

Heels, Devils define great college hoops rivalry today

Great names, games make this match one to watch every time

Eight miles, as the crow flies, separates the two schools.

The two schools have combined for seven national championships, 30 ACC championships and 60 NBA draft selections.

Duke-North Carolina is by far the biggest rivalry in sports and has been long before Dick Vitale ever said it was.

Since 1980, Duke has had the highest winning percentage in the country (.776), followed closely by North Carolina (.761).

The two schools have combined to finish the regular season with a No. 1 ranking 21 times.

There are many more numbers that could be thrown around, but you get the point.

The two schools have some tradition, which was on display last night in the first matchup between the teams this season.

Sure there are other rivalries that matter in some parts of the country, but this is the only one that demands the attention of the entire country.

And no rivalry has featured so many great players: Michael Jordan, Grant Hill, Antawn Jamison, Elton Brand, Art Heyward, Dick Groat, Shane Battier, James Worthy, Sam Perkins, Phil Ford, Johnny Dawkins, Tommy Amaker, Bobby Hurley, Jerry Stackhouse, Rasheed Wallace, Mike Gminski and many others who have gone on after college to accomplish much more in basketball.

Then you have the coaches.

The flamboyant Frank McGuire, who went on to coach USC, was probably the rivalry's first instigator. McGuire spawned Dean Smith, the winningest men's basketball coach in history, who experienced numerous successes at UNC before Mike Krzyzewski came on the scene in 1981.

Then the rivalry really took off.

The easygoing former church deacon Smith contrasted nicely with the fiery, foul-mouthed Coach K.

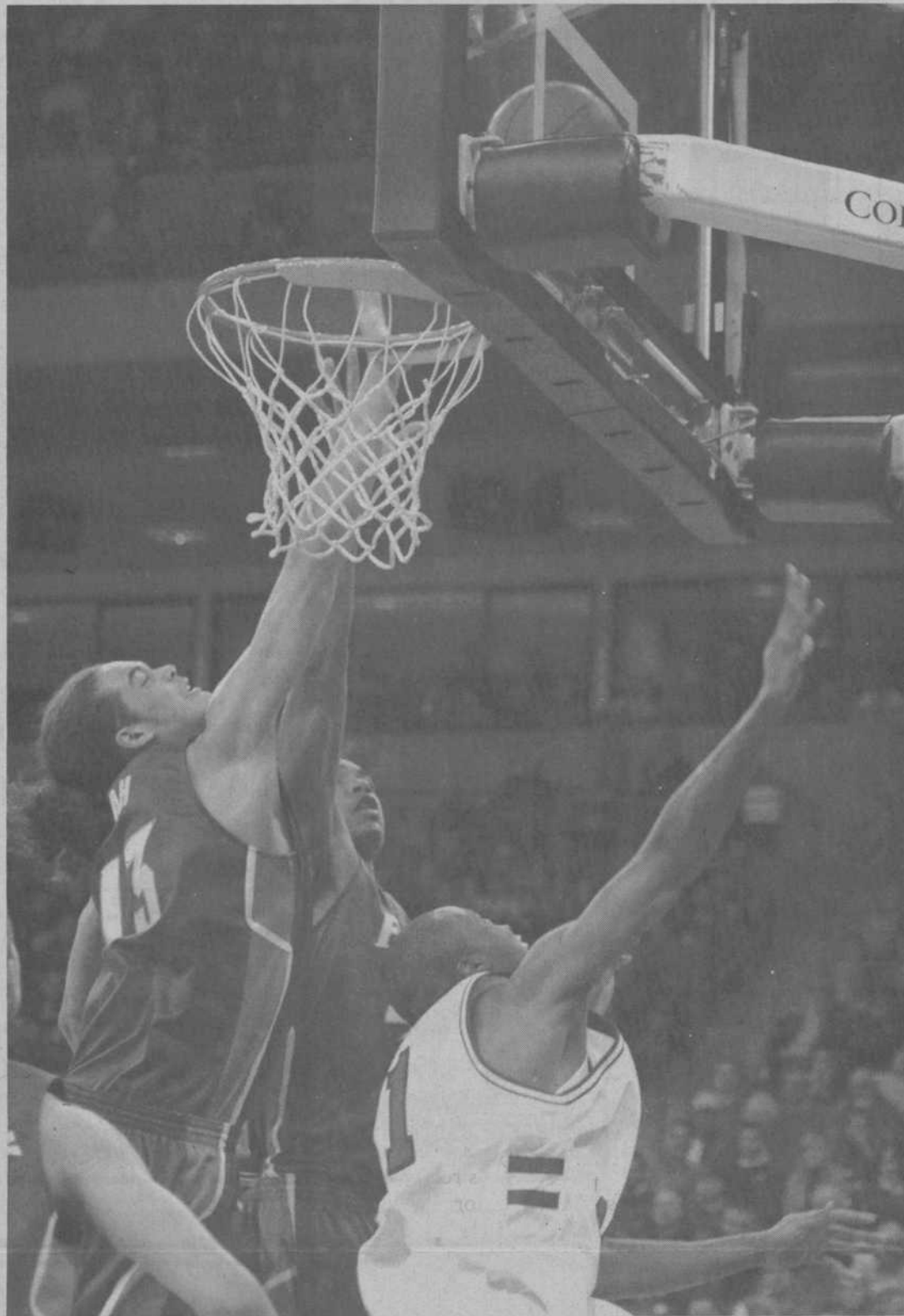
When Smith told Krzyzewski not to talk to his players during one of their ACC Championship battles, Coach K responded by cursing Smith loud enough for everyone around to hear it.

