

With Kemp & Pierce, Sonics are playoff-bound

BY JIM COUR
AP SPORTS WRITER

SEATTLE -- With Shawn Kemp and Ricky Pierce, the Seattle SuperSonics are headed into the NBA playoffs.

Without Roy Tarpley and Fat Lever, the Dallas Mavericks are going nowhere.

Seattle moved a step closer to the playoffs with Saturday night's 115-102 victory over the Mavericks.

And that wasn't the only negative for Mavericks on Saturday. Earlier, the injured 7-foot Tarpley was arrested on suspicion of drunken driving by police in Dallas. Tarpley has twice violated the league's anti-drug policy.

"It's very disheartening," Dallas coach Richie Aduvato said. "He's been doing so well of late with his rehabilitation."

"He slipped, obviously. I can't comment beyond this until I get the police report."

Dallas isn't the same team without Tarpley and Lever, both sidelined with season-ending knee injuries. The Mavericks were 4-1 before Tarpley tore the anterior cruciate in his right knee against Orlando on Nov. 9.

They're 21-44 since.

Rolando Blackman, Tarpley's teammate and vice president of the NBA Players Association, was saddened by the news of Tarpley's arrest.

"My first thought was I hoped

number to four, any combination of wins or losses by either Dallas or the Los Angeles Clippers.

Seattle has 11 regular-season games left, seven at home.

The Sonics have won two straight after losing eight of 10

"My teammates said it's been a while since I got one of those dunks," Kemp said. "It got the crowd going."

Blackman, a 10-year veteran with 15,000 career points, said Kemp has the potential to be a superstar in pro basketball.

"His abilities are limitless," Blackman said. "If his jump shooting gets more consistent and if he improves his court awareness, he'll be one of the great ones."

Kemp attributed his outstanding game to Dallas' defensive tactics.

"My game is in the low post," he said. "They didn't double team me. It was like they were saying, 'Go ahead.'"

The highly competitive Pierce was at his scowling best when it counted, the fourth quarter. He kept the Sonics on top with Kemp out of the game.

Pierce, who didn't come to Seattle until Feb. 15 in a trade with Milwaukee for Dale Ellis, is fast becoming the leader of the Sonics.

"At the end of the game, I want the ball because the most important thing is winning," Pierce said.

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-Ricky Pierce

he didn't violate his probation," Blackman said.

But he said the Dallas players, including himself, could not be distracted by Tarpley's latest headlines.

Dallas has 12 regular-season games left, including a game in Dallas against Denver on Tuesday night. The Mavericks weren't confident about their playoff chances after losing to Seattle for the second time in four games.

"This was a two-game because this was the team we are competing with," Aduvato said.

