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By Ryan Wilcox
Assistant Sports Editor

Strengths
In many ways, Brooks is the prototypical Roy Williams big man minus an effective post-up game — though that, too, is improving. Brooks can run the floor, juggle with opponents on defense, swallow up offensive rebounds and clean up others’ misses on the glass. He’s averaging 2.5 offensive rebounds per game.
Brooks has also been markedly more comfortable in his second year in the UNC offense, home out of a considerable increase in assists. Against NC State on Feb. 5, he stuffed the stat sheet more than any other game of his young career, posting eight points, a career-high 10 rebounds and a career-high six assists.

Weaknesses
His weaknesses are consistent with many other college big men. He’s hardly a threat offensively, with many other college big men.

First-year, Guard offense has run through the three-time ACC Rookie of the Week. With career highs of 33 points against Texas and Miami as his best games when he made seven 3-pointers in each game, White also just might be the second-best shooter on the team behind Johnson. He’ll need that to continue with a strong game against Duke.

Against the Blue Devils, UNC will look to White as one of the keys to the matchup, just like he’s been crucial all season.

But White’s Achilles’ heel is that he has a tendency to turn the ball over. When not the recipient of points-blank passes at the rim or gathering offensive rebounds under the basket, his post touch, as previously mentioned, is limited. And he’s not a 3-point threat, allowing defenders to sag off of him while he’s operating at the top of the key.

More troubling for the Tar Heels, however, is Brooks’ propensity to get in foul trouble, exacerbated by a lack of front court depth at the moment. Should Brooks have to sit extended minutes, North Carolina will be forced to rely on the likes of Maye and Johnson to carry the load inside. If Manley returns for the Duke game, these fears are alleviated, but it’s still something to watch for.

Aspects to watch for
With that in mind, something else to keep an eye on: Can Brooks defend the rim against Duke’s slashers — Zion Williamson and R.J. Barrett — without sending them to the free-threeline? And who will win the battle on the glass between Brooks and the Blue Devil big men, Marques Bolden and Jack White?

The performance of Brooks, UNC’s most overlooked and under-appreciated starter, could make or break a crucial game for the Tar Heels. If Brooks can help North Carolina win the battle inside, while defending without fouling against Duke’s trove of athletic talent, he can steady the inside-outside balance that is so often crucial to a recipe for UNC success.

The matchup between White and Duke’s Tre Jones will be an interesting one. The UNC point guard is one of the best first-years he’s ever coached at UNC.

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CAMERON JOHNSON
By Alex Zietlow
Senior Writer
Strengths
Kenny Williams is part of the reason head coach Roy Williams considers this North Carolina men’s basketball team one of the best shooting units in the ACC. The senior guard also ranks among the Tar Heels’ best perimeter defenders. He takes a lot of charges, has the size and tools to guard every position and is tied for second on the team with 25 steals. Most importantly, though, Williams seems to have inherited the role as the emotional leader of No. 8 UNC’s experienced squad. He doesn’t shy away from big moments and has made big plays a few times this season — including when he hit the game-winning 3-pointer in overtime against Miami to give the Tar Heels a lead they’d never relinquish.

Weaknesses
This season, Kenny Williams is shooting 32 percent from the 3-point line, 8 percent below his percentage last season. He’s a streaky scorer and often times struggles to create his own shot. Part of this can be attributed to his insistence on not taking bad shots that could disrupt the offense’s flow.

Aspects to watch for
It’ll be interesting to see who Williams matches up with come UNC’s faceoff with No. 2 Duke. No clear matchups have seemed to surface ahead of Wednesday’s contest. First-year guard Tre Jones and first-year forwards R.J. Barrett and Cam Reddish pose unsolvable problems for most teams; in any matchup, Williams will have his hands full. It’s not out of the question for the Tar Heels to resort to a 2-3 zone defense if they find themselves struggling to stay in front of the Blue Devils.

LUKE MAYE
By Chris Hilburn-Trenkle
Assistant Sports Editor
Strengths
On Nov. 6, Luke Maye and the North Carolina men’s basketball team opened the season in Spartanburg, S.C., against Wofford. Maye led the way with 24 points on 7 of 13 shooting as the Tar Heels got revenge against the Terriers, who upset North Carolina in Chapel Hill last season on Dec. 20. It is one of six 20-point performances for the senior forward this season, who ranks third on the team in points per game (14.3). Despite not shooting well from 3-point range, Maye is still proving effective from the field. His best contribution on the season has been his rebounding. Maye ranks second in the ACC in rebounding (9.6 per game) and has averaged more than two offensive rebounds per game. Maye also has gotten better at passing out of double teams so far this season. He’s averaging more than two assists per game and has dished four assists in three different games.

Weaknesses
As noted above, Maye has struggled from 3-point range this season. Last year, he converted 43.1 percent of his shots from beyond the arc, but that number has dipped more than 10 percentage points to 32.6 this year. Maye is also not particularly athletic, something that gives him trouble against some athletic forwards in the ACC.

Aspects to watch for
Maye will likely guard Zion Williamson on Wednesday night, a matchup that could create problems for the North Carolina forward. Williamson’s athleticism could spell trouble for Maye on both sides of the ball. Against Yale Davis and Robert Williams of Texas A&M last season in the second round of the NCAA tournament, Maye struggled to find a rhythm against the athletic duo. Maye managed just 13 points against the Aggies in the 86-65 loss.

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We sat down with former UNC forward Antawn Jamison

By Chris Hilburn-Trenkle
Sports Editor

On Jan. 29, The Daily Tar Heel interviewed former UNC men’s basketball player Antawn Jamison regarding the significance of the UNC-Duke rivalry. Jamison was the unanimous 1998 National College Basketball Player of the Year and his No. 33 jersey was retired in 2000. The former Tar Heel forward played the Blue Devils seven times while at UNC and won five of those games. Jamison then played 10 years in the NBA after entering the 1998 NBA Draft.

DTH: What is the meaning of the UNC-Duke Rivalry to you?

Antawn Jamison: For me to be a part of that rivalry for three years and to have some success, as well, it’s one of those things that you cherish, and the memories just never go away. Just sitting here looking at the (Daily Tar Heel) book, and I remember those moments, and as you get older it just brings you back to 20 something years ago when this kind of directed your life into what it is now. So for me, it’s pretty much the highlight of my basketball career. And I have kids now, so I was able to bring my boys here a couple of years ago and, look, this is what it’s all about. I loved it, man, and just fortunate to be a part of it.

DTH: So, stepping on the court first time for that UNC-Duke game. Do you remember what’s going through your head?

AJ: Can’t lose. I remember that year they had Trajan Langdon, they had (Chris) Collins, his dad was a coach. I just knew all the hope built up for this one game and guys like Jeff McInnis and Dante Calabria were like, ‘All right young fella, we know you’ve been doing pretty well but we need you tonight!’ You hear about it the weeks to come, that week of everywhere you walk around, the Pit and things of that nature, people are like, ‘Good luck and so forth.’ Of course, you heard those things throughout the regular games, but it was just something special. And then just the atmosphere once you took the court. It was unbelievable. I mean, I never heard the Smith Center that loud. Each possession, every play, the attention to detail, it was on a whole ‘nothar’ level. For me, it was important to win the game, but once you start playing, it was the most fun I ever had playing the game of basketball. It was a lot of excitement, a lot of buildup to this one special game. And then you would think, ‘OK, this happened at home,’ and then we go to Duke. You know how that atmosphere is. I’m walking on the court, and I’m shooting a free throw and they’re yelling ‘Your mom can’t spell,’ and this and that. It was special, and then you would feel like after your freshman year kind of get used to it, but you never do. You still have that excitement your sophomore year and junior year and so forth. I can’t put in words what it meant to be a part of that game.

