

Sports Friday

SECOND GENERATION X

Basketball talent runs deep in Xylina McDaniel's family.

By Dylan Howlett
Staff Writer

Xylina McDaniel can hear a voice when she's on the court. It's not in the North Carolina freshman forward's head. She's not imagining things. It could be heard from miles away.

"Every single time," McDaniel said, when asked whether she can hear it on the court. "Sometimes I try to act like I don't hear him, but he knows that I hear him, so he'll keep doing it."

That distinctive voice box belongs to Xavier McDaniel, her father. He starred at Wichita State and was selected fourth overall by the Seattle SuperSonics in the 1985 NBA Draft.

He was the "X-Man" to NBA fans, but to his daughter, he is a confidant, adviser and best friend.

He's also not afraid to flex his vocal chords. "I don't say too much, but I will say something if I don't see her doing something or I don't see her being aggressive," he said.

"When she takes the ball, I know she can hear me. And that's why I would say something to her like, 'You're not playing no defense and you're not rebounding. Get your ass going.'"

In 1994, during the twilight of the elder McDaniel's career that featured one All-Star nod, his daughter was born. Four years later, she had a ball in her hands as the NBA veteran prepared for retirement.

As one career ended, another sprouted. "A lot of people have aspirations of their kids playing college ball, and I had the same thing," Xavier McDaniel said.

It started with chucking small, rubber balls at miniature plastic hoops clipped onto the doors in their South Carolina home. The budding basketball player soon graduated to the McDaniels' half-court and basket in their backyard, where father and daughter practiced move after move after move.

It was far from lighthearted bonding. Xavier McDaniel vowed to make his daughter a better player every time she cradled a ball —



Freshman forward Xylina McDaniel goes up for a shot. She is second on the team in scoring.

DTH FILE PHOTO/CHELSEY ALLDER

mostly without any parental coddling.

"On the court, when he's coaching me, it's all hard — cussing out, yelling, screaming, making me run," Xylina McDaniel said.

She admitted to coming to tears during workouts with her father.

"He's hard on her," UNC coach Sylvia Hatchell said. "He's probably harder on her

than my coaching staff is. He knows how to motivate her and get on her."

When Xavier McDaniel would demonstrate and teach, no matter how angrily he did so, Xylina McDaniel would follow suit with such ease that he could not help but

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL:
MARYLAND 85, UNC 59

UNC falls flat against Maryland

The Tar Heels did not make a 3-pointer until midway through the second half.

By Jonathan LaMantia
Assistant Sports Editor

Seven times this season, UNC has won when it has been tied or trailing at halftime, including a 10-point comeback against Maryland on Jan. 3 that ended in a Tar Heel win.

But Thursday night's 85-59 loss to Maryland was also the seventh time this season that the Tar Heels failed to make a 3-pointer during a full half of play.

"We didn't start out very well defensively or offensively," UNC coach Sylvia Hatchell said.

"They got rolling. They shot 65 percent in the first half."

Sophomore transfer Erika Johnson hit North Carolina's first 3-pointer — a bank shot from the top of the key — with 12:09 left in the second half, but by then the Terrapins had jumped out to a 55-37 lead that they would not relinquish.

UNC shot one-for-19 from the 3-point range on the night.

Maryland forward Alyssa Thomas recorded 17 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists.

And teammate Tianna Hawkins led all scorers with 25 points.

"They were shooting so well from the outside," senior Krista Gross said. "We had to come out, and so it left holes in the inside."

Hawkins and Thomas entered the game ranked first and second in the ACC, respectively, in both scoring and rebounding.

The loss was UNC's first since a 102-57 loss against Tennessee on Dec. 2.

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Wrestlers face shallow roster

Injuries have forced some Tar Heels out of their comfort zones.

By Jonathan LaMantia
Assistant Sports Editor

Last weekend, North Carolina freshman 125-pounder Nathan Kraisser opened UNC's dual meets against then-No. 11 Virginia and then-No. 9 Virginia Tech with upsets in consecutive days.

Unfortunately for the Tar Heels, his success couldn't extend into the upper weight classes. UNC dropped both bouts, including a match against Virginia Tech in which the Tar Heels lost eight straight matches in the 10-meet event.

But Kraisser sent a message to a young UNC squad that the Tar Heels will need to heed as they prepare to send only freshmen and sophomores to the mat against Navy and Maryland this weekend.

"It showed that rankings don't mean anything," Kraisser said. "You can go out there and wrestle someone ranked ahead of you and still beat him."

Today, the Tar Heels will wrestle in Annapolis, Md., and on Saturday, in College Park, Md.

The Tar Heels continue to fight through their dual meet schedule with a roster that coach C.D. Mock admits isn't deep enough.

Redshirt sophomore Tanner Eitel, a transfer from Virginia Tech who missed a year due to injury, shocked Virginia's Jon Fausey last weekend, beating the then-No. 14 174-pounder 12-10.

This week, Eitel will need

to summon all he has just to step on the mat.

Eitel is fighting flu-like symptoms, but he's the only wrestler in his weight class traveling with the team.

"He knows he's got to wrestle because we don't have anyone else there," Mock said. "He's on board ... It's really just a matter of making up your mind that you're going to make your body go for seven minutes."

Antonio Giorgio, a 197-pounder, is not ready to

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