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# COMMUNITY SPORTS NEWS

**BASKETBALL ★ CYCLING ★ RUNNING ★ OUTDOORS**

**February 2026  
Volume 43  
#685**



This pair of adorable screech owls, held by a volunteer with American Wildlife Refuge, was a big hit at the second annual EagleFest at Jordan Lake. The event, postponed twice by winter storms, drew about 200 visitors and was held at the southern end of the lake Feb. 7, with birding activities, crafts, information booths, food trucks.

PHOTO BY CARL FISHER

## SPRING RUNNING



### Floodgates Open For Spring Races

Related Stories Page 4-5

The Chapel Hill/Durham running community heads into a spring season facing the biggest schedule—the largest number of local events scheduled since Covid (2021). From mid-February through May there are nearly 50 races, about a half dozen more than last year. March (16) and April (15) are the busiest.

The races are a mix of short and long distance as well as new and long-standing charity, student and community races. Most every weekend has multiple races. There's plenty to choose from including several Sunday races plus an array of trail runs. Tar Heel Ten Miler

(and two related races) in April is probably the largest returning race.

March 7 and April 25 are the two busiest single days for local races. The Running USA *RACES, Continued on page 4*

### March Primary Early Voting

Early voting for the March 3 primary continues Feb. 16-20, 23-27 from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. at six sites in Orange County, plus Sunday, Feb. 22, 12-4 and Saturday, Feb. 28 (final day) 8-3. Photo ID required. Races on the ballot range from county to national offices.

Voting sites are Orange Works at Hillsborough Commons and Efland Cheeks Community Center in northern Orange and Drakeford Library, Carrboro, Chapel Hill Public Library, Chapel of the Cross (next to Morehead Science Center at UNC), Seymour Senior Center off Homestead Road in southern Orange. New voters can register and vote during Early Voting.

Primary Day voting hours are 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

### Guided Hikes Free No More

Durham's Eno River Association (ERA) is now charging fees for some guided hikes that previously were free.

The popular spring wildflower hikes that begin in March will cost \$4.00 and require advance registration.

Hillary Harrison, who directs education and engagement programs, explained program fees cover direct costs, unlike donations to ERA which support the overall mission.

"Although we do rely on volunteers to offer many of these programs, they are not all volunteer-led, and in addition, paid staff (myself and my team) are responsible for recruiting, training, scheduling and support-

*HIKES, Continued on page 7*

**Inside:  
EV Chargers  
Fishing's Fun  
Smith Center**

### Key Tar Heel Sports Dates

Feb. 21-22, ACC Fencing Championships at Duke.

March 7, MSoccer, Charlotte FC, MLS home opener, BOA, Charlotte.

March 10-14, ACC Men's Basketball Championships, Spectrum Center, Charlotte.

March 14, WSoccer, N.C. Courage NWSL home opener, WMSP, Cary.

March 16, Basketball, Harlem Globetrotters, Lenovo Center, Raleigh.

March 21, ACC Women's Gymnastics Championships, Horizon Center, Greensboro.

March 31, Baseball, Durham Bulls home opener, DBAP, Durham.

April 11-12, Baseball, Savannah Bananas v. Texas Tailgaters, Kenan Stadium, UNC.

April 12, Football, Maroon & Gray, NCCU.

April 20, Football, Blue-White, Duke.

May 27-June 1, Soccer, TST men/women/mixed 7v7, Cary.

### NCAA Hoops Coming March 18

The next issue of CSN (March 18) coincides with the start of the NCAA men's tournament and wraps up prior ACC action, plus the first batch of running and biking results and previews of spring activities like OWA-SA lakes reopening.

CSN continues looking for an outdoor writer to do monthly columns for the paper. Turning your interest in fishing, boating, birding into 800-word monthly adventures is the goal. Contact joelcsn1@gmail.com.

Remember to sign up on the CSN website for our monthly newsletter previewing each issue.

### Off The Dribble

## Not Many Surprises In ACC Midterm Grades

Chip Bremer

Midterm evaluations usually demonstrate levels of progress compared to early projections and what is needed to reach stated goals at the end of the term. Halfway through the ACC conference slate, there aren't many surprises in terms of how teams have performed thus far, but their prospects for the postseason are becoming fairly clear. Here are the midterm grades for every ACC team in order of how the teams were ranked in the preseason:

**Louisville B.** The Cards haven't been the dominant team they were projected to be, due mostly to the injury to star freshman Mi-

kel Brown (they were 4-4 without him). Now that they have him back healthy, however, they look like they can at least challenge for a top 4 seed in the ACC tournament. This is still one of the most explosive teams in the conference, so don't be surprised when they make a deep March run.

**Duke A-.** It's hard to find anything negative about how the Blue Devils have performed thus far. Cam Boozer is clearly one of the best players in the country, and the rest of the team is playing at an extremely high level. There were plenty of things that needed

*ACC HOOPS, Continued on page 6*



When PG Derek Dixon joined the UNC starting lineup in January he provided an immediate offensive spark that continued with 3 assists in the final moments as North Carolina rallied past Duke in the Smith Center.

UNC SPORTS MEDIA PHOTO

## NC Road Races

### February 21

Cupid's Undie Run, 1m novelty run for 21+, Motorco Music Hall, Durham, 2 p.m., [join.ctf.org/evnt2026](http://join.ctf.org/evnt2026).

2nd Play 4 Kay 5K, Fayetteville, 9 a.m., [active.com](http://active.com).

Polar Plunge and Run 5K, run-plunge or both, Kure Beach 1:30 p.m. [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

### February 22

NCRC 15th Snoopy's Social Run, 5m and hotdogs, Raleigh, 2:30 p.m., [eventreach.com](http://eventreach.com)

### February 28

2nd Duke Time for Time 5K Color Run, Duke East Campus, Durham, 10 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

Inaugural Donut 8K, Jones Elem. School, Asheville, 8:30 a.m., [raceroster.com](http://raceroster.com).

### March 1

Rescheduled Kay Yow Cancer Fund Run/Walk 4K (untimed), WMSP, Cary, 1 p.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

### March 7

14th St. Paul Village 5K, McDougle School, Carrboro, 9 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

UNC SNDA Oral Cancer 5K, Bynum Circle, UNC, Chapel Hill, 7 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

Learning Outside 5K Trail Run, Pluck Farm, NC 54W, Mebane, 10:45 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

Blue Blood Rivalry 5K, Herndon Park, Durham, 8:30 a.m., [itsyourrace.com](http://itsyourrace.com).

Run the Peak, 5K/10K, Apex, 8 a.m., [itsyourrace.com](http://itsyourrace.com). *Live & Virtual.*

Waggin' Wild 5K, Greensboro, 10:30am [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

Conn Cougar School 5K, Raleigh, 9 a.m., [racereach.com](http://racereach.com).  
Oskar Blues Brewery 4m, Brevard, 11 a.m., [strictlyrunning.com](http://strictlyrunning.com) by 3/6.

OBX Beer Mile, 1m novelty run, Kill Devil Hills, 2 p.m., [registerchronotrack.com/85484](http://registerchronotrack.com/85484).

Rumba on the Lumber 5K/10K, Fayetteville, 9 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

### March 8

12th Head for the Cure 5K, NC Triangle, with or w/o dogs, Southern Village Green, Chapel Hill, 9 a.m., [headforthecure.org/event](http://headforthecure.org/event).

Running Over Cancer 5K, XC Course, WakeMed SP, Cary, 2 p.m., [runningovercancer.com](http://runningovercancer.com).

### March 14

PSF 5K for Education, McCorkle Place, UNC, 8:30 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

5th Chatham YMCA Leprechaun 5K/10K, Pittsboro, 8:30 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

## 62 Ex-ACC Players In UFL

Some 62 former ACC football players, including seven from Triangle schools, were on preliminary rosters for the eight-team UFL. The league's third season (10 games) starts March 27. Games will be broadcast by ABC, Fox, ESPN.

Sixteen ACC schools were represented; Stanford wasn't. Duke had 3 former players—RB Deon Jackson (DC Defenders), CB Mark Gilbert (Orlando), CB Myles Jones (St. Louis); UNC 2—FS Myles Dorn (Dallas), T Spencer Rolland (St. Louis); NC State 2—WR Thayer Thomas (St. Louis), RB Jordan Waters (St. Louis).

Others: Clemson (8), Louisville (7), Boston College (6), Va. Tech, Wake Forest 5 each, Florida St., Georgia Tech, Miami, Virginia 4 each, Cal, Pitt 3 each, Syracuse, SMU 1 apiece.

## NC LD Races

### February 21-22

Holly Springs Race Against the Sun, 24H/12H/Relay, Holly Springs, 7 a.m. [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

### February 21

MRT 5K-50K, Statesville Soccer Complex, 9 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

Queen Anne's Revenge Ultra 20K/50K/relay, Greenville, 7:30 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

### February 22

Rescheduled, Oconeechee Mtn Challenge 10 Mile Trail, Hillsborough, 9 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

### February 28

Wake Forest Historic Half/7K, Wake Forest, 7:30 a.m., [fsseries.com](http://fsseries.com).

Ellerbe M/HM, Ellerbe, 8 a.m., [ultrasignup.com](http://ultrasignup.com).

4th Land and Lakes Relay, 61m, Asheville to Lake James, Swannanoa, 5 a.m., [raceroster.com](http://raceroster.com).

Wilmington M/HM/5K, Wrightsville Beach, 7 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com). *Live & Virtual.*

### March 7

MST 100 Endurance Run, 100m/50m/50K/10m, Rolling View SRA, Durham, ultrasignup by 3/2.

The TarDevil 30m bushwack, Old Well to Duke Chapel, 7 a.m., [ultrasignup.com](http://ultrasignup.com).