DTH: What is that reception like now when you go to Cameron?

AJ: They look at me like, ‘Why are you here?’ I go to more Duke games than any other place, and to me, it’s uncomfortable because you’re in these small bleacher seats and I’m like legs across and people are looking at me. Finally last year some woman was like, ‘What are you doing here?’ and I said, ‘I’m here scouting, I work for the Lakers,’ and so forth, and she was like, ‘Oh, so when you play you beat us, and now you’re trying to take our players away. You might be had luck.’ But it’s fun because it brings you back to the days you played. To see these kids that have the opportunity and the talent to make it to the next level, and you actually have an input on their talents and how it will translate to the next level— it’s my job. So kind of gives it an importance of even though I don’t want to be here, I walk up. It’s funny, too, because when you go up, whether it’s the security guards or people taking your ticket, there’s Tar Heel fans over there, as well. I walked out, and a police officer was like, ‘Hey, go Tar Heels.’ So my first time I was like, OK, ‘it’s not too bad.’ And people working inside are like, ‘I’m a Tar Heel at heart, just have to work, so it was kind of surprising to see that. But once you walk in there people are just looking like what am I doing in there, so that kind of got some getting used to, but other than that it’s fine.”

DTH: So what’s your excitement like now when preparing for a UNC-Duke game? How is it different?

AJ: It doesn’t change. I’ve done a great job as far as raising some die-hard (boys), so their blood is just Tar Heels. We would sit there, we would yell, we would jump up and down like I’m on the bench, and I can’t play anymore. That part will never go away to the day I die. It’s been 20 something years, and that game has just the importance as it did when I played. Since I retired I don’t think I’ve missed a Duke-Carolina game, at home especially. I won’t go over there for a Duke-Carolina game, but it’s part of my duty to be there and give that support and I know what they’re going through. I know how difficult it is, I know all the pressure built up to that game so I get to relax a little bit. But like I said, it hasn’t changed.
The Rivalry by the Numbers

UNC vs. Duke Series Record: 137-111
Roy Williams Record vs. Duke: 14-19

49 ACC Championships
Regular Season & Tournament

Final Four Appearances: 20

National Championships: 6

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Summer School
These five games have defined UNC’s season

By Chapel Fowler
Senior Writer

When UNC enters Cameron Indoor Stadium on Wednesday night, it’ll do so with 25 games under its belt and a clear identity.

The Tar Heels have bet on their speed and scoring this season, and it’s yielded results. UNC is averaging 78.4 possessions per game, seventh fastest in the country, and scoring 79.7 points per game, second in the country.

The team, working without a traditional post player for the second year in a row, also leads the nation in rebounding at 43 per game.

But turnovers (13.8 per game) and scoring defense (73.3 points allowed per game) have plagued North Carolina in 2018-19.

When UNC enters Cameron Indoor Stadium for its annual showdown with Duke, here are five key games from the season — ones that best reflect who the Tar Heels are, and who they are not.

Dec. 15: UNC 103, Gonzaga 90

In a matchup of two offensive juggernauts, UNC used rebounding and 3-point shooting to run away from the No. 4 team in the country. The Tar Heels, with no offense to combat it, set season worsts in field-goal percentage (34.5) and free throw attempts (seven).

The heroes of two players gave North Carolina its seventh straight ACC win. White tied his career high with 33, sinking six second-half 3-pointers and leading a furious comeback late. With 10.2 seconds left, Maye sank a three from the right wing to tie the game at 77.

North Carolina hadn’t seen a game come right down to the wire all season, so the overtime victory gave the team some valuable experience in such a situation. White’s unrelenting second half was also a glimpse at how UNC can play when the talented point guard is given free rein of the offense.

Feb. 11: Virginia 69, UNC 61

The Tar Heels fell into multiple scoring droughts, and it reflected on the defensive end. Louisville shot 52 percent from the field and made 11 of 26 three-pointers (three).

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UNC trailed 36-29 at halftime, but wouldn’t let up. UNC clicked on all cylinders offensive and defensive from there, outrebounded 40-31 and outscored 32-36 in the paint.

The game was still winnable with nine minutes to play. From there, the Tar Heels outscored the Cavaliers 20-6.

One game later, the Tar Heels found themselves going down to the wire again — but this time, against one of the nation’s top teams that wouldn’t let up. UNC trailed 96-93 at halftime, but a second-half scoring burst put the team ahead 53-46 with just under nine minutes to play. From there, the Cavaliers’ famed defense took control of the game.

The game was still winnable late, but consecutive back-breaking threes from Kyle Guy gave Virginia enough of a cushion. The Tar Heels finished with season worsts in points and free throw attempts (seven).

Also of note, however, were injuries to Johnson and Little — and a deep, desperation 3-pointer by White, when the game was tied at 59, that was correctly waved off.

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First-year, Guard

LEAKY BLACK

North Carolina men’s basketball player Leaky Black went up to block a Georgia Tech shot on Jan. 29, only to land at an awkward angle.

What appeared to be a weird landing became worse. Black grabbed his ankle with his hands, rolling in pain.

Teammates Sterling Manley and Brandon Huffman carried the first-year off of the court while Black’s head hung low. He came out on crutches and in a boot after the game with a left ankle sprain.

He has now missed five games and he has not returned to practice.

Although Black will likely not play against Duke on Feb. 26, he’s still a key player because his presence will be missed for the Tar Heels on the bench.

Black is one of the best on-ball defenders for UNC, thanks to his long arms and athleticism, and he can play almost every position on the court.

This season, he has averaged 3.9 points, 2.1 rebounds, and 1.3 assists in 11.0 minutes per game. He’s shooting 47.9 percent on 3-pointers, but he is a hustler, jumping for a rebound and making the 3-pointers, but he is a hustler, one who won’t give up and will continue to lock players up in the defensive half of the court.

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This season, he has averaged 3.9 points, 2.1 rebounds, and 1.3 assists in 11.0 minutes per game off the bench.

In a fierce rivalry, Black played on the court, the 3-pointers, but he is a hustler, jumping for a rebound and making the 3-pointers, but he is a hustler, one who won’t give up and will continue to lock players up in the defensive half of the court.

Against the Blue Devils, the Tar Heels may have trouble filling in for Black’s versatility in offense and defensive plays if he remains on the bench.

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UNC has been more successful with him in those positions. He looks to look players up, a technique key to being a strong defensive player.

Black may have had a strong start in limited playing time at UNC with being a unique, versatile player because of his ability to play three out of the five positions; however, there is still room for growth. He is a first-year, which allows him to push through the growing pains that come with the role.

One of the games where he stood out the most was in a 103-82 win over Virginia Tech on Jan. 21.

Black only played seven minutes but he sparked a 20-0 run, that included 18 straight points scored by first-years. Black hit a 3-pointer during that run and finished the game with two assists and a steal.

Another game where Black shined before his injury was in the team’s second contest against Elon when he scored eight points and contributed five assists of the bench.

Black has impressed this season with his shot-making success in small doses. He’s shooting 47.9 percent this season and 45.5 percent on 3-point shots.

Black may not be the main player jumping for a rebound and making the 3-pointers, but he is a hustler, one who won’t give up and will continue to lock players up in the defensive half of the court.

Against the Blue Devils, the Tar Heels may have trouble filling in for Black’s versatility in offense and defensive plays if he remains on the bench.

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On the court, he primarily played point guard, shooting guard or small forward, and while it may be contradictory, UNC has been more successful with him in those positions. He looks to look players up, a technique key to being a strong defensive player.

Black may have had a strong start in limited playing time at UNC with being a unique, versatile player because of his ability to play three out of the five positions; however, there is still room for growth. He is a first-year, which allows him to push through the growing pains that come with the role.

