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East Carolina's hopes for season hinge on defense
Pirates' defense abysmal last year

By Phil Stukenborg

East Carolina coach Ruffin McNeill cuts a dashing -- and almost unrecognizable -- figure these days.

The second-year coach, a former Texas Tech assistant under Mike Leach, has dropped more than 120 pounds in a year after undergoing gastric bypass surgery and another operation to replace a faulty hip.

While McNeill is satisfied with his extreme makeover, he'd likely be as pleased with a major change in another area, one that could help a team considered a candidate to battle for Conference USA's East Division crown.

What it would require is his ECU defense shedding a few yards.
Although the Pirates finished the regular season 6-6 and earned a spot in the Military Bowl against Maryland, they had a horrific season defensively. ECU ranked last nationally in yards allowed, yielding an unfathomable 479 per game and giving up 72 touchdowns, 42 more than C-USA champion UCF.

The Pirates allowed 40 or more points in 10 games last season, including 76 in a loss to Navy and 62 in a loss to Rice, which finished 4-8.

A former defensive coordinator at UNLV and Fresno State, McNeill was pro-active in addressing the shortcoming. He installed a new 3-4 defensive scheme to take advantage of his overall team speed.

"What prompted the change?" McNeill said. "Self-evaluation after looking at what we did last year that was positive and what was negative, what was effective and what was ineffective.

"We knew we had to improve defensively. So we made the change with what we do defensively."

Whether it works may not be evident until C-USA play. The Pirates open with a challenging 1-2 punch of Southeastern Conference favorite South Carolina and Virginia Tech before opening their C-USA schedule against UAB.

"We felt like going to a 3-4, an odd-man look, gives us a better opportunity to have a scheme that fits our personnel," McNeill said. "It also fits the players we are able to recruit -- the linebacker-types, the noseguard types. That was a big part of it."

McNeill said the defensive scheme will allow the Pirates to be "flexible" against the abundance of spread offenses in C-USA in addition to being effective against the more physical programs on the schedule.

"Will we instantly become one of the top defenses in the country?" McNeill said. "No, I'm not so naive as to believe that. But I'm expecting great improvement. Our coaches did a great job of schematic installation and a great job of fundamental installation (in the spring)."

McNeill is confident his offense can be as productive as it was a year ago, a bonus as the defense applies what it has learned in the offseason.

"What I found while I was at Texas Tech with coach Leach is that this offense will test and stress you on all levels: vertically, horizontally and in the run game," McNeill said. "It will expose you in some aspect."
Quarterback Dominique Davis, who ranked second in total offense in C-USA last season, is looking forward to sustaining the offense's momentum. "It's about team for me, I'm just trying to win games," he said. "Last year was fun. It was everyone's first year in the system and now we have a year under our belts. We know what the coaches want out of us. We know the tempo they want to set at practice. I think it will carry over to the games."

**A closer look at: East Carolina**

**Rewind:** The Pirates relied on a prolific offense to carry them to their fifth straight bowl game, a school record. Quarterback Dominique Davis transferred from Boston College and immediately took aim at several school marks in coach Ruffin McNeill's wide-open, Texas Tech-oriented offense. Davis, the league's newcomer of the year, accounted for 46 of the team's record 60 touchdowns and passed for 3,967 yards and 37 TDs.

**Fast forward:** If East Carolina's defense displays modest improvement in its new 3-4 look, the Pirate offense will be explosive enough to give ECU an opportunity to challenge Central Florida and Southern Miss in the East Division. Davis will have a chip on his shoulder after listening to off-season talk about the league's top quarterbacks and falling somewhere behind Houston's Case Keenum and Tulsa's G.J. Kinne in the discussion. Back is 1,000-yard receiver Lance Lewis, who led the team with 14 touchdown catches.
Shaw University chooses new leader

BY PAUL A. SPECHT - Staff writer

RALEIGH—With a hefty helping of pomp, Shaw University officials on Monday named Dorothy C. Yancy the school's next president.

