(UNC's Lee pictured just right of the Clemson ball carrier.)

North Carolina is undefeated. Maryland's only loss this season came at the hands of North Carolina. Saturday, they play each other for the inaugural Atlantic Coast Rugby League (ACRL) title and berth to Nationals.

The first meeting was a three-point game that the Tar Heels claimed with a last-minute try. UNC captain Alex Lee attributes that win to superior fitness. "We're not the biggest team in the circuit, but I think we do have the hardest work ethic. We are one of the most fit," he said. "Our game plan is to swing the ball wide and play a very expansive, quick game, and I think that really helped us against them."

North Carolina is a veteran-led team. Lee, named Friday as the conference's co-player of the year, is a senior, and a number of UNC's leaders and best players are their elder statesmen. All six Tar Heels named either first or second-team all-ACRL performers are upperclassmen.

Five of Maryland's seven players with the same accolades are underclassmen. Terrapin flyhalf

Matias Cima, the ACRL's other co-player of the year, is a freshman, as are Sage Winn (first-team prop), Matt Reilly (first-team wing) and John Davis (second-team scrumhalf). Despite this being many of the Terps' first year on campus, some have plenty of experience playing together.

"I played four years with (Davis) at Gonzaga. He played 13 in the first match and now he's playing nine, just to put him closer to me," said Cima. "We have a good connection me and him, and I played on the U17 National Team with (Winn), so me and him have a good connection, too. We're a young team, and we're good players. We're starting to link up all over the field, which I think didn't happened in the first game, so they're going to be in for something new this weekend."

Saturday, Both Winn and Davis will be in new positions from the first match against North Carolina. Davis is at scrumhalf, where he's been since that first game, and Winn will be at open-side flanker, which could throw off UNC's equilibrium for the first couple minutes. However, Lee is also at a new position for the Tar Heels. He played open-side flanker in the first go-round, and he's been in the midfield ever since, taking his ball-hawking skills with him.

"He poached almost every person that ran high on him," said Cima of Lee. "He's a good player. What we have to do is run low when we run at him."

And what does Lee think the Tar Heels need to do to contain his co-player of the year?

"As with any dynamic flyhalf we'll be looking to shut him down early on. We have very quick back row players. Our 10's a big boy, so we'll be looking to knock him over in the first five or ten minutes and shut down his lateral movement so he won't be as dynamic as he'd like to be early on."

The revenge factor, co-conference players of the year squaring off against each other, the first ever ACRL title on the line as well as a trip to the Sweet 16 (which would be UNC's first in 7 years and Maryland's first since at least 1994) and a little bit of ageism should make Saturday's championship bout in Charlotte one for the ages.