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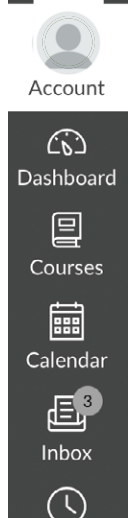
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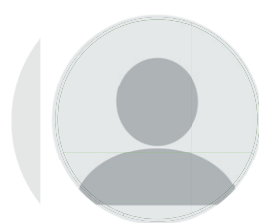
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THE IMPACT OF THE KNOW ME PROJECT ON STUDENTS

Edit Profile

The Know Me project changes students' default Canvas profile pictures

by Lorenza Medley
Staff Writer

Graphic of Canvas profile page
by Zoya Zalevskiy

The Know Me project was created by Academic Affairs to help professors teaching online classes to identify and connect with students. The Know Me project refers to default Canvas profile pictures. Many students, especially those in the LGBTQ+ community, have been negatively impacted by the sudden change of their profile photos on their Canvas page.

During the pandemic, it was difficult for professors in online classes to connect with students, which led to Academic Affairs creating a solution where the students' ID photos would be used to help professors identify who each student was. Dick Beekman, student body president, is familiar with the project and agreed to it as long as students could change their profile photos if they wanted to.

"Very quickly, it became evident that while students did have the ability to change their Canvas picture, that it was also just as quickly getting changed back to the Student ID picture," Beekman said.

As student body president, Beekman meets with a variety of people, including, but not limited to: students, staff, administrators, alumni and donors to advance the interests of the student body. "I am the primary student advocate on behalf of the student body, and I

represent the student body in a variety of different roles, serving on a variety of different committees, serving on the Board of Trustees," Beekman said.

The rosters in Canvas are set to refresh daily until Feb. 1, resulting in the ID photos reverting every time students try to change them in Canvas. "At some point, it stops being every single day and goes to a weekly schedule, and when those refreshes were happening, those windows were changing back," Beekman said. Beekman suggested that the rosters refresh on a semester basis rather than a weekly basis and is still in conversation with Academic Affairs on this matter.

According to Dr. Erica Lennon, associate director for outreach and community engagement at the Center for Counseling at Psychological Services (CAPS), the project had good intentions behind it. "I think the hope was to actually help folks be able to state their name, pronouns, gender identity in a way that aligns with who they are," Lennon said. "Versus having a system that states a sex that was assigned at birth, that is not the person's gender identity, that dead names them, that is not the name they go by, the name they have chosen."

Lennon has been at UNC Charlotte for 11 and a half years. In addition to being the associate director for outreach and

community engagement, she also is an adjunct instructor for women and gender studies and teaches queer & gender history. Lennon learned about the Canvas profile picture situation from a student who came to her because the profile picture negatively impacted their mental health.

"I think that the solution has to be understanding that there are components of the project that have been really helpful, but that there is one piece of this project, that from everything that we are hearing, is having an impact on the mental health of our trans and non-binary and gender nonconforming or expansive students," Lennon said. While the project allows students to change their first name, select their pronouns and identify their gender identity from a list, they are faced with old photos that may not represent them currently.

Madison Wilson, a fourth-year at the university and the founder and president of Prism, has tried to change her Canvas profile photo, but it reverted to her ID photo from her first year. She believes that completely removing the automatic upload would be the best solution to this issue.

Wilson has been a student at UNC Charlotte since fall 2019 and founded Prism in October 2021 to connect with

other LGBTQ+ students at the university. The club talks about what is going on in the world regarding the LGBTQ+ community as well as what is going on in their lives.

Recently, Wilson sent out a form for the group members to fill out regarding the Canvas profile photo change. "Our Canvas picture should be a representation of ourselves and how we express our identity," a response to the form said. "Taking away that option can be invalidating." Wilson believes that using a picture from when students started at the university is invalidating because it does not allow them to express the truest version of themselves.

