticketmaster queue. You hadn’t accounted for this in your training. Holding back tears, you persevere and log back in.

ConnectCarolina finally submits to your desperation, but every class is glaring with a red square.

You frantically click through options 17, 18 and 19 of your backup schedules, but everything is full. There’s no hope. You’re enrolled in six credit hours of a rock climbing class and medieval and early modern music.

Better luck next time.

X: @dthopinion

The Daily Tar Heel

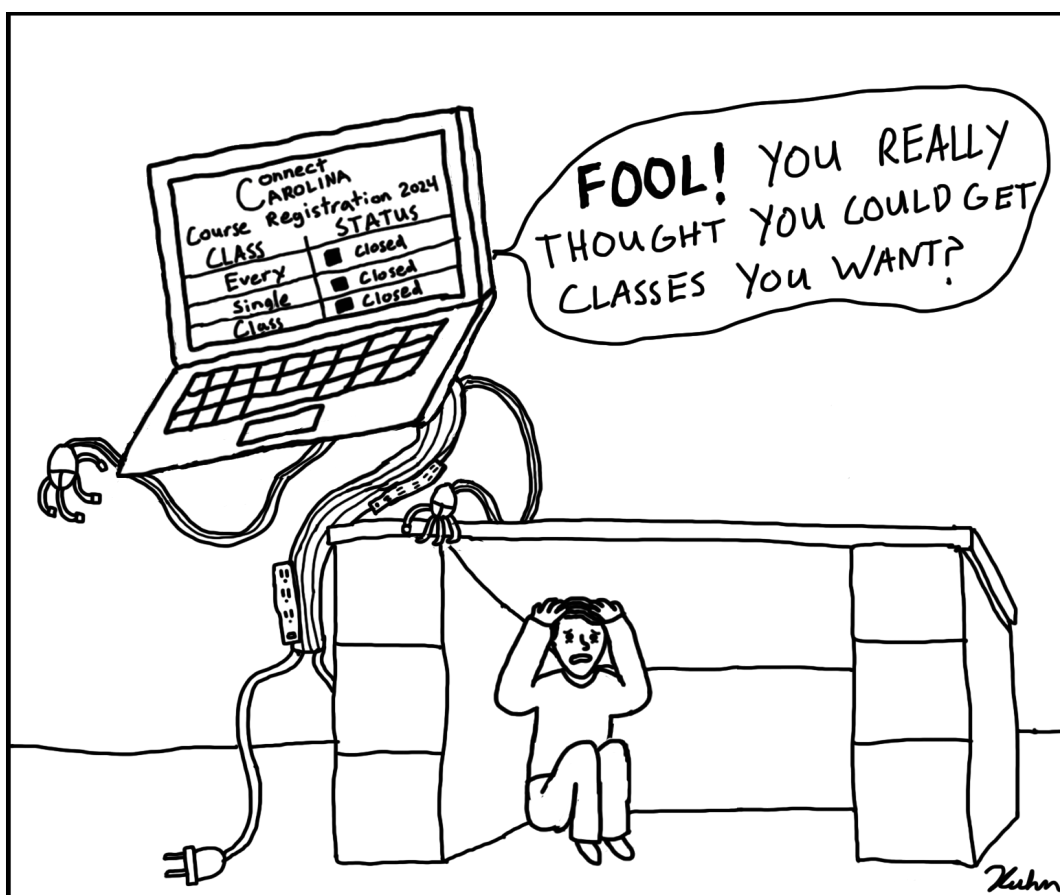
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- Students: Include your year, major and phone number.
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- Edit: The DTH edits for space, clarity, accuracy and vulgarity. Limit submissions to 500 words.

Email: opinion@dailytarheel.com

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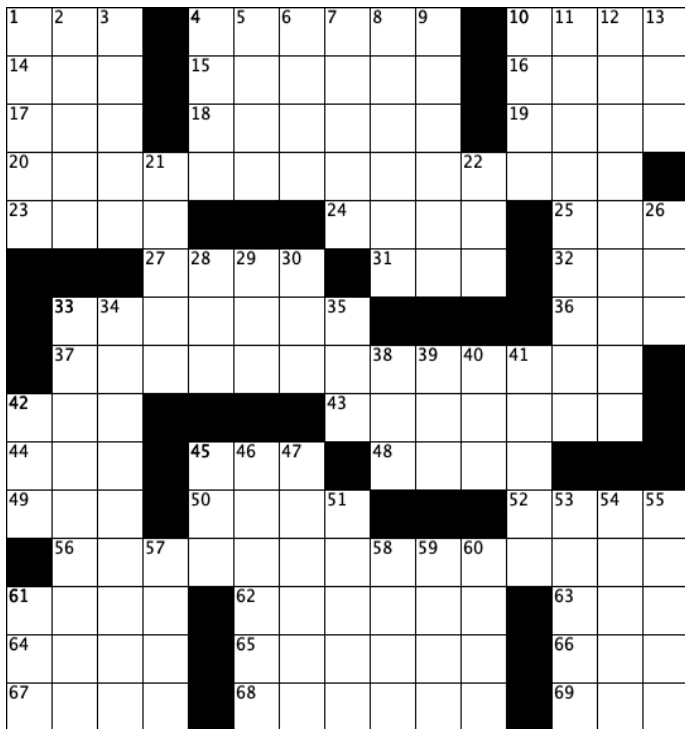
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This week's crossword was created by Liam Furlong. Liam is a UNC junior majoring in comparative literature and education. He is from Wilmington, Delaware.