Umstead Trail M, Umstead State Park, Raleigh, 9 a.m., [racereach.com](http://racereach.com).

Miles For Moore M/HM/5K, Southern Pines, 8 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

47th Corporate Cup HM/5K, Truist Field, Charlotte, 7:40 a.m., [raceroster.com](http://raceroster.com).

Live Well HM/5K, Greenville Town Commons, 7:30 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

Northern Trails Trail Race, 17m/10m/5m, N. Guilford HS, Greensboro, 8 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

Perennial: A Time Based Endurance Run, 10H/6H/3H trail, Belmont, 7 a.m., [ultrasignup.com](http://ultrasignup.com) by 3/5

## NC Multisports

### February 28

Northeast Park Sprint Duathlon, run 1m, bike 10.5m, run 1m, Gibsonville, 10 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com), first event in Trivium Series.

### March 7

Leo's Peanut Butter and Jelly Sprint Tri, Morganton,

### March 15

16th Tobacco Road M/HM, USA Baseball, Cary, 7 a.m., [tobaccoroadmarathon.com](http://tobaccoroadmarathon.com).

### March 21

3rd Harepin Hustle Trail Run, HM/10K+, Lake Crabtree CP, Morrisville, 7 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

All American HM/5K, Main Post Parade Field, Fort Bragg, 7a.m. Registration TBA.

Asheville M/HM, 7:30 a.m., [raceroster.com](http://raceroster.com).

Assault on Black Rock Trail Race, 7m, Sylva, 9 a.m., [ultrasignup.com](http://ultrasignup.com).

Badwater Cape Fear 51m/50K run, Bald Head Island, 7:45 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

Blackbeard's Revenge 100 Ultra, 100m/100K/100m relay, Corolla, [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

6th Cliffs of the Neuse Trail Run, 50K/25K/8m/4m, Seven Springs, 9:30 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com) by 3/19.

28th Fellowship of the Idiots 19.7m run, Albemarle, 5 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

### March 22

Cary Greenways HM/10K/5K, Bond Park, Cary, 8 a.m., staggered start, [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com). *Live & Virtual.*

Tower Climb Hill, 10m, Pittsboro, 10:30 a.m., [carolinagodiva.org/winter-series](http://carolinagodiva.org/winter-series).

### March 23

Appalachian Series Day 4 (NC) M/HM, Etowah Park, Hendersonville, [active.com](http://active.com).

### March 28

8th Craft Beer HM/5m, Charlotte, 8am, [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

4th Lake Norman HM/5K/10K Wildman, Mooresville, 7:30 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com). *Live or Virtual.*

Only Fools Run HM/10K/5K, Jaycee Park, Greensboro, 8 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

Hanging Rock 8H Adventure Race, solo/teams, Danbury, 8:30 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

8 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com). *Live & Virtual.*

### March 8

Azalea Sprint Tri, first race in NCTS, Wilmington, 8 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

## NC Bike Rides

### March 28

Movin' For Community 10K Fun Ride, Tarrboro, 8:15 a.m., [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com).

### March 29

NCBC Spring Rally, 20/37 /64m, Aviator Brewery, Fuquay-Varina, 10 a.m., [ncbikeclub.net](http://ncbikeclub.net).

## U.S. Soccer

### Women/She Believes Cup

March 1—Argentina, Nashville, 6:45 p.m., TNT, Universo.  
March 4—Canada, Columbus, OH, 6:45 p.m., TNT, Universo.  
March 7—Colombia, Harrison, NJ, 3:30 p.m., TBS, Universo.  
April 11/14/17—Japan, San Jose, Seattle, Commerce City.

### Men

March 28—Belgium, Atlanta, 3 p.m., TNT.  
March 31—Portugal, Atlanta, 7 p.m., TNT, Universo.

## Community News

Rescheduled 25th African American Cultural Celebration at NC Museum of Art, Raleigh, Feb. 28, 10:30 to 4:30.

The 26th Triangle Lebanese Festival March 21-22 at 241 Horizon Dr., Raleigh, features food, music, dance, kids games. Free.

Lenovo Center, Raleigh, home of the Carolina Hurricanes, ranked 19th among 32 NHL stadiums, and likely will move up when planned improvements are made inside and outside the arena, [theathletic.com](http://theathletic.com) reported. Bell Centre, Montreal, was first, MSG 10, TD Garden Boston, 18, Capital One, Washington, 27.

## February Standings

### Triangle Dart League

Darty Old Men 3-0 47-13 0.783, Dave's Not Here 3-0 44-16 0.733, Subway 2-2 40-40 0.500, MRDMCR 2-2 38-42 0.475, STDW 1-2 26-34 0.433, We Need 'em All 1-2 25-35 0.417, One For Fun 0-4 20-60 0.250.

### Ocasl@Tasl Winter

Over 30—Mountain Goat FC 6-0 18, Tugboat Depot 6-0 18, Durham FC 3-0-3 9, Sneaky PK FC 2-1-2 7, Still Limpin 2-0-3 6, The Federal 1-1-3 4, Matienzo FC 1-0-5 3, Hot Pants FC 0-0-5 0.

Anderson Over 40—Beercelona 6-0 18, Federal 4.0 4-0-2 12, Oldcastle United 3-1-2 10, Boca Seniors 3-0-3 9, Boot Room FC 1-1-4 4, Wrexhamstring 0-0-7 0.

Kaminsky/Studdard Rec 1/2—Woodcroft SC 5-1-0 16, Quality Assurance 4-1-0 13, Pickup FC 4-0-2 12, Head Game Strong 3-0-3 9, Chapel Hill FC 1-0-6 3, College United 0-0-6 0.

O'Hara Rec 3—Sporting Rose 3-1-2 10, AR United 92 3-0-3 9, Noir FC 3-0-3 9, Stone Cold FC 2-1-3 7.

Coed 11—The Diamond Dogs 6-1-0 19, Unicorns FC 4-2-1 14, Athletic Tri 2-1-4 7, Hairy Fairies 0-0-7 0.

### Orange Co. Sportsplex Men Basketball Winter

Buckets 4-0, Pollard Mustangs 3-1, FA-White 2-2, Screwdrivers 2-2, Live Wire 1-3, FA-Blue 0-4.

## Upcoming CSN Issues:

### Digital Only

March 18, NCAA Hoops

April 15, Spring Cycling

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Deadline 7 days in advance

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## Durham Lands Carolina Blaze Pro Softball

Durham landed a women's pro softball team, Carolina Blaze, as part of a new six-team Athletes Unlimited Softball League (AUSL). The team plays a 25-game summer schedule with ten home games starting June 9 at Smith Family Stadium on Duke East Campus. The stadium, built in 2017 for Duke softball, seats 900, has a 17x32 video board, and hosted NCAA regional softball last season.

Former Duke stars Ana Gold and Jala Wright are on the 13-player roster, along with three other former ACC players (Clemson 2, Va. Tech 1).

Blaze is the only East Coast and Southern-based league entry. Others are Chicago Bandits, Oklahoma City Spark, Portland Cascade, Texas Volts and Utah Talons. The Triangle's support for women's sports was cited as a reason Durham was selected.

AUSL began last year with four teams playing a barnstorming schedule at 12 venues. All games were broadcast on TV, including ESPN and MLB platforms. MLB is a partial AUSL owner. Three games were played in Holly Springs. Two sold out. Season tickets for Blaze start at \$210. Single game tickets TBA.

They'll play a three-game series against Utah June 25-27 at Durham Athletic Park.

Mia Davidson (Miss. St.) of Hillsborough is on the Portland Cascade roster.

## Senior Baseball Assessment Days

Central NC Men's Senior Baseball League holds assessment days Feb. 21-22 for the new season.

For players 18+, first assessment day is Saturday, Feb. 21, at Carrboro High School baseball field off Rock Haven Rd., Carrboro, at 1 p.m. Session two is Feb. 22, at 2 p.m. at South Wake Sports Academy, 6109 NC55, Fuquay-Varina.

For ages 32+, Feb. 22 at 3 p.m. at South Wake Sports Academy.

For ages 50+ and Classic (60+), assessments are Feb. 22 at 3 p.m. at South Wake Sports Academy.

To participate fill out a registration form at [ncmsbl.event/assessment](https://ncmsbl.event/assessment). Additional try-outs may be added later.

## State Games Winter Sports (5) Offered

BodyArmor State Games has five winter sports: Feb. 21, Flag Football Tournament at Herndon Park, Durham; Esports Feb. 21-22 at Hilton Raleigh North Hills; pickleball March 12-15 at PinPoint, downtown Raleigh; March 20-22 Figure Skating at Greensboro Ice House. Youth and adult hockey will be March 13-15 at Raleigh rinks.

Pickleball will have 10+, 35+, 50+, 65+ age divisions for singles, doubles, mixed doubles and costs \$75/player plus \$10 tech fee. Register at [pickleballden.com](https://pickleballden.com).

For flag football there are five divisions—5s women non contact, 5s women contact, 5s men, 5s coed, 8s coed. Fees are \$200 for 5s, \$350 for 8s. Tournament format will be based on the number of teams signed up.

Check [ncsports.org](https://ncsports.org) website for more winter games sports information.

## Orange Senior Games Signup

Sports and Silver Arts competition in the Orange County Senior Games for men/women 50+ will be held April 9-May 6 throughout the county. Competition is by age group in five-year brackets. Sports include pickleball, swimming, tennis, track & field and many others including archery, basketball shooting,

bocce, biking. Medalists can advance to the state finals in the fall.

Registration for 2026 is under way at [ncseniorgames.org/orange](https://ncseniorgames.org/orange), with early bird deadline March 20 (\$15.00 cost), and final deadline March 27 (\$20.00). Golf and bowling have additional fees. Call either county senior center with questions.