Beekman sympathizes with students and understands their frustrations regarding this matter. If students have any ID-quality photos, he encourages them to change them. He is currently in conversation with Academic Affairs and IT to find a permanent, more inclusive solution that can address this concern.

"I think that it's important for people to realize that the conversations are ongoing, and if people are eager to make their voices heard, I would encourage that they keep doing that because that is very helpful in the advocacy effort," Beekman said.



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DORM FIRE IN MARTIN HALL

A small fire started in Martin Hall due to an unattended candle

by Kathryn Caudill
Staff Writer

Photo of Martin Hall
by Jade Suszek

On Jan. 26, 2022, at 6:24 p.m., a small fire started on the first floor of Martin Hall. The resident of the room left a candle, a prohibited item, unattended in the dorm, causing both the fire detection and sprinkler system reaction.

Both UNC Charlotte police officers and the Charlotte Fire Department responded to the scene. According to the non-emergency line of the campus police, this is standard procedure for a fire or triggering of a fire alarm; however, the official police report has yet to be completed at this time. The online version of this article will be updated when it is released.

There were no injuries to anyone in the dorm room or Martin Hall but, there was property damage due to the fire and flooding from the sprinkler systems. In addition, there is visible exterior damage that can be seen near an outside window of the dorm room.

Housing and Residence Life was unable to comment at this time.

The property damages that occurred due to the fire will be paid for by the student who caused the fire, as noted in the resident handbook.

Furthermore, Housing and Residence Life has the right to assess prorated charges at any time. The student may appeal any bills received within 30 days of the billing date to be reviewed by the associate director for maintenance operations.

In the 2021-2022 Housing Resident Handbook, there are several measures students should adhere to in terms of fire emergencies. Failure to comply with these measures could result in a

student conduct referral. Such measures include keeping hallways and exits clear for students and staff to ensure a safe evacuation route. Items in the way of an exit can be removed and discarded by the university, and a fee of \$25 can be charged to the parties involved.

Students should also participate in any fire drill, treating each alarm as a real emergency. Fire drills are held four times throughout a calendar year by the Environmental Health and Safety Department. Failure to participate could result in a \$50 fine.

In a time of evacuation, students should leave the building and call University police or 911 from a safe location. In this call, students should give their name, exact location and any relevant information such as injuries.

If there is smoke in the room during the evacuation, students should stay low to the ground and if the door is hot, do not open it, instead place a sheet outside a window to identify the location.

If the door is not hot, exit the room, triggering the fire alarm, if it is not already sounding, and exit to the designated safe location for the specific residence hall or building.

False tampering of fire alarms, or other safety alarms, could result in removal from the dorm, a \$500 fine and/or six months in jail. Fire escape usage is also only available in times of evacuation. Any inappropriate use of such escape can result in disciplinary action.

Students with mobility challenges should have several "buddies" to rely on in the case of an emergency evacuation.

Students are also provided with a

non-exhaustive list of prohibited items for dorm rooms to limit emergency situations such as fires.

Candles are on this list with other items such as incense, ceiling tapestries, halogen bulbs, LED light strips with adhesive, multi-plug extension cords, space heaters and 3D Printers. This list is non-exhaustive, allowing for Housing and Residence Life the ability to remove any items that cause disruptions to normal operations, such as tripping circuits or triggering the fire alarms.

Each year UNC Charlotte hosts a mock dorm room burn held by the Environmental Health and Safety Offices and Fire and Safety Technologists, a student organization that focuses on fire safety.

The mock burn shows different scenarios with different materials catching fire and with and without sprinklers to demonstrate how fast a dorm can catch flame. Students will be provided with knowledge on preventing and stopping fires in a dorm room scenario.

The most recent mock burn was in October of 2021, and the 2022 burn has yet to be scheduled.

A similar situation occurred in October 2017, when a female student started a fire in Oak Hall. There was severe damage from the fire and water from the sprinkler system, displacing students from three other suites. There were no injuries in this fire either; however, the student was charged with first-degree felony arson.

