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UNCW student makes the grade at 'Playboy'

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A UNCW sophomore has bared all for the centerfold spread of *Playboy* magazine's February issue.

While the university's name isn't mentioned in the eight-page nude pictorial, Playmate Kona Carmack said some of the school's 8,400 students already have heard about it. The magazine goes on sale Tuesday.

"There's no telling how people are going to react," Ms. Carmack said from Hawaii, where she's spending winter break. "Wilmington is a pretty laid-back place, so I don't think people will make a big deal of it."

But her sorority, Chi Omega, thought it was a big deal. The 19-year-old marketing major said she quit last spring when members wanted to throw her out of the organization because of the nude pictorial.

"The sorority said girls aren't allowed to pose nude," Ms. Carmack said. "And I thought that was ridiculous, so I quit."

University officials say this is the first

time they can recall a student posing nude for a magazine.

But don't expect the university to trumpet Ms. Carmack's accomplishment like those of students who become finalists in national beauty pageants.

"We prefer to emphasize those that are



Kona Carmack poses in one of the photos in her 'Playboy' pictorial. 'There's no telling how people are going to react,' she says. But she knows how her sorority at UNCW feels — members wanted to throw her out, so she quit last spring.

UNCW English class last year arguing *Playboy* isn't pornography, said even she was nervous at first about posing nude.

"I broke out in hives thinking about it," said Ms. Carmack, who plans to skip the spring semester at UNCW because of various *Playboy* commitments. "*Playboy* is classy. They don't exploit women."

The magazine discovered the Rocky Mount resident from calendar photos taken of her in high school. After she flew to Chicago for "test" photos in November 1994, she said, magazine publisher Hugh Hefner thought she was centerfold material.

"He makes the final decision on every Playmate," she said. Ms. Carmack just returned from a New Year's Eve party at Mr. Hefner's California mansion, but wouldn't share any details of the bash.

With the \$20,000 payment for the pictorial, Ms. Carmack bought a new car and plans to put the rest away for future college tuition bills.

And what will the nude centerfold do for her social life?

"I have a boyfriend," she said.

central to the academic mission of the university," said spokesman Mimi Cunningham, adding that beauty pageants include a talent competition.

"Of course, we wish all our students success," she said.

Ms. Carmack, who wrote a paper for a