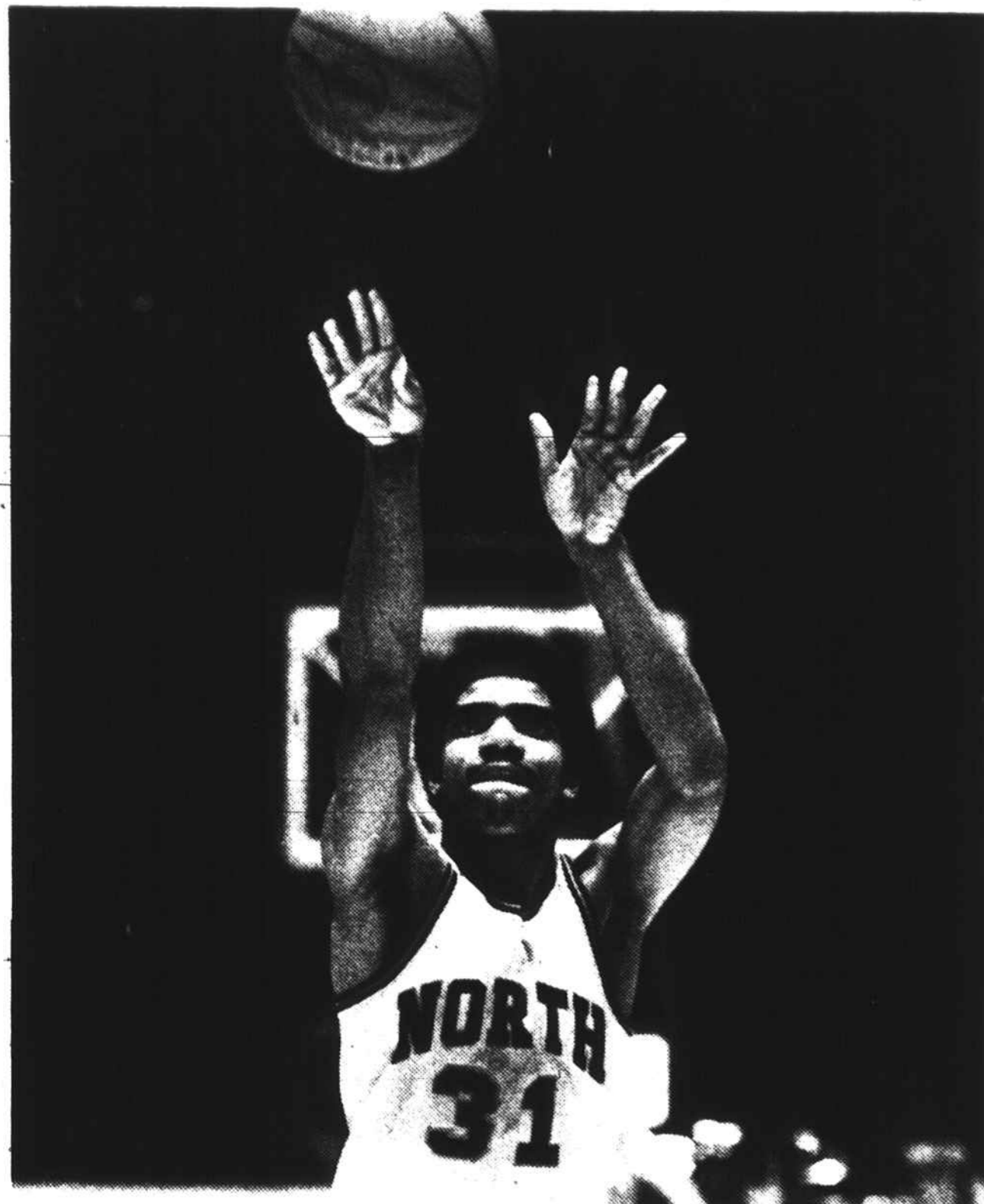


sportsweek

Columns, Scores, Profiles, Predictions



Mixed Results

North Surry's Strickland: Stellar on offense but overmatched by Chapel Hill's Smith on defense (photo by James Parker).

