

# State hosts Carolina

# Technician

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## Evans rediscovers his successful ways

by Wes Cashwell  
Features Editor

As unpretentious off the football field as he is dynamic at directing the Wolfpack offense on the Carter Stadium turf, State quarterback Johnny Evans seems to have finally rediscovered the formula to the success which surrounded him in abundance during his high school years, and in all too brief spurts his first three seasons at State.

While the Wolfpack is currently boasting a 5-1 record and riding the crest of a five game winning streak going into Saturday's conference battle with its old nemesis Carolina, things haven't always been this rosey on Evan's football horizon. The obvious low point occurring at the end of a 3-7-1, 1976 campaign, the High Point senior's first season as the starting quarterback.

"Last year was the most frustrating athletic year I've ever had," said Evans recently. "But one bad year won't make me think that my college career isn't what it should have been. If we have a good year this year I think it will have been fulfilling."

Fulfilling it just might be. Evans needs only 123 more yards

See "Evans," page 7



Johnny Evans

## Surging State battles Tar Heels in big one

by David Carroll  
Sports Editor

It is an event for the ages, a football game that is either savored or sulked over long after the final gun goes off.

Surging State hosts North Carolina in their 87th annual clash tomorrow afternoon at 1:30 in Carter Stadium. A crowd in excess of 50,000 is expected to fight the traffic jams and witness the intense rivalry.

The 20th-ranked Wolfpack enters the contest with much momentum, riding the crest of a five-game winning streak, including a 3-0 Atlantic Coast Conference mark. The Tar Heels enter the crucial ACC game with a 3-2 record and a 1-0 league mark.

Carolina coach Bill Dooley was philosophical about a game that might very well decide the ACC championship, or at least determine who the favorite is.

"This is what college football is all about," assessed Dooley. "When you get two rivals before a packed house. Past scores have had just a few points separating a victory and defeat. And it's real difficult for us to win over there. The last time we won at Carter Stadium was in 1971."

See "HE," page 2

## Jovial Ted Brown rushes into Wolfpack history

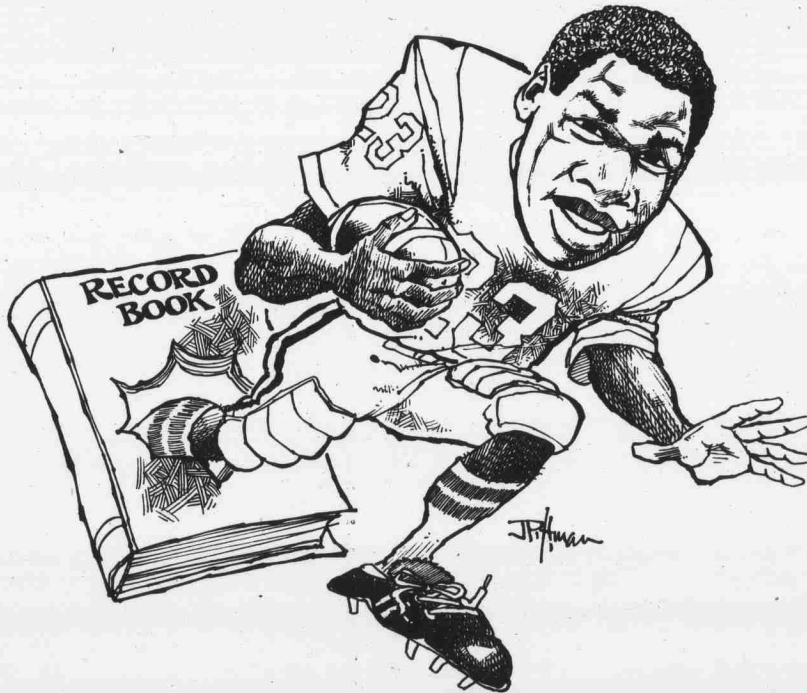
by David Carroll  
Sports Editor

It is not merely that Thomas Edward Brown will hold virtually every rushing record at State before he completes his eligibility. Nor is it that he has led the nation in smiling while delighting Wolfpackers and even nonpartisan fans with his special understanding with space. What seems so amazing about Ted is the unlikely way it has all happened—the way this 18-year old that few college football powers wanted emerged into, quite possibly, the finest running running back in the history of the Atlantic Coast Conference—and the modesty (that almost borders on naivete) he has displayed in the wake of all the newspaper clippings, television interviews and autograph sessions.

