

## Prep Spotlight

# Spartan jayvee team aims to fly high

By DAVID BULLA  
Chronicle Sports Editor

It is said that changes are irksome.

Yet, constant personnel turnover is a fact of life in scholastic sports. Such change has not been irksome for Mount Tabor Coach Rick Anderson, who again has one of the best jayvee basketball teams in the county.

The Spartans are coming off an 18-2 campaign, featuring such players as Pat Cunningham, Tyrone Lewis, Andra "Boo Boo" Baker and Ed Reese. Those players earned promotions to the varsity, but the 1985-86 jayvees are off to a 3-1 start.

The quick start can be attributed to an influx of new talent. The best of Coach Rick Anderson's stable includes 6-foot-3 Julius "Juice" Reese, 6-3 Hassan Stevens, 6-6 Joe John Bryant and 6-2 Stephon Torrence. Reese and Torrence are freshmen; Stevens and Bryant sophomores.

"We probably had better guards last year," Anderson said after the Spartans held on for a 56-54 win at pesky North last Friday. "But I think we're better inside this year. So that makes the two teams hard to compare."

"We're capable of having just as good a season. It might not show in the record because we play a more difficult schedule."

That proved to be the case in a road loss at Carver on Tuesday afternoon.

"Carver did some good things and we made a bunch of mistakes," he said. "They really stuck us."

"But at this point this season we are further along than we were a year ago. If we keep up the progress, we'll have a comparable season in my eyes."

Stevens was the standout in last Friday's game. The sophomore scored 24 points, including the last four of the see-saw contest. Stevens, a transfer student from Atlanta, also blocked three shots for the high-flying Spartans. No



Julius Reese, left, grabs a rebound and Hassan Stevens sticks a jump shot at a recent Mount Tabor practice; they are a formidable frontcourt combination for



the Spartan jayvee basketball team, which is off to a 3-1 start (photos by James Parker).

less than five of Anderson's players can jam and he frequently holds dunking sessions to motivate his team.

"I'm trying to get the feel of our system," said Stevens, who played jayvee ball at Benjamin E. Mays Academy in Atlanta last season. "In Atlanta, I was playing with some exceptional size. I was probably the shortest guy on the team and I was a strong forward."

Stevens, who lived his first

eight years in New York City before moving to Atlanta, is the son of John Stevens, a former semi-professional basketball player. Last season was the high point of the younger Stevens' basketball career, as the Mays jayvees went undefeated.

Both Stevens and Reese project as No. 3 or swing players by the time they reach college. Yet, most of their shots this season will be from short and medium range.

"We do have plays where we

shoot from the outside," Stevens acknowledged. "So we're not just shooting five-footers."

"I'm doing a lot of work on my shot, too. I go out at home and practice free throws for a couple of hours."

All of the Spartan jayvees are working on their dribbling. Stevens realizes he'll need to be able to handle the ball to play collegiately.

"In one drill, we dribble the ball as close to the floor as possi-

ble," he said. "You go back and forth until your arms grow tired. In another drill, you dribble two balls at one time without looking down."

Reese, the son of former Atkins track standout Ed Reese, plays three sports, including football and track. He probably is the fastest 14-year-old basketball player in the country. Over the summer, Reese set a national age-group record in the 400-meter dash. He and Torrence were part

of a foursome that enabled the Twin City Relays to take second place in the International Youth Meet of Champions (first place went to the combined Canadian entries).

"I'm not in any hurry to make a decision on which sport I'll ultimately pursue," said Reese, who has a reliable jump shot. "I will decide on the sport that I'm best in."

Reese and Stevens are not the Please see page B11

## College Basketball

# Youthful WSSU drops a pair on the road

By DAVID BULLA  
Chronicle Sports Editor

They were singing during basketball practice Tuesday afternoon at Winston-Salem State.