Prep Spotlight

Reynolds Stops East In Third-Place Game

By SAM DAVIS
Staff Writer

Hot-shooting Jack Maxwell and Lynwood Oliver paced a second-half rally that carried Reynolds to a come-from-behind 56-43 win over cross-town rival East Forsyth and a third-place finish in the Frank Spencer Classic last week at Memorial Coliseum.

Neither team seemed overjoyed about playing in the consolation game of the tourney, which resulted in a ho-hum first half. However, Reynolds got both its offense and defense going at the beginning of the second half.

The Demons, employing a zone defense for the first time this season under Coach Stan Elrod, were able to curtail East's inside game and take control in the third period.

"We threw a little zone at them in the first half and they seemed uncomfortable with it," said Elrod. "We knew they wanted to get the ball inside on us and, when we went into the zone, they looked confused. We talked at halftime about preventing them from getting the ball inside to Greg Scales and, once we took that away from them, they got frustrated."

Elrod said the loss of 6-4 center Jonathon Whitt earlier in the week was another reason for using a zone. "I'm not a zone coach," said Elrod, "but without

Whitt inside we don't have very much size."

Maxwell, a 6-0 swing man, had not seen action in the tournament prior to game against East because of an injured hand. But Maxwell came out confidently against the Eagles, drilling his first two shots to give the Demons an early 4-2 lead. However, he saved his best for the final quarter when he hit three consecutive outside jumpers.

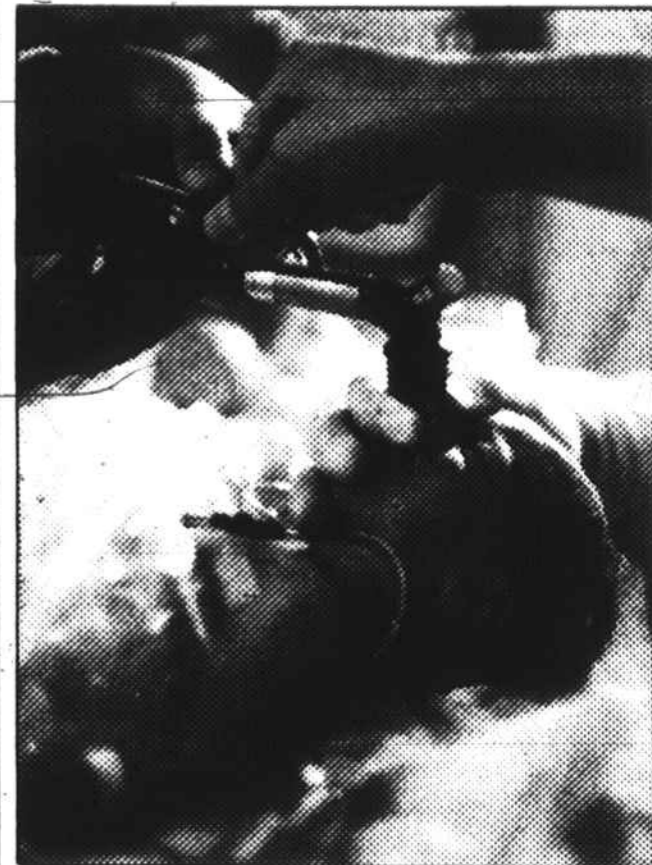
"I had been out for five days with a hand injury prior to the game and I really wanted to help the team tonight," said Maxwell. "We know we have to play them again so we all knew that if we won tonight we could gain a psychological edge. My job is to shoot from the outside and tonight my game was on, so I kept putting the ball up. We were also concentrating on stopping Scales and boxing East off the boards."

"Our strategy was to put some weight on him inside and not let him get a second or third shot," said Maxwell. "Coach told us at halftime to front Scales and give weak-side help. Fortunately, we were able to do our job inside."

Oliver, a 6-2 leaper who was able to contain Scales with help from his teammates, rejected Scales' shots twice during the game, in addition to soaring over the taller Eagles for 14 points and being named

Please see page B3

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Rams' Russell Leads CIAA In Scoring At Break

By ROBERT ELLER
Sports Editor

With the holiday break still under way, most CIAA basketball teams remain on vacation.