Ask Brown about his success as a running back and he will quickly go into a monologue about how great his coaches, offensive line and backfield mates are. He doesn't wear his statistics like a coat of arms. Brown realizes that a man can be all this, all that and all-anything, but if his team doesn't win there's something missing.

"If we win the yardage means a lot," emphasized the junior who became State's all-time leading rusher last Saturday against Auburn. "But if we lose, it's just some numbers. If I get 10 or 20 yards and we win, it's all right with me. Winning is the most important thing."

See "Brown," page 6



# THE game also crucial ACC contest

(Continued from page 1)

"State would have to be the favorite," he continued. "They went down to Auburn and beat a Southeastern Conference team (17-15) and beat ACC defending Champion Maryland (24-20) the week before. It has been a real good football game in recent years and I expect both teams to be ready once again."

The Pack has held the upper hand in the past few meetings, winning two in a row, three of the last four and six of the last 10. But neither coach thinks the past has any relevance.

State coach Bo Rein said he tries to keep the team from getting too emotional during the week. He wants his players' emotions to peak on Saturday rather than Thursday.

"We don't want our players to come into the game like a clinched fist," he explained. "We try to curb their emotions by working the hell out of them in practice. If we got up as much as the fans, we'd never be able to play."

### Control emotions

"Game week is game week," he continued. "We know what we have to do. We can't let emotions enter into it."

Much has been made of a possible confrontation between State's explosive offense and Carolina's solid defense. The Wolfpack leads the conference in total offense and the Tar Heels have the top defense.

"State's offense presents more of a challenge than any we've faced this year. They have a very explosive offense with many very, very good players. Johnny Evans is a very, very good quarterback. State's receivers are outstanding and they're running backs are also great," praised Dooley.

"One phase of the N.C. State football team which hasn't got much credit is their tough defense. They're playing very, very good defense. If we expect to move the ball against them we'll have to be more consistent. They're kicking game is also very solid. That could be a big factor in the outcome."

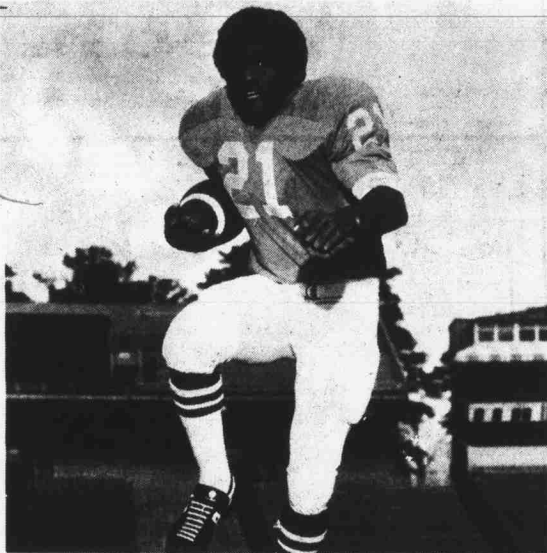
"As far as us having a chance to win, we can't give up the big play if we expect to win," he continued.

### Tough defense

This season Dooley's defense has given up few yards and points. UNC is yielding six points a game and less than 250 yards a game. On the other hand, the Tar Heels' offense has moved the ball with the blinding speed of a soap bubble.

"We haven't been consistent enough on offense," Dooley admitted. "We've had to rely too much on our defense."

Rein put the game into perspective: "There are three kinds of players," he said. "There are players who make things happen, players that see things happen and players who wonder what happened. They'll be playing like crazy men. I hope I don't get hurt on the sidelines."



Mel Collins provides offensive punch for Tar Heels.



Staff photo by Chris Seward

An aggressive Pack defense will be needed by State if it is to improve to 6-1 against Carolina Saturday.

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Kyle Wescoe

Bill Cowher

# Power packed

## Linebackers Wescoe, Cowher spark State defense

by Jimmy Carroll  
Staff Writer

Hand Kyle Wescoe a six-shooter and put a black cowboy hat on Bill Cowher. Let them ride down Hillsborough Street upon a couple of sleek stallions. Watch the citizens bolt their doors and seek cover.