THE DINING IMBALANCE

How the closing of Crown Commons affected North Village students

by Jessica Danesi
Staff Writer

Photo of South Village Crossing
by Chris Crews

Due to recent increases in reported COVID-19 cases and the presence of the Omicron variant, Charlotte decided to operate all classes virtually for the first two weeks of the spring 2022 semester. Students who live on campus were offered a certain amount of credit if they were to delay their move-in, and a similar approach was given to meal plan holders. However, some students still moved onto campus and were upset with the dining options available.

From Jan 6 to 19, the Crown Commons dining hall in North Village was closed to all customers. Conversely, the SoVi dining hall in South Village was open for dine-in and take-out. Several residents of North Village found this to be inconvenient, as they had to travel to the opposite side of campus for a meal.

“Crown Commons being closed is very inconvenient for me,” said Juhi Chatterjee, a student living in North Village who used to go to Crown about fourteen times per week. “Now, I have to ride a bus for a very long time and walk over to SoVi, and it is just not something that I can do twice a day every day.”

The primary reason Crown was not operating during this time was due to COVID-19 safety concerns. SoVi is larger than Crown; therefore, it has more space to properly social distance. Additionally, since fewer people were on campus, the dining halls would have fewer customers. This may have made it challenging to pay as many staff members to operate both dining halls.

However, this isn't the first

time that only one dining hall has been open due to COVID-19. Last year, Charlotte's only dining hall options were SoVi or Crown2Go, Crown's take-out service. Many students were upset about this, some even choosing to organize a Change.org petition with the goal to either open more dining options or give partial refunds on meal plans. Ultimately, no significant changes were made to dining hall accessibility or meal plans.

Regardless of the reasons for closing, there was still an imbalance between North and South Village dining. Was it fair to completely open one dining hall and close the other? People who were staying in North Village had to travel to

the other side of campus if they wanted to eat at the dining hall, while South Village residents faced no inconvenience.

“I do think that [the closing] is unfair because it puts students in North Village in a tough position, while it doesn't affect South Village at all,” Meredith Burns said, a student staying in North Village. She stayed on campus due to cheerleading and is accustomed to using her meal plan at Crown Commons at least eight times a week.

Emmett Cleaver is a student living in North Village. Before the closing, he would go to Crown Commons about two to four times per week. “As a Wallis Hall resident, having Crown completely

closed is extremely inconvenient to all North Village residents,” Cleaver said.

Students who have a meal plan but do not use it during the first two weeks will get a certain amount of credit transferred to their student account. This is useful for students who stayed at home while classes were virtual but doesn't help North Village residents that had no choice but to use their meal plan to eat. These students needed to go to SoVi to use their meal plan, which not all students have the time to do.

Without access to Crown, having a meal plan wasn't useful for North Village residents. “I have a meal plan that includes unlimited swipes and \$250 of DB each semester,” Chatterjee said. “I feel that

now with only SoVi open, I am not getting as much use out of my meal plan as I should be, as I do not have the time to go to SoVi twice a day.”

More students have moved back on campus with the start of in-person classes, and Crown Commons has re-opened for customers. Nothing has been done to compensate for the inconvenience of the North Village dining hall being unavailable. Students living in North Village during the first two weeks of this semester should be compensated for the lack of dining near them, perhaps with some credit back to their meal plans. Needing to travel all the way to SoVi was either very inconvenient or simply not possible for them. Students' time is valuable, with classes, student organizations and personal time to factor in—and this should be recognized.



MY OVERDUE THOUGHTS ON

POKÉMON

by Jake Pierce
Asst. Arts & Culture Editor

“Pokémon Diamond and Pearl” were the very first “Pokémon” titles that I ever played as a kid. So you can imagine my delight when it was revealed in February 2021 that these titles were being remade from the ground up for Nintendo Switch.