## UNC Hockey

UNC hockey split the first two games of the second part of the 50th season, losing 6-3 to West Chester and topping Temple 3-2 in Hillsborough. A key UNC defender Florian Zajac graduated in December.

Two games with Oregon and Louisville were canceled by winter weather. A game with NC State was added but later postponed when the power at the arena in Morrisville failed. After a 1-1 start, Cincinnati rolled to an 8-2 win in Charlotte. A second game was canceled.

Remaining games: Feb. 19 at N.C. State (Senior Night for both teams), Morrisville, 8:30 p.m., and Feb. 21-22 at Lehigh. UNC (6-13-1-0-1, 19 points) is in cellar (tenth place) in ACHA Div. 1.

## Area Pickleball Events

March 6-8, 5th Bull City Open, Piney Wood Park, Durham. Registration ends 2/23.

March 12-15, Winter BodyArmor State Games Pickleball, PinPoint, Raleigh, deadline 3/1 at [ncsports.org](https://ncsports.org).

April 18-19, Dink4Choice 2026, Ephesus Park, Chapel Hill. Registration ends 4/12.

April 24-26, The Farm Spring Pickleball Smash with juniors, Chapel Hill. Registration ends 4/19.

May 16-17, The Big Brass Clash, Felton Grove HS, Apex. Registration ends 5/8.

May 30-31, May Madness: Pickleball Smash, Ting Park, Holly Springs. Registration ends 5/22.

Sign up for most tournaments at [app.pickleballden.com](https://app.pickleballden.com).

## Rule Adjustments Possible For WC

Countdowns on throw-ins and goal kicks plus 10-second time limits on substitutions could happen at this summer's World Cup as the game's lawmakers seek to keep the tempo of matches flowing.

The introduction of an eight-second limit for goalkeepers to release the ball from hand was positively received and now the International Football Association Board (IFAB) is working to extend the countdown principle to other areas of play.

Referees are set to be empowered to impose a five-second countdown on dead ball goal kicks and on throw-ins if they feel a player is taking too long.

Substitutions were identified as another area where teams seek to disrupt tempo and these could be limited to 10 seconds, with substitutes barred from entering the field for a period of time—potentially a minute—if the 10-second limit is exceeded.

Injured players also could be forced to remain off the field for a fixed period of time, again to deter teams from using injuries as a way to break up play.

Asked whether the measures might be implemented for the World Cup in North America, the IFAB's technical director David Elleray said, "They could be, yes."

Football Association of Wales chief executive Noel Mooney, who chaired the IFAB's annual business meeting in London last month, said, "We all get frustrated when we see a game stopped, and we're [all] suspicious if the game has been stopped for the right reasons, [or if it has been] done for tactical reasons, and so on.

"So we really wanted to focus on that, certainly this year, and we've got a number of measures that I think will make the game much better." *ESPN News*

## Local EV Charging Stations Number 76

There are roughly 125,000 electric vehicles in North Carolina, NCDOT says, with many in Orange County.

Orange County has 76 public charging stations. Chapel Hill (40) leads the way, followed by Orange County (25), Carrboro (11). Parking decks in Hillsborough, Chapel Hill, Carrboro have the most stations. EV charging is free in Carrboro and Orange County but not in Chapel Hill.

EV charging units at UNC parking decks (Business School, Cardinal, Craige, Cobb, Ramshead) and other campus locations like Giles Horney lot on Airport Rd. are not included in the local number because they are limited to UNC permit holders. All are ChargePoint stations.

Here's where public charging stations are:

## Eno River Rolls Savannah 62-5

Eno River women's rugby club rolled Savannah 62-5 in Durham to open the spring season behind 3 tries each from AJ and Aly and two from Sadie. Mads and Cassie also scored. Mads added 6 conversions. Back BOP was Huli, Forward Cassie and Player of the Match AJ.

The club, the state's oldest, practices Tuesday 7-9 p.m. in February at Herndon Park, Durham. New players welcome. No experience required.

Upcoming Eno matches: 2/21 at Augusta; 3/14 Atlanta, in Durham at Holt Fields.

## World Cup News

The May 31 friendly between USMNT and Senegal at BOA Stadium in Charlotte (CSN, Jan 2026), the second to last warmup for Team USA before the World Cup, remains in flux. The USMNT website says the U.S. plays Senegal but other ticket outlets list the opponent for Allstate Continental Clasico as TBD, probably as a result of chaos and penalties that followed the AFCON championship game in January won by Senegal over Morocco 1-0. FIFA issued hefty fines for players and coaches from both clubs for unsportsmanlike conduct. Both Senegal and Morocco are World Cup teams.

According to news reports, clamor continues among European officials to boycott "Trump's World Cup" after his threats about Greenland and fans' concerns about high ticket prices and difficulty in obtaining U.S. visas.

Soccer fans here may want to plan their summer evening schedule around the World Cup. Some 40 of the 104 games will be in prime time (21 on Fox, 19 on FS1). The first three U.S. contests are in prime time, and forewarned three-hour pre-game shows are coming. Overall, 70 WC games are on Fox (broadcast TV), 34 on FS1 (cable). That's twice the number of broadcast games than 2022.

Greensboro (UNC-G) will be the WC training camp for Norway which has three East Coast games in the first round. Germany will train at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem (CSN, Jan 2026).



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Chapel Hill has 20 at Rosemary St. parking deck; 6 public parking level at 140 West downtown; 4 Homestead Aquatic Center; 2 each at Town Hall, Eubanks park & ride, Chapel Hill Library, Southern Community Park, Hargraves Center.

Carrboro has 5 at Drakeford Library parking deck; 2 each at Town Hall, municipal lot on W. Rosemary, MLK Park on Hillsborough Rd.

Orange County has 11 at Eno parking deck, Hillsborough; 6 Durham Tech park & ride lot; 2 each at Bonnie Davis Ctr and Detention Ctr, Hillsborough, Cedar Grove Comm. Ctr, Seymour Senior Ctr.

Nearly all Chapel Hill-owned stations charge 20 cents per KWh plus processing fees. Park & Plug units at Library, SCP, Hargraves charge a fee of 13.4 cents per KWh plus a 6% tax. Some older stations do not charge a fee because they are not equipped to do so, Chapel Hill said. The town charges fees to help maintain this equipment over time.

The two original stations at Homestead are being replaced by four new stations. This work is expected to be completed in the coming weeks. *J.B.*

## Snow Days Close Community Centers

Why are community centers in Chapel Hill closed on Snow Days?

City Communications Manager Alex Carrasquillo replied, "Serious safety concerns keep us from opening the Community Center or Hargraves during snow/ice storms. During and just after these storms, we encourage folks to stay home and off the roads due to dangerous travel conditions. This includes staff who would have to drive in to operate these facilities."

## Community News

Running low on paperbacks for winter nights? Chapel Hill Public Library has a Paperback Pop-Up Saturday, Feb. 28, 10-1 in Room D by Friends of the Library. Books will be \$1.00 each and organized by category.

North Carolina added 145,907 people last year, more newcomers than any other state except Texas and Florida. This made NC the ninth largest state (11.2M), the Census Bureau reported.

Facility rentals by Chapel Hill are a big business. Rental income, primarily from soccer fields, totaled \$635,297.75 for the last fiscal year (2025), compared to \$553,141.13 for the previous year. Figures include all rentals from picnic shelters to pickleball, basketball courts, soccer (grass, turf), skate rink.

## Coming Up in CSN:



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## Berkman Wins 20 Miler

Amy Berkman (3:25:02) of Hillsborough was the women's winner at 35th Uwharrie Mountain Run 20 Miler in Ophir. Benjamin Godfres (2:48:54) of Morrisville was first male. There were 158 finishers, compared to 171 last year, for the single track trail run, one three races that day. The races sold out last fall.

Local age group award winners: Laurel Silliman, Chapel Hill, first 19&U, 5:16:25; Kathryn Nelson, Chapel Hill, third 40-49, 5:13:21; Monica Calhoun, Pittsboro, first 50-59, 4:13:53; Cindy Weeks, Carrboro, first 60-69, 4:52:04; Andrei Tong, Chapel Hill, first 20-29, 4:03:46; Courtney Mandeville, Hillsborough, third 30-39, 3:16:54; Jim Malone, Efland, second 60-69, 4:14:56; Kevn Weeks, Carrboro, third, 4:34:40; Bill Vanca, Pittsboro, second 70-79, 5:35:27.

Maeve Gualtieri-Reed (1:21:01) of Chapel Hill was second female and Lisa Dunn (1:24:32) of Carrboro third in the 8 Miler (154 finishers, down from 168 in 2025). Winners were Neal Mesca of Durham and Sarah Swentfleger of Greensboro.

Award winners from Chapel Hill included Jennifer Thomas, Hillsborough, first 40-49, 1:36:57; Cari Reisdorf, second, 1:38:34; Liz Gualtieri, first 50-59, 1:33:51; Amy Hird, second, 1:52:21; Laura DeWald, Carrboro, first 60-69, 1:50:52; Matt Mesca first 20-29, 1:16:43; Erik Macintosh, Mebane, first 30-39, 1:15:56; Evan Calabrese, third, 1:20:44; Neal deJong, Carrboro, third 40-49, 1:21:35; David Morgan, Carrboro, first 60-69, 1:40:09; Brian Gyro Beatty, Hillsborough, second; Eric Teagarden, second 70-79, 2:03:58.

Cliff Simpson of Carrboro was first 50-59, 9:53:01 and Brian Lapham, Hillsborough, second, 10:08:57, in the 40 Miler. The winner was Ethan Slesman (6:51:44) of Durham (69 finishers, up from 25 last year).