The reputation of Wescoe and Cowher, State's skull-rattling junior linebackers, has spread throughout the Atlantic Coast Conference as well as New York, Virginia, Alabama and their native Pennsylvania. Like a band of wild west desperados, the Wolfpack's power-packed pair are wanted by college campuses across the nation, particularly Chapel Hill. For the North Carolina Tar Heels, who bring their 3-2 record into Carter Stadium Saturday to meet the 5-1 Wolfpack, eliminating the effectiveness of Wescoe and Cowher will be a necessity if the UNC offense is to move the ball at all.

The value of Wescoe and Cowher to the Wolfpack defense, one of the school's best ever, is shown dramatically in the statistics. First, it must be noted that a year ago middle guard A.W. Jenkins led the Pack in tackles with 92. After six games this season, Cowher has 97 tackles and Wescoe, 89.

"If we don't make the tackles then we're not doing our job," said the 6-2, 216-pound Cowher. "The defense is built this year so that we would be making more tackles."

### Range improves

The plan has apparently worked, since Wescoe and Cowher have been in on 186 of State's 653 tackles. The upsurge in tackles isn't due strictly to a change in defensive assignments, according to defensive coordinator Chuck Amato.

"Our linebackers have shown a big improvement in the range they cover," said Amato, a linebacker himself on State's famed white-shoe defense of 1967. "Their improvement in range is due to the additional experience they have. They're making tackles inside and outside, and this improves the defense overall."

The two have been close friends ever since they came to State as two more in a long line of "Penn State rejects," players Penn State claimed lacked the necessary

physical measurements to play major college football. It doesn't take a man of Nittany Lion coach Joe Paterno's intelligence to see by Wolfpack game films that Cowher and Wescoe aren't playing pinocle.

"They said I didn't weigh enough," said Cowher.

"They said I was too short," said Wescoe, a 6-0, 225-pounder.

### Emphasis not on size

So how would Wescoe and Cowher go about recruiting linebackers?

"I wouldn't put so much emphasis on size," said Wescoe. "I'd go more for speed, instinct, who has the nose for the ball. Then I'd look for leadership ability and attitude, to see if he gets blocked one time and stays down or gets up off the ground."

Said Cowher: "Attitude. You need somebody who'll be a good leader. Somebody who wants to hit people. You have to have the ability to come up with the big play. You can tell in the films who those guys are."

After receiving the black-ball treatment from Penn State, the Wolfpack's stunning 15-14 triumph over the Nittany Lions at Beaver Stadium in 1975 was a special moment for Cowher and Wescoe, particularly since it was their freshman year.

The Penn State game carries the same significance for Wescoe, Cowher and the other Pennsylvania natives that the Carolina game does for the local players.

### Hatred realized

"We had no idea what a State-Carolina game was like," said Cowher. "When we got in the locker room before the game you could tell it was special. When we got on the field before the kickoff we could feel the hatred between the teams."

"We knew it meant a lot to the guys from North Carolina," said Wescoe, a native of Bethlehem, Pa. "And the same was true when we played Penn State. The guys from North Carolina knew this was a special game to us."

While past Carolina games have been

special, few have been as significant as Saturday's will be. Not only is the rivalry as heated as ever, but the ACC race is a five-way scramble, and the Wolfpack could post a commanding 40 mark with a victory.

Most of the copy has been about State's offense vs. Carolina's defense. But the Wolfpack linebackers know State's defense will have plenty to say about the outcome.

### Defense tries harder

"Our offense is good," said Cowher, a Crafton, Pa., product. "You can't take that away from them. We know we've been overlooked by a lot of people. But that's been good because it has made us try harder."

"This game should be a good test for both offenses and defenses," said Wescoe.

"We're not going to worry about who's offense is best or which defense is best," said Cowher. "We're just going out and try to win the game. If we score 28 points and give up 27 we'll feel okay."

# Solution to traffic problem offered

With an expected crowd of 50,000 for the State-North Carolina football game in addition to traffic from an estimated 100,000 people going to the N.C. State Fair Saturday, the North Carolina Highway Patrol recommends the following routes to follow for easiest access to the Stadium:

**From the North, West and East:** Travel to Interstate-40 and then to Blue Ridge Road and use either the Blue Ridge Road entrance of those entrances off of Trinity Road to enter the Stadium.

**From the South and Southeast:** Travel via the Beltline to Western Blvd., head west to Powell Drive, turn right and proceed to Hillsborough Street. Troopers will be there to direct traffic to the Stadium. South and Southeast traffic may also exit at Cary and proceed to Highway 54: At N.C. 54, travel east to either Trinity Road or Nowell Drive. Both roads lead to the Stadium.

