

## Sports

## SLAP SHOTS

## God or Gold?

By Kyle S. Phipps  
Sports Editor

In Durham NC, there may be the greatest collection of basketball talent in the state, and they don't play in Cameron Indoor Stadium and they aren't supported by people who call themselves "Cameron Crazies". Instead, they are a group of teens, seventeen and under, who play for Mount Zion Christian Academy.

Mount Zion is a tiny school with about 200 students ranging from kindergarten to 12th grade. Tuition to the school is about \$8000 per year. Tuition for all of the basketball players is provided by the school.

Mount Zion was founded 11 years ago by the Rev. Donald Fozzard as an offshoot of the Mount Zion Christian Church.

Of 13 players on the Mount Zion team, 11 are expected to play Division I college basketball. However, Tracy McGrady, a 6 foot 7 senior may jump straight to the pros and skip college. Mount Zion players have already signed letters of intent for such schools as Missouri and UNC, while others are thinking about schools like Kansas, UCLA, and Maryland.

Fozzard is very clear about the purpose of having a number 1 ranked basketball team at a private religious school. "The basketball's the bait that brings 'em in and exposes them to the Gospel," said Fozzard, according to Bruce Feldman of ESPN.

Some of the players come from less than desirable backgrounds. McGrady was a poor student at Auburndale High School in central Florida. He was suspended from school for five days for getting into a verbal dispute with one of his teachers. McGrady's mother, Melanise Williford wanted her son to switch schools and Mount Zion was quick to express interest.

All of this sounds well and good, until some of the things Fozzard says are closely examined. Fozzard has said professional basketball is the best place for McGrady to go after graduation. "Go to college? You've got all the education you need by the ninth grade. Everything after the eighth grade is just a repeat. I'm personally going to tell him (McGrady) to go get that money. The people who say he should go to college are the ones who want to use him, so the universities can pack the gyms and put that meat in the seats," said Fozzard, according to ESPN.

Education is the reason McGrady should attend college. McGrady may be one of the most talented basketball players in the nation, but an education is always a necessity. It's very possible for McGrady to destroy his knee the first time he goes up for a dunk and an NBA player moves to stop him. What will McGrady fall back on then? A good guess would be the blacktop courts in central Florida.

It's difficult to believe Fozzard is only concerned with the spiritual development of these young men. Mount Zion has sold out all of their games, and top players from all over the country are trying to come to Mount Zion. Closer analysis may show that Fozzard is advancing the cause of his wallet rather than the cause of The Almighty.

## Lady Bulldogs 6-6 in conference

By Erin King  
Staff Writer

Two defeats and one victory brought the UNCA Lady Bulldogs' Big South Conference record to 6-6 during the week of Feb. 10.

UNCA won 68-46 against Maryland-Baltimore County on Feb. 15, but lost 70-52 to UNC-Greensboro on Feb. 10 and Winthrop on Feb. 12, 69-63. In the Winthrop game, the Lady Bulldogs owned a 22 point lead, only to lose the game.

Head Coach Ray Ingram thinks that defense was key in all the games, but especially important in the Lady Bulldogs' win over the UMBC Lady Retrievers.

"This was probably the best defensive effort we've made all year," said Ingram.

UNCA led UMBC at halftime, with senior Vicki Giffin and junior Cary Gay making two lay-ups each with one minute left in the first half to put the score at 28-22. UMBC never had the lead again for the rest of the game.

Freshman Emily Hill's lay-up with 9:48 left in the second half gave the Lady Bulldogs a 21-point lead. The final score was 68-46. Giffin ended the game with 18 points, while Hill added 10.

The win was UNCA's twelfth, giving it the most wins since the Bulldogs started playing Division I basketball, and the most wins in a season in 13 years. It was also the biggest conference road victory ever for the Lady Bulldogs.

Ingram said that UNCA's defense helped win the game for them, especially with contributions by Giffin and senior Marcia Napier.

"Vicki started to come back and find her game," said Ingram. "Marcia played a great inside game."

Ingram said the team also "did a very good job of containment

and not letting them turn the corner and get inside."

"They tried to pressure us quite a bit, and our point guards, Mandy Edwards and Amy Freed, did a very good job. Edwards had no turnovers, and when a point guard has no turnovers against a team that's pressing, that's an excellent accomplishment," said Ingram.

Offense is still a problem area for the Lady Bulldogs, but they can fall back on their defense, said Ingram.

"The offense still isn't where we'd like it to be, but when we play this kind of defense, we can get by with a mediocre offense," said Ingram.

Good defense could not save the Lady Bulldogs from defeat against Winthrop, however, where they went from a 22-point lead with 12 minutes left in the second half to lose 69-63.

UNCA's first half defense kept the Lady Eagles to only scoring 13 points. Gay scored the Lady Bulldog's first five points, and UNCA caused Winthrop to make offensive mistakes with their back court pressure. UNCA scored 32 points by halftime.

"If we made a mistake in the first half, it was that we didn't come out of that with a 30, 35-point lead. We didn't capitalize as well offensively as we should have in the first half," said Ingram.

After halftime, the Lady Bulldogs continued to pressure Winthrop's offense throughout most of the second half. The Lady Eagle's steadily came back, though, and tied the score with 3:36 left in the game.

Defense was the strongest part of UNCA's game "up until the last 12 minutes, then we just fell apart," said Ingram.

With Winthrop's Jennifer Churchill scoring 30 points, Winthrop passed UNCA and beat them by six. Giffin, Gay, and Hill all fouled out during the last few minutes of the game trying to stop the Lady Eagles.

Gay scored 12 points, Hill had 10, and senior Lee Christiansen

pulled down seven rebounds.