The move, Willie E. Gary, chairman of Shaw's board of trustees, said from a lectern on the steps of the chapel, would help restore confidence and stability to the embattled downtown institution.

"This is not a funeral. This is a celebration," Gary said after a performance by a marching band. "We're doing better today than in the last five years or so."

Yancy is a familiar face to Shaw. And that has divided people who are close to the school. The oldest historically black university in the South has endured a tumultuous three years, including financial problems, damage from a deadly tornado, an accreditation review and several leadership changes.

Supporters of the appointment say Yancy, who retired after serving as Shaw's interim president from June 2009 until September 2010, will help Shaw raise money. And her experience as an administrator, supporters added, will help the university earn reaccreditation, which has been threatened by financial problems.

But some saw Monday's announcement as a retreat to old habits, a move that could prolong problems.
"The board now has a six- to seven-year history of not doing the right thing," said Elvira Williams, the former dean of Shaw's college of arts and sciences. "... I don't think she'll change the culture there."

**Served in interim**

Yancy's appointment is the latest spin in a revolving door at Shaw's front office.

Yancy, who did not attend Monday's announcement, had been president at Johnson C. Smith University, a historically black school in Charlotte, for 14 years before arriving at Shaw in 2009.

She came to Raleigh after the abrupt announcement that President Clarence Newsome would not return. He accepted a year's paid sabbatical and left his post amid criticism over poor finances and crumbling infrastructure.

Yancy moved aside in 2010, when Irma McClaurin filled the position permanently. But McClaurin was pushed out last week. Board members said the relationship wasn't working but declined to provide details.

Gary, a Florida lawyer, did not speak about McClaurin's departure, saying only that her relationship with the board of trustees was "not where it needed to be."

So now Yancy replaces the person who replaced her, becoming Shaw's fourth president in three years.

She signed a two-year contract. College presidents usually spend more than five years in one job. Shaw trustees hope she'll stay longer.

"Yancy thinks she's interim, but we'd like to see her full time," Gary said.

Gary also announced on Monday that Marilyn Sutton-Haywood would remain in her position as vice president of academic affairs.

Sutton-Haywood last week told university officials that she intended to leave, but Gary had said he hoped to retain her.

**Debt questions**

After Gary's news conference, students and faculty filed into the campus chapel, where media representatives were not allowed.

Despite Gary's reassurances, Shaw's stability remains unclear. He refused to answer questions about the extent of Shaw's debt, saying only that the school needs to strengthen fundraising, starting with $1 million to expand the student center, which needs rebuilding after tornado damage and years of deferred maintenance.
"We're paying our bills, managing our debt ... just like the United States of America," he said during the news conference.

"We'll need to raise money from everyone: investors, alumni, even trustees," he said in a later interview.

In 2009, Shaw officials said the school was more than $20 million in debt.

In 2010, the university was tossed a lifeline when then-U.S. Rep. Bob Etheridge secured a $31 million federal loan for the school.

In April, 27 buildings sustained nearly $4 million in damages after a tornado touched down on campus.

**Record of raising money**

Shaw hopes Yancy's track record of luring new money rejuvenates the school. Her ability to attract donors is part of the reason Yancy was hired.

At Johnson C. Smith University, Yancy ran two successful capital campaigns, and raised more than $145 million for the university, according to a statement released by Shaw Monday afternoon. Yancy increased Shaw's endowment from $14 million to $53 million, the statement said.

Gary says he's already raising expectations.

In the next 10 years, he hopes to boost the school's endowment to $100 million. Shaw could use new classroom space, a wellness and recreation center, new dorms and a new football stadium, he said.

Shaw had raised nearly $20 million before the recession, Gary said, but has "far less now."

Shaw's board has set ambitious goals before.

In 1991, Gary pledged $10 million to the university. When asked about his pledge, he has "probably written close to $5 million in checks" since 1991.

McClaurin had planned a fundraising campaign that she dubbed "Imagining More." It was an effort to improve the school's financial situation with donations from private investors and alumni across the country.

