

Cheerleader hits the jackpot as 'the strongest link'

By Lauren Pressley
Old Gold and Black Reporter

Rarely are college students' bank accounts envied by others. But when senior Mary Claire Butt struck it rich, that all changed.

When Butt first received an e-mail from her coach about the college cheerleading edition of NBC's *The Weakest Link*, she hesitated to send in an audition tape on the small chance that she would be chosen to participate.

It was beyond her wildest dreams that she would not only be selected for the prime-time game show, but also go on to win it and bring home \$74,000.

It was Butt's sister that encouraged her to try out for the show. "She kept saying, 'you have to do this, you have to do this,'" said Butt. "She just thought it was something I would be good at."

NBC requested that the cheerleaders be in uniform for their audition tapes, and preferably send in material from one of their games. Butt took a chance in filming hers during a family vacation last winter. Wearing a pair of ski pants and a Wake Forest sports bra, she belted out the fight song from atop a snowy mountain.

Her method caught the eye of *Weakest Link* producers, and before she knew it, Butt was headed to Los Angeles to film the

show. She was unable to bring any friends or family members with her because of the show's need for confidentiality, but says she enjoyed spending time with the other contestants once filming was finished.

"It was fun because we were all about the same age and we had the common thread of being college cheerleaders," Butt said. After filming was completed, the contestants had dinner together and then sat around in the hotel's hot tub talking about their respective universities.

"Only one girl didn't hang out with us, but she was the one we voted off first," Butt said with an apologetic smile. "I think she was a little angry."

Butt's success with *The Weakest Link* is not surprising considering her love of trivia. She insists that she has been a "Jeopardy junkie" since she was six years old. Butt was also known for begging others to play Trivial Pursuit with her at a dude ranch where she often vacationed as a child.

In addition to her interest in trivia, Butt also credits her winnings on *The Weakest Link* to pure luck. "If I had been standing in a different spot, I wouldn't have done so well," Butt said. "Everyone had to answer a math question except for me, and math is one thing that I can't do on my feet."

For several months after the filming, Butt had to be careful not to disclose any information about the outcome of the show - she had signed a one million dollar confidentiality agreement. Butt, who loves to talk, said, "It was really hard not telling anyone, but I had a lot of fun misleading people."

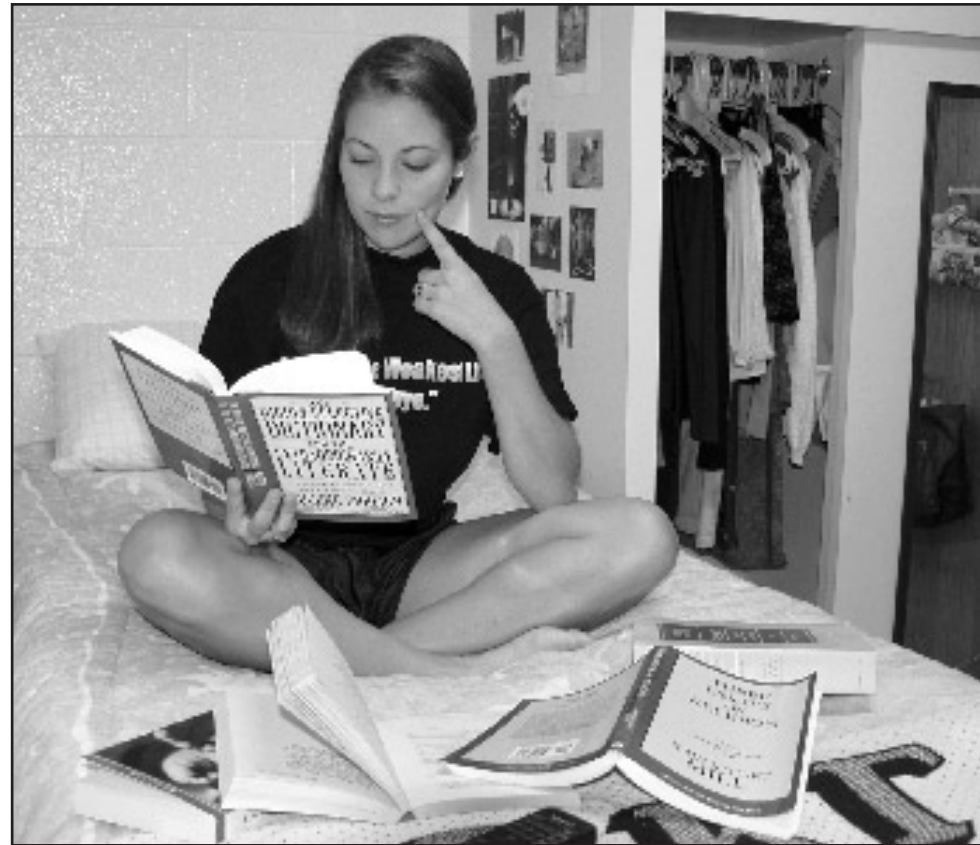
When the college cheerleading edition of *The Weakest Link* aired in June, Butt was in Washington D.C. working as an intern. Her mom called from their home in Arkansas to let Butt know the show was on.