Developed primarily by Japanese game studio ILCA, under the oversight of The Pokémon Company and series developers Game Freak, these titles aimed to revitalize 2006’s “Pokémon Diamond and Pearl” with a new graphic style and gameplay mechanics. Now, roughly two months out from their November 2021 release, I can confidently say that “Pokémon Brilliant Diamond and Shining Pearl” have left me generally impressed, although they do have a few missteps.

One thing that I feel ILCA nailed is the game’s presentation. Many of the characters and graphics from the Nintendo DS original have been brilliantly reimaged in 3D while still flawlessly preserving the original’s two-fold art style (where characters would appear with smaller, cartoonish proportions in the overworld and more realistic proportions during battles).

What’s more, the many different trainers players will encounter throughout the game all shine with personality through their animations and dialogue. Even the Pokémon themselves have a level of polish

and personality simply not present in previous Nintendo Switch titles. Early in my playthrough, I noticed that my partner Pokémon Turtwig would often turn towards the camera during battle and

smile while hopping in place. Many other Pokémon have similar idle animations that will play on occasion. Not only are details like this absolutely adorable, but more importantly, they go such a long way

in making the Pokémon feel like living things and making the world as a whole more rich and believable. The reimaged art style also makes the environments look striking. Snowpoint City looks colder





BRILLIANT
DIAMOND

SHINING
PEARL

Peaks and Valleys, Highs and Lows...



Images of Pokémon Brilliant Diamond and Shining Pearl
courtesy of Nintendo

than ever with its thick fog and harsh blizzards, while Floaroma Meadow is stunning with its luminescent glow and floating flower petals being carried by the wind. Finally, a masterful reimagining of Generation Four's already legendary soundtrack serves as the icing on the cake for the presentation of these titles.

While these changes are welcome, ILCA didn't stop at simply updating the visuals—they also tweaked various gameplay features. The Sinnoh Underground, an area that served as a fun if somewhat basic distraction in the 2006 originals, has been completely reinvented, adding additional exploration opportunities and new, albeit still very basic, multiplayer functionality. Other side content and bonus features like character customization, Pokémon Contests and making Poffins (Pokémon treats) have all been updated in these remakes. Battles were also significantly updated to bring the game more in line with its modern counterparts—namely, adding the Fairy type and various tweaks to move sets and stat balancing. One of the best changes that ILCA made when updating these games for a modern audience was simplifying the use of Hidden Moves (HMs.) HMs essentially act as field skills which allow players to explore the environment with the help of their Pokémon. Overall it's a sound concept, but in the original Generation Four games,

the system was a logistical nightmare. HMs are made far more accessible in “Pokémon Brilliant Diamond and Shining Pearl,” making exploring the Sinnoh Region and searching every nook and cranny for secrets feel more rewarding than ever before.

However, this is where some of the most major cracks in ILCA's design begin to show. Chief among these issues is that “Pokémon Brilliant Diamond and Shining Pearl” give out Experience Points at an unprecedented rate. Players will find their squad of Pokémon rising through the ranks quicker than ever before. This means that with the slightest amount of wandering or exploration, your team is likely to level up to the point where any challenging battles the game attempts to throw at you are simply a non-issue. If you're simply making a mad dash from point to point and never leaving the beaten path for any reason, then your CPU opponents may actually provide a challenge. But when you have a map as well designed and packed full of secrets and optional routes as the Sinnoh Region, forgoing exploration feels like ignoring a considerable chunk of the game. For most of the second half of my playthrough, my Pokémon were so powerful that there was absolutely no challenge. I would easily destroy any opponent who dared to challenge me with little to no thought or planning,

and this includes battles that are meant to be difficult tests of skill, such as the game's main villain or the Sinnoh League Champion. Essentially, the more time you spend exploring, the more mind-numbing the main storyline becomes. It's unfortunate because other games, such as “Xenoblade Chronicles: Definitive Edition,” have found ways around this problem by allowing players to customize difficulty settings and lower their power level if they feel they are outpacing the game's challenge level.

