

Christians Top Catamounts 92 To 81 In Conference Battle

Elon Quintet Topples Lions By 16 Points

Displaying a balanced scoring attack through both halves, the Fighting Christians of Elon turned back the Frederick Lions 72 to 56 in a non-conference battle on the Frederick court on Wednesday night, February 3rd, with Elon posting her tenth win of the season as the Christian cagers continued to gather momentum in the late season.

The Christians got another great performance out of All-American Jesse Branson, with the big Elon forward pumping in 37 points against the Lions. The big boy hit 16 points in the first half as the Christians moved to a 33-27 margin at the half-time break. Branson sharpened his shooting for 21 points as Elon out-scored Frederick 39 to 29 in that final period.

The big night for Branson shot the front in the torrid race with Western Carolina's Henry Logan for the Carolinas Conference scoring leadership. Going into the Frederick game, Branson trailed Logan by barely one-tenth of one point in the Conference statistics, with Logan averaging 27.7 and Branson averaging 27.6 points per game.

Branson's 37 points last night, added to the 33 counters he hit against Atlantic Christian on Monday night, moved the Elon forward to a 28.5 average in 17 games. Logan managed only 26 points against Lenoir Rhyne last night and is averaging 27.6 points in 18 games to date. In addition to his fine shooting against Frederick last night, Branson also pulled down 13 rebounds.

The Fighting Christians had two other boys in double figures in the scoring columns, with Richard Such and Dave Winfrey each hitting for 12 points against the Lions. Bill Hodges, who hit 22 points, was the only Frederick player to reach double-figure scoring.

The line-ups:
Pos. Elon (72) Frederick (56)
F—Branson (37) Cottrell (7)
F—A. Davis (6) Hodges (22)
C—Van Lear Murray (8)
G—Atkins (5) Shell (6)
G—Winfrey (12) Hemphill (7)
Half-time: Elon 33, Frederick 27.
Elon subs — Such 12, Andrew, T. Davis, Mixon, Frederick subs — Joseph 2, Flynn, Edwards 4.

BRANSON IS GREAT DESPITE LOSS OF GAME TO HIGH POINT

"Oh no, you don't." One might read those very words in the determined thought expressed on Jesse Branson's face as he meditates momentarily while watching the grabbing hand of High Point's Dale Neel during the recent bitter battle between the Christians and Panthers, a battle in which the Panthers used a desperate last-second fling to defeat the Elon cagers by a single point on a 63-67 score. The invading High Pointers won the effort, but the greatest glory of the night went to Branson after a mighty victory that netted 41 points and 19 rebounds for the Elon All-American while being denied a championship or defense all night long by the Panthers. Branson was hailed by friend and foe alike for perhaps the greatest performance of a great career.



Jesse Branson Has 'Finest Hour' As . . . Panthers Gain 68 To 67 Win On Last-Second Shot

Elon Downs Guilford

The Christian basketballers threw an unexpected zone defense against the Guilford Quakers here on Thursday night, January 14th, and that surprise defensive move by Coach Bill Miller and his Elon cagers completely flabbergasted the powerful Quakers and gave Elon a lopsided 67 to 44 victory.

The Quaker fans and Guilford's Coach Jerry Steele looked on in utter disbelief as the Guilford basketballers went down to defeat. The Quakers, who had been hailed as the "Cinderella Team" of the Conference this year, had posted 11 wins in 13 games prior to that night, but they found their attack rendered powerless in the face of the tight Elon zone.

The Quakers made a tight battle of it through the first half, and with six minutes remaining before intermission Guilford was actually in front by a 24 to 23 count. At that moment Jesse Branson hit a field goal and a pair of charity tosses to send Elon back ahead, and the Christians moved to a close 34-30 edge at the break.

Big Jesse Branson, who ripped the nets for 29 points during the game, hit 17 of those counters in the first half as he kept the Christians ahead most of the way. He was joined early in the second half by Bobby Atkins, who hit three quick buckets and went on to score 12 of his 14-point total in a big final half to pace Elon to the 67-44 victory.

(Continued on Page Four)

If England had her "Finest Hour" in her heroic stand against the German blitz early in World War II, then surely Jesse Branson had his personal "Finest Hour" when he almost single-handedly fought back the High Point Panthers over in Alumni Memorial Gymnasium on Saturday night, January 23rd, only to see the Panthers win a 68 to 67 decision on a last-second desperation shot.

The Panthers came into the Elon gym that night as the Number Two small college team in America and with a record of fourteen wins in fifteen starts up to that time, but the High Pointers were looking defeat squarely in the face when Branson topped an already mighty effort with a "three-point play" that shot Elon to a 67-66 edge with barely forty seconds on the clock.