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How the UNC-Duke rivalry first came to be

By Jack Frederick
Assistant Sports Editor

Long before the UNC-Duke rivalry rose to national prominence — before Dean Smith took the reins of the Carolina program — two prominent families in now-northern Durham County learned to hate each other. In the 1790s, the UNC-Duke rivalry began with a scandal between the Mangum and Duke families, at first written about in a 1994 News and Observer article. Chaney Mangum and Taylor Duke had given birth to a child out of wedlock. It was a secret that could only be kept for so long.

“Taylor was married,” said Freddie Kiger, a historian, statistician and longtime Chapel Hill resident. “Chaney was unwed and it starts from there.”

After Arthur Mangum, Chaney’s father, sued for child support from Taylor Duke, the relationship between the two wealthy families was changed forever. From then on, the families fought for dominance and power over central North Carolina.

The Mangums, who were major players in the founding of North Carolina’s Whig Party, became big supporters of UNC. Meanwhile, the Dukes, staunch Democratic Republicans, funneled money from their tobacco empire into Trinity College, which moved to Durham in 1892 and was renamed Duke in 1924. In all of their actions, the families were determined not to be outdone by the other.

Over time, the animosity between the two families grew and transformed into a Tobacco Road rivalry.

“Think about it,” Kiger said. “In the span of eight miles, there are 11 champions. You tell me anywhere else in the country where schools are that close together and (have) that many college basketball national titles.”

Though the origins of animosity between Tar Heels and Blue Devils began while George Washington was still president, it would be a long time before the rivalry began.

Basketball wasn’t invented until 1891, and Duke and UNC didn’t have teams until 1906 and 1911, respectively. Such contention in the new sport wasn’t even thought of until well into the 20th century.

On Jan. 24, 1920, the first UNC-Duke game was held inside Angier Duke Gymnasium before a crowd of more than 1,000 fans, according to Kiger.

“The Carolina quint won over Trinity on the latter’s court last Saturday night by the score of 26 to 25; read a game story from The Daily Tar Heel.

North Carolina lost to Duke in basketball Saturday night in Durham 36 to 20, for the first defeat the Tar Heels have suffered at the hands of their neighboring rivals since the season of 1891. The Daily Tar Heel article said.

From here, the magnitude of such a rivalry between the two schools came on Feb. 5, 1929 in The Daily Tar Heel. During the game, a fresh-faced Mike Krzyzewski played for Duke.

“North Carolina won over Duke by the score of 36 to 25,” read a game story from The Daily Tar Heel. “The Carolina quint won over Trinity on the latter’s court last Saturday night by the score of 26 to 25; read a game story from The Daily Tar Heel.

Whom Roy Williams was tapped as the Tar Heels head coach in 2003, it was a continuation of that legacy. Over the course of history, the schools have accounted for 3 of 65 ACC Tournament Championships and 36 Final Fours. Both schools are in the top five winningest basketball programs all-time.

Over time, the UNC-Duke rivalry has been among one of the best in any sport. And it all started with two families who couldn’t get along.
Our four sports editors give you their picks

CHRIS HILBURN-TRENKLE  Sports Editor

Last season, North Carolina and Duke faced off three times, including a matchup in the NCAA Tournament semifinals. The Tar Heels got the best of the Blue Devils twice, including the game on March 9, which they won by five points. This season, Duke returns zero starters from that team. But led by four first-year starters, Duke boasts one of the most high-powered offenses in the nation.

R.J. Barrett and Zion Williamson rank first and second in the ACC in points per game, respectively, and should create matchup nightmares for Luke Maye, Cameron Johnson, or any other Tar Heel assigned to guard them. I expect Williamson and Barrett to each drop at least 20 points on the Blue Devils.

Carm Reddish and Tre Jones make up the other two first-year starters. Reddish is the third and final Blue Devil averaging double figures in scoring and Jones is perhaps the best defender in the ACC.

I expect Jones, who is the younger brother of Tyus Jones, to give fellow first-year Cole White trouble when White is on defense and create turnovers against UNC’s No. 2 scorer.

I think the only way UNC will win in this hostile atmosphere is if the Tar Heels take it from deep with the same efficiency it did against Wake Forest on Saturday (16-25 on 3-point shots).

I think North Carolina will shoot well from the field and from deep in the first half and possibly go into the intermission with a lead. However, Duke always comes out hot in the second half against the Tar Heels and I expect that trend to continue on Wednesday.

The Blue Devils will make their shots late as part of a second-half run and UNC will be unable to counter in the hostile environment.

Score: Duke 86, UNC 79

RYAN WILCOX  Assistant Sports Editor

Zion Williamson, who is the likely No. 1 pick in the 2019 NBA Draft, is, in a word, overwhelming. He’s too much of everything all at once: too big, too strong, too quick, too explosivel.

UNC has the perfect blend of young talent and veteran experience. Cole White is the team’s best offensive player, and Luke Maye, Cameron Johnson and Kenny Williams have years of college basketball experience behind them to back him up. In the long run, any of these guys have played all season, who has the most raw talent will not be the deciding factor.

I predict big nights from veterans Johnson and Maye on Wednesday in Cameron Indoor Stadium. UNC will do something it has struggled to do all season, take care of the ball, and thus limit Duke’s opportunities on offense.

The Blue Devils get a lot on the glass (14 offensive rebounds per game as of Feb. 15), but UNC is one of the best rebounding clubs in the nation, and the Tar Heels will control the glass. UNC comes out hot from the 3-point line, and takes Duke down in the first leg of the best rivalry in college athletics.

Score: UNC 90, Duke 90

JACK FREDERICK  Assistant Sports Editor

Duke is as big a title contender as anyone.

But North Carolina is ready to shoot its shot after a solid, confidence-building win leading into the matchup. In the final game leading up to the rivalry matchup, UNC shot the ball exceedingly well against Wake Forest. The Tar Heels — led by Cameron Johnson, who made a career-high seven 3-pointers in Winston-Salem — beat the Demon Deacons by a margin of 35.

The win is also the kind of game UNC needed leading into a contest against the Blue Devils. It’s also the kind of performance the home team should fear welcoming in its rival to Johnson’s impressive performance from deep.

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UNC’s top five wins against Duke highlighted by 8-point comeback

By Chris Hilburn-Trenkle  
Sports Editor

The North Carolina men’s basketball team and Duke have played 248 times in the rivalry’s history. Here is a list of five of the best games of the rivalry, spanning from 1974-2006.

March 2, 1974: No. 4 UNC 96, Duke 92, OT.

One of the earliest classics between the two rivals occurred in 1974. With 17 seconds left to play in the contest, the Blue Devils held an eight-point lead in an era when there was no shot clock. UNC senior All-American Bobby Jones calmly walked to the free-throw line and hit two free throws to cut the lead to six points. On the next two inbound plays, Duke turned over UNC and converted two layups in a row to make it an 86-84 game.

After getting the ball inbounds on the next possession, a Duke player missed a free throw and head coach Dean Smith called a timeout with three seconds left. Smith set up a play. Walter Davis received the ball at half court, took three dribbles and sank a 30-foot bank shot to send the game into overtime. In the extra period, the Tar Heels prevailed, 96-92.

Jan. 18, 1986: No. 1 UNC 95, No. 3 Duke 92.

The Blue Devils and Tar Heels both came into this contest undefeated, boasting 16-0 and 17-0 records, respectively. Led by sophomore Jerry Stackhouse and Rasheed Wallace, UNC came into this game with a 16-1 mark on the season.

The Blue Devils were coached by assistant coach Pete Gaudet while Krzyzewski was in the hospital for exhaustion, yet they still put up a strong fight. North Carolina opened up a 17-point lead, but Duke rallied and sent the game into overtime. In the extra period, Jeff Capel hit a 30-foot shot to send the game into second overtime before the Tar Heels got the last laugh.

