

Vikings sweep pair from Yellow Jackets

By DAVID BULLA
Chronicle Sports Editor

Reporters who regularly cover Atlantic Coast Conference basketball know that former official Lou Bello, now a Raleigh sportscaster, often asks coaches a hard question after games:

Why did one team shoot so many more free throws than the other?

The winning coaches, usually embarrassed, do their best to duck Bello's question. The losers go head-long into an off-the-record tirade on the unfairness of officiating, claiming that getting a fair shake is like trying to climb a hill of feathers. Yet, there are no easy answers.

Last Friday night, disparities in foul shots figured in a couple of county high school games. In North's homecourt 71-58 win over Carver, the Vikings made 25 of 33 free throws. The Yellow Jackets went to the line 10 times and made six. In East's 59-54 road upset of Greensboro Page, the Eagles made 27 of 46 charity tosses. The Pirates were eight of 18.

Those kind of differences left losing coaches and players pondering the futility of their game.

"I couldn't believe it," mused Carver guard Tim Douthit. "North was in the one-and-one with 5:53 left in the first quarter. That's the earliest I've ever seen anyone in the bonus."

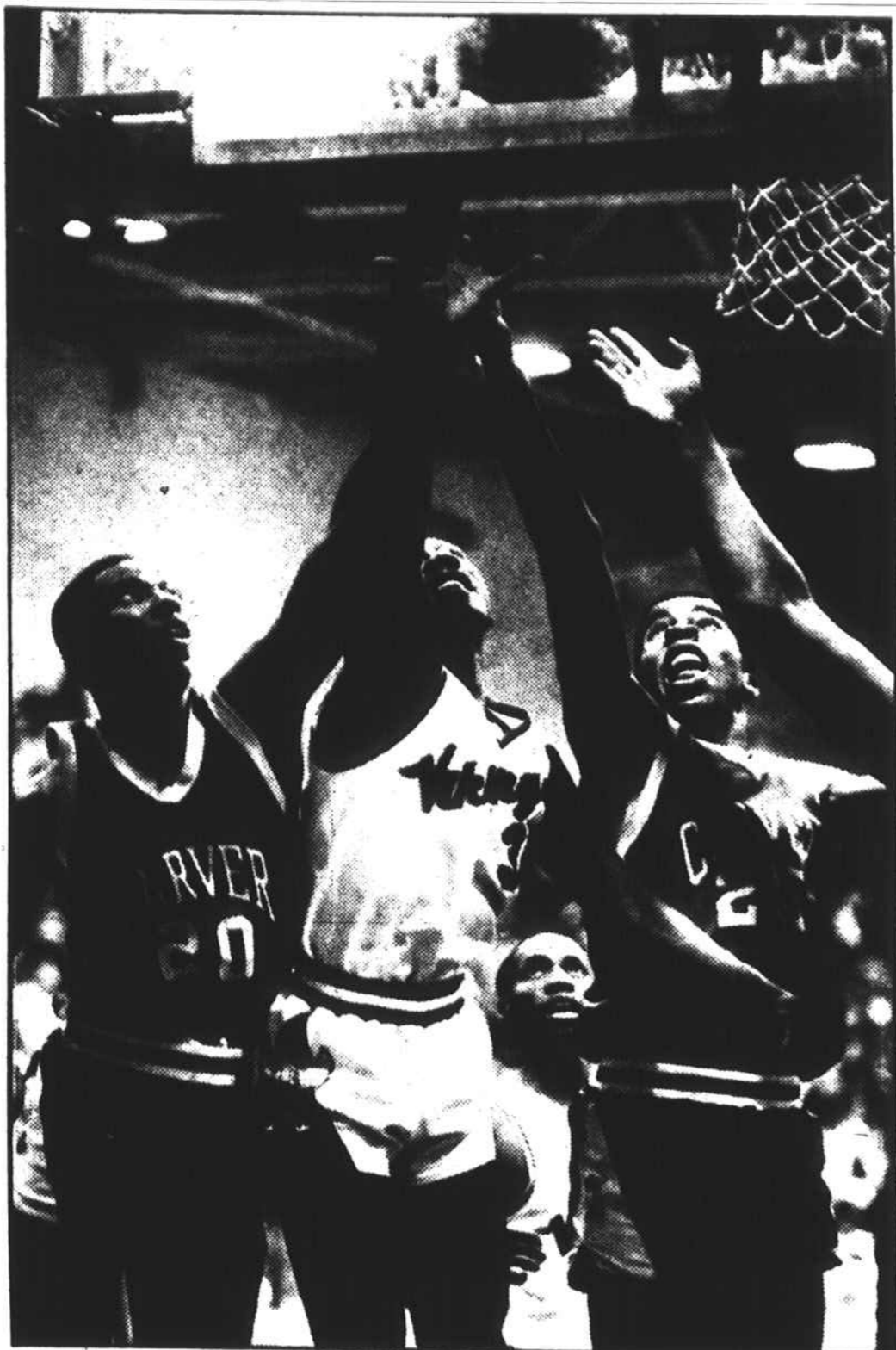
Yellow Jacket Coach Alfred Poe does not believe in criticizing the officials. However, Poe wondered just what he was supposed to tell his players.

