Coach Carl Tacy of Wake Forest walked slowly up the steps of the college gym, glanced at a big sign in the window which said, "We're proud of you Deacs." Tacy smiled.

"I guess you're never really satisfied with a season," he said. "But accomplishing something like we did Thursday (beating North Carolina) builds confidence in a program. We feel we can do better next year."

Tacy is wasting no time to insure the Deacons will do better. He left early Monday morning for a recruiting trip (destination secret).

"We have to recruit size and talent," he said. "We need someone with solid experience. This would have helped our forwards. They could have done a better job with a scoring and experienced center."

In mid-season, Tacy junked the control offense, went to a fast break. Our idea was to spread people out, isolate one, cut and screen. We hoped to get the defense napping. We ran only a few things and tried to do them well. We used a three-guard offense.

"Teams knew that our strength was in the backcourt and they defensed us accordingly. Though our guards had tremendous pressure over half our points came from them."

"Maybe we had enough size. But we needed someone who could give us consistent scoring and rebound power inside. When I say this, I don't want to detract from Pat Kelly's hard work."

Wake Forest had played a slowdown last year," said Tacy. "I wanted to switch to a run and shoot offense. It's the style I like to play. It meant that we had to change what they had been doing. It was hard for them to learn to move."

"Eddie Payne had to learn the job as point man. He hadn't been one before. But he did a consistent job this year. He doesn't have the stamina and strength to play defense the way we would like but we learned heavily on him for the things he could do."

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"I never liked for a team to hold the ball on me," he said. "I like to run and break our ideas. Our team was built on that way."

"We needed good leadership. At first, everyone was hesitant to take over. Eddie demonstrated his leadership during the latter part of the season. The team looked to him."

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"You're never really satisfied with a season," says Carl Tacy, who still has some reason to smile.
WF Gains Confidence

Continued From Page 13

"The first time we tried it was in Chapel Hill. We'd used it briefly before as a stall. But this was the first time as a game plan. It went well up until about the last seven minutes. Then North Carolina got the lead, went into their four corners. We went after them, fouled and they hit some quick buckets. Before we knew it, we were down.

"As we continued to run the spread we improved and got confidence in it. Our victory over Maryland (62-60) was a big one for us. We ran it exceptionally well in beating North Carolina in the tournament. There was no way we could beat either Maryland or North Carolina with a run-and-shoot game."

Tacy decided he wanted to be a basketball coach when he was a sophomore in high school (Huttonsville, West Va.) He came under the influence of Bill Weber "an outstanding man, who meant a great deal to me with his guidance, direction, warmth and friendliness for all the players."

After coaching experience in high school, junior college and a very successful year at Marshall, Tacy came to Wake Forest in April 1972.

Quiet, soft-spoken, a man who maintains his poise under pressure, Tacy was a contrast to the highly competitive and volatile Jack McCloskey.

His first year in the ACC and it has been tough, going against top competition with obvious weaknesses in talent.

"I would like to have gotten just one player off the other team's bench," said Tacy, with a wry smile.

"In the ACC, the teams know each other well, the coaches know every move you'll make. This makes it harder. I know a little more about what to expect now. And if I can get some key players, we'll have a better shot at some of the conference teams the next time around."

Tacy won a reputation in his first year as an excellent coach and also a sportsman. He was tabbed Gentleman Carl Tacy.

His calmness on the bench, hides the stress he feels and his competitiveness rarely shows. He got one technical foul (in the Maryland game) when he exploded after goal-tending was not called.

"Staying on the bench comes after a few years," said Tacy. "I used to pace the sidelines, rant and rave. I felt I wasn't involved without this.

"Now I know a coach should spend time working on the things he has control over. If you make the proper preparation there's not a lot to be done on the bench. Players want a coach to show some enthusiasm but not so that he can't plan the strategy or make the moves he should. I want the players to feel that I'm doing what I should do."

"A coach should teach a lot of things besides basketball," said Tacy. "I mean that things have a carry over value in life," to make the players better individuals.

"There's a certain feeling players have when they know they have given everything. If they give 100 per cent of themselves, whether they win or lose, this is success. If they don't give all they have, then it is failure, regardless of the score."

"And this is true in anything a man does."
Mrs. Carl Tacy, wife of the Wake Forest basketball coach, shows her delight at a good Deacon play during the ACC tournament game with North Carolina. Their daughter, Beth, may be thinking more of things to come. For story on the 76-62 Tar Heel victory, see Page 18.
Coach Carl Tacy of Wake Forest is not surprised. The Deacons have knocked off West Virginia (86-74) at Morgantown, beat 11th-ranked Pennsylvania (69-61) and are second in the Atlantic Coast Conference in scoring defense and scoring. They also have two players of the year — Tony Byers and Lee Foye.

Yet, Tacy says with a smile and a shrug that he is not "all that surprised." He does admit that the team has come together a bit more quickly than he thought.

"When you have a young club, it's a question how long it will take to get the players working together," said Tacy.

He is a bit surprised and certainly pleased by the team's poise.

"They have come through in key situations where they could have fallen off," said Tacy.

Like against Pennsylvania when they lost the lead but still didn't crack under the pressure, went on to win.

There are a couple of big reasons for the improvement. One is 6-8 Cal Stamp, a junior college transfer. Stamp has rebounded and scored well. He has provided much needed strength on the boards. He's aggressive and because he plays all-out he provides a leadership that inspires everyone else. Having Stamp inside to take his share of the scoring and rebounding has made Mike Parrish and Lee Foye better.

Stamp has also shown considerable defensive ability, a reason for the Deacons' improvement in this.

Also there is more depth this year than last. Last season, when a starter got in foul trouble, Tacy was in trouble, too.

But Tacy has substituted frequently and in many cases the reserves Phil Perry, Jerry Schellenberg, Haley Hall, Bobby Dwyer have played well.

Don Mulnix, the 6-8 freshman from Denver, is still a question. Mulnix can play. He could be the best of the new crop. But he is recovering from a knee operation. He hasn't tested it fully in practice.

"We have to get a consistent effort from our front line," said Tacy. "We are still pushing to get a balanced effort. We can't win with just good guard play."

Even though the front line is much improved, Tacy is still looking for a good big man — 6-10 or better. He has his eye on a couple of prospects. And he's not sitting around waiting for these guys to decide they want to come to Wake Forest. He's already out recruiting.

And he knows the best recruiting argument is a winner. The Deacons travel to St. Petersburg, Fla., for the Sunshine Classic Friday and Saturday. Wake Forest plays LaSalle in the opener.

The Deacons have been working out through the exam period and will leave Thursday morning.