UNC sweeps rival Blue Devils

“Tar Heels poised for postseason run

By Brian Keyes
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In the rivalry matchup to end the season, the North Carolina men’s basketball team (16-9, 10-6 ACC) dominated Duke (11-11, 9-9 ACC) from start to finish in a 91-73 win. Led by three different players scoring 18 points, the Tar Heels played one of their most complete games of the season on Senior Night.

North Carolina got out to an excellent start by quickly hitting five of its first seven shots to get out to an 11-2 lead. Struggling to defend UNC’s bigs, Duke center Mark Williams and forward Matthew Hurt each picked up a quick foul. Nothing could slow down the Tar Heels, though, as players made jumper after jumper, including a one-legged, fade-away 3-pointer from senior forward Garrison Brooks to balloon the lead to 24-6.

By the end of the first half, the Blue Devils managed to cut the lead down to 16, but they failed to establish any sort of defensive rhythm, allowing North Carolina to shoot 55.2 percent from the floor and 62.5 percent from deep.

Duke started to find its rhythm in the second half, shooting 4-6 to start, while UNC’s red-hot shooting cooled slightly, but the Tar Heels’ size and speed was still too much to overcome.

The Blue Devils tried to break out a full-court press and trapping defense, but North Carolina continued to draw fouls against Duke’s undersized frontcourt, keeping the lead firmly in hand. It was only a matter of time before UNC cruised to a final score of 91-73.

UNC will start its postseason in the ACC Tournament in Greensboro as the sixth seed. The Tar Heels will start in the second round, playing their first game on Wednesday, March 10.

Tar Heels face uncertain postseason path

UNC slated as sixth seed in ACC Tournament, firmly in NCAA field

By Ryan Heller
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Garrison Brooks was not North Carolina’s leading scorer on Senior Night. The senior forward had 13 points in the win against Duke, which was belted Caleb Love, Garrison Huffman, Miller and KJ Smith. Walker Miller joined the Tar Heels in 2017 by defeating their crosstown rival. The senior forward had 13 points in the win against Duke, which was belted Caleb Love, Garrison Huffman, Miller and KJ Smith. Walker Miller joined the Tar Heels in 2017

By Jeremiah Holloway

Senior Writer

Monday, March 8, 2021

Senior Night belongs to Garrison Brooks. His career highlight came earlier this season, when he faced North Carolina in the ACC Tournament. He hopped to his feet and jogged to the bench after scoring the Tar Heel’s first bucket of the game. It was a magical moment, one that many fans will remember for years to come.

By Ryan Wilcox

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Sunday, March 7, 2021

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DTH FILE/NATHAN KLIMA

First-year forward Garrison Brooks (15) celebrates during a game on March 5, 2021.

DTH FILE/EMILY SARTIN

Students and fans gather outside of Sup Dogs on Franklin Street to watch UNC's game against Duke on March 6, 2021.

DTH/IRA WILDER

UNC seniors hold commemorative jerseys before the game in the Smith Center on March 6, 2021. UNC swept Duke 91-73.

DTH/ABE LOVEN

UNC first-year guard Caleb Love (2) dribbles in the Smith Center on March 6, 2021.

DTH/ABE LOVEN

UNC student association president Maranda Martin dances with a student from the crowd as the Tar Heels beat the Blue Devils 91-73.

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Students rush Franklin Street for second time

Despite increased police presence, some students congregated again

By Heidi Pérez-Mareno, Suzannah Claire Perry
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Moments after UNC men’s basketball defeated Duke, a growing crowd of fans stood at all four corners of the intersection of Franklin and Cameron streets, chanting “Tar” and “Heels” back and forth.

Then, as Chapel Hill police officers stood by, many fans rushed to the intersection’s center for the second time this year, defying UNC Community Standards and a state executive order meant to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Last month, officers took over 35 minutes to clear the intersection. This crowd, which was substantially smaller, dispersed from the intersection for the resumption of traffic within five minutes. The crowd later regrouped for another brief period.

Senior Jobel Angela Barcoma said she chose to stand on the sidelines while students rushed to experience a UNC tradition.

"Part of it would be trying to experience what rushing is (like) as a UNC student," Barcoma said. "But I didn't want to risk it, and the right direction," Hudson wrote.

The order allows indoor sporting venues with capacities above 5,000 people to operate at 15 percent capacity. Still, local and UNC officials focused on educating fans about the right direction, "You guys suck," one student yelled at an officer. "I really mean that." The game comes after Gov. Roy Cooper announced last Wednesday that he would ease numerous restrictions on businesses. We have to stay vigilant to eliminate any actions that could lead to negative impacts at this time.

Northam said the Town has focused on educating fans about the danger of rushing and promoting alternatives, including virtual watch parties and early visits to Franklin Street for another brief period.

Chapel Hill police officers closed a UNC student, "Barcoma said. "We was all making huge plays, making a bunch of shots, throwing some good passes. Making a bunch of hustle plays, I think it’s hard to not to get excited from that, especially when everyone’s playing as well."

For the roughly 3,200 people in the Dean Dome, being there in person will make this moment infinitely more special. The decision to allow fans for the last two home games has been and will continue to be scrutinized, as it should be. The pandemic is still raging, screening still remains an imperfect solution and the people who say the risk was simply too great should not be ignored.

But there’s an understated truth in the decision that recognises our institutionalism as an excuse, that we have been forced to deny ourselves for so long — the need to engage together, to be joyous and celebrate the moments that make us happy.

When you come to play basketball at North Carolina, you talk about or you hear former players talk about running through that tunnel and hearing that crowd and getting on that court and seeing that Carolina Blue wave out there," Roy Williams said. "So that’s something (the players have) missed. And I think the last two games, it’s been the loudest, 2,000 century of the Blue wave ever seen in my life."

After a night like Saturday, all there is left to do is to hope that this is the beginning of the end for all that we have been through. There is a future quickly approaching when feeling the simple elation of your college team beating a rival will not be a rare break from a world otherworldly with such tragedy.

We have to stay vigilant to eliminate any actions that could lead to negative impacts at this time." Northam said. The Town has focused on educating fans about the danger of rushing and promoting alternatives, including virtual watch parties and early visits to Franklin Street for another brief period.

UNC Police Chief David Perry said at a Campus Safety Commission meeting Wednesday afternoon that there would be as many as 30 officers on standby at both the Dean E. Smith Center and the Cameron Street and Cameron Avenue area.

Over 200 students were referred to UNC’s Office of Student Conduct following last month’s rush, facing consequences that range from a warning to UNC campus police to disenrollment if they are found guilty.

UNC Media Relations confirmed that students would be investigated again if they were reported for rushing tomorrow.

“We appreciate that the overwhelming majority of our students did the right thing tonight and celebrated safely,” UNC spokesperson Joanne Peters Denny said in a media Relations statement. “We’re disappointed in those who did not heed the warnings not rush Franklin Street and will follow our disciplinary process for any reports we receive of violations of our COVID-19 community standards.”

However, student rushers interviewed by the DTH said the rush was worth it, despite the COVID-19 exposure and the possible consequences.

“I can’t go out there. I’ll get arrested,” one student, standing back from the center of the intersection said to a friend standing by. “They’re going to bury us.”

Maybe next year,” a police officer standing nearby said. “Just not now.

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