According to private audits conducted between 2002 and 2006, a single board member owed at least $7 million in money promised to the university. The audits, conducted by The Wesley Peachtree Group in Atlanta, did not identify the board member.
A chance for help

Tim McDonough, spokesman for the American Council on Education, said the recent tornado at Shaw may help the university bolster support.
"After a natural disaster, usually, there's a sense of urgency to rally and fix whatever problems there are," he said.
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Dorothy C. Yancy

Yancy, who lives in Atlanta, served 14 years as the president of Johnson C. Smith University, a private school affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) in Charlotte, before stepping in for Shaw's Clarence Newsome in 2009.

While at Johnson C. Smith, she ran two successful capital campaigns, and raised more than $145 million for the university. She also increased the institution's endowment from $14 million to $53 million.

Yancy holds an undergraduate degree in history and social science from Johnson C. Smith University, a master's degree in history from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and a Ph.D. in political science from Atlanta University in Georgia. She also studied at the University of Singapore, Hampton University, Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago, Northwestern University, Georgia Institute of Technology and the University of Illinois at Chicago.
A UNC system administrator has been promoted to a new position with new responsibilities, receiving a raise of nearly 11 percent.

Leslie Boney, who was associate vice president for economic development and engagement, will have the new title of vice president for international, community and economic engagement. His salary will increase from $131,016 to $145,000, according to the UNC system.

The new position results from a consolidation of other international activities following the retirement of the longtime head of the N.C. Center for International Understanding, a part of the UNC system. Boney will coordinate the university's international strategy, community engagement and economic development programs.

Boney's promotion was approved last week by the UNC Board of Governors. The move comes at a time when campuses are having to eliminate hundreds of jobs as the result of a state budget cut that averages 15.6 percent across the system. At the same time, the system's General Administration has taken cuts several years in a row.

UNC President Tom Ross, in asking for the board's approval, made the case that the move would be an overall money saver.

"Although it is a promotion for Leslie, this restructuring will allow us to operate more efficiently and will result in an overall budget reduction for UNC General Administration," Ross said.
Bedbugs found again at Wake Forest University

By: BERTRAND M. GUTIERREZ | Winston-Salem Journal

More bedbugs have been found in Winston-Salem — this time at Wake Forest University.

A university spokeswoman said last week that the university used a canine search team to check residential space on campus before students arrive for the fall semester.

"The canine teams did find evidence of bedbugs in a very small number of rooms, about 2 percent, and the rooms have been treated using a high-heat treatment that is considered by pest-control experts to be 100 percent effective," spokeswoman Cheryl Walker said in an email.

There are about 1,700 rooms. A double room costs $3,775 per semester, she said.

The canine inspections began July 5. As attendees of summer camps and conferences began moving out of university facilities, crews began inspections and began treating the rooms, Walker said.

"University officials are confident that residence halls will be free of bedbugs when students arrive on campus."

This isn't the first time that bedbugs have made their way to Wake Forest University.

Bedbugs were detected last August in residence halls after students had arrived. About 15 students were affected, school officials said last year.

Heat treatment also was used to exterminate the bugs at that time. Pest-control experts say that turning the heat up to at least 120 degrees for a significant amount of time is effective in dealing with the problem.

In the past few weeks, the Housing Authority of Winston-Salem has also been dealing with the problem at Crystal Towers in downtown Winston-Salem.

Of Crystal Towers' 201 units, 90 are being treated for bedbugs, officials said.

Exterminators were using heat treatment on the apartment building.

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Virtual and Artificial, but 58,000 Want Course

By JOHN MARKOFF

PALO ALTO, Calif. — A free online course at Stanford University on artificial intelligence, to be taught this fall by two leading experts from Silicon Valley, has attracted more than 58,000 students around the globe — a class nearly four times the size of Stanford’s entire student body.

The course is one of three being offered experimentally by the Stanford computer science department to extend technology knowledge and skills beyond this elite campus to the entire world, the university is announcing on Tuesday.

The online students will not get Stanford grades or credit, but they will be ranked in comparison to the work of other online students and will receive a “statement of accomplishment.”

