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Buffin moves up — and on to glory

By DAVID J. KUPSTAS
Staff Writer

If you ask Marc Buffin, he'll tell you that he often knows before the game if he will have a bad day on the soccer field.

If you ask men's head soccer coach Elmar Bolowich, he'll tell you that Marc Buffin rarely has bad days.

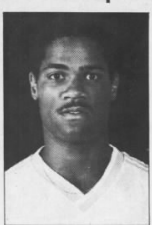"He's a very consistent player," Bolowich said of the UNC co-captain. "There are hardly any games where you can say Marc Buffin had a horrible game. He had that in his freshman and sophomore years, but now he's a player that others really look for to play well."

Buffin, a 6-foot-1, 185-pound senior from Dallas, Texas, and he and Bolowich have differing definitions of what a good performance entails. While Bolowich expects Buffin to play solid defense and help out on offense whenever possible, Buffin wants to do more. He isn't satisfied unless he moves up and creates scoring opportunities.

So Buffin was thrilled to learn last spring that he would get a chance to move from the backfield to midfield this season. He played midfield alongside Chad Ashton in late spring's scrimmage games and continued to play there in the preseason and early this fall.

"I thought it would help our overall attack play to have Buffin in the midfield because he can distribute and play the ball quickly," Bolowich said. "He can support, he has a shot and he is good in the air. All these contribute to scoring."

Buffin responded to his new role right away in an early season game against Clemson. He moved up to midfield at the beginning of the second half and scored both goals as the Tar Heels rallied past the Tigers 2-1. He has netted three more goals since then to bring his career total to 11.

Buffin's position allows him to leave the backfield and help out on offense, especially in situations like the Clemson game, when the Tar Heels get behind by a goal or two. This dual role is similar to that of former UNC star Dave Smyth. Smyth, a Tar Heel from 1984-87, was

Marc Buffin

known for scoring crucial goals in late-game situations after moving up from the sweeper position.

"A person I really looked up to was Dave Smyth," said Buffin, who was a sophomore during Smyth's senior year. "Dave was one of the best leaders I've played with in any sport. When the game was on the line, it was Dave that sort of took it off the line and said 'This one's ours to win.'"

Buffin played high school soccer at Greenhill Prep in Dallas, where he was also a standout quarterback and safety on the football team. He chose UNC over George Mason and several small schools after visiting Chapel Hill on a recruiting trip.

"It was just a feeling that you know you belong here," the speech communications major said. "I knew I would enjoy myself and work to stay here. I looked into some other schools, but only UNC was going to hold my interest."

Because Buffin had to divide time between two sports in high school, he wasn't able to give his full attention to either one. Buffin thinks that playing soccer almost year-round in college has helped him improve steadily since his freshman year.

He started 16 of the 20 games he appeared in his freshman year. Since then, Buffin has missed only one start, a mandatory one-game sitout following a red card against Central Florida last year. His receiving a red card goes against his image of a quiet, likeable person. However, Buffin doesn't think he deserved a red card for his foul, simply grabbing a player's shirt to prevent an easy goal.

"It was ridiculous," said Buffin. "They kicked me out of the stadium — told me I couldn't sit on the bench. I thought it was pretty strange."

Bolowich doesn't wish Buffin would get a red card every game, but he would like to see him become a little more aggressive. Buffin's objective as a wing defender was to not let the striker get by him. He can now take more chances as a midfielder and open defender since he doesn't have to be concerned with marking a man.

"He needs to be more physically aggressive," Bolowich said. "He tries to compensate with athletic abilities. His athletic abilities combined with a good portion of aggressiveness would make him more of an impact player on defense."

Buffin's non-aggressive nature isn't worrying Bolowich too much, however.

"That's just his personality. You can't mold every player for what you want to do," Bolowich said. "He suits the team very well. He's a player that the other players can rely on."

Buffin has played a large role in the Tar Heel's post-season successes too. In 1987, Buffin scored the winning goal during UNC's 2-0 win over Duke in the NCAA first round. That win over Duke was UNC's first-ever NCAA tournament victory. The Tar Heels eventually lost at Clemson in the final four that year and at South Carolina in the second round in 1988. Buffin said he thinks the Tar Heels could go far in both the ACC and NCAA tournaments this season.

A possible obstacle in both tournaments would be No. 1-ranked Virginia, which scored twice in the last five minutes to beat UNC 3-0 already this season. Buffin said UNC would give the Cavaliers fits in a rematch because of the Tar Heels' physical, emotional style of play.

"We could probably beat anyone in the nation if we just played 90 minutes," Buffin said.

Show must go on: Series resumes Tuesday

From Associated Press reports

SAN FRANCISCO — The World Series will resume next Tuesday night in Candlestick Park, allowing the Bay area to recover from its worst earthquake since 1906, baseball commissioner Fay Vincent said.

Neither Candlestick nor the Oakland Coliseum are ready yet, but Vincent said he expects the ballparks to be prepared next week. Games 3, 4 and, if necessary, 5 will be played in San Francisco, as scheduled before Tuesday night's earthquake.

This will be the longest gap during a World Series since 1911 when there was a week delay because of rainouts in the meeting between the New York Giants and the Philadelphia Athletics.

"It is becoming very clear to all of us

in major league baseball that our issue is really a modest one in light of the great tragedy," Vincent said. "It is also clear that we are not going to be able to play baseball at either park in this area until next Tuesday."