Wallace finished with 25 points on 10 of 11 shooting but he fouled out with 19 seconds left in regulation. In his absence, Stackhouse and senior guard Donald Williams stepped up. Williams finished with 24 points and hit the deciding jump shot to give UNC a 100-98 lead in the eventual win.

March 6, 2005: No. 2 UNC 75, No. 6 Duke 73.

Coming into the regular season finale at the Smith Center and the final home game for UNC’s top seven scorers, including Sean May and Raymond Felton, the Tar Heels were riding a six-game win streak.

Yet with just over three minutes left to play, it looked like Duke was about to spoil the affair. At that point, the Blue Devils held an eight-point lead in an era when there was no three-point line to make it an 86-84 game.

However, one of Duke’s three losses that season came against UNC in the first game ever played at the Smith Center. Senior Steve Hale and Brad Daugherty led the way for the Tar Heels on that day. Hale scored a career-high 28 points and Daugherty added 25 to give North Carolina the narrow victory.

Feb. 2, 1995: No. 2 UNC 102, Duke 100, 2 OT.

Led by sophomores Jerry Stackhouse and Rasheed Wallace, UNC came into this game with a 16-1 mark on the season.

The Blue Devils were coached by assistant coach Pete Gaudet while Krzyzewski was in the hospital for exhaustion, yet they still put up a strong fight. North Carolina opened up a 17-point lead, but Duke rallied and sent the game into overtime. In the extra period, Jeff Capel hit a 30-foot shot to send the game into second overtime before the Tar Heels got the last laugh.

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March 6, 2006: No. 13 UNC 83, No. 1 Duke 76.

On March 4, UNC marched to Cameron Indoor Stadium for J.J. Redick and Shelden Williams’ Senior Day. The Blue Devils boasted a 25-2 mark and were the No. 1 team in the nation.

Yet led by first-year Tyler Hansbrough, who earned first-team All-America honors that season, UNC trailed by just one point at halftime, 38-37. Halfway through the second half, the game was tied at 59 before UNC went on an 11-0 run. The Blue Devils cut the deficit to three points but first-year guard Bobby Frasor made two free throws to push the lead to five points.

After Williams made a dunk, Hansbrough sealed the game with four free throws to spoil the last home game for four Duke senior starters and he finished with a game-high 27 points and 10 rebounds.

Get ready. A nail care revolution is coming.
**Rebounding and 3-point shooting strengths for UNC**

By Holt McKeithan

Assistant Sports Editor

On Wednesday night, No. 8 North Carolina travels to Cameron Indoor Stadium to take on their rival, No. 2 Duke. Here’s a look at the Tar Heels’ biggest strengths ahead of the matchup with stats updated through Feb. 15.

**3-point shooting**

When UNC’s starting lineup is on the floor, the Tar Heels are able to space the floor and surround Garrison Brooks with four dangerous 3-point threats. UNC boasts the third best 3-point shooting percentage in the ACC, behind only Virginia and Virginia Tech.

Cameron Johnson is the primary threat for North Carolina, as he shoots a blistering 47.9 percent from behind the 3-point line, which is the second best in the ACC. For reference, that is higher than Duke forward R.J. Barrett’s total field goal percentage (44.8).

Then there’s Cody White, who knocks down 2.4 3-pointers a game, and shoots them at a 38.6 percent clip. Luke Maye has seen a significant dip in his 3-point percentage from last season’s 43.1, but he is still knocking down 1.5 3-pointers per game.

Given UNC’s lineup, that statistic is particularly impressive. The Tar Heels’ tallest starters are Johnson and Brooks at 6-foot-6, and they don’t get much bigger off the bench. Sterling Manley certainly helps, but he has been injured since Dec. 29.

The Tar Heels’ dominance on the glass is a product of a Roy Williams system. The 16th-year UNC head coach always emphasizes rebounding the basketball, and even with a short lineup, this season is no exception.

Yet against Duke, North Carolina will have its hands full. Duke has in 14 offensive rebounds per game, a mark that is good for fifth best in the country, and first among power 5 conference teams. That could be an issue against the length and athleticism of the Blue Devils.

The battle on the glass will be a big factor ahead of Wednesday’s showdown in Cameron Indoor Stadium. This season, North Carolina has out-rebounded its opponent 21 times and won 18 of those games. In the five times when North Carolina’s opponent has pulled in more rebounds, the Tar Heels are 1-2. (Photo by Holt McKeithan)

**Defensive intensity, turnovers could hurt UNC against Duke**

By Ryan Wilcox

Assistant Sports Editor

All year long, North Carolina's weaknesses haven’t been a secret — far from it.

 pres. The Tar Heels are second in the country in points at 87.5 per game. They shoot 38.6 percent as a team from 3-point range, and boast three players who average points in double digits, plus three more who average at least 8.2 points. But on the other side of the floor, North Carolina hasn’t been as impressive. In conference play, the Tar Heels have allowed opponents to shoot 42.9 percent from the field and are allowing 73.5 points per game. UNC has been comfortably outscoring most of its opponents, but the trend of overly generous defense is worrying.

And perhaps the biggest cause for concern in this game is a simple one: Who is guarding Zion Williamson?

If you’re reading this, you likely don’t need a rehash of Williamson’s otherworldly athletic abilities. He’s a Mack truck with a V8 engine, an evolutionary Charles Barkley with otherworldly athletic abilities. He’s a Mack truck with a V8 engine, an evolutionary Charles Barkley with otherworldly athletic abilities. He’s a Mack truck with a V8 engine, an evolutionary Charles Barkley with otherworldly athletic abilities. He’s a Mack truck with a V8 engine, an evolutionary Charles Barkley with otherworldly athletic abilities.

The Tar Heels find an answer for Williamson — no small feat, to say the least — and limit needlessly turnovers, they will give themselves the best chance to draw first blood against the Blue Devils.
Bench players will need to contribute more against Duke

By Brennan Doherty  Senior Writer

Conventional wisdom says it’s important to have a deep roster in basketball. But when No. 8 North Carolina travels to Durham to face No. 2 Duke on Thursday, don’t expect either team to depend on their reserves too much.

According to Ken Pomeroy’s advanced metrics, the Tar Heels rank 256th out of 351 Division I teams in bench minutes, while the Blue Devils are at No. 261.

Outside of a historically poor game against Louisville in January and a loss to No. 4 Virginia that stings mostly because of the way it unfolded, UNC has largely handled its business in ACC play. But Boeheim’s crucial modifier is interesting because of how it relates to this year’s Tar Heels.

Players have gotten hurt. Sterling Manley has at least started to participate in practice again, but the sophomore big man still hadn’t played since Dec. 29 against Davidson due to a sore left knee.

In Manley’s absence, there has been little cover for sophomore Garrison Brooks, who plays the five in UNC’s small-ball lineup. Luckily for UNC, he’s performing well, averaging 8.1 points in his last seven games.

The Tar Heels depth chart guard took a hit when first-year Leaky Black sprained his ankle at Georgia Tech on Jan. 29. The 6-foot-7 Black can play anywhere on the perimeter, even running the point at times. UNC has certainly missed his versatility.

Even first-year Nassir Little suffered an ankle injury during the first half of last week’s loss to Virginia and didn’t return. Little was back for Saturday’s win at Wake Forest, scoring five points in 11 minutes.

If there is a UNC bench player to watch for at Duke, it might be Little. The 6-foot-6 small forward is UNC’s most-used reserve and he scored in double figures in 5 of 7 games before getting injured against Virginia.

Regardless, Duke-UNC should come down to how the Tar Heels’ veterans starting five perform against Duke’s core group of first-year superstars. A year ago, UNC averaged just eight bench points in its three games against Duke but still went 2-1.

