

Sports

A&E	B5-6
Calendar	B6
Comics	B6
Deacon Notes	B2
Perspectives	B4
Scoreboard	B3

Women's soccer downs Tigers in NCAA opener

Squad rallies from one goal down on the road to avoid three-game season sweep at hands of Clemson

By PAUL GAETA
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

The NCAA Selection Committee's announcement last Monday that the women's soccer team would play host to Clemson in the first-round game of the NCAA Tournament was a bit ironic.

The only team the Deacons had lost to twice during the season would mark their first ever opponent in the big dance. With a win, the booters could make amends for their prior losses. With a loss, it would be three strikes and they're out, literally, of this single elimination tournament.

Twice this season, the booters were defeated by a formidable Clemson

team. In October, they dropped a close decision to the then 10th-ranked Tigers, 5-2 in overtime.

Then, last week, the Demon Deacons had a chance to make amends for that earlier loss. The team, however, failed to make up for the loss as they dropped another close battle, 2-1, in the second round of the ACC Tournament.

With their backs against the wall, the Demon Deacons responded with a triumph in their first ever game at the big dance. Down 1-0 at halftime, the booters scored two goals early in the second half to finally defeat the Tigers in yet another close game, 2-1.

The win propelled the Demon Deacons into a second round game at

head-ranked Florida this Sunday at noon.

In Sunday's game, Clemson got off to a quick lead when, at the 8:28 mark of the first half, one of the Tiger's prime offensive threats, Beth Keller, from a pass by teammate Jennifer Crawford, put one in the net from 16 yards out for the 1-0 lead.

The Demons Deacons put pressure on their opponents throughout, including a shot that hit the post in the closing minutes, but the lead stood for the remainder of the half.

"At halftime we knew we weren't playing well, but we also knew we'd come back," Head Coach Chris Turner said. "That shot that hit the post at the

end of the half gave us confidence that we'd score."

Indeed, the Deacons came out of the gates in the second half like a new team and this better play was rewarded with two quick goals.

Fifteen minutes in, the Tigers committed a foul in their own box and the Deacons made them pay. Junior Cheryl Zimmermann converted the penalty kick, and the game was all knotted at 1-1.

Then, five minutes later sophomore Norine Fernback slammed home a beautiful shot into the left corner from 12 yards out, giving the Deacons the lead for good.

"All in all we played the best we ever have for such an elongated

amount of time," Turner said. "The whole second half, we dominated. We did everything right and that's why we won.

Now the Demon Deacons, who own a 14-7 record overall, will travel down to the land of the Gators for a significant matchup with 21-2 Florida. On paper, the Gators, with their strong record and national ranking, look like quite a formidable opponent.

Turner, however, is not sure if his squad will see this team when they take the field.

"They're fifth in the country, but I don't know how many quality opponents they have faced," he explained. "I think they also might be looking past us to a possible game against

Chapel Hill. We're definitely capable of winning."

The Deacons must watch out for the Potopulos, star forward Danielle Fotopoulos, one of the best players in the nation, who has already scored 29 goals this season. If the team can contain her the Demon Deacons will be in good shape.

"We're going to try to keep her outside 30 yards from the goal," Turner said.

"We can't let her split our defense, but we're not going to change our game around to stop her. Florida defends just like Duke and Clemson, whose play we're used to. We'll just go at them like we have in our games with these opponents."

Runners qualify for NCAA finals in Furman meet

By ADAM ROTHSCHILD
SPORTS COPY EDITOR

The Deacons are going dancing in the desert.

For the seventh time in the past nine years, the men's cross country team has qualified for the NCAA National Championship Meet based on its finish at the NCAA District III Championships, held Saturday at Furman in Greenville, S.C.

This year's rendition of the cross country Big Dance will be held Monday at the Dell Urich Golf Course in Tucson, Ariz.

Saturday, the Deacons finished second out of 43 teams from the southeast at the District meet, a meet in which the top three squads automatically qualified for the nationals. The district champion, fifth-ranked North Carolina State, and third-place Alabama joined the No. 13 Deacons as automatic qualifiers.