While not as much of an issue, there's also a distinct lack of new content in ILCA's remakes. On the one hand, this does make them very faithful to the original versions, which is impressive in some regard. However, given the ambition that has been shown in previous remakes like 2014's excellent “Pokémon Omega Ruby and Alpha Sapphire,” which were more complete re-imaginings of Generation Three than point-for-point remakes, it would have been nice to see ILCA go a little further in expanding upon Generation Four's excellent base with brand new additions. Finally, multiplayer is another area where “Pokémon Brilliant Diamond and Shining Pearl” seem to suffer, as the incredibly basic functionality and somewhat cryptic matchmaking process are put to shame by the fully fleshed-out competitive multiplayer available in

2019's “Pokémon Sword and Shield.”

While I ultimately enjoyed my time with “Pokémon Brilliant Diamond and Shining Pearl,” there are certain parts of the experience that nearly tanked my whole impression of the game. The difficulty curve and the wonderful sense of exploration being put at odds with each other is by far the biggest flaw with the package as a whole—and the somewhat basic multiplayer and lack of new content may be sticking points for some. However, what ILCA gets right, they get very right, and I would love to see what the studio is capable of in the future.





Charlotte's newest campus coffee spot: **THOUGHTFUL CUP**

by Emily Kottak
Arts & Culture Editor

Photos of Thoughtful Cup
by Bethany Ivan & Dhruv Jani

This semester, Charlotte students have another campus option for getting their caffeine or snack fix. Thoughtful Cup opened in 2022 and is located on the ground floor of the Fretwell building. This location used to house Fretwell Café. The cafe underwent construction, completely transforming this location into something more practical, inviting and new. A timelapse video on the Auxiliary Services website shows the construction process and the drastic transformation.

One of the most eye-catching of the new features in the building is the three-panel mural entitled "Intertextuality" created by local artist and South Mecklenburg High School art instructor Ashley Graham. In the mural, Graham included ideas from esteemed intellectual figures: James Baldwin, Maya Angelou, Elie Wiesel, Adam Smith, Gabriel García Márquez and Rachel Carson. The inspiration behind creating this mural stems from the Business Services marketing team and administrators from the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences.

This diverse and thought-provoking mural adds to the new aesthetic of the transformed space. However, this isn't the only upgrade. As seen in the time-lapse video, the area is more open and has

great seating options. This could be a good study spot, a place to gather with friends or even have a small meeting.

"I thought the Thoughtful Cup was amazing," said third-year student Juliana Ballin about her first time at the coffee joint. "The space made me feel like I was transported into a whole new environment. I felt like I was in an actual coffee shop rather than on campus. The staff was super sweet, and my order came out super quickly. There were tons of tables and chairs that allowed the students to work on schoolwork, chill with friends and even enjoy a nice book."

Now for one of the most important parts of Thoughtful Cup: the drinks and food. Thoughtful Cup offers all kinds of drinks, from lattes to matcha to tea. I am usually a coffee drinker but decided to switch it up when I visited Thoughtful Cup by getting a chai tea latte. In a school with close to 30,000 students, ordering on-campus food can sometimes be a timely process. At Thoughtful Cup, however, I waited in line for no more than five minutes and received my drink right after finishing my payment; it was very quick.

I will say that I did go in the afternoon, so perhaps that time isn't as busy as a morning coffee rush. Regardless, the service

was excellent, and so was the warm, spice-filled, decadent tea.

While I ventured out and tried some tea, Ballin had a great experience with coffee, "I ordered an iced caramel latte, and it was super good," said Ballin. "It wasn't too sweet or too bitter. It was honestly perfect!"

In addition to a variety of delicious drinks, Thoughtful Cup also offers an assortment of baked goods, including croissants, danishes and more. There is also a collection of grab-and-go snacks such as granola bars, sandwiches, fruit, popcorn and more. It's a great option for students needing

something quick to snack on, on their way to class.

"I would definitely go back! It is just an amazing place, a comfortable atmosphere and a perfect place to relax," said Ballin.