But value goes beyond points. First-year guard Coby White has been excellent as of late but he’ll be guarded by an excellent defender in Duke’s Tre Jones, while playing in a tough environment; a solid showing by Seventh Woods off the bench could go a long way.

Brandon Robinson, meanwhile, has never seen a lines ball not worth diving for. His knack for doing the dirty work might make a difference.

Every little bit counts. sports@dailytarheel.com

Garrison Brooks could prove to be X factor on Wednesday

By Brian Keyes  Senior Writer

Every Roy Williams team tries to hit the same notes: run the fast break, have a solid point guard, look for the high-low pass and throw the ball to the post early and often. The key to making this system work—especially against a long, physical team like Duke—is a dominant player at either the power forward or center position.

Luke Maye provides value in his shooting and rebounding, but the 6-foot-9 sophomore is limited in the post due to his size and shouldn’t be counted on against a player like Zion Williamson or even Marques Bolden. The key to playing how UNC would like lies with its traditional starting five.

The key to playing how UNC would like lies with its traditional starting five.

Pinning in for the head coach on Roy Williams’Directive operations for the men’s basketball team Sean May admitted he thinks the 6-foot-9 sophomore has been playing out of his true position this season. But Brooks still provides a physical presence capable of recreating and converting high-low passes and drop off from driving players.

Brooks has the second highest offensive rating on the team among players playing major minutes in games through Feb. 15, sitting at 123.5, behind only Cameron Johnson. He’s an outlet under the basket for players like Maye or Coby White, who handle most of the shot creation on the team, just like Brandon Robinson is an outlet on the perimeter.

Duke has one of the most impressive shot-blockers in the nation with Williamson, along with the taller, longer Bolden. Brooks will have to convert his opportunities when he gets them to make the most of his time on the court. He’ll also have to avoid turnovers on post ups against what may be the best transition defense in college basketball.

Defensively, Brooks will have to avoid fouling at the rate he normally does. With Sterling Manley still out and Brandon Huffman still a raw talent, North Carolina doesn’t have the size to keep up with Duke if Garrison isn’t on the floor.

But the former forward will have to keep Williamson from snagging offensive rebounds, stopping guard RJ Barrett from driving all the way to the rim and stand his ground in the post against Bolden.

Duke is one of the most talented teams in the country and to come away with a victory North Carolina will need Brooks to step up to the challenge.

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Over the 99 years and 248 games that UNC and Duke have competed, there have been buzzer-beaters, overtimes, and blowouts. Here are some of the greatest.
Over the 99 years and 248 games that UNC and Duke have competed, there have been buzzer-beaters, overtime games, and blowouts. Here are some of the greatest.
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Top 5 Blue Devil wins against UNC since 2010

By Hank Tucker
Associate Sports Editor


To set up the first of many dramatic comebacks in recent years, the Tar Heels jumped in front of the favored hosts and took a 43-29 lead into the locker room. But the Blue Devils started the second half on an 8-0 run thanks to 3-pointers from Nolan Smith and Seth Curry and Duke took its first lead of the night when Brian Kelly knocked down a triple with less than 10 minutes to play. Smith scored a career-high 34 points in the game, and the 14-point halftime deficit remains tied for the third-largest the Blue Devils have ever overcome in a win.

Feb. 8, 2012: Duke 85, North Carolina 84—Dean E. Smith Center, Chapel Hill

Duke trailed 82-72 with less than two and a half minutes left and didn't have the lead for the entire second half until the clock showed all zeroes, when freshman Austin Rivers' memorable buzzer-beating 3-pointer swished through the net to send the crowd in Chapel Hill into stunned silence. Tyler Thornton started the comeback with a 3-pointer, Seth Curry added a triple on the next possession and Ryan Kelly sank a jumper from the corner to cut it to two in the final minute. After a free throw for the Tar Heels, North Carolina forward Tyler Zeller tipped a blocked shot into his own basket with the help of a questionable nudge in the back by Duke forward Mason Plumlee. Zeller then missed a free throw on the other end, opening the door for Rivers' heroics.

Feb. 18, 2015: Duke 92, North Carolina 90 (OT)—Cameron Indoor Stadium, Durham

Just days after North Carolina coaching legend Dean Smith died, the two teams gathered in a huddle at midcourt before the matchup for a moment of silence and then played a game that would have made him proud. In the most electric comeback at Cameron in recent memory, Duke trailed 77-67 with less than four minutes left before Justise Winslow scored five straight Blue Devil points and Tyus Jones scored the next nine, cementing his legacy as a clutch playmaker, to finish regulation on a 14-4 run. All-American Jahlil Okafor converted a couple of clutch buckets in overtime as Duke held on for a victory.

Feb. 17, 2016: Duke 74, North Carolina 73—Dean E. Smith Center, Chapel Hill

On paper, Duke shouldn't have won this game, not with its least talented team of the last decade going up against a loaded Tar Heel squad that would play in the national championship and certainly not after guard Matt Jones went down midway through the first half with an ankle injury. But the Blue Devils didn't make a substitution in the final 10:51 and battled back from an eight-point deficit, climing the win when freshman Derryck Thornton blocked Joel Berry II's last attempt in the lane. North Carolina big man Brice Johnson had 29 points and 19 rebounds to dominate the paint, but the Tar Heels inexplicably stopped feeding their star down the stretch even as Duke center Marshall Plumlee played with four fouls.


Duke has come from behind to stun superior North Carolina teams several times this decade, and the most dramatic run to an ACC championship in program history included one such victory against a top-seeded Tar Heel squad that won the national championship three weeks later. Facing a 13-point deficit early in the second half in Brooklyn, the Blue Devils quickly tied it up with a 13-2 run and took the lead moments later on a 3-pointer by Frank Jackson. Harry Giles enjoyed his best sequence in a Duke uniform with a key block, dunk and steal to help the Blue Devils pull away, and Duke won the ACC championship the next day with another comeback against Notre Dame.
Duke and North Carolina set for 249th iteration

By Michael Model  
Sports Editor

Ever since Duke obliterated then-No. 2 Kentucky in Indianapolis on opening night, the hype has been unprecedented.

With Zion Williamson a walking highlight reel and classmates R.J. Barrett, Cam Reddish and Tre Jones lighting up the scoreboard, the Blue Devils have been must-see TV all season.

LeBron James, Jay-Z and Floyd Mayweather are just a few of the names that have sat courtide to get an in-person look at Duke during the last month, and one can only imagine the atmosphere when the young Blue Devils take to their biggest stage yet.

No. 1 Duke will host eighth-ranked North Carolina Wednesday at 9 p.m. at Cameron Indoor Stadium in the 249th iteration of the Tobacco Road rivalry.

The Blue Devils have not been fazed by college basketball’s elite programs this season, including a series sweep of Virginia—and have shown a level of poise and maturity unheard of from young teams.

“We have a lot of attention. Zion and R.J. are the key guys in handling that. Zion came in here having a lot of attention. I think he’s even made comments about what his parents used to say to him in high school, like ‘if you’re going to be really good, you’re going to have a lot of attention,’ so he’s kind of dealt with that.

“Devils’ handled it really well, and they have good families. Their families aren’t caught up with all that. I have good kids.’”

While the Blue Devils (23-2, 11-1 in the ACC) have struggled out of the gate on numerous occasions this season, Duke has continued to rise up against its toughest competition. The Blue Devils were locked in from the opening tip in each of their four top-10 wins—getting out to respective first-half advantages of 21, 17, seven and 14 points—while trying to avoid falling for the biggest rivalry in college basketball.

“You can bet that Duke will be mentally prepared for Wednesday’s battle, as it will likely be the lone chance for its starting freshman foursome to take down the Tar Heels (20-5, 10-2) in front of the Cameron Crazies.