Title: "Fall Break"

Across

- 1 Used to be
- 4 Cover stories
- 10 People asking for cover stories
- 14 Nova Scotia time, abbr.
- 15 Try to woo
- 16 Mystic energy
- 17 Word before 'lift' and 'lodge'
- 18 Feature of many Banana Republic shirts
- 19 Science-y campus acronym
- 20 Bestselling K.A. Tucker novel
- 23 Borderline
- 24 Our galaxy has 100 billion of them
- 25 New Zealander's 'yam'
- 27 Like Armando Bacot, at 6'11"
- 31 Dalí's nickname
- 32 Line beginning with https, often
- 33 Advances in trousers?
- 36 9-down, to Venus
- 37 Great E.B. White book to get caught in?
- 42 "You ____ My Sunshine"
- 43 Aim, telos
- 44 'The,' in German
- 45 The f-bomb, without really saying it
- 48 Give birth to a hairy animal?
- 49 "Understand?"
- 50 Crowd noises after Virginia scores against the Tar Heels
- 52 Chronicle
- 56 Newbery Medal-winning Lois Lowry novella about childhood during WWII
- 61 Tent often made of animal pelts
- 62 Corolla manufacturer
- 63 Dorm supervisors, abbr.
- 64 Privy to the punch line, say
- 65 Use a key
- 66 Poem of praise
- 67 Indian fire god
- 68 Simmer with rage
- 69 Butterfly catcher

Down

- 1 Excrement
- 2 Posed a question
- 3 "_____ like a bee." - Muhammad Ali
- 4 Spore cases
- 5 Redbone or Trotsky
- 6 Done listlessly
- 7 Onions and tulips
- 8 Waxed-winged man of Greek mythos
- 9 Tennis pro Williams
- 10 Group on-stage for PlayMakers' "Misery"
- 11 Backyard bathrooms, say
- 12 Recommend some medications
- 13 America's Uncle
- 21 Prefix for four
- 22 Language at your fingertips, abbr.
- 26 Franklin Street burger joint
- 28 Word on many jets
- 29 Bad cholesterol, for short
- 30 Russian writer Tolstoy
- 33 Medical examination
- 34 Shortly after that
- 35 Auto racing sponsor, abbr.
- 38 Rubber ducky's home
- 39 Before in time
- 40 Relaxation station
- 41 The most terrible
- 42 The best part of the Superbowl, for many sports non-fans
- 45 Goes out, like the tide
- 46 Unborn mammal
- 47 An example from many, say
- 51 Personal flair
- 53 "Moulin Rouge" Broadway star Tveit
- 54 Exam letter
- 55 Resource, benefit
- 57 Bite-sized
- 58 Owl's damn to give?
- 59 Engrave
- 60 Japanese rice wine
- 61 "General Hospital" actress Carrere



Help Wanted

HELP WANTED: Help with home tasks including laundry, meal prep, and light tidying. 4 hr/week, \$20/hr (including drive to Durham). Flexible. May occasionally watch kids. Contact macaulaylj@gmail.com.
PART-TIME OFFICE SUPPORT: 10-15 hrs / wk. Assist Office Manager and team members w/ admin tasks, errands, projects. Reliable, positive attitude. Attention to detail. Highly organized.

HOROSCOPES

If November 1 is your birthday...



Today's Birthday (11/01/23). Luck blesses partnership this year. Maintain playfulness and romance with regular practice. Resolve winter challenges together, for springtime metamorphosis. Savor growing health and fitness next summer. Abandon outworn expectations and dream up new autumn possibilities together. Hold each other to your higher purpose.

To get the advantage, check the day's rating: 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19)

Today is an 8 — Domestic matters require attention now. You can suddenly see hidden dirt. Discipline with household chores and tasks rewards beyond the effort. Teach from experience.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

Today is a 9 — Listen more than you talk. Speak respectfully. Teach discipline. You can learn what you need to know. Make your case with facts and data.