Then the Panthers came down the floor, with the seconds ticking rapidly away as they maneuvered the ball for that last shot in a bid for victory. They had no time-outs left and could not pause to group their forces, so it appeared that time might run out, and then the hulking form of Dale Neel, all 6 feet 9½ inches and 245 pounds of him, barged down the left side of the lane, smashing into Branson as he went, and a hook shot lofted high and into the basket for the win.

The victory went into the books for High Point, but the individual glory belonged to Jesse Branson, Elon's great forward, who was clearly All-American and All-Anything that night, as he ripped the cords on 17 of 23 tries from the floor and netted 7 of 10 shots from

the charity stripe for 41 points. He also pulled down 19 rebounds, and the whole performance was done with two and sometimes three Panthers hanging on his neck. Branson had scored more points and got more rebounds in other games, but he never played a better game against tougher conditions.

In addition to Branson, Bobby Atkins was the only other Elon player able to hit double figure scoring, with the speedy guard chipping in 13 points. High Point put four men

in double figures, with Neel's 19 counters tops for the invaders for the night.
The line-ups:
Pos. Elon (67) High Point (68)
F—Branson (41) Stewart (15)
F—Such (2) Tatgenhorst (3)
C—Andrew (3) Neel (19)
G—Atkins (13) Smith (12)
G—A. Davis (2) Forte (16)
Half-time: High Point 37, Elon 31.
Elon subs — Winfrey 6, Van Lear 3.
High Point sub — Green 3.

The Bulldogs kept the game close through the first half, which ended with Elon on top by five points at 30 to 25, but the Fighting Christians unleashed a whirlwind assault on the basket in the second half and had moved out front by 17 points midway that final half.

Towering Jesse Branson, who ripped the nets for 33 points, continued his torrid play of recent games as he ran his total for the four most recent Elon battles to 150 points, an average of 37.5 points per game for the four-game stretch.

Branson hit 21 of his points from the free-throw circle, and in so doing he set a new all-time Elon record for most free throws in a single game. His 21 charity tosses

broke the old mark of 17 set by Jewey Andrew in 1963. Branson had previously set a new Elon rebound mark this year when he pulled down 27 rebounds against Frederick to smash his own old mark of 25 that he first set last year.

The Christians put four men in double figures as they swept past the Bulldogs that night. Bobby Atkins racked 15 points, 12 of them in the last half drive, and both Art Davis and Dave Winfrey hit 10 points for the night.
Pos. Elon (91) A.C.C. (68)
F—Branson (33) Tice (6)
F—A. Davis (10) Serba (3)
C—Van Lear (9) Jones (13)
G—Atkins (15) Johnson (18)
G—Winfrey (10) Ashworth (11)
Half-time: Elon 30, Atlantic Christian 25.
Elon subs — Such 7, Hughes, Andrew 2, T. Davis 3, Nicks, Mixon 2, Atlantic Christian subs — Tod, Hobbs 3, Hill 8, Harper 2, Hale 4.

Atkins Leading Scorer Before Capacity Crowd

Playing to a capacity crowd of 4,600 fans, largest crowd ever to see a varsity basketball game at Elon College, the Fighting Christian cagers came from behind in the last half to turn back the Western Carolina Catamounts here last Saturday night, February 6th, by a 92 to 81 count.

The huge crowd, many of them attracted by the prospect of a personal scoring duel between Elon's Jesse Branson and Western Carolina's Henry Logan, the two top scorers in the Carolinas Conference, saw Logan edge an ailing Branson by a single point. Branson, who was fighting a flu virus and a temperature at the time, pumped in 26 points, only to see Logan drop a free throw and a stolen lay-up in the final two minutes to count 27 points for the night.

With so many eyes on the much-heralded Branson and Logan, it remained for sharp-shooting Bobby Atkins, Elon's fine sophomore guard to run off with the top scoring honors for the night. Atkins topped both Branson and Logan when he hit on 9 of 15 floor shots and swished 11 of 12 from the free throw line to net 29 points for the night.

It was a close battle all the way, with Western Carolina moving to a quick lead in the early minutes, with Elon coming to the fore in the next five minutes of that first half. John Brintnall then led a Catamount rally that pulled Western to the front again, and the Catamounts held a slim 40-39 margin at the half-time break. Two three-point plays by Charlie Van Lear kept Elon in contention.

The Cats widened the margin as the second half opened, but within a period of six minutes the two teams swapped leads or were tied thirteen times midway the period.

Elon Cage Games

- Elon 65, Wofford 64.
- Elon 66, Pfeiffer 68.
- Elon 85, Lenoir Rhyne 84.
- Elon 65, High Point 76.
- Elon 56, Appalachian 59.
- Elon 60, Erskine 65.
- Elon 100, Loyola 80.
- Elon 71, Fort Eustis 75.
- Elon 84, Wofford 92.
- Elon 106, A.C.C. 79.
- Elon 60, East Carolina 67.
- Elon 70, Campbell 59.
- Elon 67, Guilford 44.
- Elon 86, Campbell 77.
- Elon 67, High Point 68.
- Elon 62, Catawba 60.
- Elon 91, A.C.C. 68.
- Elon 72, Frederick 56.
- Elon 92, West Carolina 81.