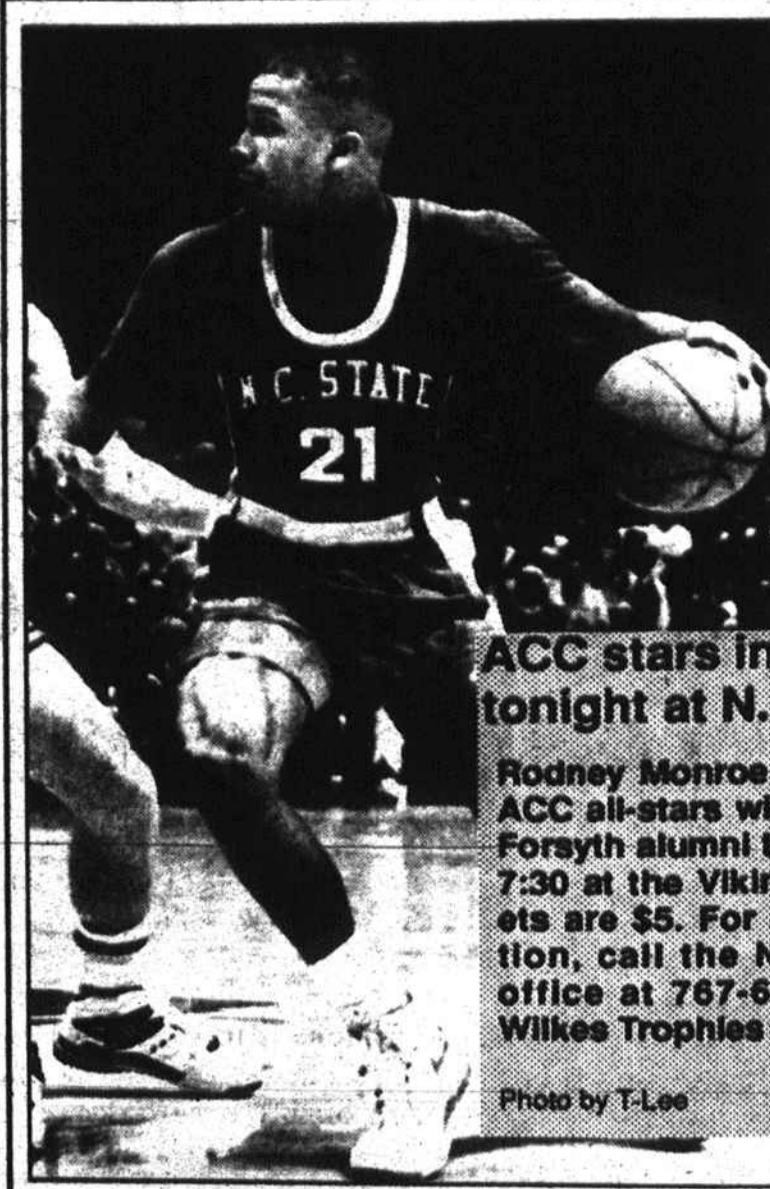
Seattle (34-37) holds down the eighth and final Western Conference playoff berth. The victory over Dallas cut the Sonics' magic

games.

Kemp and Pierce were the pivotal players for the Sonics in the second half against the Mavericks. Kemp scored 11 of his 23 points in the third quarter and Pierce had 11 of his 19 points in the fourth quarter.

Kemp sat out most of the fourth quarter after his fifth personal foul. He made 10 of 12 shots from the field, including a 3-pointer and three slam dunks. He had two of Seattle's seven blocked shots.

The 21-year-old Kemp was at his thrilling best. He excited the crowd of 11,756 at the Seattle Coliseum with a two-handed reverse slam dunk in the third quarter.



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Photo by T-Lee

Norfolk mentor voted Division II women's coach of the year

By Chronicle Staff

Norfolk State women's basketball coach James Sweat has been named Converse's NCAA Division II Coach of the Year in a joint announcement by Converse Inc. and the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA).

In his third season as the Spartans head coach, Sweat guided the third-ranked NSU women to a 33-2 record and a first-ever NCAA Final Four appearance. Norfolk won its first 33 games, tying a Division II women's record for consecutive wins in a season and most wins in a season.

Earlier this year, Sweat, who

was also named the CIAA's Coach of the Year, earned his 250th career win. In 10 years of coaching, Sweat's record is 257-62, a winning percentage of .810.

Sweat led the Spartans to the Final Four with only one senior on the roster — Tracy Saunders, an All-American pick and the NCAA Division II Player of the Year. Norfolk has risen to the top quickly in just two years under Sweat whose team posted a 15-14 record in his first year at NSU in '89.

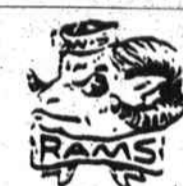
Sweat received his Coach of the Year award last weekend during the NCAA Division I women's national championships at New Orleans.



Photo by T-Lee

Sweat guided Norfolk State to their best season ever.