**From Raleigh:** Use Western Blvd. to Powell Drive, turn right and proceed to Hillsborough Street, where officers will direct traffic to the Stadium.

**Under no circumstances should any traffic exit from the Beltline onto Hillsborough Street.** The Highway Patrol feels the above routes are best for football traffic.

The Highway Patrol will be directing traffic from all points surrounding the Stadium-Fairgrounds area. To make sure you get to the stadium, a sign in the windshield saying "STADIUM" would be helpful.

When leaving the football game, please exit the same way you entered.

Gates to the parking lots open at 10 a.m. It is recommended that football fans assume the kickoff is at 12 noon instead of the actual 1:30 p.m. time.

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# Pack defense upstaging 1967 team

When talk revolves around defense at State, the white-shoed edition of 1967 immediately comes to mind. But after this year, that may change.

There's a red-shoed contingent roaming west Raleigh and compiling stats which may eventually out do the '67 group, says Chuck Amato, the Wolfpack defensive coordinator, who played linebacker on the 1967 Liberty Bowl championship squad.

The current State defensive unit is one of the best Amato has seen, bar none, and he's including the 1967 group which limited opponents to less than nine points a game and 280.9 yards in total offense.

This year's squad, through six games and headed into a tough battle with arch-rival North Carolina Saturday at 1:30 in Carter Stadium, had recorded two shutouts enroute to a 5-1 won-loss mark while holding opponents to an average of less than 13 points a game and giving up just 281.3 yards total offense a game, 4 yards (less than fifteen inches) more than the 1967 team.

## Good defense

"This is as good a defensive unit as I've seen in a long time," said Amato, who aside from playing defense has coached that side of the ball the last 10 years. "The stats so far show that it is as good as the 1967 team."

Amato said a goal at the start of the season was to cut in half the long plays that hurt the defense so much last season. "We were playing good up front last year, but those long plays killed us," he said.

It's been the long plays that have scored on State this season. Only two touchdowns scored against the Wolfpack have come on short yardage drives, while eight touchdowns have come on long passes or long runs.

And the up-front play this season has been super, he said, enabling linebackers Bill Cowher and Kyle Wescoe to make tackles like linebackers in a 5-2 alignment should.

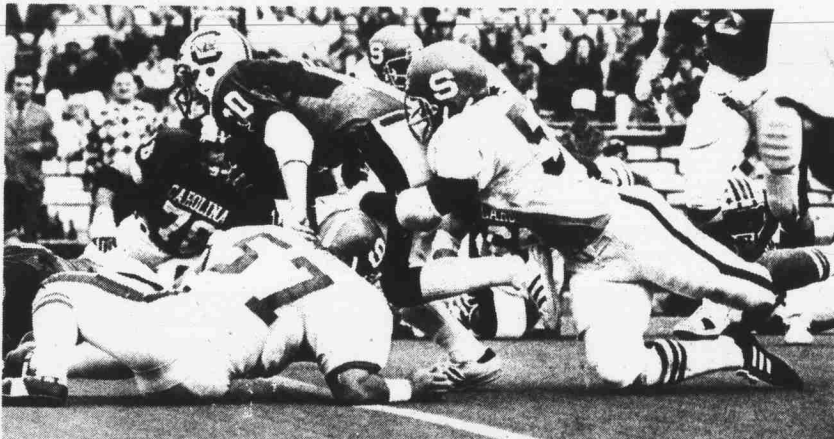
## Linebackers star

Cowher leads the State group with 97 tackles and Wescoe has 89, just through six games. Last season, middle guard A.W. Jenkins led the team with 92.

Bill and Kyle wouldn't be making all these tackles if the five men up front were not playing good technical football," said Amato.

The Wolfpack defense is a mixture of experienced seniors and enthused underclassmen, and that blend is just right to make a good team, said Amato.

"We have some new faces up front and reliable personnel in the backfield," he said. "And I wouldn't trade youth and



Middle guard A. W. Jenkins makes a tackle.

Staff photo by Chris Seward

ambition up front for all the experience in the world. In the secondary, I want experience and we've got it."

Virtually every member of the defense has contributed to the Wolfpack success to date, including seniors Ralph Stringer and Richard Carter in the secondary and Tom Prongay, a senior tackle, and the irrepressible Jenkins, also a senior, up front.

## New players star

Among the new faces who have played extremely well are ends Joe Hannah and Marion Gale, both sophs, tackle Brian O'Doherty, safety Woodrow Wilson and linebacker James Butler.