The Blue Devils’ rookies have accounted for nearly 77 percent of the team’s scoring this season, led by Barrett’s 22.7 and Williamson’s 22.4 points per game.

And the nation’s top two recruits are especially eager for the opportunity to take part in arguably the most storied rivalry in sports.

“[I’m] pretty pumped,” Barrett said. “It’s a game as a kid I was watching all the time. Just to be a part of it is going to be a lot of fun and we’re going to go in there and play hard and try to win.”

“That’s been on everyone’s minds since we committed to Duke,” Williamson added. “It’s the biggest rivalry in college basketball.

“In order to emerge the victor, the Blue Devils will have to quiet an explosive North Carolina offense, which is second in the nation at 87.5 points per contest. The Tar Heels thrive by stretching the floor with lethal perimeter shooting and creating space for either dribble penetration by point guard Coby White or inside looks for versatile big man Luke Maye.

And Maye’s attempts to bait the freshman into costly fouls.

Despite the prestige of the rivalry and significance of the matchup, Jones knows that in the end, it’s just another game after sitting in Cameron for last year’s 74-64 Blue Devil victory.

“I remember the atmosphere in the gym. It was crazy, really packed,” Jones said. “It’ll be a big-time game for sure, but when the ball is tipped, at the end of the day you’re just playing basketball again.”

Zion Williamson has made Duke a must-watch spectacle whenever he takes the floor as a constant highlight-reel threat.

Cameron Johnson, who is second among all major-conference players at a 47.9 percent 3-point clip. Jones will attempt to further cement Duke’s interior size advantage against Maye—who is averaging 14.5 points and 9.6 rebounds per game—while trying to avoid falling for Maye’s attempts to bait the freshman into silly fouls.

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What it takes to be Tent 1 in Krzyzewskiville

By Hank Tucker
Associate Sports Editor

Note: This story was written before the 2018 game.

Three days before Duke hosts North Carolina on Senior Night, Tent 1 still isn’t sure what its theme will be.

The group of 12 students that millions of television viewers will envy in the front row of the student section at midcourt Saturday might coordinate Kangaroo Jack outfits around an Australian theme, a nod to sophomore forward Jack White, or they might dress up in scuba gear. Another option is getting painted as the Blue Devils’ retired jerseys, even though there are 13 of those in the rafters and just 12 of them.

“But Danny Perry gave his to Marvin Bagley, so it works,” tent captain Sara Shmueli pointed out.

The outfit dilemma is one of the only pieces of Tent 1’s experience that has not been carefully mapped out since long before they set up their temporary home in Krzyzewskville for the start of Black Tenting Jan. 12, 50 days ago.

Twenty-four groups began tenting on the first day, committing to a six-week tenting schedule to make it fair whenever grace is called. Each group can miss one check per tenting period before they are bumped on their second strike, but Shmueli and Fernandez proudly said their group has never missed a check in three years.

That was the easy part this year, though. Tenters were given grace for several days during Black Tenting due to a mid-January snowstorm and lost almost all of Blue Tenting as well due to a flu outbreak. Even in a long tenting season, with the home game between Duke and the Tar Heels taking place on the final night of the regular season rather than midway through February, members of Shmueli’s group averaged eight nights in the tent—fewer than it took to be in a Black Tent during last year’s shorter season.

But instead of appreciating the time off, Shmueli and Fernandez seemed almost disappointed that their group did not have as much time to bond this season as in past years.

“I like the night shifts definitely, especially during black tenting when you have the shift right before the night shift,” Shmueli said. “Maybe from like 10 until 2:30, you really are there with one other person, kind of have to bond over how cold and uncomfortable you are.”

Tenting shifts also became a little more comfortable this year thanks to the K-ville common room, complete with carpeting and beanbag chairs.

“I spent a lot of time in there doing work and hanging out. It was super nice,” Fernandez said. “By the end, it started to smell like trash, but up until like the last week, it was super nice.”

Shmueli maintains a spreadsheet to keep track of everybody’s hours and adjusts the schedule to make it fair whenever grace is called. Each group can miss one check per tenting period before they are bumped on their second strike, but Shmueli and Fernandez proudly said their group has never missed a check in three years.

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That description applies to most of K-ville by the end of a marathon tenting season, but it will be worth it for the more than one thousand tenters who pile into Cameron come Saturday. And Tent 1 will be first through the door.

Nearly 150 groups attempted to black tent in Krzyzewskville this winter.

Shmueli, a junior, is used to the nuances of tenting—as she was in Tent 3 as a freshman and Tent 4 last winter, both good enough to be in the front row. But eight members of last year’s tent graduated, so she assumed the role of tent captain, invited friends and asked them to invite their friends.

The expectations were clear from the outset: every tent member had to commit to pulling their weight with tenting shifts, prioritizing attendance events and studying their share of trivia.

“People were almost scared, not of Sara, but of just messing up, like letting the tent down, letting Sara down,” said junior Elise Fernandez, who has tented with Shmueli all three years.

“There was a lot of panicked calling and running around.”

Their study guide for the test was a 50-page article and books about the program and the documentary “A Cut Above: 100 Seasons of Duke Basketball,” that Shmueli and Fernandez watched together.

The questions they were most proud of getting right this year were the name of the former head coach who still attends every Blue Devil home game (Bucky Waters) and Duke’s record in 1994-95, the year Mike Krzyzewski’s former head coach who still attends every Blue Devil home game (Bucky Waters) and Duke’s record in 1994-95, the year Mike Krzyzewski

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Blue Devil bench struggling to find its footing

By Derek Saul
Blue Zone Editor

The 2017-18 Duke squad struggled mightily with finding consistent production outside of its starting five, and not a single reserve averaged more than 4.0 points per 13 minutes per game. But with the same options returning to the team this winter—Marques Bolden, Javin DeLaurier, Jack White, Alex O’Connell and Jordan Goldwire—this season’s Blue Devils would finally have depth.

In the preseason, Krzyzewski named White and DeLaurier team captains, and the junior duo greatly exceeded expectations to open the campaign. But then, somewhat inaproposely, the quality of play from White and DeLaurier diminished greatly.

For White, the beginning of the season played out like a fairy tale—the 6-foot-7 do-it-all forward seemed to be the perfect complementary piece to Duke’s standout freshman quartet of Zion Williamson, R.J. Barrett, Cam Reddish and Tre Jones, and his freshman trajectory in his 2018-19 campaign. DeLaurier became a shell of himself. As a relative non-factor offensively, the Shipman, Va., native often struggles to make an impact on the court, and Coach K recognized that recently.

After playing more than 15 minutes in eight consecutive December and January outings, DeLaurier has not reached the 15-minute plateau since Jan. 12.

O’Connell similarly is not living up to expectations. After posting an efficient 48.9 percent clip from three last season, his 3-point percentage regressed to a more pedestrian 36.7. Hopes of O’Connell becoming an explosive scorer off the bench remain alive, as the sophomore guard has shown flashes, such as during his 16-point effort against Syracuse.

Surprisingly, the greatest source of recent optimism surrounding Duke’s bench is Jack White. The defensive-minded guard is a near zero on the offensive end, as Goldwire puts up just 4.7 points per 100 possessions and sports the worst offensive rating of any Blue Devil.

However, the 6-foot-2 sophomore played a key role in Duke’s historic comeback against Louisville. Goldwire was on the court for the entirety of the Blue Devils’ late run, and his defensive tenacity, paired with that of starting point guard Jones, gave the Cardinals fits.

With perhaps the strongest starting lineup in college basketball, Duke depends on its reserves less than most other teams. Although the Blue Devil bench struggles at times, should White and DeLaurier return to their early season ways, and O’Connell and Goldwire find ways to make an impact, Duke will finally have the depth to match its talent ceiling, a lethal combination come March.

