

New spring sport

Inaugural softball season is a challenging venture

by Monetta Brown

The new kid on the block always gets some rough treatment. So does a start-from-scratch softball team. Just ask Bennett coach Herb Jackson, whose team has lost its first seven games.

"When you start any inter-collegiate program, you're going to suffer and take some hard knocks initially. It takes time to build a competitive program. I want people to know that and not get down on our young ladies when they don't perform up to their best."

Bennett has never had a softball team, and it has been competing against some schools with scholarship athletes—a fact which puts the Belles at a tremendous disadvantage. The team was the brainchild of President Gloria Randle Scott, who envisioned softball as part of a spring sports package and asked Athletic Director Leon J. McDougle to develop a team. McDougle hired Jackson because of his experience on the diamond. Jackson played second-base and shortstop for

four years at North Carolina A&T State University and is now the baseball coach at his alma mater.

Despite the rude initiation that the Belles have received, Jackson is proud of the resilience of his squad and excellent contributions by several of its players.

Junior shortstop Erica Salter gets high marks from the coach. "She's a top-rate baseball player," Jackson, the director of student activities at Bennett, says. "She can play with the best of them."

Freshman outfielder Crystal Reynolds has also been a mainstay. "Reynolds has played very well," the coach says. "She hit a home run at Noco Park that cleared the fence against A&T."

The coach also cites the versatile Jeaninne Thomas for meritorious service. Thomas, a sophomore, has pitched, played second base and centerfield.

The team also includes infielders Regina Artis, Karyn Weaver, Zandra Allen, Broнетta Walker, Alfredia Moore and Cynthia Payne; catchers Jennifer Chollette and Candy

Bentley; outfielders Kimyatta Vinson and Robin King-Hoard, and pitcher-infielder Inez Triplin.

One of Jackson's most difficult tasks has been to maintain the team's morale.

"I wish that we had started with a club team first because it is really discouraging to the ladies to try to compete with teams that have been playing for years," says Jackson.

One of the season's delights has been strong attendance at some home games.

"Student support is very important," Jackson says. "On warm days, it's been pretty decent. I think it's great, being that we don't have our own field. The students walk down to see us perform."

The coach hopes that one day soon the field behind Goode Gymnasium will contain a well-groomed softball diamond.

"That will make a great difference to the program," he says.

A little more experience for his players and patience by the fans will help the new team in town get acclimated.

Basketball fortunes rebound during Raleigh tournament

by Rosellen Durham

The basketball team saved the best for last.

Bennett enjoyed its most important victory of the year on the final weekend of the season, defeating Mary Baldwin College in the first round of the North Carolina-Virginia Women's College Basketball Tournament in Raleigh. The next day, the Belles nearly won a close encounter with tournament champion Meredith College.

"We ended the year on a good note," said Coach Joyce Spruill. "We're looking forward to next season."

The Belles almost swept the tournament. They were losing by only three or four points with two minutes left in the Meredith game, according to Spruill. Bennett fouled in order to stop the clock and regain the ball, "but when we put them on the free throw line, they hit every free throw," the coach recalled.

The squad, which finished 4-20, placed center Valencia

Floyd on the all-tournament team, to which point-guard Hyler Jones received honorable mention.

The upbeat ending had the team walking tall and the coach "rejoicing." "We played good ball in the tournament," Spruill said. "The whole team stood out. (Frontcourtplayer) Debra Dilworth had a good tournament, and Valencia Floyd did a fantastic job offensively and defensively. (Forward) Yvette Williams played really well, but she got hurt against Mary Baldwin and couldn't play in the championship game."

Williams grabbed a rebound and aggravated a leg injury which she had suffered earlier in the season against Winston-Salem State.

Although the Belles finished quite a way below .500, the team doubled its number of victories over last season and gained momentum during a time when a more fragile club might have become dispirited.

"In spite of our losses, we

improved our overall game," said Spruill.

A prime mover in the tour around was Hyler Jones, who "did a fantastic job of handling the ball for us," Spruill observed.

What stands out the most in the coach's mind from the season? "The potential that was on that team," Spruill said. "During the course of the season, they showed what they were capable of doing, but they just didn't execute consistently at all times."

Attendance at the games rose this year, the coach noted, but "we would like to have more support. But you know you get into a thing where if you win there'd be no problem with people coming to see you play. But if you lose, you run into the thing of the typical fan versus the loyal fan. But we had much better support this year."

More wins inevitably mean more fans. Next season may very well bring more of each.

Eyewitness remembers Frisco earthquake

a column
by Morgan Johnson

On Oct. 17, 1989, the World Series was being held in San Francisco in Candlestick Park. Not only were there people getting off work early to make it to the game, but there were people getting off early to watch it on television.

It was a very hot day. My friends and I went to a park in Brisbane, Calif., 10 minutes away from San Francisco. Everything was calm, including the water which surrounded the park. We could see the stadium from where we were and there were helicopters circling above.

