



## Duke vs. UNC marathon shoots for record while helping local kids

By ADAM PLAYFORD, The Herald-Sun  
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DURHAM -- Duke students will meet UNC students on the basketball court this weekend, but for once, no one will guess at the final score.

"It's going to be a lot of points," UNC junior Greg Richmond said.

Duke freshman Megan Clair thinks so, too.

"If a two-hour game can go to 100, I can't imagine what a 58-hour game can go to," she said.

That's right, 58 hours. The participants plan to dribble, post and shoot to a place in the Guinness Book of World Records for the longest basketball game.

Right now, the basketball marathon record is 30 hours and 12 minutes, set by the Beatrice (Nebraska) Hoops Basketball Organization in August 2004. The Duke-UNC teams are planning to play for 58 hours.

According to The Associated Press, the Beatrice game's final score was 4,107-4,018.

If this game's players score at that pace, it will finish 7,888-7,717.

But in this case, winning isn't just about the scoreboard.

The game, which will feature an opening tipoff by former U.S. Sen. John Edwards, is also the culmination of a fundraiser between the two groups of students.

They hope to raise \$80,000 for Hoop Dreams, a Durham organization that uses basketball as therapy -- both physical and mental -- for terminally ill children.

Hoop Dreams works with local children whose ages range from 3 to 18, said Lisa Brachman, the program's executive director. Many are being treated at Duke or UNC Hospitals.

"It isn't really about the ball," she said. "It's about getting kids to interact with peers, kids who have been on a similar path with them."

Whatever money the marathon raises will help the program increase its number of participants and expand programs for the children and their parents and siblings, Brachman said.

The marathon will start at 8 a.m. Saturday and end at 6 p.m. Monday, and will be held in UNC's Fetzer Gymnasium. Special events are planned for Monday once the game ends.

The project was sparked when Richmond, who is the effort's UNC director, heard about a record-setting softball marathon on the radio.

"I was like, wouldn't it be cool if we could do something with basketball, Duke and Carolina?" he recalled.

Richmond, an intern at UNC's Newman Catholic Student Center, contacted Duke's Newman center. There, he found David Walker, who is now the program's Duke director. It became a joint project between the Catholic student centers.

"I started looking for people to help me out," Walker recalled.

Now, the project, which is non-religious, has since expanded to include more than 100 students, the directors said.

Spalding is sponsoring the marathon, and so far, the event has raised about \$50,000, said Walker, a junior.

As the game approaches, they are still looking for certified referees, especially for the early morning hours, and are trying to convince other companies to pony up some cash.

"One of the cool things that we're trying to do is really push the rivalry, and with donations we're encouraging Carolina and Duke students, alumni, friends, supporters to donate money to Hoop Dreams, and you can donate on behalf of your school," Richmond said.

Even once it's over, though, the students' involvement with Hoop Dreams won't end.

Some of the college students have already been paired with Hoop Dreams students, helping them with their basketball and taking them to football and basketball games.

Those efforts will continue, and after this marathon's done, they plan on another in 2007 -- although they're not sure if they will try to raise the record again or just do a symbolic 24 hours, Richmond said.

This year, the Guinness requirements are driving a lot, he said.

Clair, who is Duke's publicity coordinator, said that another world record application for a game that was slightly over 50 hours is being reviewed, which is why they decided to make their game 58.

Both teams will only be allowed to use 12 players, who will be required to stay in the gym for the entire 58-hour period. They can play for up to four hours at a time, Richmond said, but whenever they come out of the game, it must be for an hour. They can sleep -- but only courtside.

The game will be played under international basketball rules, he said. It will have official, certified referees, who will work four-hour shifts, he said.

"Everything has to be done by the book," Richmond said. "It has to be well-documented. We have to have a camera going at all times."

For more information or to donate, visit [www.basketballmarathon.com](http://www.basketballmarathon.com)

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