Which is strange, you might think, since the Rams are in the midst of the most demanding part of their schedule. Last week, WSSU lost to four-time Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference champion North Carolina A&T, defending CIAA champion Virginia Union and an improved Virginia State squad.

Perhaps the long, steep road that came with WSSU's December schedule requires a song. Or perhaps singing helped reduce some of the pressures of exam week. It's more likely that the Rams just have a few good singers, such as Rodney Davis, who sings the national anthem at home games.

Coach C.E. "Bighouse" Gaines isn't exactly singing the blues, but he hoped for something better than a 3-4 start, not including a decisive win over the AAU All-Stars.

"I thought we could be 7-2 going into January," said Gaines, whose club will not play for three weeks after Saturday night's game at Norfolk State. "We're just not playing fundamentally-sound basketball and we can't quite handle bigger teams. We're playing with three kids (sophomore Terry Nance, junior college transfer Kevin Harvey and newcomer Harry Giles) who don't have a whole lot of experience." lot of experience."

Then there are nights like last Friday, when the Rams played well in a 98-85 loss at Virginia Union, rated No. 1 among NCAA Division II schools in the preseason. But the Panthers have the sky-walking Jamie Waller, who put on a

*"They're doing the best they can. But we are playing the roughest teams on our schedule."*

*-- Bighouse Gaines*

34-point show for the Rams. Waller had the nets singing often, to the tune of a 10-of-17 night from the floor and a 14-of-17 outing from the line.

"We did a pretty good job of containing everybody else," Gaines said. "Then Jamie would come up with some unusual moves."

Oscar "Big O" Williams countered with 25 points and Alexander Hooper added 18. But Virginia Union dominated the boards, fashioning a 50-29 cushion. Jerry Hargrove led the way with 12 rebounds. Waller and Greg Williams had 10 each. Harry Giles was WSSU's leader with six boards.

The Rams are lean on true big men. Gary Cromartie, at 6-7 and 220 pounds, is WSSU's largest inside player. But he's out with an ankle injury.

Maurice Edmonds, a 6-7 freshman, started with a bang, but he had only four rebounds against A&T and one against Union. So Gaines sat him against Virginia State.

Freshman Derek Daniels, a terror in the prestigious Inner-High League in Washington, D.C., last season, has Charles Barkley's disease. No, the 6-7, 235-pound Daniels isn't excessively overweight like Barkley. Instead, Daniels' problem, according to Gaines, is small hands.

That left the 6-7 Harvey, 6-4 Nance and

the 6-5 Giles as Gaines' big men in the 81-62 setback at Virginia State. They combined for 13 points and 12 rebounds. David Blackwell, VSU's 6-7 center, had 18 points and 10 rebounds. Trojan forward Alfred Cantrell had 15 points and 14 rebounds.

Although Hooper had one of his best games of the young season (19 points on seven-of-10 shooting and five of six from the line), his effort was not enough to offset the solid outings turned in by the Trojan front line.

Gaines is still trying to find the right combination. That is, his house isn't quite in order.

Nance has been playing out of position, thus limiting his effectiveness. Giles, perhaps the best all-around athlete on the team, is operating with a toe and thumb injury sustained during the football season.

But none of these players are true big men who can consistently match up with the best centers and power forwards in the CIAA.

"They're doing the best they can," Gaines said. "But we are playing the roughest teams on our schedule. I believe A&T will win the MEAC again. West Virginia Tech will be No. 1 or 2 in its conference. Paine is going to have a winning season and there's no question about the quality of Virginia Union."

"But playing a tough early-season schedule should pay dividends when we get into divisional play."

Indeed, the entire CIAA Southern Division appears to be mediocre at best this season. Such a scenario means that the enterprising Gaines, the winningest active coach in college basketball, may yet find a way to win the division flag. For, one of his

Please see page B10



## Inside Move

Maurice Edmonds uses the glass to score two points in a recent Winston-Salem State basketball game (photo by James Parker).