## Krispy Kreme Challenge

Anthony Sanchez-Padillia (35:35) of Chapel Hill was the top local finisher (12th) at the 22nd Krispy Kreme Challenge in Raleigh. There were 2,248 finishers with WT's 32:17 and 40:20. Runners ran 2.5m, ate a dozen glazed donuts and ran another 2.5m.

In the Non Challenger Race, Neal Duncan (36:25) of Chapel Hill was the top local runner (9th). Times for top finishers were mucked up. There were 2,644 finishers for the 5 miler.

Overall, there were 5,710 participants in both races, 63 percent male. Proceeds went to the UNC Children's Hospital.

## Levin First At WTF HM

Halden Levin (2:00:26) of Chapel Hill was first woman at Whiskey Tango Foxtrot (WTF) HM trail in Gibsonville, with Lisa Hecker (2:03:16) of Mebane, who won last year, second. There were 125 finishers, up from 113 in 2025. MWT was 1:42:03.

Three locals earned awards in the 5 Miler (197). Mimi Keen, Chapel Hill, was first 14&U, 46:02; Susan Aliperti, Moncure, third 55-59, 58:29; Martha Hamblin, Mebane, first 65-69, 1:22:23. WT's were 33:53 and 39:49.

## Sole Mates 6.5

Benjamin Arnold (43:56) and Elisabeth Angoti (52:04), both of Chapel Hill, were the winners in the 6.5m Double Teams (17 finishers) at Sole Mates in Cary.

John Paul Amalong (21:59) and Anne Amalong (21:58), both of Chapel Hill, took second in the 5K (137). WT's were 16:39 and 20:46. Ariel Kopelove of Chapel Hill was third 30-34, 30:24.

Sajan Singh, Chapel Hill, was third 25-29, 38:01, in the 5K doubles team. WT was 18:45.

## Viking Dash 5K

Cindy Webster (27:00) of Chapel Hill was first female master and Paul Patzer (26:57) of Chapel Hill first 50-59 at Viking Dash 5K trail in New Hill (89). WT's were 23:46 and 26:15.

Lisa Hecker (43:32) of Mebane was the first female master in the 10K (38). WT was 49:32.

## Leshner Leads Carson 5K

Luke Leshner (18:50) of Raleigh was the leader at 18th Eve Carson Memorial 5K for Education in Chapel Hill (260 finishers). The race, which normally happens in the fall and features performance by Clef Hangers at the start, had top finishers from six different N.C. hometowns.

Henry McLaughlin (18:52) of Durham was second and Isaac Bosman (19:23) of Chapel Hill third. Women's winner was Jill Konkol (28:15) of Lenoir, with Megan Smith (30:22) of Zebulon second and Hailey Hackett (29:29) of Cary third.



PHOTO: BLUERIDGENOW.COM

## Running News

Juan Pablo Restrepo (1:26:07) of Chapel Hill was third 20-24 at Charlotte Ten Miler (392). WT's were 52:43 and 58:28.

No local award winners at UGTBGrind'n Trail Run at New Hill on a cold winter morning. The ten miler had 11 finishers (127 last year); 22 registered. WT was 1:19:16. The top 3 finishers were women. The 5 miler had 47 (71 in 2025); 54 registered, WT 35:21.

## Deyo Third In Trail Run

Zack Deyo (2:35:01) of Mebane was third male in the rescheduled 3 HR Groundhog's Lap Race at Haw River State Park, Greensboro (32). WT's were 2:30:25 and 2:38:14. Each lap was a 3.8m loop.

Michael Barrett, Hillsborough, was first male master, 2:48:52; Martha Hamblin, Mebane, first 41-99, 2:00:05; Michael Lester, Mebane, second 41-99, 2:08:00.

## Bakoo Fastest Relay Team

Bakoo and the Boys (1:10:23, 5:13 pace) had the fastest time at the Occoneechee Speedway Relay in Hillsborough. There were 59 teams (222 runners) doing 20 laps, about 13.5m, in six divisions.

Bakoo was first in 4-person men teams (11). Bull City TC Master, 1:16:53 second, Goldilocks and the Three Bears, 1:17:46 third.

2 Person/Men (4), Bull City Spiders, 1:13:11 first, Sicardias, 1:27:59 second; Dick Trickle's Excellence, 1:46:56 third. 2 Person/Coed (7), Team Redi 1:27:27 first; Ratz 1:31:30 second; Running for Rudy, 1:32:28 third.

4 Person/Female (3), What are we running from? 1:40:28 2 Person/F (1), Second Wind, 1:35:18.

4 Person Coed (33, the largest division), Bull City Track Hack, 1:21:28 first; The Distance, 1:29:13 second; Miller Miles, 1:39:53.

### RACES, Continued from page 1

calendar listed more than 1,000 N.C. races for both months. CSN compiled a preliminary race list in January but found additional races were added or shuffled to a different date every couple of days.

Nationally, many Gen Z runners (ages 20-29) have turned to running, swelling numbers to near or record levels. Their strength or impact in this market isn't clear, but it's certainly less.

Meanwhile, it looks like most local runners avoided Triangle and out of town races during the bitter cold weekends of January and February. Some did their training runs, while others opted out. Even the Uwharrie Mountain Run (3 trail races) in the national forest which was sold out when registration opened last fall had a fair number of no-shows. Several area races were rescheduled due to icy conditions in January.

Raleigh's oldest race promoter, Young & Associates (Jim Young), apparently went dark. Inquiries were not returned. They've been doing sports events since 1981 and helped build the N.C. Road Runners Club. J.B.

## Chapel Hill/Durham Spring Road Races

### February

- 21, Cupid's Undie Run, 1m novelty run, Durham.
- 22, Rescheduled, Occoneechee Mtn Challenge 10m trail, Hillsborough.
- 28, Duke Time for Time 5K Color Run, Durham.

### March

- 7, UNC SNDA Oral Cancer 5K, Chapel Hill.
- 7, Blue Blood Rivalry Run 5K, Durham.
- 7, St. Paul Village 5K, Carrboro.
- 7, TarDevil 30m Bushwack, UNC to Duke, Chapel Hill.
- 7, Learning Outside 5K Trail, Pluck Farm, Mebane.
- 7, MST 100 Endurance Run, 50m/50K/100m, Rolling View SRA, Durham.
- 8, Head for the Cure 5K, Chapel Hill.
- 14, Chatham YMCA Leprechaun Dash 5K/10K, Pittsboro.
- 14, Crush Colorectal Cancer 5K, Durham.
- 14, PSF 5K for Education, Chapel Hill.
- 15, Pie Day, Pi K, Durham.
- 21, Run 4 Health Of It 5K, Durham.\*\*
- 21, Cane Creek Mtn 3.3m trail, Snow Camp.
- 22, Tower Climb Hill, 10m, Pittsboro.
- 28, Shamrock 'N' Run 5K, Chapel Hill.
- 29, Anchors Aweigh 5K, Chapel Hill.\*\*

### April

- 4, Duke Law Rainbow Run 5K, Durham.
- 11, Cedarock Trail Run, HM/10K/5K trail, Burlington.
- 11, Kevin Dendy Memorial 5K, Hillsborough.
- 11, Run for Malawi 5K, Chapel Hill.
- 11, Haw River Island Ramble 6K trail, Graham.
- 12, ZTA Franklin 5K, Chapel Hill.
- 12, MST Trail 12m/50K Challenge, Durham.
- 12, The Fast & Furiest Ind. Rescue 5K, Hillsborough.
- 18, Smile More, Complain Less 5K, New Hill.
- 18, Tar Heel Ten Miler/4m/Double Down, Chapel Hill.
- 24, Mebane Dogwood Festival Family 5K, Mebane.
- 24-25, Blue Heaven Trail Fest, 4m/HM/100m relay, Chapel Hill.\*\*
- 25, Angels Among Us 5K, Durham.
- 25, Bull City Beer Mile, 1m novelty run, Durham.
- 25, Komen N C Triangle Race for the Cure 5K, Durham.
- 25, Socks and Undie 5K Rundie, Durham.
- 25, Tobacco Road Relay, 75m, Chapel Hill to Raleigh.
- 26, Philosopher's Way Trail Run, 10m/7K, Chapel Hill.

### May

- 2, Garmin M/HM/10K/5K, Durham.\*\*
- 9, FCA Mom's Day 5K, Burlington.
- 9, Run to the Rhythm Trail 5K, Pittsboro.\*\*
- 16, Bee Amazing 5K, RTP, Durham.
- 16, Lookin For A Cure 5K, Durham.
- 16, Zen Squirrel Trail Run, 10m/5m/2m, Briar Chapel, Chapel Hill.
- 23, Memorial Day 5K, Siler City.\*\*
- 30, Running of the Bulls 8K, Durham.

For more race info and registration, check community-sports-news.com website.

\*\* New Race

# Triangle Running News

NEW distance races in Chapel Hill and Durham are among an expanded spring running lineup.

Blue Heaven Trail Fest April 24-25 has 100m team relay, XC HM and 4m, sunset to sunrise challenge on 4m loop trail at Together Animal Sanctuary in Chapel Hill. The Garmin M/HM starts outside DBAP downtown and ends inside Duke's Wallace Wade Stadium.

Other new races include 5Ks March 21 at Hillside High, March 29 at UNC, May 9 at Northwood High, Pittsboro.

BENEFIT swim meets are few in number locally, but the Third Annual Swim For Charlie masters meet fundraiser Sunday, April 12, at the Sportsplex in Hillsborough is special.

Swim for Charlie teaches second graders in Orange/Durham schools life-saving water safety skills. Swim meet starts at 8:50 a.m. and has 23 mixed events from 50 to 500s. Register at [club-assistant.com/club/form/register](http://club-assistant.com/club/form/register). Volunteers are needed for both the swim meet and in-pool program. Training provided.