Ingram said there were two factors that influenced the outcome of the game, they being the team's attitude during the second half and his coaching.

"It's one of the things that happens when you get that lead and you're very dominant, you get a little complacent. We got a little complacent, on the one hand, the other part of it is the coach fell asleep and didn't help his team," said Ingram.

Ingram wants to see Giffin get more shots off and thinks the team needs to work on getting her open more.

"Right now, we're allowing defenses to spread out on us, which is good on the one hand, but they're spreading out on us and we're forgetting about Vicki, and we can't do that," said Ingram.

"We've got to find a way to get her some shots, because she is our big game player, and I have to come up with some schemes to get her the ball and get her her numbers, and then everybody else can do their part," said Ingram.

Giffin's contributions to the team are very important said Ingram.

"She's the one that got us where we are. She's worked really hard. She's responsible for half of the other girls getting their points," said Ingram.

Giffin scored 10 points and was the only player to score in double figures for UNCA in the Lady Bulldogs' 70-52 loss against the Greensboro Lady Spartans.

UNCA was down by 13 points at halftime. Though they let Greensboro only outscore them by five points during the second half, the Lady Spartans lead was already too big to overcome.

Freshman Dana Polakowski and junior Mandy Edwards both contributed eight points during the game. The team only shot 35.7 percent as a whole.

Greensboro center Biz Brediger scored 16 points, and forward Melinda Goodson pulled down 12 rebounds.



PHOTOS BY DEL DeLORM

(Top) Amanda Brewer takes a jump shot over Liberty's Sharon Wilkerson. (Bottom) Dana Polakowski drives on a Liberty defender

## UNCA looks for big season

By Robert Hardin  
Staff Writer

The early part of the track and field season has been a successful one for the UNCA track and field teams, according to head coach Stan Rosenthal. The men's and women's track and field teams have competed in the Kentucky Indoor meet, at the University of Kentucky, and the U.S. Air Invitational at East Tennessee State.

There were no team scores in either of these meets because of the number of schools participating. "They were good meets, but not great ones," said Rosenthal. In the two meets, UNCA did have runners finish in the top twenty of their events.

In other competition the men's team have recorded victories over Winthrop and Davidson. The men's team also competed well against the Citadel, but fell short of a victory.

The women were victorious over Davidson, but lost close meets against Furman and Winthrop. "We have gotten off to a successful start," said Rosenthal.

The success of UNCA track and field can be seen in their victories and in the number new team records. There have been six school records set this season as

well as five freshman records.

Leading both the men's and women's teams this season are the long distance runners. "We are going to be very strong in the 800m and up in both men and women," said Rosenthal.

Leading the men's team are senior Pat Spencer and junior Eddie Legair. Spencer is the defending conference champion in the 10K event and was the leading runner for the cross country team in the fall.

Legair, a transfer from Mid-American Nazarene University, was a four-time NAIA national qualifier in track. Legair should be one of the top runners on the team this year. Freshmen Tim Gautreau, Jim Phillips, and Brandon Trollip should make significant contributions to the team this season, said Rosenthal.

The sprinters are led by junior Michael Creel and freshman Avery Smart. "Michael Creel and Avery Smart are our two best sprinters," said Rosenthal.

The anchors in the field events for the Bulldogs are sophomore Brent Sevier and sophomore Michael Slaughter. They will try to get some points for the Bulldogs in the shot put, discus, and hammer throw. Creel also competes in the javelin where he placed sixth in the conference championships last season.

The strong long-distance run-

ning of Emily Olinger and Becky Vonderhaar should put the Lady Bulldogs into position to be competitive in all their meets this season. Olinger and Vonderhaar bring a winning attitude and winning experience to the women's track and field team.

"Becky has been conference champion in the 10K, twice, and the 5K. Emily has won the 10K and the 5K, as well," said Rosenthal. Olinger holds the UNCA record for the 5K at 17 minutes and 51 seconds, and Vonderhaar holds the UNCA record in the 10K with a time of 37:01.

The top freshmen on the women's team are Misty Buchanan, Karen Monaco, and Shanley Rassler. Buchanan was a six-sport star in high school, but will concentrate on her running at UNCA. Monaco will compete as a long distance runner and should have a strong freshman season.

Rassler has already made her mark on the UNCA track and field program by setting a new freshman record in the 800. The Lady Bulldogs should also get significant contributions from seniors Joyce Cacka and Andrea Jernigan, and juniors Siobhan Keenan and Louise Monk.

Cacka and Jernigan are both strong in the 5K while Keenan should further strengthen the long

distance running in the 1500m. Monk earned "most improved" runner from the women's team last year after reducing her personal record in the 5K by nearly two minutes.

Monk also competes in the 10K where she placed sixth in the conference.

Senior Jenny McGrane will lead the women in the field events. McGrane finished third in the javelin throw at the 1996 Big South Conference Track and Field Championships and is looking to improve on that this season.

The 1997 Big South Track and Field Championships will be held on April 19 at UMBC. "The goal for the team is to come back from the conference championship with a trophy," said Rosenthal. To do that, the teams must finish in the top three for the meet. The Liberty Flames are the favorites to win the title.

"Our goal is always to win conference, but Liberty is very good," said Rosenthal. Last season Liberty beat George Mason in a meet just prior to George Mason winning the NCAA championship. Realistically, a second place finish would be attainable for UNCA, said Rosenthal.

On Feb. 22, both the men's and women's teams will compete, in a home meet, against Charleston Southern, Winthrop, Campbell, and Morris Brown.

The UNCA men's and women's track teams will be hosting a meet on Saturday, Feb. 22. The meet will begin at 10 am, and will be held at the indoor track. UNCA, Charleston Southern, Winthrop, Campbell, and Morris Brown will participate.