But things will get hot and heavy next week as school reopens and both the Southern and Northern Divisions begin conference competition with eyes on division titles and seedings for the CIAA tourney in February.

Thus far, only four divisional games have been played, all in the North, and Virginia State has a leg up on the rest of the field. The Trojans, who lost top scorers Julius Norman and Darrell Stith, both four-year starters, to graduation, looked to be hard-pressed to keep pace in the division this season. But they beat St. Paul's at home in early December and stunned powerful Virginia Union 77-74 in overtime Dec. 17.

Hampton is the only other team to have a division win to its credit, beating Bowie State back in November.

As for overall records, Hampton entered the holiday break at 8-1, Norfolk State was unbeaten in five games, and Union's only loss in eight outings came at the hands of Virginia State. The Panthers have also defeated the highly-regarded University of the District of Columbia this season.

Virginia State, at 5-3, is the only other Northern Division team with a winning record.

Aggies Impressive In Tourney Win

By ROBERT ELLER
Sports Editor

The North Carolina A&T Aggies, who had to settle for respect rather than a win against defending national champion North Carolina State Dec. 20, got both last weekend in the first University of North Carolina Charlotte Holiday Basketball Classic.

With tournament Most Valuable Player Joe Binion scoring 46 points and grabbing 26 rebounds in the two-day event, the Aggies took the title in impressive fashion.

In opening-round action, the Aggies took on Appalachian State in a game that was close through much of the early going. However, A&T outscored the Mountaineers 10-2 over the final two minutes of the first half to take a 37-28 halftime lead and was never headed in the 75-63 win.

Binion tossed in a game-high 24 points and had 10 rebounds. Guards Eric Boyd and Jimmy Brown added 15 points each for the Aggies.

A&T used a tight zone defense throughout the contest and Coach Don Corbett said he was pleased with the defensive effort.

In the title game the Aggies took on UNC-Wilmington in a nip-and-tuck affair throughout the first half which ended with the Aggies ahead 33-31. The two teams were tied three times in the final 20 minutes before the Aggies took the lead for good with eight minutes left and cruised to a 65-54 win.

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Overall, St. Augustine's, last season's division winner, is 6-1. WSSU is 6-2, Fayetteville State 6-5 and Johnson C. Smith 4-3.

A look at individual stats shows that WSSU's Troy Russell is the league's top scorer with a 23.6 points-per-game average. Russell, ranked 14th in the league in scoring last year with a 18.1 average, was not a pre-season all-conference selection.

Following Russell in scoring is St. Paul's Charles Bell, a pre-season all-league selection, is averaging 23 points per game after scoring at an 18-point clip last season, 15th in the league.

Virginia Union's 6-8 powerhouse Charles Oakley is third in scoring, averaging 22.4 points per game. Oakley is also the league's second-best rebounder, hauling in 13.4 misses per contest, and his 64 percent shooting accuracy is also second-best among league players.

Rounding out the top ten in scoring are Johnson C. Smith's Roosevelt McGruder (22.3), Kevin Bush of Virginia State (21.8), David Pope of Norfolk State (21.2), William Person of Fayetteville State (19.9), Michael Damon of Livingstone (19.8), Dave Lacy of Shaw (19.3) and Dwayne Wood of Virginia State (19.0).

Pope leads the league in rebounding with 13.8 per game. Following Oakley in the third spot is Fayetteville's Person at 12.5. Virginia State's Cliff Straughn is next with a 12.4 average, followed by Damon of Livingstone at 11.9.

North Carolina Central's Charles Murphy is the top field goal percentage shooter, making better than 71 per-

cent of his shots from the field. Behind Oakley is Russell, with a 58.5 mark.

Wood is the top assist man with an average of 5.8 per game, followed by Bubba Johnson of Hampton with a 5.6 average.

Wood is also the leader in steals, averaging 3.8 takeaways per game. McGruder of Smith is second with 3.3 and Pope averages three steals per outing.

Cedric Miller, Hampton 6-11 center, leads in blocked shots with 29, six more than runnerup John White of Bowie State.

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