If open water swimming is your choice, try the 16th Open Water Challenge May 20 at



Jordan Lake's Vista Point, Pittsboro. Three distances are offered: 1K, 1.2m, 2.4m. Register at [eventreach.com](http://eventreach.com) by 4/30.

ONE of the season's first triathlons is the March 7 Leo's Peanut Butter & Jelly Sprint Tri in Morganton. The race honors the organizer's father (swim half mile indoors, bike 12.4m, run 5K). "We'll race and eat in his honor."

The biggest local triathlon is the May 30 Triangle Sprint & Mini Sprint at Harris Lake, New Hill, 6th event in N.C. Tri Series, the largest on the East Coast.

WINTER weather postponed several local races. New race dates: Occaneechee Mountain Challenge 10m trail, Hillsborough, Feb. 22; Kay Yow Cancer Fund Celebration 4K (untimed), Cary, March 1.

CSN continues to not list races put on by U.S. Road Racing and N.C. Brewery Series. They are not good value. *J.B.*

## Triangle Distance Races

### March

- 7, Umstead Marathon, Raleigh.
- 7, MST 100 Endurance Run, 50m/50K/100m, Durham.
- 15, Tobacco Road M/HM, Cary
- 21, Hairpin Hustle Trail HM/10K+, Morrisville.

### April

- 11, Cedarock Trail Run, HM/10K/5K, Burlington.
- 12, MST Trail Challenge 12m/7K, Durham.
- 26, Philosopher's Way Trail Run, 10m/7K, Chapel Hill.

### May

- 2, Garmin M/HM/10K/5K, Durham.
- 16, Zen Squirrel Trail 10m/5m/2m, Chapel Hill.

## Community News

Cultural Food Truck Festival with black-owned trucks and vendors will be held Saturday, Feb. 28, 3-10 at Durham Central Park. Also, music by Pushabay Killas and a kids zone.

North Carolina FC men won't field a USL Championship league team this year. They're planning to join the new USL Division One (Premier).

Holi Festival March 14, 12-3 at Cedar Fork Community Center, Morrisville.

## Cycling Fundraiser

The Third Bike Bash, a fundraiser for youth biking in Wake County, will be March 7, 6:30 to 9 p.m. at City of Raleigh Museum. Their goal is \$15,000. Early bird registration costs \$75/person for dinner and curated auction at [givebutter.com](http://givebutter.com).

## Film Festival Season

The 20th Carrboro Film Fest was rescheduled to Feb. 27-March 1 at Drakeford Library Complex due to the winter storm last month. Many films are sold out and the film schedule was revised. Check [filmfreeway.com](http://filmfreeway.com) for tickets.

27th Nevermore Film Festival, celebrating the dark, terrifying and fantastic, takes place Feb. 27-March 1 at Carolina Theater, Durham.

The 28th Full Frame Documentary Film Festival will be held April 16-19 in downtown Durham. Passes are on sale, single film tickets April 9. Lineup announced 3/12. Last year there were 49 films from 30 countries. Questions? Call 919-684-4444.

# What's Next as Trump Voids Climate Change Findings

Marianne Lavelle



By revoking its 17-year-old scientific finding that greenhouse gases endanger public health and welfare, the Environmental Protection Agency will demolish the legal underpinning of its authority to act on climate change under the Clean Air Act.

EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin will be alongside President Donald Trump for an event Wednesday focused on boosting U.S. use of coal, as mercury and air toxics standards are repealed. That is expected to be a prelude to Zeldin finalizing the endangerment finding repeal, an assignment the president handed him in an executive order signed on the first day of his second term in office.

To help readers sort through the meaning of the highly technical legal maneuver by the Trump administration, and look to what comes next, Inside Climate News tackled some of the key questions raised by the reversal of the endangerment finding:

### Does this mean that scientists now think climate change is not a problem?

A panel of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) put it bluntly: "The evidence for current and future harm to human health and welfare created by human-caused [greenhouse gases] is beyond scientific dispute," the scientists said in a report submitted to the EPA as it launched its repeal process. They said that the endangerment finding that the Obama administration adopted in 2009 is now supported by longer observational records and multiple new lines of evidence.

In its original proposal, the Trump EPA relied on recent Supreme Court decisions it said restrict its authority to act on climate under current law, and close observers expect that will be the administration's strategy.

"We expect EPA to revoke the endangerment finding for legal reasons, not scientific ones," said Jeff Holmstead, a partner at the Bracewell law firm who served as head of EPA's air office during President George W. Bush's administration.

### If this is about law and not science, how has the law changed since 2009?

The second Trump administration had the confidence to take on the endangerment finding largely because of how the president reshaped the Supreme Court in his first term, legal experts say. In two 6-3 decisions from a conservative majority bolstered by Trump's three appointees, the justices created new doctrine that limited the power of federal regulatory agencies like the EPA.

The Supreme Court struck down Obama's signature climate policy, the Clean Power Plan, in 2022. And in that case, *West Virginia v. EPA*, the court established its so-called "major questions doctrine," saying regulation of greenhouse gases was an issue of such great economic and political significance that the EPA could not regulate them without explicit direction from Congress. Then, in a 2024 case over fishing regulations, the Supreme Court overturned the principle that had guided regulatory law for 40 years, saying that federal agencies were due no deference in interpreting ambiguities in the law. The court said

judges, not agencies, should decide the meaning of the law, even though in the environmental realm that typically involves application of science and knowledge of the best available technologies for reining in pollution.

### So is this "final" decision really final?

Not in the least. The EPA's regulatory determinations are challenged in court more than those of any other federal agency, according to tracking by the Institute for Policy Integrity at New York University, and this high-stakes decision will not be an exception.

Climate action advocates see the endangerment finding as a key line they must defend in what they see as the extraordinary all-out assault on environmental protection in the second Trump term. "Put simply, this is a gift-wrapped package for the fossil fuel industry," said Manish Bapna, CEO of NRDC. "It is unscientific, it is bad economics, and it is illegal. So we're gonna fight it."

The first stop will be the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, which has exclusive jurisdiction over appeals of nationally applicable regulations. Seven of the 11 judges on that court were appointed by Presidents Obama or Biden.

### How hard would it be for a future administration to restore the finding that greenhouse gas emissions are a danger to human health and the environment?

It depends on the courts. If *Massachusetts v. EPA* is still standing at the end of the battle, the EPA will still have the power to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. But if the Supreme Court were to rule the Clean Air Act gives the EPA no authority over greenhouse gas emissions—"Then there would be the problem of a lack of authority, unless Congress wrote a new law," said Doniger of NRDC.

No matter the outcome of the coming litigation over the endangerment finding repeal, the fossil fuel industry has won time. The Trump administration has ensured that the nation that has contributed the most to the atmosphere's overload of climate pollution, the United States, will be entangled in litigation during years that scientists have said are crucial for driving down the pollution that is increasing risks and costs for communities as it alters the planet.

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to go wrong for Duke to take that lone conference loss at UNC, and all are easily correctible. As long as Boozer and the rest of the frontcourt remain healthy, the Devils will retain top seed in the ACC tourney.

**NC State C.** The Wolfpack really struggled out of the gate, losing virtually every Tier 1 matchup on their non-conference schedule. Then, just as it looked like they were finally pulling together, they get humiliated in Louisville by 41 points. The emergence of Qadir Copeland as a key playmaker was a positive development, but the constant disappearance of preseason player of the year Darriion Williams is certainly a huge roadblock to their postseason aspirations.

**UNC B.** It took a while for the Tar Heels to get some traction, but once they got through their West Coast road trip and Seth Trimble returned from injury, they appeared to be back on track. Of course, they followed their big win over Duke with a subpar performance in a loss at Miami, so consistency continues to be an issue. Caleb Wilson still needs to touch the ball on every possession if the Heels are going to go far in March.

**SMU B.** The Mustangs took their lumps against the conference's upper tier, and while all five starters are averaging double-figures (led by Boopie Miller's 19.2 ppg), they still have room to improve. If it weren't for the conference's fab freshmen, Miller would make a solid ACC POY candidate. Andy Enfield just needs to find that extra gear to secure that first-day bye at the ACC tourney.

**Virginia B+.** The Cavaliers are quietly putting together one of the more impressive ACC runs behind the emergence of Belgian forward Thijs De Ridder. The supporting cast has been solid, especially freshman Chance Mallory, and as long as the shots are falling, this team is a March contender. They've tempted fate quite often, but they seem to find ways to win regardless.

**Syracuse D+.** Until Donnie Freeman finally arrived on the scene, the Orange were not enjoyable to watch. Now that he's back to full strength, they are at least bearable to the point where they are winning a few games here and there. Regardless, the performance is far from preseason projections, and unless J.J. Sterling or one of the freshmen comes alive, they'll be an early out in March.

**Clemson A-.** Brad Brownell's Tigers are having another quiet but solid run, and they're doing it with one of the ACC's least-heralded rosters. This team is fundamentally sound and extremely deep, and not one player is averaging more than 12 ppg. If Brownell doesn't win Coach of the Year with this team, it would be a travesty.

**Notre Dame D.** The absence of star guard Markus Burton really put a damper on the season for the Irish. That's an absence that

just can't be overcome with just Jalan Haralson and Braeden Shrewsbury. Of course, who knew it would put the team at the bottom of the ACC standings?

**Miami B+.** Somehow, somehow the hodgepodge of talent Jai Lucas put together is working in its own way. The trio of Malik Reneau, Tre Donaldson and Shelton Henderson is bullying opponents, and even when they're off, they've only lost by the slightest of margins. This is a dangerous team despite their lack of depth.