At 5:04 P.M., the earthquake erupted. This was my first time being outside during an earthquake, and it seemed to be pretty safe since we were in the open.

There was a building a few feet away from us, and it looked as if it was going to fold up, like when a deck of cards collapses. It also appeared to be more dangerous inside. My friends and I didn't think much of it. We just thought it was another minor shake. We had no idea of the extent of the disaster. As we continued to hang out on the grass, people who were inside the building came running out, got in their cars and left.

Later, my friends and I took a walk around the park and we passed a woman. We asked her if she felt the quake and she certainly did. But after we passed her, she yelled back, "Oh, by the way, the Bay Bridge collapsed." We thought she was joking and yelled back, "Well, that's good, less traffic." We did not believe her because of her casual tone.

As we headed back to the car, I noticed that the lights at Candlestick were off, which was odd. When we got in the car and turned on the radio, the stations had lost their airwaves. We turned on the sports station to hear the game and instead we heard that the bridge had indeed collapsed and there were fires in the Marina District. Later, there were reports that the Cypress Freeway had collapsed and the most damage had taken place in the South Bay in cities such as Santa Cruz and Watsonville.

The next day no one went to work and people were to stay indoors. Vice President Quayle toured the Marina District, which caused a bit of controversy, and there were scenes on television of the bridge, the freeway, shattered parts of the city and the events that followed the quake

Young tennis team shows spunk

by Monica Exum

The tennis squad brought much more pride than pain to Coach Leon McDougle even though, as a team, the Belles didn't win a match.

This was the Bennett's first full season after playing a limited schedule last year. The team was burdened by inexperience and the loss of some veterans who didn't return to school. But there wasn't a player who didn't improve during the year, and the Belles held many of their opponents' hands to the fire.

"My goal was to make the team competitive, and in many matches we were competitive," McDougle says. "We had a very tough schedule for a school in its first full year of play."

Amazingly enough, several Belles had either never played competitively or never played tennis before this academic year.

"Four of my kids came directly out of my beginning tennis class," the coach explains. "Even so, in most instances they were able to hold their own. We played schools that are well known for women's tennis teams. Many of their players come from the country club set. They've had lessons since early childhood."

The Belles played some strong teams from Virginia, including Longwood, Ferrum and Virginia Wesleyan.

McDougle has special plaudits for Dorcas Matowe, a

freshman international student from Zimbabwe.

"She had no experience at all prior to the season," the coach says. "She was probably our most consistent player and the one who was most praised by opposing coaches. Dorcas was coachable, intelligent and willing to improve."

McDougle was also appreciative of the contributions of freshmen Jacqueline Drummonds from Brooklyn, N.Y. and Batsirai Mutasa from Corpus Christi, Tex.; sophomores Khea Newby from Omaha, Neb., Janae Simmons from Somerset, N.J., Kim Somerville from Columbia, Md. and Sharon Turner from Royal Oaks, Md. and senior Tracey Lett from Winston-Salem.

The coach is optimistic about next season.

"I feel if we can hold this group together and get one or two experienced high school players, then next year we'll be even more competitive."

He would like to see greater participation on the part of inactive athletes on campus.

"It's quite disturbing to me as coordinator of athletic programs that we have too many athletes on our campus with playing experience in various sports who are not participating in anything."

Next spring, the right mix could bring even more pride to the courts behind the gym.

Incompetents at work

Phony leaders shame nation

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rights and world peace. Young people never change. They are always the social and political innovators of a society. We are the ones who strive to bring about change while politicians hide behind self-righteous and incomprehensible political gibberish when all their campaign promises go up in smoke.

I don't know about everyone else, but I'm fed up with shallow administrators like Dan Quayle, Oliver North, Gary Hart and a list of others whose unscrupulous ways have been sensationalized on the covers of the nation's tabloids like spoofs about UFO's or Hollywood gossip. What this country needs is

real leaders who are concerned with the problems of this society. As conscientious citizens of a democratic nation, we should exercise our constitutional freedom and vote; not for the men and women who dish out the biggest pieces of apple pie or who shield themselves in the beautiful American flag, but for people who stand up for the little man as well as the big, who will seek changes and policies that will support the common welfare of individuals here and abroad.

Forget the peanuts, jellybeans, broccoli and fame-seeking bimbos. We deserve more out of our paid government officials. We deserve true leadership.

would have most of you suing. Students who were in the dorms could not return, even to get a few belongings. The school gave everyone a \$100 loan, and that's all, if I remember correctly. There were students sleeping in the Student Union; there were students who hadn't bathed for days. If students didn't have a friend or a relative to stay with, they were homeless for about three and a half weeks. And when the dorms were safe to enter, people found that the workmen raided almost every room. One student was missing \$600 dollars.

Another thing that was really interesting was to see the national newscasters all rush out to bring the nation the story. Dan Rather, Tom Brokaw and Peter Jennings were chauffeured in white limos to the site of the Cypress Freeway

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