But the most notable young face up front is that of 6-foot-1, 252-pound sophomore defensive tackle Simon Gup-ton.

"Simon has loads of talent, and he'll be a great player," says Amato, who likes to compare him to Ron Carpenter, a former State All-America defensive tackle and a standout the last few seasons with the Cincinnati Bengals of the NFL.

"Simon is like Ron when he was a sophomore," said Amato. "He's not the most physical player right now, but if you get away from him, he'll chase you until he gets you, and he usually does."

Amato likes to talk that way about all his defensive stars, all 22 of them — the 11 starters and the 11 reserves.



Staff photo by Ron Srebro

Senior defensive back Ralph Stringer keeps his man covered.



Stringer, a certain All-ACC choice, takes a breather.



Staff photo by Chris Seward

Joe Hannah and Alan Beltrus pursue runner.

## Gridders hold 50th reunion

When the 1927 State football team holds its 50th reunion this weekend, it'll be a gathering of one of the greatest teams ever to compete in the old Southern Conference.

On the strength of a 9-1 record, the Wolfpack that year won both the North Carolina and the Southern Conference titles.

Activities for the group of returning players and the wives of some deceased players will include attending the State-North Carolina football game on Saturday at 1:30 in Carter Stadium.

Members of the illustrious squad will be presented to the 50,000 expected for Saturday's matchup and include: Captain-guard Nick Nicholson, center William Metts, quarterback Joseph Adams and Halfback George Hunsucker along with the widow of team star Jack McDowell, Sarah McDowell.

## Pursues more records

## Brown has lots of fun as Pack wins

(Continued from page 1)

"My only goal is for us to win," he continued. "I don't have personal goals. When you win good things happen to you. And it's a lot more fun to play when you win."

Lately Brown has had lots of fun. The Pack has won five straight games and this year's team has the potential for greatness.

"Last year everybody made mistakes that accounted for a lot of things," Brown reflected. "This year we have the closest team we've had since I've been here. We're helping each other and don't get down on people when they make mistakes. We have a lot of potential and a great attitude. I only hope we keep winning the way we have been."

"I guess if we have one main goal it is to win the ACC championship," he added. "If we do that, we'll probably get a bowl bid too."

Not only is Brown the Wolfpack's leading career rusher with 2575 yards, he also holds the single game rushing record of 227 yards. He is averaging over 107 yards per game rushing and close to six yards per carry for his career. Additionally, he has already scored 216 points. With a season and a half left, Brown appears to have an excellent shot at surpassing Mike Voight's all-time ACC career rushing total of 3,971 yards and Stan Fritts' all-time scoring total of 256. Twice he has been named to the UPI National backfield of the week and he will probably be the first freshman to ever be chosen to the All-ACC team all four years in school. The marks of distinction seem endless.

## Much ability

But Brown is much more than a game in a record book. He is magic in a football uniform. He has the super gifted ability that everybody admires in a running back. His forte is finding daylight, however little room is there, and turning it into a sizeable gain. Brown's extraordinary assets are his excellent equilibrium and peripheral vision which enable him to anticipate defenders' moves.

"No other back in the league can break the plays he breaks for the yardage that he breaks them," praised Wolfpack coach Bo Rein. "Tacklers can't seem to wrap him up because he exploded and runs right through the tackles. Ted runs with great explosion and he has what we call super body lead."

"Ted has many of the moves of Archie Griffin. He has great, great strength," he continued. "It's unbelievable, in fact. He is the strongest athlete on the squad in leg power. Defenders bounce off him like basketballs."

Brown explained part of his running style:

"I try to keep just a little bit of distance between me and them," he said. "That way when they try to stop me they have to overextend themselves and their strength is decreased, which makes it easier for me to get away."