"The excitement in my house just kept mounting as the show went on, with neighbors pouring in and everything," Butt said. "By the end of the show all I could hear was a bunch of screaming."

Butt's parents were no doubt as thrilled with her winnings as their daughter, who plans to eventually put the money toward law school. However, she laughed and said, "I'll probably spend some of it before then."

Butt said that one of the best aspects of the entire experience for her was being able to put her school on the map.

"People generally only know about us because of basketball, and many don't realize that we're a smart school," said Butt. "It was great to represent Wake so well."



Sarah Leer/Old Gold and Black

Senior Mary Claire Butt won \$74,000 when she appeared on NBC's *The Weakest Link* this summer. Although Butt filmed the episode last spring, she was unable to disclose the results of the game show until after it aired in June.



Elizabeth Bland/Old Gold and Black

Pomp and circumstance

Members of the Class of 2002 anxiously sit on the Quad awaiting their diplomas at the Commencement Ceremony May 20. Over 1,500 undergraduate and graduate students received degrees at the university's 160th graduation celebration. Despite the chilly weather, thousands of parents and relatives joined their graduates. Senator John McCain (R-AZ) delivered the commencement address.

Orientation helps Class of 2006 adjust to college life

By Michele Stupinsky
Contributing Reporter

South Campus awoke from its summer slumber Aug. 21 as the Class of 2006 arrived to begin a full week of orientation activities geared toward acquainting the new students with the campus and each other.

The traditional freshman orientation included such annual events as the ice cream social and the new student convocation, which featured speakers President Thomas K. Hearn, Jr.; Paul Escott, dean of the college; Paul Orser, dean of freshmen; and senior Katherine Collins, student chair of the orientation committee.

"(Orientation) gives students a chance to become acclimated ... and makes sure parents are comfortable with the university," Collins said.

First-year students also attended assemblies to introduce them to the university's honor code and to teach them about the university's involved past. Chaplain Ed Christman presented "What's in the Wake Forest Name?" telling the story of the campus' history and traditions through the eyes of Samuel Wait, the founder and first president of the university.

Freshman Lauren Smulcer said that Christman's program was perhaps the "only way (for freshmen) to find out about the past of the school."

Freshman Kathleen Culpeper agreed, saying the activity was one of the "most memorable" of orientation week.

Other freshman orientation events included sessions regarding health and safety on college campuses. During the halftime of the men's soccer game on Aug. 24 in Spry Stadium, students were invited to learn the alma mater and

the fight song, meet the coaches and the Demon Deacon Band, as well as to receive the annual orientation T-shirts.

Culpeper is glad that she had a week before classes began "to meet everyone ... and know who is going to be in (your) dorm".