**Wake Forest D.** The Deacons have settled into one of those teams that are sometimes fun to watch but end up on the wrong side of the win column. They have Juke Harris, who is having an All-ACC year, but little else. They could sneak a win at the ACC tourney, but not likely to do much more.

**California B.** If Brad Brownell doesn't win Coach of the Year, Mark Madsen would make a solid candidate for putting together this group of misfits into a high-level competitor. They may not have the consistency to get to that upper tier, but if Dai Dai Ames or Justin Pippen get hot, the Bears could surprise some folks in March.

**Virginia Tech B+.** Another surprise seemingly out of nowhere, the Hokies are riding the talents of Neo Avdalas and Amani Hansberry to an unlikely run to the ACC's upper half. What they lack in depth, they make up for in grit, and that can be a dangerous weapon in the postseason.

**Florida State C-.** In their first year under Luke Loucks, the Seminoles haven't quite reached that high-octane offense they wanted, but they have proven formidable at times in wins against Miami, Cal and Stanford. They're probably not a postseason stallion, but they are a dark horse.

**Georgia Tech D.** The Yellowjackets have ended up in the ACC basement because they don't have much beyond Baye Ndongo and a resurgent Kowacie Reeves. They've had brief moments of competitiveness, but any chance of moving up the standings is a longshot.

**Stanford B+.** The star that nobody saw coming was the emergence of freshman star Chisom Okpara and his impact on the Cardinal's season. They still don't have the type of roster that can make a good postseason run, but there's no doubt that Okpara put this team on another level.

**Pittsburgh D.** The Panthers also experienced some bright spots this season—like the debut of fan-favorite Roman Siulepa, but not enough to get them out of the basement. The question now becomes: can Jeff Capel keep his job?

**Boston College D.** It's not always easy to see these kinds of things happen just as predicted, but unfortunately, that's what happened with the Eagles. Maybe BC should just give up on having a basketball program.

## Smith Center Plans Remain On Hold

UNC hasn't decided about the future of the Smith Center.

The decision was leaning toward a new arena at Carolina North in December but former Carolina players and alumni, led by Coach Roy (241-40 at DES) and alum/businessman Rusty Carter of Wilmington, weighed in last month with opposition to moving the arena off campus forcing a delay.

They formed "Committee for a South Campus Arena" and introduced Williams, Carter, Tyler Hansbrough, the ACC's leading scorer ever, and began a petition campaign to "renovate not relocate" which had 32,000+ signatures 2/10. The petition is at renovate-smithcenter.org website. In response, the university plans two stakeholder committees (one of basketball folks and another for student concerns).

The committee spread the word with ads in the campus newspaper and signs at the Smith Center explaining what they're doing and why.

In early February, they asked the university for a "full and independent cost study of a phased Smith Center renovation with seating and revenue figures so we can have an accurate comparison." The university hasn't responded.

Years ago a consultant offered six options for the future of the Smith Center including renovation but the specific plans and cost figures were not disclosed so lots of unverified

numbers get tossed around about a new roof and other improvements would cost.

Meanwhile, UNC trustees last month allocated \$8M for advance planning for the 230-acre mixed-use Carolina North campus on the site of the former Horace Williams Airport, closed since 2018, 1.6 miles north of Franklin Street.

Chancellor Lee Roberts calls the project "live-work-play-learn" with housing for students, employees, families, academic buildings, research facilities and an entertainment district with retail stores, hotels, restaurants, plazas, performing arts venues. No mention of a sports arena was made, but similar projects planned at UNC Asheville, Ole Miss and Texas involve sports facilities and student housing.

Some 2,200 undergraduate beds would be in the first phase, Roberts said. Construction could begin in 2027.

The initial planning likely will develop a site plan, infrastructure needs, remediation plans (three former landfills) are on the property, relocation of existing UNC units like Facilities Services, according to a UNC news release. No mention of costs or finances was made, but Roberts said earlier public-private funding, state, corporate and private support, revenue-backed bonds will be needed.

Another early step might be naming a Master Developer for the project after selecting a multidisciplinary design team. They're advertising for the design work now with applications due March 19.

UNC said it plans to occupy about a quarter of the entire 947-acre Carolina North Forest tract. They said the 20 miles of public trails will be protected and improved.

Joel Bulkley

## College Hoops Notes

At least a dozen Tar Heels are playing internationally: Armando Bacot (Turkey), Ty Claude (Serbia), Isaiah Hicks (South Korea), Brice Johnson (Dominican Republic), Christian Keeling (Finland), Nassir Little (Japan), Brady Manek (China), Luke Maye (Japan), James Michael McAdoo (Japan), Kennedy Meeks (Taiwan), J.P. Tokoto (Poland) and Jae'Lyn Withers (The Netherlands) ... Commercial jersey patches for college teams were approved by the NCAA starting Aug. 1 ... Over two seasons, federal prosecutors said 29 games involving 17 college basketball teams reportedly were impacted by a point-fixing scheme, including three schools in North Carolina (Queens University, East Carolina, N.C. A&T). According to SI, 20 former and current college players were charged ... Two players from UNC (C. Wilson, 4, H. Veesaar 28), Duke (C., Boozer 1, I. Evans 38), Louisville (R. Cowell 36, M. Brown Jr. 50) and three other ACC players (B. Miller, SMU 30; E. Okorie, Stanford, 32; M. Reneau, Miami, 35) were among ESPN's Top 50 college players at midseason (1/28). That's 9 from the ACC ... Kansas replaced UCLA in the CBS Classic December basketball series. They join UNC, Ohio State, Kentucky. Matchups and venues change each season. Carolina plays Kentucky in 2026 at MSG, NYC ... Rick Pitino won his 900th game and joined the list of most men's D-1 college hoops wins. Coach K, first, 1202, Boeheim, second, 1015, Williams, third, 903. Smith (879) was seventh ... Former UNC player Marcus Ginyard wears a lot of hats including one for expertise on French champagne from Alsace, France. He also serves on a special UNC advisory committee for Carolina North as director of Special Projects for the Chancellor ... McDonald's All American boys and girls all star games March 31 on ESPN will feature recruits heading to UNC, Duke, three other ACC schools plus a number of unsigned boys players ... The NBA All Star game had four former ACC players on initial rosters. Cal, Duke, Fla. State, Louisville each had one player ... UNC was fined \$50,000 by the ACC for court storming during the Duke game ... Florida State coach bought 500 beers for FSU student fans in Tallahassee but Virginia rallied for 61-58 win late ...

## UNC Down Two Starters, Tops Pitt

North Carolina's two leading scorers and rebounders (36 points, 18 rebounds) missed the game against Pitt.

Caleb Wilson, injured left hand, and Henri Veesaar, illness and lower extremity issue, were out. UNC won 79-65. In the Smith Center to improve to 20-5, 8-4. Jarin Stevenson and Seth Trimble, 19 each, led the Heels. Halftime was 46-32. They have road games at NC State, Syracuse next.

Wilson suffered a fracture in his left hand in the loss at Miami. No timetable on a return.

## Community News

National Girls & Women in Sports Day Celebration was postponed until Sunday, Feb. 22, 10-11:30 a.m. at UNC's Koman Practice Complex and offers free tickets to a women's basketball home game at 12 noon.

Harlem Globetrotters make an annual visit to Lenovo Center, Raleigh, March 19 at 7 p.m.

Shaun King of Durham is TORC's first paid employee and executive director. He's the board chair at Bike Durham and worked at Duke. TORC is the Triangle Off-Road Cyclists, MTBers.

The Pittsboro Farmers' Market moves Feb. 19 to a new home, PopUp Park, 50 W. Salisbury St. Hours are Thursday 3-6 p.m.

Annie Tane of Orange County is a member of the 19-member SONC Athlete Leadership Council that provides advice and guidance to state officials on programming and competitions. She's serving a two-year term and also is a vice chair of SONC's board of directors.

Black History Month events in Carrboro: Feb. 22, Concert featuring The Four Seasons at 3 p.m. and Feb. 28, Health and Wellness Fair, 10-2. Both are at the Drakeford Library Complex downtown.



## Haw River Cleanup Slated March 21

The 36th Haw River Clean-up-a-thon, organized by the Haw River Assembly, takes place Saturday, March 21, and needs volunteers to help remove trash along waterways in the eight-county watershed, from Greensboro to Jordan Lake. Teams of volunteers have until March 15 to register at [events@hawriver.org](mailto:events@hawriver.org) to get supplies and an assigned site. Both individuals and boaters are needed for the cleanup.

Last year 346 volunteers removed 312 bags of trash and 54 tires from streams and creeks along the river.

### Spring Cleanup

The Clean Jordan Lake Inc. spring cleanup will be held Saturday, March 14, 8:30-12 noon, part of Creek Week, at Jordan Lake. Sign up on the [meetup.com](http://meetup.com) website. Rain date is 3/15 12:30-4 p.m.

The MLK Jr. Day of Service in Durham had 376 volunteers and they removed 2,764 pounds of litter; planted 600 flower bulbs; cleared 1.7 acres of invasive plants at Forest Hills Park and pruned and mulched 78 street trees.

## Fishing Classes In Fayetteville

NCWRC holds fishing classes in February at Pechmann Fishing Education Center in Fayetteville. Registration for all workshops and classes is available online at [ncwildlife.org](http://ncwildlife.org), or by calling 910-868-5003. Most classes are free.

Feb. 20, Introduction to Kayak Fishing, 6-9 pm, ages 14 years and older.

Feb. 21, Volunteer Orientation/Basic Fishing Instructor Training, 8:30 am-12 pm, for volunteers ages 18 years and older.

Feb. 21, Beginning Fly-tying Workshop, 9 am-4 pm, ages 14 years and older.