For the artificial intelligence course, students may need some higher math, like linear algebra and probability theory, but there are no restrictions to online participation. So far, the age range is from high school to retirees, and the course has attracted interest from more than 175 countries.

The instructors are Sebastian Thrun and Peter Norvig, two of the world’s best-known artificial intelligence experts. In 2005 Dr. Thrun led a team of...
Stanford students and professors in building a robotic car that won a Pentagon-sponsored challenge by driving 132 miles over unpaved roads in a California desert. More recently he has led a secret Google project to develop autonomous vehicles that have driven more than 100,000 miles on California public roads.

Dr. Norvig is a former NASA scientist who is now Google’s director of research and the author of a leading textbook on artificial intelligence.

The computer scientists said they were uncertain about why the A.I. class had drawn such a large audience. Dr. Thrun said he had tried to advertise the course this summer by distributing notices at an academic conference in Spain, but had gotten only 80 registrants.

Then, several weeks ago he e-mailed an announcement to Carol Hamilton, the executive director of the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence. She forwarded the e-mail widely, and the announcement spread virally.

The two scientists said they had been inspired by the recent work of Salman Khan, an M.I.T.-educated electrical engineer who in 2006 established a nonprofit organization to provide video tutorials to students around the world on a variety of subjects via YouTube.

“The vision is: change the world by bringing education to places that can’t be reached today,” said Dr. Thrun.

The rapid increase in the availability of high-bandwidth Internet service, coupled with a wide array of interactive software, has touched off a new wave of experimentation in education.

For example, the Khan Academy, which focuses on high school and middle school, intentionally turns the relationship of the classroom and homework upside down. Students watch lectures at home, then work on problem sets in class, where the teacher can assist them one on one.

The Stanford scientists said they were focused on going beyond early Internet education efforts, which frequently involved uploading online videos of lectures given by professors and did little to motivate students to do the coursework required to master subjects.

The three online courses, which will employ both streaming Internet video and interactive technologies for quizzes and grading, have in the past been taught to smaller groups of Stanford students in campus lecture halls. Last year, for example, Introduction to Artificial Intelligence drew 177 students.
The two additional courses will be an introductory course on database software, taught by Jennifer Widom, chairwoman of the computer science department, and an introduction to machine learning, taught by Andrew Ng. Dr. Widom said she had recorded her video lectures during the summer and would use classroom sessions to work with smaller groups of students on projects that might be competitive and to bring in people from the industry to give special lectures. Unlike the A.I. course, this one will compare online students with one another and not with the Stanford students.

How will the artificial intelligence instructors grade 58,000 students? The scientists said they would make extensive use of technology. “We have a system running on the Amazon cloud, so we think it will hold up,” Dr. Norvig said.

In place of office hours, they will use the Google moderator service, software that will allow students to vote on the best questions for the professors to respond to in an online chat and possibly video format. They are considering ways to personalize the exams to minimize cheating. Part of the instructional software was developed by Know Labs, a company Dr. Thrun helped start.

Although the three courses are described as an experiment, the researchers say they expect university classes to be made more widely accessible via the Internet. “I personally would like to see the equivalent of a Stanford computer science degree on the Web,” Dr. Ng said.

Dr. Widom said that having Stanford courses freely available could both assist and compete with other colleges and universities. A small college might not have the faculty members to offer a particular course, but could supplement its offerings with the Stanford lectures.

There has also been some discussion at Stanford about whether making the courses freely available would prove to be a threat to the university, which charges high fees for tuition. Dr. Thrun dismissed that idea. “I’m much more interested in bringing Stanford to the world,” he said. “I see the developing world having colossal educational needs.”

Hal Abelson, a computer scientist at M.I.T. who helped develop an earlier generation of educational offerings that began in 2002, said the Stanford course showed how rapidly the online world was evolving.
“The idea that you could put up open content at all was risky 10 years ago, and we decided to be very conservative,” he said. “Now the question is how do you move into something that is more interactive and collaborative, and we will see lots and lots of models over the next four or five years.”