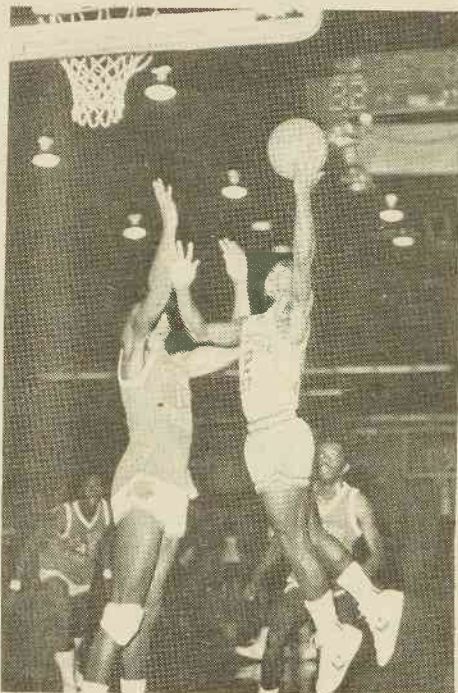


SPORTS

McNeil Selected CIAA Player-Of-The-Year



By John B. Henderson

Bonny McNeil, a name familiar to Central Intercollegiate Athletics Association (CIAA) opponents all year long, has been named, along with forward Julius Norman of Virginia State, CIAA "Co-Player-Of-The-Year", according to information released by the CIAA Office at Hampton, Virginia.

McNeil, last year's NAIA free-throw leader at the national level, was also selected to the ALL-CIAA squad for the 1981-82 campaign in a poll by the conference coaches.

A native of Durham, N.C., McNeill

is currently leading the Fayetteville State University basketball team in scoring (20 hoops per game) and assists, with seven.

Third year mentor, Jake Ford is highly complementary of his 5-7 dynamic point-guard who he calls the "best guard in the entire country--pound for pound." Despite giving a decided advantage in height to most of his opponents, McNeil performed like a magician on the court, bewildering the taller opponents with his Houdini-like moves.

"I am very happy for the young man," began Ford who captured his 100th collegiate victory this season. "Bonny has been very consistent for us this year and I feel that he is very deserving of the honor."

How does "Super B," as he is called by his fans and classmates, feel about the recent honors bestowed upon him?

"I feel very honored and I know that my family is gonna go crazy when they find out," said McNeill who is from a close-knit family. "I know my dad's really gonna go crazy when I tell him this," said McNeil with a wide grin. He further stated that he feels that the coach and his teammates deserves some of the credit. "Without them I couldn't have done it."

Point-wise, McNeill's highest production was 35 points against St. Augustine's College. "I wanted to make ALL-CIAA when I came here," said McNeil. "And now this is really something."

Lady Broncos Finish Atop CIAA

By John B. Henderson

The Lady Broncos of Fayetteville State University finished the regular season of play with a perfect 12-0 record in the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association's (CIAA) Southern Division and an overall mark of 23-3.

Coached by second-year mentor Yvonne Edwards and ranked 7th in the NAIA national polls, the Lady Broncos reeled off 12 straight triumphs in-a-row after suffering a loss in early January (90-73) to non-conference opponent UNC-Wilmington whom the FSU club had defeated earlier at the holiday break, 97-71.

The Lady Broncos were the top seed at the CIAA Women's Tournament held recently at Durham's North Carolina Central University.

The Lady Broncos triumphed over Johnson C. Smith on the road, 78-60 and traveled to Livingstone College for the regular season finale, 80-61.

The Fayetteville State women's club is paced by junior Norfolk, Virginia native Concetha Smith who poured in 23 points in the win over Livingston. Smith, named the NAIA District 26 "Player-of-the-Week" recently, is averaging 19 points per contest. She is an ALL-CIAA point-guard and is practically a shoo-in for the all-conference honors again this campaign.

All-American candidate and ALL-CIAA forward senior Dianthia Morris is second in scoring at a 17-point clip while pulling down 12 rebounds. The Lawrenceville, New Jersey native is sure to take ALL-CIAA honors for the third time in her collegiate career at Fayetteville State.