Junior Nolan Swanson, the newly-crowned ACC Champion, placed fourth out of 312 runners, with a time of 30:05 over the 10K course, the fastest time ever for a Deacon runner on the Furman course, the traditional site for this long-standing event.

"Nolan Swanson continues to assert himself, to capture a little bit of Wake Forest history by winning the ACC meet and then running the fastest time in Wake Forest history at this event," Head Coach John Goodridge said. "I'm looking forward to another opportunity at the national level at the upcoming NCAA Championships."

Senior Jon Russell finished ninth overall with a time of 30:24, and junior Eric Dunn was 13th at 30:39. Juniors Eric Pragle, Ben Boyd, Matt Shady and Pat Fitzgerald rounded out the Deacon lineup. All seven Deacons finished the race in 31:30 or under, the only team in the field to accomplish that feat.

"As a team, we ran very, very well," Goodridge said. "Collectively as a team, this is the fastest team at Wake Forest in this competition."

The Deacons seem to be peaking at the right time, improving even since the ACC Championship, which was run Nov. 2. The Wolfpack defeated the Deacons by a 10-point margin, 66-76, the same difference as in the ACC meet. However, the fact that the field at Furman was so much bigger than the conference meet indicates a much closer race.

"It was a very tightly contested competition with North Carolina State," Goodridge said. "As a team, we raced a little better against State than at the ACC Championships."

The Deacons raced at the Pre-NCAA Invitational Oct. 19 on the same course where Monday's championship will be held. The Deacons finished ninth out of 32 teams in that meet, and Swanson placed 15th overall to lead the squad.

"I feel really good about the fact that we're familiar with the environment and the course," Goodridge said.

Win vaults Deacons out of ACC cellar

By SCOTT PLUMRIDGE
OLD GOLD AND BLACK REPORTER

In dramatic fashion, the Demon Deacon football squad defeated the Duke Blue Devils 17-16 in their last home game of the season.

After trailing for most of the game, the Deacons rallied for 14 unanswered points in the fourth quarter to stay out of the basement of the ACC.

"It wasn't a pretty game, but we'll take 'em any way we can get 'em," Head Coach Jim Caldwell said.

Trailing 16-3 entering the final stanza, the Deacons appeared to be well on their way to another disappointing loss.

"We were in a lull there in the third quarter," Caldwell said.

Some gutsy play calls by Caldwell, accompanied by clutch execution, turned the tide for the Deacons, leading them into the Duke end zone on their final two possessions.

The first of the two fourth quarter touchdown drives held every bit as much suspense as a big screen thriller.

"It wasn't a pretty game, but we'll take 'em any way we can get 'em."

Jim Caldwell
Head Coach

A surreal 18 plays in length, the drive included an astounding four fourth-down conversions.

"They did a great job executing down the stretch," Caldwell said.

On the first set of downs, the Deacons found themselves with their backs against the wall. Following a holding penalty, the Deacons were in a third down and 27 yards to go situation.

Undaunted, sophomore quarterback Brian Kuklick hit junior receiver Thabiti Davis with a 26-yard pass. At fourth and one yard to go, Kuklick took his first gamble of many on the drive. Kuklick, behind his surging offensive line, pushed forward over center for the first down.

The second set of downs also resulted in a fourth down situation. Again, Caldwell called for the squad to go for the fourth down conversion. This time Kuklick passed the ball, finding sophomore wideout Desmond Clark for ten yards.

The next set of downs also went to fourth down, and it appeared that the Deacon effort had finally been stymied by the Duke defense. An incomplete pass to freshman receiver Jammie Deese was ruled pass interference, however, keeping the Deacon drive alive.

On the final complete set of downs before finding the end zone, the Deacons again went to a fourth down situation. On fourth and 10 yards to go, Kuklick found Clark again for another key first down pass. Emotion-



Photos by Kristin Thompson

Junior Robert Fatzinger and freshman Fred Robbins, above, converge on a Duke ballcarrier, while freshman Morgan Kane bursts upfield, at right.

ally charged, the offense finally broke out to end zone on a 13-yard touchdown pass from Kuklick to Clark.