"Look, North's a great team and we would have had enough trouble beating them even up," he said. "They shot 33 free throws and we shot 10. Does that mean they played perfect defense and we didn't? How are you going to beat a team that shoots 23 more free throws than you do?"

The latest North-Carver game was a case of second verse, same as the first. In a 67-53 win at Carver Jan. 10, the Vikings shot 26 free throws, compared to nine by the Yellow Jackets.

But the free throw disparity was not Poe's only plague. Carver played without point guard Corey Belton, who suffered a severe ankle sprain two weeks ago and has been in a cast ever since. He was expected to have it removed this week. However, he may not be able to play for at least two more weeks.

"We don't have a bad ballclub," said Poe, whose team has lost four of its last six. "We haven't had our backcourt together more than seven times all season. Tim missed several



North's Rodney Scott splits Patrick Dozier, left, and Ben Miller for a tap-in and two of his 16 points in the win over Carver (photo by James Parker).

games with an ankle sprain and now Corey has the same problem. We haven't had any continuity in our offense because of those injuries."

The Yellow Jackets, who dropped to 1-5 in the Metro Conference and 9-8 overall, had a formidable game plan for North. Poe used a big starting lineup of 6-foot-6 Ben Miller, 6-5 Fernando Horn and 6-4 Ray Agnew. Douthit and Patrick Dozier manned the guard positions. It seemed like a workable strategy, but the free throw situation rendered it superfluous.

For North, the game represented an opportunity to return to the ranks of the winners after last Tuesday night's 71-65 loss at Greensboro Page. The Vikings did not disappoint Coach Olon Shuler, whose club regained a share of the Metro Conference lead with Page with a 5-1 record. North took a 17-2 overall mark into Tuesday night's game at East.

"We had a couple of days of hard practices, and had to come back and play good," said North

forward Brian Howard, who had 14 points, 11 rebounds and three blocked shots. "We didn't play as well as we wanted to in the first half, but we started to click on all cylinders in the second half."

North held a somewhat tenuous 29-25 halftime lead as Carver's big lineup and a sagging 2-3 zone prevented the Vikings from getting their usual assortment of high-percentage shots. But the Vikings gradually pulled away in the second half on excellent shot selection. North shot 67 percent for the half.

Shuler also was pleased with the way his team handled the ball.

"We didn't turn the ball over but nine times, compared to 21 times at Page," Shuler said. "We just took better care of the basketball."

"We also got some transition baskets. If we're going to be successful, we're going to have to get the ball up and down the court."

Jeff Denny led the Vikings with 24 points and Rodney Scott added 16. Denny had nine rebounds and Scott seven. Chris Upson pitched in 13 points.

Carver's Miller, a 6-foot-6 senior, turned in another outstanding effort, totaling 22 points and 12 rebounds.

In an exciting girls' game, North rallied for a 37-33 overtime win. The Lady Vikings trailed 33-27 with 1:32 left in regulation. That's when they turned up the intensity to salvage the critical conference victory.

