

Ruffin-Pratt provides spark

Stifles Duke’s leading scorer

BY MEGAN WALSH
SENIOR WRITER

Bouncing from adrenaline, the North Carolina women’s basketball team gathered in a huddle for a final word of inspiration Monday before meeting Duke on the court in Carmichael Arena.

“Rebound.”

Ten minutes into the first half, it was clear sophomore guard Tierra Ruffin-Pratt was listening.

“(Ruffin-)Pratt did a really good job defensively and rebounding,” UNC coach Sylvia Hatchell said. “She’s just playing better and better.”

Ruffin-Pratt’s dominating presence led the Tar Heels by example under the basket as the 5-foot-10 Tar Heel earned five rebounds in the first half.

Playing defense against Duke’s top scorer for the season, senior Jasmine Thomas, Ruffin-Pratt finished second in boards for the night and first in leadership and aggression.

Ruffin-Pratt went on to pick up three key buckets to shift the momentum in the Tar Heels’ favor, as North Carolina went on to a last-second 62-60 victory against the Blue Devils.

“I was just focused, like in the zone the whole game, starting with the defensive end and it just all turned over into the offensive end,” Ruffin-Pratt said. “I was making shots and giving people the ball when they were open, so it just got me going.”

North Carolina took its first lead of the game, 21-20, as Ruffin-Pratt’s aggression turned two missed free throws by junior Laura Broomfield into a key play. Powering past a Blue Devil, the guard earned an offensive rebound and found open space to sink a momentum-changing jumper.



DTH/ERIN HULL

Tierra Ruffin-Pratt came off the bench to lead UNC with eight assists and propelled the Tar Heels against the No. 5 Blue Devils in Carmichael Arena.

Then, early in the second half she rallied the Tar Heels on a basket assisted by Cetera DeGraffenreid and again on a pass from senior Jessica Breland.

“I’m a lot more comfortable on the court,” Ruffin-Pratt said. “I’m not afraid to attack the basket or go up for rebounds.”

When Ruffin-Pratt wasn’t putting up her own 10 points, she was setting up the success of her teammates. Recording a team-high eight assists, Ruffin-Pratt took leadership from the top of the key to a new level.

“She’s a great passer — she can play point guard,” Hatchell said. “She’s a great defender. She understands the game, she’s got great basketball principles, great bas-

ketball intelligence and IQ. So she’s really taken a lot of leadership over this team.”

And that leadership can all be attributed to her attitude. When the guard’s face filled the jumbotron in the final minutes of play after her last assist, a brief smile was replaced immediately with a look of intent as she re-set on defense.

“I take a lot of pride in (playing against the opponent’s No. 1 player), and I guess the coaches do too,” Ruffin-Pratt said. “They call me the Secretary of Defense for the team, so just being up there I always gotta make a statement on defense.”

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@dailytarheel.com.

DUKE

FROM PAGE 3

and Italee Lucas helped UNC rally back and go into halftime leading by one.

In typical style, Lucas proved to be a vocal leader all night long.

Five minutes into the second half and the shot clock winding down, the highly defended Lucas was searching to pass to a teammate. Seeing no one, she decided to take matters into her own hands.

After a last-second rush to the basket, the next thing the senior heard was the buzzer-beating swish as the UNC lead increased to four.

The Tar Heels had three and-ones in the final four minutes of the game, something the Blue Devils knew would come back to haunt them. UNC shot only 7 of 18 from the foul line, but when handed the opportunities late in the game, the Tar Heels took advantage of them.

“I thought we didn’t win the battle of being smart,” Duke coach Joanne McCallie said. “I think there were three or four and-ones called at the end of the game, which is completely unacceptable and shows a lack of discipline on our part.”

Though they struggled at the start, the Tar Heels showcased their discipline and team work in the closing minutes of the game.

Senior Jessica Breland charged the basket with just more than a minute left. Seeing someone in her way, she looked right and saw Lucas



DTH/JAMES CARRAS

Waltiea Rolle recorded seven blocks including one that stopped a game tying shot attempt. Broomfield added six points and five rebounds.

waiting in the wings. With a pass behind her back, the forward delivered it to her waiting teammate.

Lucas sunk the shot and grinned from ear to ear on the baseline, as if admiring the pair’s feat.

Hatchell was delighted with what she saw from all her players during the game.