The tasteful design, warm environment and delicious food and beverages make Thoughtful Cup the perfect addition to Charlotte this spring semester. Students are sure to enjoy themselves as they take in the beauty of the art, sip their favorite drinks and dwell in the ambiance of what Charlotte has created in Thoughtful Cup.



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SPLIT//DECISION

Charlotte splits series with Old Dominion

by Cameron Williams
Staff Writer

Photo of women's basketball team
courtesy of Charlotte Athletics

Wednesday, Jan. 26: Charlotte beats ODU 64-61

Charlotte's women's basketball team defeated the Old Dominion Monarchs 64-61 in a battle that came down to the end. The 49ers' narrow victory on Wednesday, Jan. 26, was solidified with a late block from fifth-year forward KeKe McKinney.

Charlotte improves to 9-6 on the year with the win and a perfect 5-0 in C-USA play.

First Quarter:

The first quarter was an all-out slugfest as neither team could gain much of an advantage. Octavia Jett-Wilson was doing everything in her power to find open looks, but the nature of the tough Monarch defense wouldn't allow many for the fifth-year senior. Charlotte led at the end of the quarter 16-11.

Second Quarter:

The second quarter is where ODU found their stride as they would score in bunches leaving the Charlotte coaching staff searching for answers as the Monarchs outscored the 49ers in the quarter to head into halftime with a one-point lead of 32-31.

"They did some great things to get back in the game," 49er Head Coach Cara Consuegra said following the game. "At the end of the day, we just made a few more plays than they did."

Third Quarter:

The second half continued the battle as ODU would possess the lead only for a short time until Mikayla Boykin and Jett-Wilson caught fire and ended the quarter strong winning it 18-11. The 49ers pushed the lead to eight, heading into the fourth quarter.

Fourth Quarter:

The Monarchs would not go away as they had a chance to tie the game in the closing minutes of the contest until McKinney came up big for the 49ers with a block in the closing minute of the game. This essentially iced the game ending in the fifth straight victory for the 49ers.

Knocking down the three-point basket was one thing Consuegra felt was a key to the team's success in this game.

"We expected them (ODU) to bring a lot of help into the paint," Consuegra said. "We expected them to help on Tae (Jett-Wilson), help on JMac (Jada McMillan) a lot. So, we told Kam (Kameron Roach), Jacee (Busick), Molina (Williams) that you are going to have open threes because of the way we think they are going to play."

Players of the Game for Charlotte:

Jett-Wilson has been on a hot streak of late as she has been playing at a high level. Her 22 points led all scorers in the game, and she has found her stride now that conference play has started, and it does not appear that she is looking back anytime soon.

If the 49ers can regularly get performances out of McKinney, they

will be tough to beat. McKinney posted a double-double with 10 points and 11 rebounds in the game. At the end of the game, her block proved to be the game clincher and came against one of the Monarch's best shooters in Iggy Allen.

Saturday, Jan. 29: ODU beats Charlotte 54-45

After a close victory against the Monarchs just a few days prior, ODU came out with a purpose en route to a 54-45 win against Charlotte inside Halton Arena on Saturday, Jan. 29.

The loss snapped the 49ers' five-game winning streak as the team fell to 9-7 on the season and 5-1 in Conference-USA (C-USA) play. This was the first loss for Charlotte in C-USA play. The Monarchs improve to 15-4 and avenge their loss against the 49ers on Wednesday.

Head Coach Cara Consuegra believes the team will learn from the loss as they move forward to their upcoming matchups.

"We have to move forward quickly," said Consuegra. "We were the opposite of how we played on Wednesday. We are disappointed, but we can't let that affect us moving forward."

The 49ers couldn't quite get their

offensive rhythm going all game as the Monarchs' defense was playing at its highest level. The Monarchs did a much better job defending Octavia Jett-Wilson this game, only allowing six points from the fifth-year star.

However, despite the lackluster offensive performance as a whole, the 49ers bright spot on the offensive side of the ball was senior guard Jada McMillan. She recorded 16 points and dished out three assists. Her big shots kept the 49ers within reach, but the team couldn't pull close enough to take the lead.