The Bay Bridge Series was postponed Wednesday for the second straight day. The earthquake, which struck Tuesday just 30 minutes before game time, killed more than 200 and injured hundreds of others.

"We had 17 structural engineers and two architects totally examining the stadium for the impact. We feel there is no structural damage," said John Lind, Candlestick's manager. "There are some minor repairs and some cleanup. There are areas where we would like to explore in the next few days, to make sure be-

yond a shadow of a doubt."

The news conference announcing the plan was held in a room lit by candles and remote television camera lights. The St. Francis Hotel is still without full power.

"The alternative of waiting a few days seems to be better than canceling the World Series, but this is said in light of understanding the difficulty this area is having," Vincent said. "We will not be playing while this community is in the early stages of its recovery.

"We believe Tuesday is a very good working hypothesis, but it is not definite yet. I think our preferred course is to play at Candlestick."

The Giants have been told to report to Candlestick Park Thursday afternoon for a 1 p.m. workout.

What ever happens, the 1989 World

Series will not be remembered for its baseball.

Bay area fans were gearing up for a battle between two local teams that promised to be a close slugfest. But the A's had different ideas.

The Oakland Athletics, the winningest team in the major leagues this season, shunted aside San Francisco in the first two games. The ease with which Oakland won was impressive, but not necessarily exciting to the fans or the millions of television viewers.

That all changed when a national TV audience, settling in for an evening of baseball, suddenly saw their screens scramble. "This series has gone from the mundane to the memorable," Athletics general manager Sandy Alderson said later, sadly.

Rock-bottom Dallas can only go up now

By WARREN HYNES
Staff Writer

"'America's Team' is back! They're restructured, remodeled and revitalized! The 1990 Super Bowl awaits this football team! Ladies and gentlemen, make way for the return of the Dallas Cowboys!"

These sort of phrases were heard a lot in the months preceding the 1989 NFL season. The most popular pro football team in America was changing its face after suffering through years of mediocrity. This change was joyfully received by the American media and the Cowboy fans. The 'Boys were said to be playoff-ready. However, looking at the latest standings, it appears to have been a severe case of apprehension.

In late August, I sat in Chase Hall with a few of my suitemates of which two are die-hard Cowboys fans. They were telling me how much their team had improved. Finally, I responded.

"Guys, let's make a deal," I said. "If the Dallas Cowboys make the playoffs this year, I will treat you both to a full day of unlimited use of my meal card."

Obviously, my friends will not receive any free food. However, I am not telling this story to show up my friends. I am attempting to show what the media did with the Cowboys this summer.

Dallas' changes in ownership, coaching, and quarterback produced stories in the sports media. Even the stats from the first scrimmage were printed in newspapers. It was much too much hype for a team just beginning to go through a tough road of reconstruction.

The Dallas Cowboys underwent a change in ownership when Jerry Jones purchased the team from Bum Bright in February. Jones, flashy and energetic, proclaimed himself a die-hard Cowboys fan who would do his utmost to bring the 'Boys back to dominance.

The new owner began by firing long-time president Tex Schramm and Tom Landry, the only head coach in Dallas history. Jones chose his former college roommate and University of Miami coach, Jimmy Johnson, to replace the illustrious Landry.

Johnson brought with him a new offensive coordinator in David Shula, who hailed from the Miami Dolphins where he helped develop the great Dolphin quarterback, Dan Marino. But, this was not the end of the changes.

Because of their 1988 record, the Cowboys earned the top pick in the college draft. With its pick, Dallas purchased the talents of Troy Aikman the much-heralded UCLA quarterback. It was quite a hefty buy — six years for

$11.2 million — and brings much hope to the quarterback position.

In the supplemental draft, the Cowboys got University of Miami quarterback Steve Walsh. Walsh quarterbacked Johnson's championship team in 1988.

On October 12, the Cowboys made their biggest move of all. They traded Herschel Walker, arguably the best all-around running back in the game and the team's best player, to the Minnesota Vikings. In return, the Cowboys received 12 — no joke — 12 players. Seven of these players are future top draft choices, and five are current Minnesota players. The Cowboys have, in reality, acquired the future of the Minnesota Vikings, as well as some of the Vikes' present.

Those are the Cowboys' new faces, and granted, it is quite a drastic change. However, success will still take time because there is a great deal more development to take place.

For all intents and purposes, there is virtually no offensive experience on the club. Michael Irvin and Kelvin Martin, young Dallas receivers, have a combined three years of experience and Aikman and Walsh have a tremendous amount of on-the-job learning to do in terms of strategies and coverages. The redevelopment of a team's offense in an immense task which cannot be done overnight.

Secondly, the defense has even more remodeling to complete than the offense. It is led by former All-Pro, 15-year veteran Ed "Too Tall" Jones and includes other accomplished veterans: Everson Walls, Garry Cobb, Eugene Lockhart and Jim Jeffcoat. The remainder of the defense combines the new arrivals from Minnesota, fresh new rookies and less-than-spectacular veterans. More young talent must be acquired and the influx of youth will take time to develop into a strong, confident unit.

Dallas Cowboys fans have a tremendous amount to look forward to because the team has a dedicated owner, a skilled group of coaches and a quarterback of great potential. The foundation is solid, and the building has begun. Of Dallas' 47-player opening-day roster, 32 had four years or less of pro experience.

Yes, the Dallas 'renaissance' has begun. With a little bit of patience on the part of the press and fans, it will prove quite fruitful and in two or three years, my suitemates will have that free feast. You can count on it.