JOURNEYS TRAVEL RAM OF THE WEEK



MARGIE JONES
Junior Pitcher

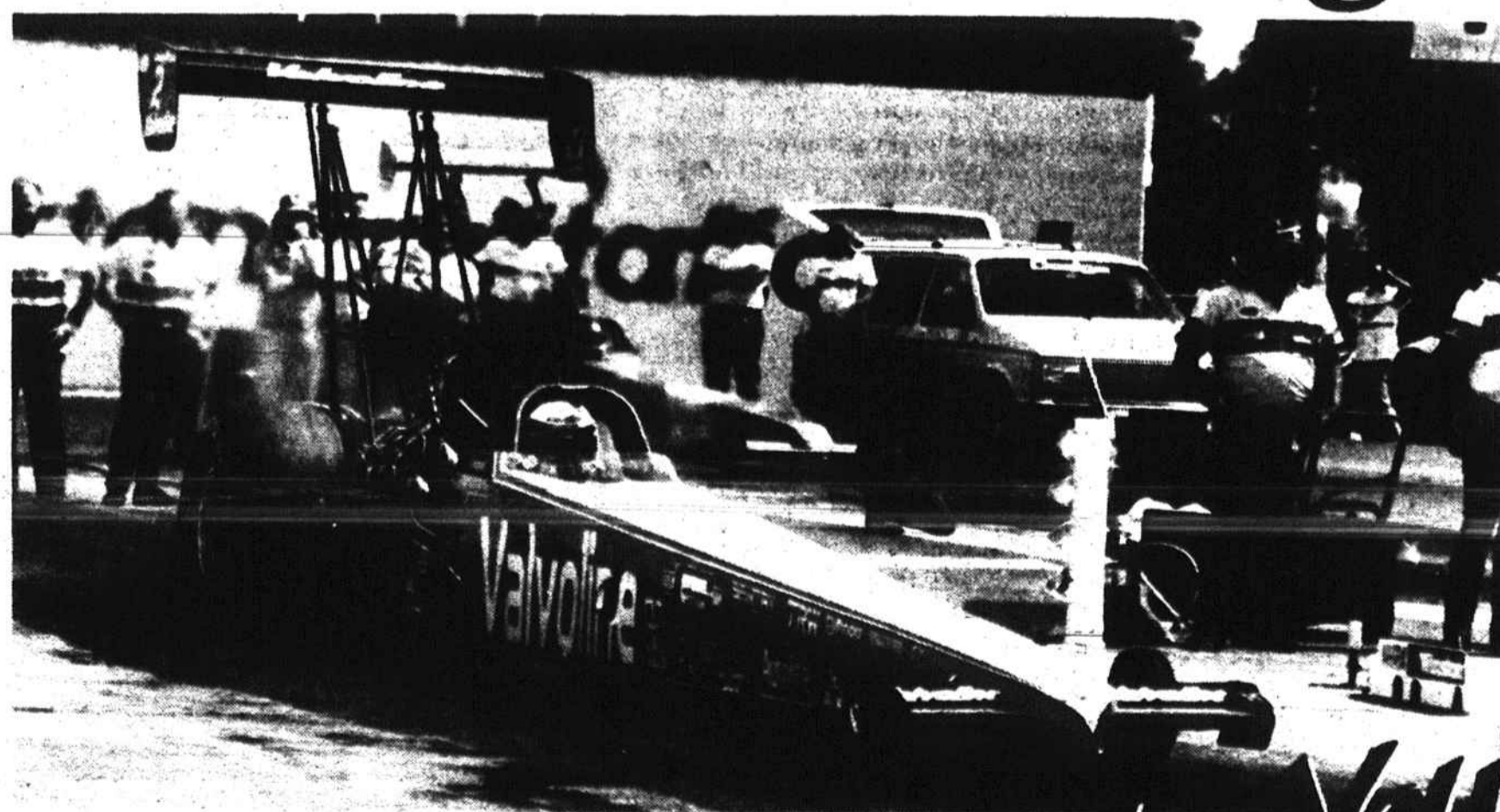
The Lady Rams softball player, who does double duty as pitcher/1st baseman, went 3-4 and had 2 RBIs vs. NCA&T. Margie has been one of the bright spots in a character building year for the women's softball team. She has a .360 batting average and a .600 slugging percentage.



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