But from her tried and true, she

the candidates, I conclude that we have a very strong pool,” Carney said, adding that he cannot talk about the finalists individually.

The candidates will all be visiting the campus for an official interview with the selection committee, along with Carney and Chancellor Holden Thorp. They will also participate in separate forums throughout February.

Contact the University Editor at university@dailytarheel.com.

Attend the forums

► Kimberly Espy: Thursday from 4:15 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Student Union Room 3413

► David Lee: Monday from 4 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. at the Sonja Haynes Stone Center.

► Barbara Entwisle: Feb. 22 from 4 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. in Wilson Library.

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Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit 1 to 9.

Solution to

Monday's puzzle

9	6	4	8	7	2	3	1	5
5	1	7	4	9	3	2	6	8
2	3	8	6	1	5	4	9	7
7	5	6	9	2	8	1	3	4
1	8	3	7	4	6	5	2	9
4	9	2	3	5	1	8	7	6
3	2	9	5	6	4	7	8	1
8	7	5	1	3	9	6	4	2
6	4	1	2	8	7	9	5	3



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Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

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ACROSS

1 Unconscious state
5 Big Apple line
8 Buster who played Flash Gordon
14 Rat-
15 Texter's "I think ..."
16 Cosmetics giant founded in 1932
17 Side-to-side skid
19 Top-priority
20 Cosmetics giant Lauder
21 Doodad
23 In the past
24 Have no place to go but up
27 Old man's domain, in a Hemingway work
29 "¿Cómo _ usted?"
30 With perfection
31 Bite like a rat
34 Get all A's
38 From the past
39 Pistol handle, and what 17-, 24-, 50- and 62-Across each have
41 Gentle-lamb connector
42 Wallpaper goo
44 To be, in Bordeaux
45 FBI guy
46 Mtn. stats
48 Virgil epic
50 Bus driver's request
55 Point, as a pistol
56 Disinfectant brand
57 Port near Kobe
60 Ex-Soviet leader Brezhnev
62 Idler at the shore
64 Non supporter's political sign words

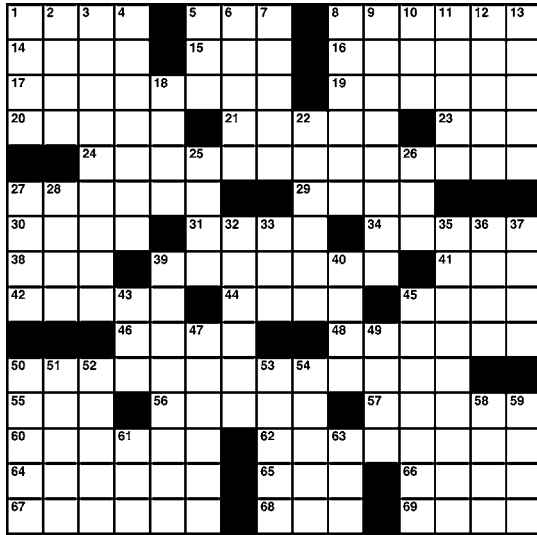
DOWN

65 U.N. Day mo.
66 Wild West's Wyatt
67 Monopod feature
68 Mo. town
69 Some NCOs
1 Hard Rock
2 Bluesman Redding
3 Newspapers' staff lists
4 Nonbeliever
5 Athletes for Hope co-founder Hamm
6 Chum in Chihuahua
7 What drives a baby buggy?
8 Cookie jar morsels
9 Transplanted successfully
10 Bating no.
11 Lamb's greeting
12 Salsa drum
13 Bug sci.
18 Head, to Henri
22 Cookout holder
25 Maker of Mama's Special Garden Sauce



26 Invoice add-on
27 Sports car option
28 Chihuahua greeting
32 Big bomb blasts
33 Courtroom VIP
35 Photographer's tote
36 Morales of "NYPD Blue"
37 Arrive, in a way
39 Spare tire site?
40 About to arrive
43 Light hit
45 Grinds, as teeth
47 Chihuahua, e.g.
49 Fair-hiring org.

50 Round of gunfire
51 Attach, as to a hitching post
52 Ham it up
53 Vagabonds
54 Supporter's political sign word
58 Super Bowl XXXIV MVP
59 Gig gear
61 " _ Blu Dipinto Di Blu": 1958 hit
63 Eur.-North America divider



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