Junior John Cross, a resident adviser in Collins Residence Hall, said that the Spry Stadium event had a great turnout. "The freshmen even started a wave with the crowd."

Junior Britt Hamilton, another RA in Collins, said that hall meetings had a big impact on the freshmen's introduction to college life. "It's the first time that it's just the freshmen and their RA with no parents," he said. "It's a really honest experience."

Even though freshmen arrived on campus before upperclassmen, there were still many that were here before the rest. Certain student groups brought back several new students to get an early start on the year, including the Demon Deacon Marching Band, Students Promoting Action & Responsi-

bility in the Community volunteer organization, the *Howler* yearbook, and many of the athletic organizations.

Junior Jennifer George, chief designer of the *Howler*, said that they came early to allow freshmen to "learn the ropes" of the yearbook's operations as well as to get the entire staff acquainted with the *Howler*'s new publisher.

Sophomore Teri Martinko, captain of the dance line, attended the "camp" that was held to make sure that the marching band, dance line and the flag squad are prepared for the first game of the season. "We have a good group of people working together really well," Martinko said. "It's going to be a great year!"

Also, numerous students took part in the Outward Bound outdoors teamwork program and Pre-School sponsored by religious organizations on campus.

As far as the freshmen go, both Culpeper and Smulcer vouch that now that they've had a chance to witness the student body in action, leaving the Class of 2006 excited about the upcoming year.



Sarah Leer/Old Gold and Black

Freshmen Blake Bennett and Chris Nilan move in with their new ThinkPads Aug. 21 at the start of freshman orientation.

BRIEFLY

Campus organizations may have their announcements listed by sending e-mail to news@ogb.wfu.edu, faxing to Ext. 4561 or writing to P.O. Box 7569. The deadline for inclusion in each week's paper is 5 p.m. Monday.

Volunteer Services to hold activities fair

Students interested in volunteering in the Winston-Salem community are invited to meet community and student representatives from 50 area agencies at the Volunteer Service Fair 2 - 5 p.m. Sept. 4 in the Green Room of Reynolda. For more information, contact the Volunteer Service Corps Office at Ext. 5290.

United Kingdom through the Rhodes or Marshall scholarships should contact Katy Harriger in the department of political science at Ext. 5450 or harriger@wfu.edu as soon as possible. Candidates must be nominated by the university. There will be an on-campus selection process in September.

Students wanted for university telethon

The Office of Annual Support is looking for paid student callers for the College Fund Telethon. Training will take place Sept. 15, and calling will begin Sept. 17 and continue through Nov. 14. There are

also opportunities to call for the law school fund and the divinity school fund.

The College Fund provides money for student financial aid, faculty support, overseas study, and library and technical resources.

Student callers are paid \$6.75 per hour plus incentive pay based on performance. For more information, contact Emily Cockerham at Ext. 5819 or cockeres@wfu.edu.

Fulbright proposals due Sept. 30

Applications for Fulbright Fellowship grants for graduate study abroad in the 2003-2004 aca-

demic year are due Sept. 30. Proposals may be in any field including the creative and performing arts, and are available for any of 140 countries.

For information, contact Mary Friedman at Ext. 5429 or Peter Siavelis at Ext. 5451.

VSC seeking students to join campaign

Students interested in joining the month-long campaign promoting student community service should attend an information session at 11 a.m. Sept. 3 in Benson 407. Contact the Office of Volunteer Services at Ext. 4549 for more information.

Mullen scholarships applications available

Applications are being accepted for a limited number of Thomas E. and Ruth Mullen Scholars of the Upperclass Carswell Scholarships.

The stipend of \$1,500 a year may be renewable. For more information contact the Admissions and Financial Aid offices.

Student Government seeking new members

Petitions are now available for students interested in filling positions in the SG Legislature, Student Budget Advisory Committee, Executive Advisory Committees, and the Honor & Ethics Council. All applications can be picked up outside the SG office in Benson

304, and are due by 4 p.m. Sept. 3. Call Ext. 5293 for more information.

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