North and East met Tuesday night, with the winner claiming sole possession of first place in the Metro 4-A. North won the first game 35-33 three weeks ago.

Bev Gaylean started North's comeback with a 15-foot bank shot with 54 seconds left. Teammates Ayse Erginer and Annette Lawson converted back-to-back one-and-ones to forge a 33-33 tie.

The ever-aggressive Lawson fouled Carver's Jenee Cross as the clock ran out in regulation. But Cross missed the front end of the one-and-one to send the contest into overtime.

"We made a heckuva comeback," North Coach Gene Malloy said. "I thought Ayse Erginer played a great game. She really came through at the end of the game, especially on defense."

In the extra period, Gaylean got a layup and Erginer and Tina Banner each converted a free throw. Meanwhile, Carver center Pam Sawyer, who finished with

nine points, fouled out and North effectively sealed off the inside.

Cross led the Lady Yellow Jackets with 12 points.

Erginer led North with 13 points and 12 rebounds. Lawson added 12 points.

The North girls, behind Lawson's 16 points, took a one-game lead on East with a 49-40 road win Tuesday night.

The Lady Vikings, who frustrated East's offensive flow with a 1-3-1 zone, won the game at the line. They made 19-of-27 free tosses, compared to 7-of-18 for East.

"We also got back before they could get into the transition," Malloy said. "East is at its best in the transition."

Honor Roll

- Shaunda Gamble hit two free throws with 10 seconds left to give East a 43-41 girls win over Page last Friday night. Gamble led the Lady Eagles with 13 points

- Jennifer Singer paced West with 18 in a 48-34 triumph over Parkland. Angela Glenn led Parkland with 16

- Janice Rhynehardt had 11 points in Glenn's 28-25 loss to Greensboro Smith

- Zeb Sheff pumped in 20 points to lead Parkland's 50-47 upset of the West boys, whose nine-game winning streak ended

- Elston Johnson had 16 points and Phil Kelley added 14 to pace Mount Tabor's 62-51 upset of North Davidson

- Scott Bailey netted 21 points and Chan LaRue added 14 to lead East's upset of Page

- Connell Surles totaled 24 in Glenn's 56-55 loss to Smith

- Scott Spransy scored 17 and Colin Stainback had 14 in Reynolds' 59-53 win over Davie County



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PREP STANDINGS

Tuesday night's games not included.

County Standings BOYS				Central Piedmont 4-A BOYS			
Team	W-L	Team	Conf. W L	All Games W L			
North	17-2	West	8 2	15 4			
West	15-4	Reynolds	8 2	10 8			
Parkland	10-7	N. David	7 3	13 6			
Reynolds	10-8	Parkland	6 4	10 7			
Carver	9-8	Mt. Tabor	5 5	8 10			
Mount Tabor	8-10	Brown	4 6	6 12			
East	4-12	S. Rowan	2 8	5 14			
Glenn	4-15	Davie Co.	0 10	2 14			

County Standings GIRLS				Metro 4-A GIRLS			
Team	W-L	Team	Conf. W L	All Games W L			
East	15-2	North	5 1	10 6			
North	10-6	East	5 1	14 2			
Carver	6-8	Smith	4 2	6 8			
Reynolds	7-9	Page	3 3	8 7			
Glenn	6-9	Carver	1 5	6 8			
Parkland	4-11	Glenn	0 6	6 9			
West	2-13						
Mount Tabor	1-15						

Metro 4-A BOYS				Central Piedmont 4-A GIRLS			
Team	Conf. W L	All Games W L	Team	Conf. W L	All Games W L		
North	5 1	17 2	S. Rowan	8 1	13 4		
Page	5 1	14 2	N. David	7 3	10 8		
Smith	4 2	8 6	Reynolds	6 4	7 9		
East	3 3	4 12	Brown	6 4	7 9		
Carver	1 5	9 8	Davie Co.	5 5	5 11		
Glenn	0 6	4 15	Parkland	4 6	4 11		
			West	2 7	2 13		
			Mt. Tabor	1 9	1 15		