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Duke Dining & Jewish Life at Duke have collaborated to offer special dining events at the Freeman Center!

Best Jewish Family Recipe Contest: 2/18-3/1
Submit your favorite Jewish family recipe between 2/18 and 3/1 to jewishtimes@duke.edu. Submissions will be reviewed and the winning recipes will be featured on the dinner menu at the Freeman Center. Winners will be announced after Spring Break.

Taco Tuesdays
The Freeman Center is now offering tacos once a month on Tuesdays! (2/19 & 4/2)

National Pancake Day: 2/21
Join us as we celebrate National Pancake Day with breakfast for dinner as we prepare pancakes right in front of you!

Post Oscar Night: 2/25
Enjoy an upscale menu and Oscar-themed décor at our “Post Oscar Night Dinner!”

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Duke’s top 5 wins of the 2018-19 season

By Michael Model
Sports Editor

Nov. 6, 2018: Duke 118, Kentucky 84—Bankers Life Fieldhouse, Indianapolis (1)

The fourth-ranked Blue Devils erupted out of the gates in the Champions Classic. The nation’s top three recruits put on a show as Duke opened up a 34-13 advantage against then-No. 2 Kentucky and never looked back. Barrett, Reddish and Williamson combined for 83 points, and junior captain Jack White broke out of the bench with nine points and 11 rebounds. The Blue Devils led by as much as 37 as Duke’s freshmen compiled one of the most impressive offensive performances in recent memory in just their first regular-season game.

Jan. 12, 2019: Duke 80, Florida State 78—Tucker Center, Tallahassee, Fla. (2)

Then-No. 13 Florida State provided an inexperienced Blue Devil team with its first true hostile road environment after then-top-ranked Duke saw a blue-heavy crowd in Winston-Salem earlier that week. The Blue Devils opened up a 29-19 lead midway through the first half, but Duke had its first major scare of the season when Zion Williamson got poked in the eye in the period’s closing minutes. Without Williamson on the floor, Cam Reddish emerged from a season-long slump with 23-points, including a wide-open triple with 0.8 seconds left, to give the Blue Devils a hard-fought victory.

Jan. 19, 2019: Duke 72, Virginia 70—Cameron Indoor Stadium, Durham (3)

Coming off a shocking overtime loss to Syracuse, the No. 1 Blue Devils faced the brutal task of an unbeaten No. 4 Virginia coming to town. Playing without floor general Tre Jones, who suffered an AC joint separation against the Orange, Duke relied on iso-ball from R.J. Barrett and Williamson to generate offense. After taking 13 3-point attempts in the first half, the Blue Devils focused on attacking the interior out of the break. Williamson and Barrett combined for 57 points and Marques Bolden added a pair of clutch free throws down the stretch as Duke sealed the deal.

Feb. 9, 2019: Duke 81, Virginia 71—John Paul Jones Arena, Charlottesville, Va. (4)

No. 2 Duke came out firing against No. 3 Virginia in the teams’ rematch three weeks later, opening up an 8-0 advantage and a 29-15 lead in the first 12 minutes. Barrett drained his first five triples and Duke hit 13-of-21 in the contest. Virginia used a 11-3 run to cut the deficit to four entering the break, but Reddish caught fire in the second half, adding 17 points—aided by five triples—as Duke put Virginia away and earned a season sweep.

Feb. 12, 2019: Duke 71, Louisville 69—KFC Yum! Center, Louisville, Ky. (5)

What tops a 34-point blowout of a John Calipari-coached squad? How about the largest comeback in the Mike Krzyzewski era? Trail ing by 23 with 9:30 remaining in the contest, ESPN’s win probability chart gave Duke a 0.1 percent chance of a comeback. With Louisville getting complacent and taking ill-advised triples, the Blue Devils rode offensive efficiency and pesky defense from reserve Jordan Goldwire to erase the deficit. Reddish complemented Williamson’s 27-point, 12-rebound performance with 22 points, including a triple to knot the score at 69 with 1:29 to go and the go-ahead free throws with 14 ticks on the clock as Duke stunned then-No. 16 Louisville on the road.
**THE DEVIL’S IN THE DETAILS**

**[BY THE NUMBERS]**

- **111-137**
  - Duke’s Series Record vs. North Carolina
- **111-37 (.750)**
  - Duke’s All-Time NCAA Tournament Record
- **16**
  - Duke’s Final Four Appearances
- **5**
  - Duke’s NCAA Titles
- **19-14**
  - Coach K’s Record vs. North Carolina Since 2003-04
- **39**
  - Duke’s ACC Titles
    (19 Regular-Season, 20 Conference Tournament)

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Q&A: John Feinstein talks Duke-UNC history

By Michael Model
Sports Editor

The Chronicle’s Michael Model spoke with former Chronicle sports editor and renowned sports author John Feinstein to break down the evolution of the battle of Tobacco Road and what makes it one of the most special rivalries in all of sports. Their conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

The Chronicle: What aspects of the Duke-North Carolina rivalry make it stand out as the best in sports?

John Feinstein: I think the fact that the two schools are 10 miles apart…and the fans of the two schools actually live together. It’s not like Michigan-Ohio State, it’s not like Army-Navy—as great a rivalry that is…. The fact that they basically share the same community and they share the same media…and they play at least twice a year every single year, sometimes three times. Back when I was in school when the Big Four tournament existed, there were years when they even played four times.

So, you know you’re going to face them twice a year and both teams have been, generally speaking, really good every year since 1978 when Bill Foster turned the Duke program around and went to the Final Four. Carolina had a down year in ’02, they had a down year in ’10. Duke had a down year in 1995 when Krzyzewski was out with a back problem. But, in ’10. Duke had a down year in 1995 when Krzyzewski was out with a back problem. But, really for 40-plus years, they’ve been top-10 teams when they’ve met.

TC: You’re talking a lot about the coaches involved: Mike Krzyzewski, Roy Williams and Dean Smith. How much have their successes overshadowed the players?

JF: You’re talking three Hall of Fame coaches. You’re talking coaches that have combined to win 10 national championships and have been to 32 Final Fours combined and uncountable ACC championships, both regular season and tournament. Mike and Dean, everybody knows, did not get along most of the time when they coached against each other. Roy and Mike have certainly had their moments through the years. I think they get along much better now that they’re both older statesmen in the game. But it’s always been intense because they recruit against each other a lot and obviously play two or three times every year. It is unique in all those senses.

TC: Duke and North Carolina have been battling since 1920. At what point during the last 99 years do you feel the rivalry peaked?

JF: I don’t know that there’s a particular peak period or peak moment. I do remember back in 1994 when they both made the Final Four and there was a possibility of them playing in the national championship game. I think the thought of that terrified both sides because the notion of losing to the other for a national championship was just terrifying.

Krzyzewski tells a story that when Carolina lost to Kansas in the first game that evening, he actually walked into the locker room and said to the players, ‘Look, Carolina lost and I’m not going to pretend that’s not a big deal for us. It is, but now you have to take that thought and flush it.’ They were about to go play UNLV, but he acknowledged the fact that knowing they would lose to Kansas in the first game that evening, he actually walked into the locker room and said to the players, ‘Look, Carolina lost and I’m not going to pretend that’s not a big deal for us. It is, but now you have to take that thought and flush it.’ They were about to go play UNLV, but he acknowledged the fact that knowing they would lose to Kansas in the first game that evening, he actually walked into the locker room and said to the players, ‘Look, Carolina lost and I’m not going to pretend that’s not a big deal for us. It is, but now you have to take that thought and flush it.’