(Remaining Games)

- Feb. 8—Pfeiffer, away.
- Feb. 10—Appalachian, home.
- Feb. 13—East Carolina, home.
- Feb. 17—Lenoir Rhyne, away.
- Feb. 20—West Carolina, away.
- Feb. 24-27—Conference Tourney at Lexington.

and Bobby Atkins jumped Elon to a 64-60 margin with 9:55 remaining, and the Christians were never headed again. Elon held as much as 13 points lead at times and finished with an 11-point margin.

The line-ups:
Pos. Elon (92) West Carolina (81)
F—Branson (26) McConnell (13)
F—Such (4) Moore (8)
C—A. Davis (4) Brintnall (17)
G—Atkins (29) Logan (27)
G—Mixon (4) Kiser (16)
Half-time: Western Carolina 40, Elon 39.

Elon subs: Van Lear 13, Winfrey 12. Western Carolina subs: Bloom, Burrell.



Spotlighting The Fighting Christians

By TOM CORBITT

On Thursday, January 14th, the athletic department, the administration and student leaders met with Mr. H. C. "Jobie" Hawn, commissioner of the Carolinas Conference, for the purpose of discussing sportsmanship, crowd behavior and officiating. Mr. Hawn had asked to be invited to all Carolinas Conference schools, and Dr. Danielely had promptly invited him to visit Elon.

Concern has been expressed about sportsmanship in the Conference (or the lack of it), for several incidents have occurred recently within the Conference which have detracted from the reputation of Conference members, with booing by students and spectators and "crowd baiting" by coaches having become quite prevalent.

Mr. Hawn, in speaking to the assembled group here at Elon, stated that "all of our trouble stems from officiating. The better the officiating, the better the sportsmanship." He further brought out that the key to this problem lies in the fact that referees and officials are not adequately paid for their services in the Carolinas Conference when measured by the standard of fees paid by the Atlantic Coast Conference, the Southeastern Conference and the Southern Conference.

Sports officials in the Carolinas Conference receive \$25 per game and 12 cents per mile one way for refereeing basketball games. By comparison, officials in the Atlantic Coast Conference receive \$80 per game and 25 cents per mile, while those in the Southeastern Conference are paid \$75 per game and 20 cents per mile, and those in the Southern Conference get \$70 per game and 20 cents per mile.

The "better" officials work where

the salaries are the highest. There are 112 licensed football officials under Mr. Hawn, with only 42 of them rated as Atlantic Coast Conference officials, and 29 of those 42 also work in the Carolinas Conference. Consequently, the Carolinas Conference is frequently forced to use young officials who tend to make mistakes and tend to be indecisive and who are unwilling to take abuse from spectators.

In the future, an attempt will be made to better train these Carolinas Conference officials, but for the present Commissioner Hawn is asking our help and understanding. It is his opinion that as the coaches, players, cheerleaders and campus leaders conduct themselves, so will the student body react.

Suggestions designed to improve the situation are that players on the bench and coaches should in general remain seated at all times and should not attempt to incite crowd reactions by their actions on the bench.

Cheerleaders are urged to hold up their hands to stop booing, for students should not boo and should attempt to discourage unsportsmanlike spectators who may not be members of the college community.

Faculty members may help too, by mentioning sportsmanship in their classrooms, and student government and fraternal organizations may do much to encourage sportsmanlike conduct.

Commissioner Hawn, in his talk here, did not mean to imply that he was in any way criticizing sportsmanship at Elon, for his discussion was a general one. He expressed the hope that the school spirit at Elon would in no way be

(Continued on Page Four)

Cage Squad Tops Indians

Making their first start after finishing mid-term examinations, the Maroon and Gold basketball squad gained a close and hard-fought 62 to 60 victory over the Catawba Indians at Salisbury on Saturday night, January 30th, and once more it was a scintillating effort by Jesse Branson that sent Elon's colors winging to the top of the victory pole.

The big Elon All-American continued his scorching offensive play which had produced two consecutive games of 40 and 41 points the week before when he flipped in an even three dozen counters against the Indians, and it was fortunate for the Christians that Branson was still blazing hot, for no other Elon player could do better than seven points.

The Catawba quint, in the midst of one of its worst seasons, proved surprisingly strong. The Indians were only 1-8 in the Conference as they faced the Christians, but they kept the score close all the way and trailed by only a single point several times in the torrid second half.

Branson hit on fourteen field buckets and added eight points from (Continued on Page Four)