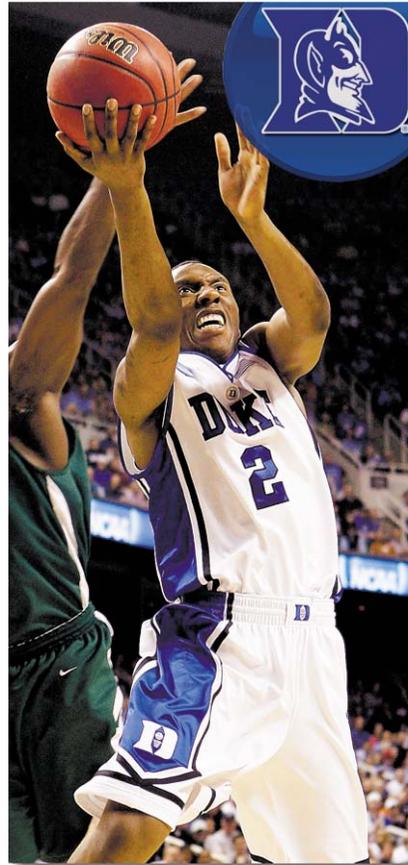


# SECOND THOUGHTS

North Carolina, Duke prepare for Round Two



**NO. 1 UNC VS. NO. 8 LSU**  
TODAY, GREENSBORO, 5:45 P.M., CBS

**NO. 2 DUKE VS. NO. 7 TEXAS**  
TODAY, GREENSBORO, 8:15 P.M., CBS

## Tar Heels' fate rests on Lawson's whim

**GREENSBORO** — Maybe you're one of those true blue North Carolina Tar Heel fans who sits for 347 days a year just waiting for the 18-day party that is the NCAA tournament.

Maybe you shirk certain responsibilities at your day job to check in on the latest gossip and chitchat on UNC message boards.

Maybe you've spent a hundred dollars or so just to see the Tar Heels play in person this weekend at the



**DAN WIEDERER**

Greensboro Coliseum.

And maybe your blood is pumping just a little faster right now because it's game day and Carolina is just a win away from the Sweet 16.

See **WIEDERER**, Page 5C



### INSIDE

■ Everything you need to know about today's UNC-LSU game and Duke-Texas game. What are their keys to the win? Also, a closer look at the opposition, **Pages 4-5C**

## Blue Devils face big challenge in Pittman

**By Sammy Batten**  
Staff writer

**GREENSBORO** — When Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski was an assistant with the USA Olympic basketball team back in 1992, he asked forward Charles Barkley during practice one day why he didn't block out while rebounding.

"He says, 'I don't have to block out. I have my space,'" Krzyzewski said. "Well, I never was with a guy who had his space."

Krzyzewski was referring to

Barkley's girth. The NBA Hall of Famer stood only 6-foot-4, but weighed in at a thick 252 pounds.

Today, Krzyzewski's Duke squad will face a similar body type in the second round of the NCAA tournament when it faces Texas at the Greensboro Coliseum.

The Longhorns feature 6-foot-10, 298-pound center Dexter Pittman, who has emerged as a major force in postseason play in his junior season.

See **DEVILS**, Page 4C

# Heels

From **Page 1C**

But before this NCAA tournament trek goes any further, let's pull over to a rest stop and talk for a moment.

It is my obligation to warn you that your hopes, your dreams, your daily mood for the next two-and-a-half weeks hinge almost entirely upon the temperament of a goofy 21-year-old scamp who still can't decide just how sore the big toe on his right foot really is.

Seriously.

When you stop and think about the gravity of this Ty Lawson situation, it's surreal. Hundreds of thousands of UNC fans have been anticipating this bracket parade for the better part of 11 months, certain these Tar Heels are good enough to win the program's fifth NCAA championship.

Yet Lawson — speedy and dynamic on the court, playful and lovable off of it — still can't figure out how big of a role he wants to play.

And if you spent even 10 minutes around the Tar Heels on Friday afternoon, you could tell the uncertainty is beginning to get a little irksome.

## Toe zone

When the locker room opened to reporters at the Greensboro Coliseum, here was the scene.

Lawson, wearing a pair of black-rimmed designer glasses, was sitting on a training table with trainer Chris Hirth treating and taping his jammed big toe. Three feet away, no fewer than 29 reporters stood staring as if the locker room was the Louvre and Lawson's toe was the Venus de Milo.

Tucked into a stall in the corner, UNC junior Deon Thompson laughed at the soap opera.

"This is sort of funny," he said. "That's probably the most watched toe ever in the history of the world. It's an important toe I guess."

Thompson was decidedly more jovial on the matter than Tyler Hansbrough, who appeared as if he'd rather transfer to Duke than talk any more about Lawson's sore digit.

"You guys are putting too much emphasis on one toe," Hansbrough said. "I mean we've been playing without Ty for a long time. And it seems like every day you guys want to have a toe update. I'm not really sure what I can say. Things aren't much different today than they were yesterday."

## Past tense

Well actually, things are a little different. Carolina's second-round opponent, LSU, was the champion of the SEC and will come to the floor this evening with far more ammunition to fire at the Tar Heels than Radford had.

Against the Highlanders, Lawson sat on the bench and UNC still rung up 101 points and won by 43. If Lawson can't play against the Tigers, we may be looking at a full evening of anxious CBS look-ins, curious as to whether the Heels will be the first No. 1 seed to exit this tournament.

That's how delicate this whole situation is.

## HANSBROUGH COMING TO TOWN

Former national player of the year Tyler Hansbrough of North Carolina and Duke's Greg Paulus will be among the players in the Carolina Barnstorming Tour that will visit Fayetteville on April 22.

The charity basketball game will take place in the Crown Arena at 7:30 p.m.

Other players who have committed to participating include Hansbrough's Tar Heel teammates Danny Green and Bobby Frasor.

An autograph session will take place from 6:30 until 7 p.m. In addition to the game itself, there will be 3-point and dunk contests.

Tickets are on sale at all Fayetteville high schools, the Crown Center box office and Ticketmaster.com for \$10 in advance, then \$12.50 at the door.

And with coach Roy Williams stamping the "game-time decision" tag on his star point guard, the worry won't let up until Lawson is on the floor and jetting from end to end the way he did for UNC's first 30 games.

As someone with a pulse on the Tar Heels' locker room, I'll tell you this. The challenge facing Lawson right now is far more mental than it is physical.

After going through pre-game warm-ups Thursday, Lawson said he felt good but there was still a tinge of soreness in his toe when he tried to push off.

The whispers inside the locker room have tried to convince Lawson that at 75 percent he's still better than most point guards in the country. But it was not a comforting sign when after the Round 1 defeat of Radford, he came back to the locker room and told at least one member of the Tar Heels, "I think I probably could have played today."

That's just Lawson. One second, he'll tell you he is 100 percent ready to go. The next second he'll get an itch in his calf and the warning alarms are blaring again.

"It's pretty crazy," senior Bobby Frasor said. "I don't know that he loves (the attention). But he'll just say whatever. No one ever really knows what's going on besides him."

## Split personality

The Tar Heels have learned to live with this dynamic over the last three years, understanding Lawson spends much of his time in his own little universe. That's why Hansbrough prodded the All-American guard about his new spectacles.

"He doesn't even need to wear them," Hansbrough said.

So they weren't prescription glasses?

"No, man," Lawson said. "They're my personality glasses."

Fortunately for Lawson, personality goes a long way in life. Unfortunately, in the NCAA tournament, toughness goes a lot further.