JF: Vic Bubas was the first guy who built the Duke program. He didn’t win a single ACC title in 10 years, went to three Final Fours and really made Duke into a national power, which it had not been…. The year after I graduated, Bill Foster had finished his program. It took three years, but he built it and they went to the Final Four, they went to the national championship game in 1978 and lost to Kentucky. Even though they didn’t get back the next two years, they were very good with Tim Spanarkel, Mike Gminski, Gene Banks and Kenny Demard, and people forget they went to the Elite Eight Bill Foster’s last year.

Then, Krzyzewski came in and it took him a couple years to turn it around—he went 38-47 his first three years—and there were people screaming that he should be fired. Tom Butters, to his credit, said no. Mike turned it around in ’84 and you know he’s still there. But certainly Vic Bubas and Bill Foster are names that Duke people shouldn’t forget. Also, there were all sorts of very good players going back to the ’60s: Bob Verga, Jeff Mullins and then my era Tate Armstrong was on Dean’s Olympic team in ’76 and was a terrific player and a first-round NBA Draft pick, but again didn’t get noticed because all four years he was in school—we were classmates—Duke was pretty terrible.
The forward has also elevated his game on defense and should be in the conversation for the ACC's top five defensive players.

Strengths: On a team that is firmly within the bottom third of Division I programs in 3-point shooting, Cam Reddish is clearly Duke’s best option beyond the arc among regular rotation players. Reddish drilled a couple of dagger shots in the Blue Devils’ unfathomable comeback against Louisville—including the game-tying score with less than 90 seconds to play—and sank the game-winner against Florida State in the closing seconds. The forward has also elevated his game on defense and should be in the conversation for the ACC’s All-Defensive team.

Weaknesses: While Reddish has improved on defense, Duke has only really faced two offenses comparable to that of North Carolina—Kentucky in the season opener and Gonzaga in the Maui Invitational. Reddish can also be turnover-prone. He gave the ball away six times each against Texas Tech and Clemson and is averaging two turnovers a game in conference play.

Aspect of matchup to watch: for Brooks, Bolden will likely be relegated to the bench. The forward has often been able to exploit mismatches with so much focus on his talented classmates, but if North Carolina makes it favor a smaller lineup with freshman phenom Nassir Little inserted for Brooks, Bolden will likely be relegated to the bench.

Strengths: Following two seasons of underwhelming play, Marques Bolden is finally fulfilling the true center role in his junior season. Bolden makes use of his 6-foot-11, 230-pound frame and has asserted himself as the Blue Devil’s defensive anchor, leading the squad in block percentage. The former five-star recruit’s coming out party came Nov. 20 against then-No. 8 Auburn, with 11 points, nine rebounds and seven blocks.

Weaknesses: During the Blue Devils’ remarkable comeback against Louisville, Bolden was nowhere to be seen, riding the bench in the contest’s final 10 minutes. Although it happens with less frequency compared to his first two campaigns, the DeSoto, Texas, native can be forced off the court at times when the game dictates a faster pace and mobility on the perimeter. Bolden improved his lateral quickness this offseason, but he still can be beat off the dribble when switched onto a speedy guard.

Strengths: Zion Williamson may be the most athletic player in the history of college basketball, which, much to the dismay of Duke’s opponents, is only one aspect of his one-of-a-kind game. Standing at 6-foot-7 and 285 pounds, Williamson has unbelievable grace and touch around the rim for a forward his size. That, combined with his 40-inch vertical, makes him virtually unguardable on the low block, in transition and otherwise.

Weaknesses: Although Williamson plays like a guard at times, driving the lane from the perimeter and taking his fair share of jump shots, his lack of elite handles and a consistent three-point shot has hurt him. His assist-to-turnover ratio is a less-than-desirable 1-to-1 and his 3-point percentage is 29.2. The only strategy that has occasionally worked against the Spartansburg, S.C., native has been to leave him open at the 3-point line.

Aspect of matchup to watch: Williamson will most likely be matched up with Luke Maye, a first-team All-ACC selection last year. Williamson beats out Maye in athleticism and general skill with the ball, but what Maye lacks in physical force, he makes up for with experience and basketball IQ. Maye is also averaging a near double-double on the year, and his nose for rebounding and putbacks can cause problems for Williamson if the freshman fails to box out consistently.
STARTERS: BACKCOURT

TRE JONES
Guard

Class: Freshman
Height: 6-foot-2
Weight: 183 lbs
Hometown: Apple Valley, Minn.
PPG: 8.7
APG: 5.4
A/TO: 4.6

Strengths: Tre Jones’ on-ball defense is second to none in college basketball this season, flustering every opposing guard he has matched up with so far. The freshman point guard can apply full-court man-to-man pressure while staying in front of ball handlers the whole time, often leading to steals or turnovers and easy transition buckets for the Blue Devils. His defense was particularly critical in Duke’s win against Texas Tech at Madison Square Garden and the Blue Devils’ recent 23-point comeback at Louisville. Offensively, Jones is an effective facilitator who rarely makes mistakes and leads the ACC in assist-to-turnover ratio.

Weaknesses: Jones does almost everything at an elite level, but the one glaring deficiency in his game is perimeter shooting. Teams are able to leave him open on the 3-point line and pack the paint to try to contain Zion Williamson and R.J. Barrett, and Jones rarely makes them pay for their generosity. He’s shooting just 27.1 percent from long distance, and his 66.7 percent clip at the line is also subpar for a high-level point guard.

Aspect of matchup to watch: Coby White is a shoot-first point guard for North Carolina, leading the Tar Heels in scoring and taking the second-most field goal attempts on the team. But he is turnover-prone as a ball handler and struggled mightily in North Carolina’s loss to Kentucky when he was matched up with Ashton Hagans, one of the few defenders comparable to Jones so far this season. Jones has defended other dangerous scoring threats like Shamorie Ponds of St. John’s superbly this year, and if he can keep that trend going and neutralize White, forcing a couple of live-ball turnovers in the backcourt as well, the Blue Devils should be able to come away with the win.

R.J. BARRETT
Forward

Class: Freshman
Height: 6-foot-7
Weight: 202 lbs
Hometown: Mississauga, Ontario
PPG: 22.7
RPG: 7.4
APG: 4.0

Strengths: First and foremost, R.J. Barrett is a winner who has all the tools to do whatever it takes to bring home a dub for his team. To go along with his elite finishing skills and his knack for attacking the paint, Barrett plays with no inhibitions, unafraid to take the tough shots Duke has needed throughout this season to get back into games or end offensive droughts against teams like Louisville, Gonzaga or Virginia. Barrett’s multidimensional game provides a matchup problem for almost every other team, and Barrett always tries to make his smaller and slower opponents pay for it with slashes to the paint and pull-up jumpers galore.

Weaknesses: Although Barrett has a knack for taking big shots, some have criticized his shot selection and efficiency throughout the season. The Mississauga, Ontario native is shooting 44.8 percent from the field, which isn’t terrible considering the fact that he leads the Blue Devils in shot attempts by a wide margin. However, his occasional tunnel vision and score-first mentality has stalled Duke’s offense at times.

Aspect of matchup to watch: Kenny Williams is one of the ACC’s best defenders, and he must bring his A-game next Wednesday in order to stop Barrett from doing what he wants to do. Williams stands at 6-foot-4, three inches shorter than Barrett, which could be a blessing and a curse. Williams’ smaller stature could be the difference between successfully bothering Barrett when he dribbles and Williams getting bodied in the paint. On the other end of the court, Williams is shooting 32.0 percent from deep, and will require Barrett to pay attention to him everywhere on the floor as a potentially lethal long-range shooter.
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Monday - Wednesday: 8:30am - 7pm
Thursday & Friday: 8:30am - 8pm
Saturday: 9am - 6pm | Sunday: 11am - 4pm

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