For years, Coach K complained to anyone who would listen that Smith got preferential treatment from officials



STEVEN PASTERNAU
Third-year print journalism student

USC headed to Gainesville



Florida's Joakim Noah, left, tries to grab a rebound over Carolina's Tre' Kelley on Jan. 25 at the Colonial Center. The Gators play host to USC tonight in Gainesville.

Katie Kirkland / THE GAMECOCK

Carolina looking again to use win against highly touted Florida as springboard

Tom Benning
STAFF WRITER

The old saying goes, "The more things change, the more they stay the same."

Looking at the USC men's basketball team's rematch against Florida tonight, it is hard to argue with the adage.

On Jan. 25, Carolina was a struggling club facing a highly ranked Gator squad. And yet, the Gamecocks managed to pull off the 68-62 upset.

Two weeks later, Carolina (11-10, 2-6 SEC) is in firm control of the cellar of the SEC East after losing their last two games by an average of 15 points. Meanwhile, Florida (20-2, 6-2 SEC) has reeled off three wins by an average of 16.3 points, refueling talk of championships.

USC head coach Dave Odom acknowledged the two teams have gone in different directions since the first matchup.

"Both teams have changed," he said during his Tuesday news conference. "They've probably gotten better. I'm not sure we have."

The Gators capped their recent resurgence by mauling Kentucky at home, 95-80. After breaking down film of the game, Odom was impressed by Florida's second-half performance.

"They were as good in that half of basketball

as anybody I've seen this year," he said. "They were efficient on offense and defense, and they played with great enthusiasm."

The UF-UK game was indicative of the Gator season, in which they have dominated the SEC statistically. The Gators are first in field goal (.525 percent), free throw (.723 percent), and three-point (.401 percent) shooting. They are tops in assists per game, and second in steals and assist-to-turnover ratio.

Leading the way for the Gators is a pair of sophomores - guard Taurean Green (14.8 ppg, 5.3 apg) and forward Joakim Noah (12.7 ppg, 6.0 rpg). In the first USC game, the tandem combined for 29 points, 15 rebounds, and eight assists. Against Kentucky, Green had a season-high 29 points.

"The guy that makes them go is Taurean Green," Odom said. "He had a Chris Paul-like performance against Kentucky. Combine him and Noah together, and that's a terrible twosome as far as we are concerned."

While the Gators gained some confidence since the Carolina game, UF coach Billy Donovan did not expect his team to overlook the Gamecocks.

"We are playing a team that really outperformed us a couple of weeks ago," he said on Monday. "The final score says 6 points, but we were

MEN ● 13

WOMEN HOOPS READY FOR 'CATS

USC riding SEC win streak into Thursday's game

Alyssa Aber
THE GAMECOCK

USC and the Kentucky will meet Thursday night with both teams in need of an SEC win.

It will be the second time that the two teams have met this season. In their previous meeting on Jan. 8, the Wildcats secured their first SEC victory of the season, defeating the Gamecocks 68-61 at Memorial Coliseum in Lexington.

The Gamecocks struggled with a challenging front end to their SEC schedule, losing their first four SEC games. However, in recent weeks the team has shown increased confidence on the court, winning three of its last four conference competitions.

Back-to-back wins against Arkansas and Mississippi State have propelled the team's overall record to 12-8, and their SEC record to



USC junior forward Melanie Johnson goes up for 2 during the Gamecocks' game against Arkansas.

Juan Blas / THE GAMECOCK

3-5.

Kentucky is currently ranked seventh in the SEC, one spot above USC, with a 4-4 record. Although the Wildcats have lost their last two games, they also recorded victories Florida and Tennessee. Tennessee is currently ranked No. 2 in

the SEC and No. 5 in the nation by the Associated Press.

Shutting down Kentucky's offense will be essential if the Gamecocks hope to keep their momentum and redeem their earlier

WOMEN ● 13

Men's golf gets hot, finishes in top 5 at Sawgrass in Florida

Gamecocks shoot best overall round in finale to take third

From Staff Reports

The USC men's golf team shot the best round of any team in the field on the final day of the Mercedes-Benz Collegiate Championship on Tuesday to finish third in the 15-team field.

Sophomore Mark Anderson and freshman Florian Fritsch led the Gamecocks to a tie for third at Sawgrass Country Club in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

On an overcast, windy day, Carolina shot 300 as a team to finish at 905 for the tournament, tying with Southeastern Conference rival Alabama for third in the team standings. The Gamecocks and Crimson Tide were four strokes behind second-place Texas Tech (901) and nine strokes behind team champion UCLA (896).

"We had a good, solid round today," head coach Puggy Blackmon said. "In difficult conditions this was a strong finish for a fairly young team. It was nice to see our young guys handle the weather. Florian had

a good tournament, and Mark had a great final round. It's a good start to our spring season and should give us confidence heading into The Gator (Invitational)."

Fritsch and Anderson both finished in the top 10 individually. Fritsch fired a final round 75 to wind up tied for sixth (74-74-75=223), his second career top-10 finish.

"It's a good start for our spring season and should give us confidence heading into The Gator."

PUGGY BLACKMON
USC coach

Anderson matched the best individual round of the day by shooting an even par 72. The Beaufort native improved his score each round (79-74-72=225) en route to placing in the top 10 for the fifth time in his career.

Senior Eirik Johansen joined Fritsch and Anderson in the top 20. He finished tied for

GOLF ● 13