Following a strong Deacon defensive effort, the offense went to work again from their own 11-yard line. This touchdown drive extended 89 yards, but with much less drama than the previous one.

With nine straight pass plays, the Deacons marched all the way to the Blue Devil three-yard line. On first down and goal to go, Kuklick floated a touch-pass to Clark in the left corner of the end zone. Falling backward, Clark warded defenders off with his left arm and gracefully extended his right to snatch the game-winning touchdown.

Although this seemed to be a fitting way to end such a dramatic game, Duke still had some life in them. The Blue Devils subsequently came up short on a 49-yard field goal attempt, preserving the Demon Deacon 17-16 win.



Odom's squad sleepwalks past Australia in final exhibition game

By MICKEY KRAYNIAK
SPORTS EDITOR

The men's basketball team dozed through its second and final exhibition contest of the season Saturday night in Joel Coliseum, scoring almost at will on the way to a 90-54 win over the Australian Geelong All-Stars.

Junior Jerry Braswell poured in 30 points and senior Tim Duncan tallied 18 points and as many rebounds to pace the sloppy Deacon effort. The home team coughed up 17 turnovers against the Aussies, and forced only eight.

Braswell was unstoppable in the second half of the contest, hitting on eight of nine shots (including five-for-six from behind the three-point arc) in the second frame to help maintain the Deacons' bloated lead. The squad's starting two-guard finished having connected on 12-of-16 shots on the night, and also directed the team's offensive show for a good portion of the game.



Braswell

"As good as he was shooting the ball, I think he was even better running the team," Head Coach Dave Odom said.

Braswell also tossed the prettiest assist of the evening, hitting freshman center Loren Woods in stride for an alley-oop slam early in the game. Woods' dunk was the second basket of an 11-0 Deacon run which moved their advantage to 22-6 midway through the first half.

The Australians were unable to claw themselves out from "down under" the early deficit, and went to the locker room down by an absurd 43-12 disparity.

"They're a very tired team," Odom said of the Australians, who are in the midst of a multi-game tour through the United States. The coach was pleased, however, with his team's ability to score so torridly.

"When you can do it before a live crowd, I think it says a lot about your team," Odom said.

The Deacons emerged from the locker room with their shooting touch quite intact, and

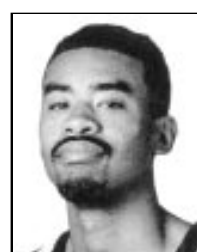
though their guests began to score with more gusto, Geelong was unable to gain any ground on their ACC foes.

Braswell promptly began raining in threes, and the Deacons, thanks to 10 early points from the guard, pushed their lead to 64-30 with 13:44 remaining in the contest. The Aussies' only answer to Braswell's touch came compliments of 6-4 guard Aaron Trahair, who headed up six trey attempts in the second half and connected on three of them. Trahair finished the night with 15 points on five-for-16 shooting.

According to Odom, the play of Braswell helped atone for the lackluster performance of junior Tony Rutland, who had a rough day on the perimeter.

"I don't think Tony had his best day," Odom said.

Though his squad prevailed by 36 points Saturday, Odom was less than pleased with the Demon Deacons' effort, and sought explanations for the team's lack of intensity in both the day's earlier gridiron happenings



Rutland

and the squad's veteran makeup.

"The football game was very exciting," Odom said of the Deacons' 17-16 win over the Duke Blue Devils in Groves Stadium. According to Odom, his team spent the final minutes of the game glued to a radio in the locker room prior to the start of their own game.

"That took a lot out of us," Odom said.

Odom also said that the experienced nature of his team, four of whose starters are beginning their third season together, also compromises his ability to keep them prepared for less important games.

"I'm a little bit worried that I don't have my team's attention right now," Odom said. "It's a veteran team coming back, and it's easy for them to let things slide. I'm concerned with mental preparation."

The Deacons will open their regular season this Sunday in Joel Coliseum against VMI.



Carlton Ward

Freshman Loren Woods shoots Saturday.