"Jada did play well today," said Consuegra. "I am proud of her stepping up and setting the tone for us. We need her to play like that for us to win."

ODU had three players in double-figure scoring, including FAU transfer Iggy Allen. Allen has been a big lift for the Monarchs this season. She is coming off a season where she led FAU in scoring and was second in rebounding as a guard.

In this contest, Allen had 11 points and three rebounds, which was vital down the stretch for the Monarchs. Ajah Wayne led the Monarchs in scoring with 13 points while pulling down four rebounds.

Players of the Game for the 49ers:

McMillan is showing why she is the floor general for the 49ers. While her non-conference might have left some fans wondering, her conference showings have shown she will have another standout season for the squad. Her performances in conference play so far have established her as a top three-point guard in the conference.

The Duke transfer, Boykin, has been performing well as of late. She proves why she was one of the top-rated players at her position coming out of high school a few years ago.



STEP BY STEP



How a team mentality could bring consistency to Charlotte's men's basketball team

by Mathis Gaglione
Staff Writer

Photo of team huddle
by Chris Crews

The 2021-22 season has been nothing short of a rollercoaster for the Charlotte men's basketball team. From key players missing games due to COVID-19 protocol's, a four-game winning streak, to a loss on a buzzer-beater against Wake Forest, Charlotte has experienced everything through the first half of their schedule.

Teams face some adversity during the season; the bad ones let it tear the team apart and let it derail their season, but the good ones come together and turn the adversity into motivation.

For the 49ers, adversity has been challenging to overcome over the last couple of years. Last season, Charlotte ended with nine straight losses, destroying any hope of competing for the conference or any post-season play. That type of meltdown can't happen with a team that has so much talent across the board this year.

However, the 49ers made changes throughout the offseason, pointing to the notion that things could be different. Charlotte brought in a handful of new players via the transfer portal last spring, and many people questioned how all the new players would mesh together. With

a couple of new transfers missing early in the season, the next few games will be an important stretch to get more familiar with one another on the floor.

"Practicing is one thing; playing is another. The more you play with someone, the more comfortable you get with them on the floor. You know when someone is going to cut, or their strengths, so it gets a little easier for the guys the more they play together," said Head Coach Ron Sanchez.

Another added factor in the team-building chemistry has been the leadership of standout player Jahmir Young. His locked-in focus and team-first mindset has been contagious for players on the team, and that has helped Charlotte continuously build relationships on the court.

"Just knowing that winning is the most important thing, it's not really about stats, and as long as we get the win, that's all that matters to me," said Young.

Young is a favorite to win Conference USA Player of the Year for the second straight season, and even that prestigious award doesn't hold the same value as winning in Young's eyes.

"At the end of the day, it's just about

winning, and I don't really care about personal accolades. I just want to do what I can to win games," said Young.

Everyone knows the saying, "defense wins championships." That phrase can perfectly describe the backbone of the 49ers' success during this season's slate of games. Defense is a huge point of emphasis from Head Coach Ron Sanchez from his assistant days at Virginia.

Sanchez has pushed that defensive mindset to his players from the beginning of the year, and it seems like the message is finally starting to pay off. After the game at North Texas, Sanchez and company spent the next few practices focusing on the defensive breakdowns they made in the loss.

This attention to detail helped the 49ers win the next two and further proved the importance of locking in defensively. Jahmir Young shared his perspective on the team's defense over the past couple of weeks.

"Defensively, we've come together, we've been special on that end, it would be crazy to get away from that," Young said.

During stretches of the season, it's easy to wear down mentally and physically.

The team strives to be very vocal at keeping each other in check and ensuring everyone is doing their part to maintain their health as they get late into the season.

"Staying in the treatment room, not doing too much extra, just being smart not to kill our knees or bodies, and fueling ourselves with the right stuff," said guard Jackson Threadgill.