GEMINI (MAY 21 -JUNE 20)

Today is a 9 — Slow and steady wins the race. Don't get pushed into anything. Postpone daydreaming. Narrow your focus. More income is possible. Harvest an opportunity.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

Today is a 9 — Personal matters need attention. Heed a critic who cares. Still, don't settle for someone else's idea of perfection. Hold out for what you want.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

Today is a 6 — Slow to think things over. Avoid automatic reactions. Complete past projects. Plan and prepare for what's next. Follow the rules. Organize for later ease.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

Today is a 7 — Friends are a big help. Confer with allies. Moderate a clash between normally gentle souls. Gather ideas and information from associates. Consider all possibilities.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

Today is a 9 — Dress for success. You're attracting the attention of someone important. Abandon old fears. You've got this. Enjoy the professional spotlight. Smile for the camera.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

Today is an 8 — Expand your territory. Enjoy an adventurous phase. Minimize distractions. Follow directions carefully or risk getting lost. Keep your eyes open. Chart your course.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Today is an 8 — A lack of funds would threaten plans. Organize budgets. Find ways to simplify. Draw on reserves. Work with your partner to find practical solutions.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

Today is an 8 — Negotiate and compromise. Refine plans around changes. Pull together and share the load to accomplish a common goal. You can find what's needed.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20 - FEB. 18)

Today is a 9 — The pace is picking up. Focus on work as the action heats up. Pay close attention to avoid mistakes. Disciplined efforts get satisfying results.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

Today is an 8 — Make time for love, passion and creativity. Fun, music, art, games, sports and hobbies feed your spirit. Share it all with someone attractive.

SUDOKU

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8	9	3	2	5	6	7	1	4
2	6	4	7	1	8	3	5	9
4	7	8	5	3	9	2	6	1
9	5	6	8	2	1	4	7	3
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Lifestyle

The Daily Tar Heel

THEATER

'Rocky Horror' encourages lacy, red-lipped self-expression

Annual production creates community with cast, crew

By Eliza Benbow

Lifestyle Editor

lifestyle@dailytarheel.com

At the Saturday midnight showing of cult classic "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" in the Varsity Theatre, a crowd of UNC students outfitted in fishnets, lingerie and bold, red lips were full of antici...

"Say it! Say it! Say it!" they yelled at the movie screen.

For the weekend leading up to Halloween, on-campus theater troupe UNC Pauper Players enlisted a shadow cast of student actors dressed in lingerie to mimic the cult classic and engage with the audience while the movie played.

"The Rocky Horror Show" premiered at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs in London in 1973, paying homage to science fiction movies in a camp, sexually-charged and comedic musical.

Midnight showings of the film adaptation, "The Rocky Horror Picture Show," have remained in theaters across the world since its debut in 1975, making it the longest-running theatrical release in film history. Audiences in Chapel Hill started participating in "Rocky Horror" in 1978.

The plot follows fiancés Brad and Janet, who get stranded at a mysterious castle on a rainy night. The castle's residents, which include Magenta, Riff Raff and Columbia, are led by doctor Frank-N-Furter. They all hail from the planet Transsexual in the Transylvania galaxy.

During the film, Frank-N-Furter unveils his most recent experiment:

the blond and chiseled Rocky Horror, dressed in a small, gold speedo.

Madi Ugan, a senior psychology and dramatic art major at UNC, has been a co-director of the troupe's "Rocky Horror" show for three years. This year, they are co-directing with sophomore Elikya Mwanda.

Ugan said they keep returning to directing the show because of the opportunity it provides for the cast, most of which identify as LGBTQ+, to form community.

"I love creating that space for people, with the vehicle being 'Rocky Horror,'" they said.

Isabella Patterson, a senior biology and dramatic art major at UNC, has also been a part of the show for three years.

This year, she played Magenta in half of the shadow cast performances. Through their performance, Patterson said the show makes them feel like they are displaying their own personality rather than playing a character.

"It's so different between different shows, between different people, because it's about the individual," she said.

Before the Friday night show, actors crowded around a vanity on the second floor of the Varsity, sharing makeup, stories and compliments.

In one corner, sophomore Hadley Hayes layered foundation over her eyebrows to emulate her character Columbia's arched, red brows. She often turned to Jenna Gartland, who played the role of Columbia last year and is Frank-N-Furter this year, for advice.

The role of Columbia is colorful and energetic, but has an emotional depth. Hayes said that Columbia's role reminds her of her own experience with bipolar disorder and mania.

Hayes wore the same outfit that Gartland wore the year before: a tube top and shorts made of glimmering



UNC student Jenna Gartland reaches toward the ensemble in her role as Dr. Frank-N-Furter during the dress rehearsal for Rocky Horror on Oct. 25. DTH/SAMANTHA LEWIS

rainbow sequins. This year, Hayes said she added a gold sequined hat, recycled from an old dance costume.

Matthew Wood, who played Dr. Scott, wore a sheer shirt and stilettos during the show. He said he wouldn't have been able to make such a daring acting choice a year ago.