Feb. 26, Monthly Fly-tying Forum, 6-8:30 pm, ages 10 years and older.

Feb. 27, Introductory Fishing for Adults, 6-8:30 pm, ages 16 years and older.

Feb. 28, Intermediate Fly-fishing Workshop, 9am-3 pm, ages 13 years or older.

## Sledding Safety Tips Offered

Here are some general winter sledding safety tips including several from the National Safety Council:

Find gentle, open slopes that are free of trees, fences, rocks, poles and roads and have a flat area at the bottom to stop.

Avoid icy conditions, as hard-packed snow or ice "dramatically increases speed and loss of control," which can lead to injuries.

Use steerable sleds or tubes specifically designed for snow. Use a bike or ski helmet to significantly reduce the risk of head injury.

Always sled sitting down with feet pointing downhill; never head-first. Limit one rider at a time to avoid collisions.

Adults should be around to supervise younger sledders.

## Rainfall Deficit Across The State

Drought conditions, caused by a 10-inch rainfall deficit since August, are expanding in North Carolina, according to N.C. Drought Monitor.

Here's the breakdown: 72 counties (including Orange, Durham, Chatham, Wake) are in severe drought; 24 moderate drought, 3 on the S.C. border (Cabarrus, Stanley, Union) extreme drought; 1 abnormally dry (Carteret).

Water levels at area Corps of Engineers Lakes are down. The level at Jordan was reported at 213.9 Feb. 13, down about 2 feet below normal pool of 216; Falls Lake, 248.28, down nearly 4 feet; Kerr Lake, 294.38, down 5.62 feet.

## Outdoors

# What Makes Going Fishing So Great

Captain Gordon Churchill

I've been asked, more than once, what it is about fishing that makes me love it so much? I can be on a large boat on the open ocean pursuing tuna that will take 30 minutes or more to land, or I could be standing knee deep in a tiny stream, pursuing trout that wouldn't be big enough to be used as bait. It doesn't matter to me. I love it. The question remains. I have struggled to answer.

A lot of my reading over the years has attempted to put focus to these questions. I challenge you to read "A River Runs Through It" and not feel in your guts that Mclean loves fishing as much as he loves his family, and that it united them throughout their lives (and continues to unite his descendants).

Thomas McGuane, an author of numerous books and screenplays, writes about fishing with a sense of longing. You can feel that as he is writing, he wishes he were out there right now. Roderick Haig-Brown famously said you can never step into the same river twice. Was he really talking about the river or saying something about himself?

John Gierach has made a career of writing books filled with essays about fishing and it's obvious he loves it. But still the question is the same. Why do we love it?

Maybe we should start with the "what?" What are the things we love so much about it? Maybe that will lead us to the "why?" I love the anticipation of going. I love the making plans with friends and the back-and-forth texts that start a few days before, the planning out meeting places and times.

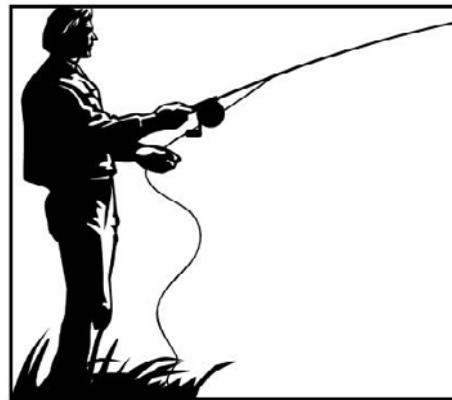
The bigger the trip the more planning that has to go in. If you're going to your usual place, it might be nothing more than, "Meet you at the usual place at the usual time." If you're traveling, there's even more. Plane tickets? Car rentals? Hotel rooms? Guides? New rods, reels, lures, whatever?

Even a short trip of an hour's drive or so carries commitment that requires a certain level of preparedness that leads to anticipation. You hope that the weather is good that day and that the conditions are favorable for what you want to do. You would certainly hope that the fish will be where you expect them to be and that they will be doing the thing you hope that they will be doing.

Is your tackle in order? I've spent many a night at the kitchen table tying knots, rigging tackle, fixing rods, and pretty much making sure everything is right before I even leave the house. A moment frozen in time as the red drum decides whether to eat. Video: Gordon Churchill I prefer to have all my gear in order the moment I arrive. Nothing is worse, in my mind, than having to rig up at the boat ramp or standing on the beach, while the fish are snapping and we are wasting time. Then we get to the spot, and the fish are there, and it all comes together. All the planning has paid off and all the equipment is right, and all the lures, baits, or flies are right. Then, if the anticipation and preparation come together, a perfect soufflé, right from the oven, isn't as satisfying.

I love standing in the water. There's a certain uneasiness that comes with entering an environment in which we are not suited. It creates uncertainty and therefore you're not quite sure what the outcome will be. I get in the water when I am in a situation where the fish are just too far to reach from the shore and a boat would only mess things up. In trout streams you need to be right at the same level as the fish. You need to see where the fish are going to be and what they are eating. Be close.

Wading on bonefish flats actually offers the opportunity to get closer to the fish than you can in a boat. These fish are super wary,



always on guard for unwelcome sounds, and being on foot is quieter. If you go surf fishing you are exposed to elements that can actually hurt you. If that random wave catches you just right, you can find yourself underwater. Constant vigilance is required. I love these kinds of fishing more than most.

Being in the same element as the fish puts you on a more even keel — you seem to lose some of the advantage we have otherwise — and I appreciate the challenge. It's just a lot of fun too. I love that instant where the fish makes the decision to bite what you are showing. It's the culmination of all I've worked for up to that point.

To cast a fly to a fish I can see, I first need to find it and then determine its direction of travel. It's helpful to have foreknowledge of the types of things it likes to eat in that situation, in that case I will have also created an imitation. I have to make my cast and, in so doing, determine how the wind is blowing and how it might affect me. Then I have to land the fly in the spot that is closest enough to the fish so it will be seen but not so close as to cause it to spook.

When the fish turns toward the fly, I have to fight with my emotions and not get overly excited and mess up by pulling the fly away too quickly or even falling out of the boat (Yes, I've seen it happen). In the exact moment the fish takes the fly, I have to set the hook in just the right manner so I don't pull the fly out of its mouth before it had a chance to get the hook inside or break the line. There's a lot that can go wrong here!

So, it appears that what I really love about fishing is the anticipation. The waiting. The hoping. Simply being in that place I need to be in. A moment. The feeling that you get when you are about to put it all together and have a great day with your friends in a nice place, far from the world and full of potential for memories.

*Editor's Note: Captain Gordon Churchill is a lifelong angler and longtime guide on the Carolina coast. He lives in Carteret County. The story is reprinted from [coastalreview.org](http://coastalreview.org).*

## Outdoor Notes

### OWASA LAKES

OWASA lakes, University Lake in Carrboro and Cane Creek in Chapel Hill, open for weekend recreation Saturday, March 28.

Cane Creek operates Friday-Saturday and University Lake Friday-Sunday. Hours are 6:30 to 6. Fees are charged. Remember to throw your Cane Creek fish back to avoid the PFAs.

On opening day (Lightning Brown Day) all lake fees, including entrance charge, boat, canoe or kayak rentals, are waived except for motor rentals.

In North Durham, Little River Lake, a city reservoir, on Orange Factory Road reopens March 13 for fishing/boat rentals/picnics. No

To report wildlife violations, 800-662-7137.

swimming. Fees are charged. LR is open Fri-Mon 6:30 to 6 through early November. Lake Michie remains closed due to flooding damage from Chantal last summer.

### BOWHUNTERS CHALLENGE

Frogman (3D) Bowhunters Challenge takes place March 21 at 10 a.m. in Jacksonville for adults 17+ and kids 8-16. Use [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com) to register.

### GOPC FILM FEST

The GOPC Film Fest will be held Feb. 25-26 at 7 p.m. at The Rialto, Raleigh. Doors open at 6. Night one, Feb. 25, features MountainFilm on Tour Films involving skiing, mountain biking, surfing and screening of "Best Day Ever." Night 2, Feb. 26, is the Fly Fishing Film Tour. Events organized by Great Outdoor Provision Co. and Chair 8. For tickets go to [trusty-gopc.myeventcenter.com](http://trusty-gopc.myeventcenter.com).

### THE LAST RODEO

Webster's Rock the Hill indoor climbing competition, this year called The Last Rodeo, will be held March 13-15 at the Chapel Hill Community Center. It will be the 37th edition, longest running event of its kind in the country, and the final one on the original wall before it is replaced. The wall covers more than 5,000 sq. ft. of rock, wood, bolts, holds, with 40 routes.

Registration is under way. Climbers complete the route March 13 (9am-3pm) or (March 14, 9-3 or 3-9) at the Community Center. Top three scorers in each division advance to March 15 finals starting at 2 p.m. Five divisions are offered: youth, recreational, intermediate, open, adaptive. Limited to 120 climbers. Cost is \$35/Orange County, others \$40 at [webtrac.townofchapelhill.org](http://webtrac.townofchapelhill.org) by Feb. 20.

## Orange Co. Creek Week

Orange County Creek Week, celebrating clean water and stewardship, will be held March 21-29. Kickoff program is Saturday, March 21, from 11 to 3 at Drakeford Library Complex, Carrboro, with community organizations and information session.

Litter cleanups, citizen science and hands-on activities are among events planned for Creek Week. Schedule for week's activities TBA.

### HIKES, Continued from page 1

ing the volunteers. We also coordinate the logistics, manage registration and communications with participants, and ensure safety and program quality. The program fees help to support the work required to offer all of our education programs throughout the year, many of which are free to access."

Nick Ferguson of ERA had another take on the question.