## Draws praise

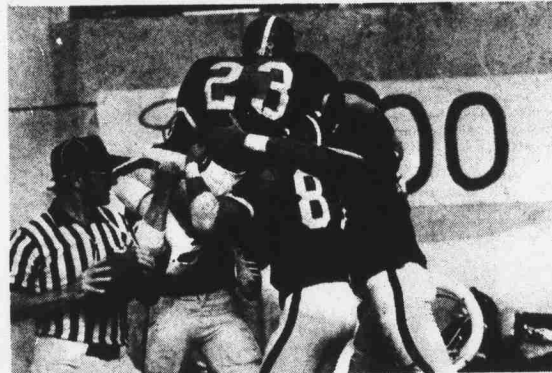
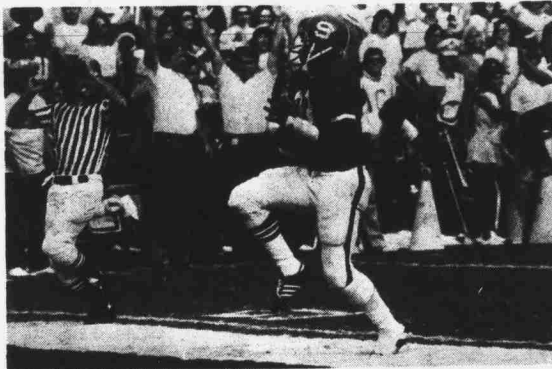
The quotations praising Brown could probably come close to filling Barlett's. Everybody who sees him play comes away with the same, everlasting impression.

"Ted Brown is the type of runner, who before he's through, is going to stand right up there with Tony Dorsett, Greg Pruitt, or whoever your favorite runner might be," said South Carolina coach Jim Carlan.

Rein related an interesting story about Brown before the season started:

"Last year we were 0-3 and struggling and we had Michigan State coming up in our fourth game. Before the game the coaches got together and decided we were gonna give the ball to Brown the first six plays."

"Right before the game I told Ted what we had in mind. And he said, 'Coach, it



Ted Brown dances into the end zone for a touchdown against North Carolina (top). Teammates greet Brown after his score (bottom).

won't take six plays. You'll have to get that kicking tee out before six plays.

## Brown confident

"Do you know on the second play from scrimmage Brown goes 81 yards for a touchdown against Michigan State," Rein continued. "The coaches thought this was so great we decided to do the same thing the next week against Indiana. Again, I tell Ted about it and he says the same thing, 'Get the kicking tee ready, coach.' This time, on the fourth play, he goes 54 yards for a touchdown."

However, Brown hasn't always been a star running back. He was a defensive guard in the Pee Wee League, a flanker back in his early high school career and finally a tailback. He was on the same High Point Andrews High School team that fostered State teammates Timmy Johnson and Johnny Evans.

Brown chose to come here because he thought it was challenge. The only schools other than State that recruited him were East Carolina, Appalachian State and Western Carolina.

"People told me I couldn't play there (State), but I knew I could," Brown remembered.

Playing for the jayvees as a freshman, Brown sparked in a game against Chowan rushing for over 100 yards and scoring five touchdowns and was selected to a starting spot on the varsity by impulsive Lou Holtz.

## Surprise starter

"The only thing I knew was that Coach Holtz said I was going to suit up against Indiana," Brown said. "I was surprised when I found out I was starting. But guys like Tom Serfass and Ed Callaway told me to relax when I went out in the huddle."

All he did was rush for 121 yards in his first varsity start. He has been a mainstay



Brown in a solemn moment at the 1975 Peach Bowl.

"I just like to have a good time," smiled Brown, whose eyes always seem to be filled with childlike wonder.

Then the subject switches back to his accomplishments.

## Best blocking

"Look," he emphasized again. "I've got the best line I've ever had blocking for me. Those guys open holes that anyone could run through. And there also just happens to be a back by the name of Billy Ray Vickers who has really helped me a lot. He's been ripping off some big yardage which means opponents can't just gear up to stop Ted Brown. We've also got other goodbacks—Rickey Adams and Timmy Johnson and Johnny Evans has done a super job at quarterback."

Brown continued to lavish praise on his teammates until he was asked if he could have ever in his wildest dreams imagined he would have accomplished what he has to date. Did Brown ever expect kids to be running around pretending they're him?

"No, I didn't ever expect all of this to happen in just two and a half years," he said, sort of shaken by the idea that young players try to emulate him the same way he once called himself O.J. in playground games.

"It's kind of strange to have people who want to be like me," he assessed. "That puts you on the spot."

"But look at all the good players I've got helping me . . ."

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Turns it around

# Evans guides Pack offense to early-season success

(Continued from page 1)

to move in the second spot behind Dave Buckley on the Wolfpack all-time total offense list. He will probably also finish fourth in total passing yards and fifth in rushing yards. And this doesn't include the feats that his legendary right leg has performed time and time again.