Last year the Lady Bronco squad finished 24-6 and were eliminated in the first round of the CIAA women's tourney by Virginia State, 98-70.



All-CIAA forward Dianthia Morris
(Photo by John Henderson)



Jake Ford

When Ford Speaks... ...His Players Listen

By John B. Henderson

When it comes to the game of "round ball," commonly known as basketball, head basketball coach Jake Ford of Fayetteville State University believes in team discipline and execution.

Ford, a native of Georgetown, South Carolina, and a former National Basketball Association star with the Seattle Supersonics, is in his third season in the tough Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) conference. He is currently enjoying his best start at the Bronco helm (12-3 overall and 7-2 in the league) winning six straight CIAA contest recently over Bowie State (54-39); North Carolina Central (82-61); Virginia Union (81-59); Livingston College (56-48); St. Augustine College (65-53); and Elizabeth City State (72-67).

Needless to say, the Palmetto state native and his 1981-82 edition of the FSU Bronco hardwood-men are currently making a strong bid for conference honors although coach Ford says he really does not have a "talented" squad.

Whether this is the case or not regarding talent, coach Ford's players have confidence in him.

Says Dino Russell, 6-2 guard and junior college transfer from Gastonia, North Carolina: "The coach (Ford) has been there (championships) before and he knows what it takes to win. Therefore, we listen to him and what he instructs us to do."

Russell, who possesses tremendous jumping ability for his 6-2 frame at 162 pounds, is one of the main cogs in the Bronco Machine this season averaging over 15 baskets an outing.

Coach Ford's "firm but gentle" coaching tactics paid off in great dividends earlier in the season (in fact, the third game of the season) when his Bronco squad won the coveted "Bull City" Invitational Tourney at North Carolina Central over the Eagles, 63-50, garnering the championship

trophy for the second time in three years.

Coach Ford's strategy and disciplined style have continued to pay off as his squad honored him recently with his 100th collegiate career victory with a 81-69 triumph over coach Dave Robbins' NCAA Division II top-ranked Virginia Union Panthers, giving them their first collegiate setback of the season.

Coach Ford is the primary reason senior five-foot-seven point-guard Bonny McNeil has blossomed into a fine free-throw shooter and was the NAIA's fourth best free throw percentage shooter in the nation last year.

"I consider Bonny McNeil, pound for pound, the best guard in the entire country," said Ford. "I also think Dino Russell is a tremendous player but he is just too unselfish and needs to shoot more instead of passing the ball off."

McNeil, a physical education major from Durham, is Ford's floor leader and leading scorer for the Broncos (18 ppg) and possesses more moves than a "belly dancer."

"My mom told me to be more careful after watching me play recently," said McNeill with a wide grin.

Says coach Ford about his star guard: "Bonny is not afraid to go to the basket for a shot over the taller guys. I explained to him starting last year that he will be getting a lot of shots from the free throw line and he has developed this skill (shooting free-throws) and done exceptionally well."

McNeil is the first to give coach Ford the credit for his success.

"I believe that coach Ford has helped develop me more as a team player and team leader," he said seriously and is known to his teammates and fans as "Super B" at FSU. "As a player you must listen to him because I feel that he wants us to do our best and he has our best interest at heart."

There is no doubt that coach Ford knows about winning and how to win. Ford played collegiately at Maryland State (now Maryland Easter-Shore) and is accustomed to winning.

At Maryland State, he was named ALL-CIAA twice and during the 1970 CIAA Tournament at Greensboro, Ford set a tourney record by connecting on 19 free throws.

Ford's other plaudits while playing guard at Maryland State included "Player-of-the-Year" in the CIAA conference; an All-American for two years; team leader in free throw percentage (four years); and was selected "Most Valuable Player" at the NAIA Tournament.

After receiving his master's degree from the University of Indiana, he served at Vorhees College in Denmark, South Carolina and was named conference "Coach-of-the-Year."

Last year, he was honored by his fellow coaches in the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) conference as "Coach-of-the-Year" and is making a strong bid currently to repeat his coveted award.

With about half the Bronco schedule completed and his Bronco-men ranked 10th nationally in a radio network poll, the players at Fayetteville State will still be listening when coach Jake Ford speaks.