"We have found through trial and error that when we charge a fee for registration for the guided hikes, registrants are more likely to attend the hike because they paid for it. We have a limited number of registration spots and have found that registrants are more likely to cancel their registration ahead of time for a refund so that we are able to offer a spot to someone on the waitlist.

"We have begun offering drop-in style hikes that are free of charge and do not require registration, in addition to our guided hikes, so that we are offering more accessible, free options for our community." J.B.

### UPCOMING CSN ISSUES:

March 18, NCAA Hoops

April 15, Spring Cycling



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Ad deadline 7 days before publication

## Carrboro Kite Fly

The annual Carrboro Kite Fly will be held Sunday, March 8, from 1 to 3 p.m. at Anderson Park off NC54. Free, open to all ages. Bring your own kite. If it rains, it's canceled.

## Take The Survey For Triangle Bikeway

The Triangle Bikeway is a planned 23-mile bikeway that would connect Raleigh, Cary, RTP, Durham and Chapel Hill.

This bikeway could potentially connect to a future extension of the Morgan Creek Trail in Chapel Hill, which will be extended to connect with Carrboro's soon-under-construction Morgan Creek Greenway.

A survey is being conducted by the Capital Area MPO (CAMPO) on the eastern portion of the bikeway, which will connect Raleigh to RTP and be funded by Wake County and the Research Triangle Foundation.

Learn more about the project and take the survey at <https://monkeylink.co/3442b8>.



## UNC Football

Here's the UNC football schedule (8 ACC games) with home games all caps:

Aug. 29, TCU in Dublin, Ireland.  
Sep. 12, EAST TENNESSEE STATE; 19, at Clemson.  
Oct. 3, NOTRE DAME, 10 at Pittsburgh; 17, at Duke; 24, SYRACUSE; 31, MIAMI.  
Nov. 7, UCONN; 14, LOUISVILLE; 21, at Virginia; 28, at N.C. State.

### Duke Football

Here's the Duke football schedule (9 ACC games):  
Sep. 5, TULANE; 12, at Illinois; 19, STANFORD; 26, WILLIAM & MARY.  
Oct. 10, at Georgia Tech; 17, NORTH CAROLINA; 23 or 24, at Virginia; 31, BOSTON COLLEGE.  
Nov. 6 or 7, at N.C. State; 14, at Miami; 21, CLEMSON; 28, at Wake Forest.



## Community News

Megan Smith Lyon is the UNC softball coach. Her situation is different from most. Her husband Corey Lyon is a UNC assistant softball coach and hitting instructor so "she's the boss at home and at work," she told the Chapel Hill Sports Club with a smile. Megan's a former UNC player and coached at Marshall and other schools before coming to UNC in 2023.

Biscuits & Banjos presents Rhiannon Giddens' "Beloved Country" with Blind Boys of Alabama and two other groups April 27 at DPAC as part of an international tour that began in February in England. Tickets at [ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com).

The 22-hole Diavolo course that opened in 2020 at New Hill Park, Cary, was named the most popular disc golf course in North Carolina by UDisc.

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## Another View, Mine John Nieman

Regular visitors to this space can attest that, over the years, my relationship with American football has been let's say changing, maybe even evolving.

But I have a long and rich history with the Super Bowl. During the 70s and 80s I hosted a rather large and garish Super Bowl party each year. One year, local television even came out to cover it. I had absolutely no money at the time and shanghaied friends to co-host it with me.

The first date I had with Martha was to pick her up and bring her to one of my Super Bowl parties. By the time the game started, she was ready to go home and so I took her home at halftime, because halftime was when nothing really was happening in the game. It was a foreshadowing about how wonderful my life would become once I was able to win Martha as my life partner. She endured the parties for a couple of years and then we were able to spend Super Bowl Sundays sharing a recliner and reminiscing about those old days.

I am old enough to remember the first Super Bowl. Although there were only four television channels at that time—ABC, CBS, NBC, and public television—it was being shown on two of the channels.

Even though my father had played college football before he went to help win World War II, he was, like many great athletes, not one to watch sports. And so took us all out to dinner during the first Super Bowl. I snuck out to the lobby of the restaurant where they had a television going to keep up with the score. I can assure you it wasn't a big deal back then.

As I have mentioned in this spot many times, Dad was the greatest man I ever knew. The only reason I know he played college football or served as a battalion commander in the Marines during World War II is that my grandfather showed me the magazines and documents. Dad really wasn't that concerned with following sports except keeping up with the travails of my sister and brother and me. He was far too busy building a company and caring for his family to be worried about such things.

He passed several years ago, but I am sure that had I gone to him and told him that I was concerned and angry about the artist performing at halftime of the Super Bowl, he would have looked at me with a combination of surprise and regret. Surprise that anyone could get worked up about such a trivial matter and regret that he had reared a son who would do so.

And yet the president of the United States—the president of the United States—during a time when American citizens are being gunned down in the streets by federal "law enforcement officers," takes the time to express his outrage.

Which causes me to worry about what kind of chaos can be visited upon this summer's World Cup here in North America. The president's need to deflect the nation's attention away from the many disasters caused by his Administration seems to override any real desire to govern this great nation. And so I am worried.

Sport is for me, like most people I suspect, supposed to be a safe haven from the real complexities of our existence.

I can only hope that the national tragedy that is the many moods and actions of our government can be rectified in some way before June.

Due to the postponements and certain work commitments of mine, I missed The Clash at Bowman Gray Stadium. From the reports I read it was something to see to really understand. As I write this I am preparing to watch the Daytona 500.

I'm going with friends to Darlington and so I look forward to this season. I am hopeful that it will be free of presidential interference. For good or for bad, I don't think it's a sport wherein he needs to cause chaos.

As I have mentioned here before and at the behest of friends and loved ones, I have begun a regimen of GLP-1 injections. In my case, I am using Zepbound. So far, I am extremely happy with the program. Readers can probably remember a time when the Index was as high as 310. I am happy to write: *Fat Boy Index: 264.*

## Media Sportswatch Joel Bulkley

Numbers are a big part of sports and sports news.

Here are some from last week. The first UNC/Duke men's basketball game (Smith Center) had a record 3.5M viewers and peaked at 4.8M on ESPN. That's up 53 percent from game one last year and the most for any ESPN hoops game in four years, Nielsen reported. GameDay was there for the 13th time. Game 2 is March 7 at Cameron.

The Duke Chronicle outraised the Daily Tar Heel, \$79,834 to \$66,7812, during this year's Battle of the Blues. But the DTH, which won two of three hoops games over Chronicle staffers this year, raised \$18,000 more this year than last. The two papers have raised more than \$700,000 in eight years and jointly produced a giant pre-game issue this year.

Overall, only two Black Friday hoops games on Fox had more viewers—Duke/Arkansas (6.8M) and UNC/Michigan State (6.5M), according to on3.com.

The Super Bowl was big, but apparently not a record-breaker with an audience of 124.9M for the game, 128.2M for Bad Bunny halftime show. One reason it didn't exceed last year's figures probably was that NBC's streaming channel Peacock is more expensive than Fox's Sports Live.

YouTube TV offers a \$65/month sports-focused package, rather than the \$83 deal previously offered, The Athletic reported.

Netflix drama "The 99ers" will recount the USWNT's winning the 1999 FIFA World Cup in Los Angeles, directed by Nicole Kassell. People We Meet on Vacation star Emily Bader will play Mia Hamm. The film could debut late in 2026. The women's success ignited tremendous growth in women's sports in the U.S.

Have read good things about Julius Erving's four-part series "Soul Power: The Legend of the American Basketball Association" on Amazon Prime. It's supposed to be more than highlight clips of Dr. J from the 60s. Shows are one hour each.

President Trump orders TV networks to "protect" the Army-Navy football date (second Saturday of December on CBS) from competition by other games. He issued an executive order amid concerns that college football playoffs could expand.

Trump's also involved in public golf in Washington, D.C., where his administration ended leases for three public courses held by The National Links Trust, a nonprofit. He's never played the courses.

The Washington Post shut down the paper's sports section and staff amid mass layoffs. The section was considered the gold standard and pushed women's sports behind strong writ-

ing by talented women writers. A number of former Raleigh writers/editors were among those losing their jobs.

Tampa Bay's baseball broadcasts will be produced and distributed by MLB this season as the FanDuel Sports Net baseball gets shakier by the week. MLB is now doing broadcasts for more than a dozen teams.

Good stuff. Rebecca Love is having one of those years of a lifetime. She hosts EPL soccer on NBC, is working on the Winter Olympics and will join Fox for the World Cup this summer.

The Athletic had an interesting story on how TV networks deal with injuries like skier Lindsay Vonn, soccer players, car wrecks during live telecasts.

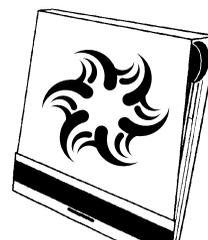
The old story was if it's Monday morning and a 60 Minutes crew is at your front door, take the week off. Now it's the "Pablo Torre Finds Out" podcast. Pablo S. Torre's an investigative reporter with a staff of about a dozen. His Jordan Hudson and LA Clippers/Kawhi Leonard stories rang the bell. He's worked for ESPN, SI and others. You can find them on YouTube.

The Pro Bowl's Tuesday night flag game was a bust (nobody watched) but flag football is coming. Nebraska will be the first D1 program with women's flag football as a varsity sport.

Meanwhile, two pro volleyball leagues are competing to follow the WNBA into our homes.

Not only did the Indy not endorse candidates in the March primary, but they didn't have a single story on Orange Co. candidates in the primary guide print edition. Sitting out the election might be considered a copout but a bunch of previously backed local candidates were anything but progressive.

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