Charlotte currently sits at (4-3) in conference play and has a real shot at competing for a conference championship. Continuing to build relationships on the court, locking in defensively and maintaining their health can make this season one to remember for the 49ers. The key will be consistency for Charlotte. The team has struggled to find an identity in some games. In others, the team finds itself outplaying their opponents from the start.

Charlotte has a two-game homestand starting on February 3 vs. Western Kentucky, currently 10-11. The 49ers split the season series last year against WKU and will look to start this year off on the right foot.



LOCAL SUPERSTAR

Concord native Jackson Threadgill has found a groove in 2022

by Sam Perry
Staff Writer

Photos of Jackson Threadgill
by Chris Crews

Sophomore guard and Concord native, Jackson Threadgill has seen a surge in his play since the turn of the new year, thriving in his expanded role with the Charlotte 49ers.

After a freshman season where Threadgill could get his feet wet, he has seen an uptick in minutes for the 49ers.

"I believe confidence comes from spending time in the gym. When people say that coaches give players confidence, I'm not a big believer in that. I do believe that your confidence comes from the work you put in. Jackson is a worker," said head coach Ron Sanchez.

High school heroics

Before coming to Charlotte, Threadgill had strong success in high school. In his senior year, he led Davidson Day to a 30-1 record on their way to the 2020 NCISAA 2A State championship. In the championship game, Threadgill poured in 30 points to take home the victory.

His strong high school play got him strong recognition, and he was named to the All-State second-team for both Hoopsen and the Charlotte Observer. He also won Davidson Day Male Athlete of the Year.

His strong performance got him offers from several schools, most notably the Georgia Bulldogs.

What drew him into Charlotte

Despite other offers, Threadgill chose to go to Charlotte and join Coach Sanchez's program. He felt he could be on the ground floor of the program they are building.

"The relationship I built with the

coaching staff, trust in their vision for me and the program. I think we can still do some big things," said Threadgill.

49ers' workhorse

Threadgill is known amongst the team for the hard work he puts in, earning praise from Coach Sanchez. He is always spotted as one of the first people out in pregame shootarounds, getting his shots in to warm up.

His hard work in the gym paid off, winning him the Hayward Grubstake Award, which is awarded to one player a year on the team that exemplifies the hard work, dedication and effort that the 49ers program wants to instill in their culture.

But he knows he still has to know his body's limits, especially with the recent short stretch of five games in nine days.

"Not doing too much extra. Being smart with the extra work we put in," said Threadgill.

Recent surge

Charlotte has had to play many games in a quick stretch after the 49ers' layoff from December 22 to January 13 due to COVID-19 protocols. This opened a vital role for Threadgill, which he has taken and ran with.

"As far as for Jackson, I think what you are seeing is him no longer being a freshman. Having been in those environments, having played against some decent competition," said Sanchez.

On the first game back from the layoff, he went off a career-high 15 points against UTEP and has had

three double-digit performances in the seven games played in 2022. Opening up the new year with back-to-back strong victories.

Threadgill seems to be a different, more confident player coming out of the new year.

"I think it's a mentality thing. Just being aggressive, being confident and trusting in the work I put in," said Threadgill.

Hometown Hero

For Threadgill, having grown up right outside of the Charlotte area, getting to play in his hometown and having a strong support system from the community around him is everything.

"It's amazing. I'm always getting asked for tickets from everybody around. But it's cool always having that support from my family, my friends, and just local people that have watched me grow up," said Threadgill.

The community around Charlotte influenced his decision to come here, and the community and family Charlotte has created influenced him to join the 49ers and has allowed him to succeed in the green and gold.

"Just the community atmosphere from people that are here or people that are going to come here. I just feel like it's a family atmosphere. I think that's the biggest thing to be a Charlotte 49er," said Threadgill.

Threadgill will be an important asset for Charlotte as the team continues to find its identity as the homestretch of the season approaches. Charlotte sits at 11-8 overall and 4-3 in Conference USA play.