## Direct offense

But in talking with Johnny Evans one gets the impression that he would rather not be remembered in terms of statistics, but more for his ability to successfully direct the Wolfpack offense. Something that didn't occur with a great deal of frequency in past seasons.

Highly touted out of High Point Andrews High School four years ago for both his quarterbacking and kicking prowess, the 6-1, 200 lb. Evans is a young man with close family ties, one reason he spurned offers from numerous other big time football schools to bring his talents to State.

"I'm a deep rooted Southerner and I decided that I wanted to play football somewhere in the South, and preferably somewhere close to home so that my parents could come and see me play," Evans said.

But after three seasons of what many armchair analysts might consider less than self-satisfying play on Evan's part, one might suspect that State's recruiting gain was Evan's loss.

Not so according to Johnny. "Sure there have been disappointments. But I believe there could have been disappointments at any school," he said.

## Meaningful experiences

"We've had lots of victories here that have meant a lot to me, and besides that, I wouldn't trade the students or academics at State for any other school I could have played at."

If Evans' career at State up to this year could indeed be considered a series of ups and downs, perhaps part of the explanation lies in Johnny's lack of playing time, former Coach Lou Holtz' indecision on where to play the versatile athlete, and just plain inexperience on Evans' part when he finally received a chance to display his skills on a fulltime basis.

Always a member of the first team from his earliest days on the football field, Evans admits that he harbored hopes of getting in much playing time during his rookie year, even though he was competing against another Wolfpack great, Dave Buckley, for the starting role. "Two years before I came to State, Bruce Shaw had been voted ACC All-Conference quarterback. The next year Dave Buckley got in right much playing time even though Bruce had been the starting quarterback the year before, so I was hoping that sort of the same situation might exist between Dave and myself," Evans said.

In his first game as a freshman, playing against Wake Forest, Evans saw nearly a quarter of action, even managing to push across a touchdown.

## Little playing time

This auspicious start wasn't to set the tone for the remaining 11 games, however, for as the season wore on, as Evans describes it, "I got to play three plays or maybe a series. If we made a first down I'd get to go on. If not, then I'd punt."

"I wasn't too happy with this" he added, "but I had to try and accept the Coach's decision."

Entering his sophomore year, Evans was shifted to the fullback spot by Holtz, a move that pleased him at the time.

"I was happy to be shifted to fullback, because I felt like I was playing an integral part on the team," he recalled, "and on top of that I was also doing the punting, so I was real satisfied."

But following a disastrous loss to Michigan State on national television, Holtz unexpectedly moved Evans back to a reserve role behind Buckley.

"Coach Holtz said that he felt like I could play the position (fullback), but that I didn't have any future at that spot. He also said that he wanted someone to back Dave up," Evans said.

"Looking back, I feel like my sophomore year was sort of split in half because of this."

## Disappointing season

With the graduation of Buckley, however, 1976 appeared to be the year that Evans would finally make his mastery on the football field known to all.

But 11 long Saturdays after the season began, the Evans led Wolfpack had managed only three wins and a tie to offset their seven losses. For the first time in his athletic career, Johnny Evans was met with large scale failure.

What made those fall afternoons seem even longer, was the fact that four of the losses happened before the eyes of the fans at Carter Stadium, who on occasion have been known to voice their displeasure at an anything less than winning Wolfpack performance. And number 10 trotting off the field after another unsuccessful series was an all too easy target for their jeers.

"I think it hurt my feelings," said Evans recalling those moments, "but I didn't let it affect me negatively, because if I had I'd be in the looney house by now, and not playing football."

"I really think it's a misunderstanding on the fans' part when they start to boo me," he continued. "They just don't realize the work that's put into a particular play, or what I've been told to do in a particular situation by the Coaches, or the other things that might pop up which would make a play unsuccessful."

"But," he is quick to add, "those are still no excuses on my part for not executing

properly."

## Personal remarks hurt

The thing that hurt the most, however, was when Evans began to hear personal remarks directed at him.

"On the field, I'm playing the role of a quarterback. If people want to make an evaluation about my role as quarterback—I'm too slow, I'm not a good passer, then that's fine, he said.



State quarterback Johnny Evans scores winning touchdown against Maryland.

Staff photo by Chris Seward

"But when I'm walking through campus and they make a personal remark about Johnny Evans, that's something different. Because I feel like that if they knew Johnny Evans, instead of number 10 on the football, that they'd like me."

"But that's something you have to live with," he said.