Wood has not participated in theater since high school, and "Rocky Horror" was his last chance to rejoin the acting community in school before graduating in December.

"I'm pretty confident in who I am, and so it's just giving me another outlet to express it with a community that I've longed to be a part of for a long time," he said.

Ugan said that the production team has been very intentional

about cultivating a consent-driven acting experience. They organized intimacy training and made sure to have the cast establish their physical boundaries before each performance, which often entails physical and intimate interactions with each other.

Because of the emphasis on consent, Patterson feels like they have ownership of their own body while they are on stage, something that they have not always felt in other theatrical performances.

"I'm so comfortable with the vulnerability and the intimacy because I'm in control of it," they said. "And I love that, that I get to be hot on stage on my own terms."

X: @eliza_benbow



UNC student Isabella Patterson smiles widely as Magenta during the dress rehearsal for Rocky Horror on Oct. 25. DTH/SAMANTHA LEWIS

REPRESENTATION

Indigenous community critiques Scorsese film

'Killers of the Flower Moon' doesn't provide new perspectives

By Carly Breland

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Martin Scorsese tells an uncensored story of the greed-fueled history of violence against the Indigenous people of the Osage Nation in his newest epic drama, "Killers of the Flower Moon."

Despite its 3.5 hour runtime and somber tone, "Killers of the Flower Moon" is a beautifully shot film that does not shy from depicting the scope of terror brought on the Osage people in the 1920s.

The Osage were forcibly relocated to a reservation in Oklahoma by the U.S. government in the mid-1800s and made a fortune after finding oil on their land. By the early 20th century, the Osage people were rich, contradicting harmful stereotypes against Indigenous wealth at the time.

The film follows the true story of Ernest Burkhart, portrayed by Leonardo DiCaprio, and his wealthy uncle, played by Robert De Niro. After serving in World War I, Ernest moves to Osage country, where his uncle evidently holds serious power and influence.

His uncle urges Ernest to marry an Osage woman, suggesting the union would be "a smart



DTH DESIGN/SARAH FENWICK

investment," as a white husband would gain control of his Indigenous wife's headright money, which is a portion of funds from oil mining.

Ernest marries Mollie, a stoic and enticing Osage woman, beautifully portrayed by actress Lily Gladstone, and quietly schemes with his uncle to garner the money belonging to Mollie and her family.

Soon, a wave of Osage people, including Mollie's sisters, die under mysterious circumstances, but the white town doctors and sheriff make little effort to investigate.

It would be inaccurate to call "Killers of the Flower Moon" a movie about Indigenous people.

Rather, the film is about white men's exploitation of Indigenous people, and the narrative reduces the Osage people to victims and side characters. So much of the film revolves around Ernest and the circle of white criminals willing to do anything for a piece of the Osage wealth.

Though far from perfect, the film brings a horrifying yet lesser-known story of violence against

Indigenous people, both physical and administrative, to a vast audience.

It would be incomplete to review a movie that tells such an important Native American story without consulting UNC's own Native community.

Marissa Carmi, the associate director of the American Indian Center at UNC and a citizen of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, said the film was groundbreaking for consulting the Osage Nation during production. However, she added that the film falls short on telling the story from a Native perspective.

Emily McDonnell, a citizen of the Navajo Nation and a Ph.D. candidate specializing in American Indian and Indigenous studies, said she grew up where many of John Wayne's Western movies were filmed, which included culturally insensitive depictions of Native people.

McDonnell said that Hollywood's failure to include Native people in the telling of their own stories has largely shaped the way Indigenous people are viewed in popular culture, which includes the inaccurate generalization that tribes exist as a monolith.

"Native people are generally portrayed historically, and that also contributes to the narrative that Native people are either no longer existent or that we're not modern people," she said.

AJ Hunt, a member of the Lumbee Tribe and administrative support associate at the American Indian

Center, was excited to be able to identify with something on the big screen but said in an email he is tired of Indigenous people being represented only through tragedy.

"It doesn't tell a different story or tell a story differently," Daniel Cobb, coordinator of the American Indian and Indigenous Studies program at UNC, said. "It centers non-Indigenous people. The story is about Osage, but it's not an Osage story in a fundamental sense."

Cobb said the film was grim and difficult to watch, which he felt was done intentionally to mirror the experience of the Osage.

However, he added that the film's ending made the Osage people seem like a thing of the past. "You would think that story ended there, that the Osage people experienced mass murder, corruption, greed and crumbled," Cobb said. "But that is the opposite. The Osage people persevered, overcame and are thriving today."

Carmi said she hopes the film will serve as a starting point to encourage non-Native people to keep learning about Native history.

"That's the most you can ask for for something like this, where we get that visibility but people continue to want to stay connected, they want to learn more," Carmi said.

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