"Besides, it's the true friends who matter the most, the people who really appreciate what you're doing."

"Last season was pretty discouraging," Evans summed up, "but I knew the main thing was to have patience and everything would work out for the best."

## Great start

And work out for the best it did. Off to their finest start since 1974, the Wolfpack has this year what Evans characterizes as "A different mental attitude. We're a

whole lot closer.

"Even though there have been occasional low points this year, our defense never has gotten down on the offense for turning the ball over, and the offense never has said anything about a long run through the defense," he said.

"What we went through last year brought us closer together," Evans added.

If the Wolfpack is closer as a team this year, Evans' new found confidence in the role of a team leader is not to be

overlooked. And if confidence is the key to better play, then Evans' case is well documented by the fact that he is leading the ACC in total offense this season, and continues to rank among the top punters in the nation.

Evans attributes this confidence to his strong religious faith, one that he points out helped him through last year's frustrating season.

## Very religious

An active member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Evans acknowledges that "I definitely believe that athletics has provided me with a chance to share my beliefs with others."

"God has provided me with a reason for playing athletics, and I hope I can use this for more than making touchdowns."

Evans concedes that there are probably those who question his ability to live up to these beliefs.

"I'm sure there are people who don't think that I'm for real. They might say that I saw him lose his cool on the field, or that I saw him with a beer in his hand at the Square. But even if they did, in either instance, I don't think that makes me a non-Christian," he said.

"I think while the athlete is under scrutiny, the Christian athlete is even under more scrutiny. The only thing that I can do is lead the best life that I know how."

## Pro football

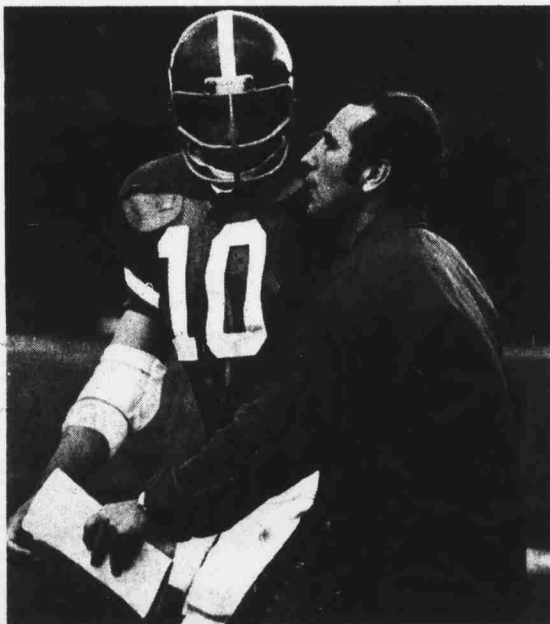
Future plans in Evans' life right now include the desire to play pro football, a goal he admits might be difficult to achieve, but one that he's definitely interested in taking a shot at.

"I think my punting will be my insurance policy for me," he said. "If given a chance I'd like to take a shot at quarterback. I think if given the time, I might be able to play the position. But who knows, after a week of camp, if I get drafted, I may find out different."

But for now Evans is only concentrating on one thing—his last shot at the Tar Heels.

"I'm going to have to gear myself down for the game since I'm so psyched up," he said. "It's like coach Rein told us at practice, there's nothing he'll have to do to get us up for this game. If you're not up for Carolina you never will be."

And if he has any major part in deciding the outcome of tomorrow's game, chances are the scoreboard at Carter Stadium just might show a larger score on its left side—because failure just doesn't come easy for Johnny Evans.

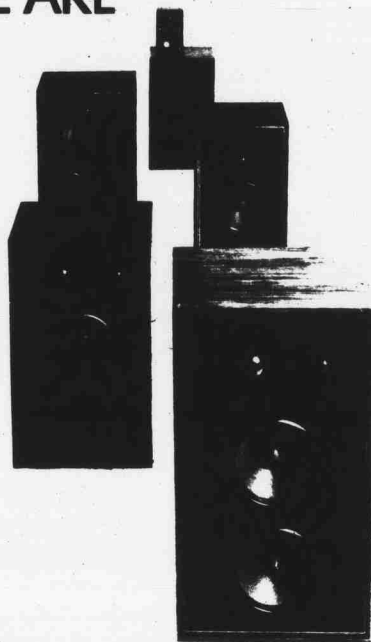


Evans confers on the sidelines with State coach Bo Rein.

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