

# Sports

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## Carver's Jackets had the right answers

By CRAIG T. GREENLEE  
Chronicle Sports Editor

Carver's 56-55 win over North Forsyth in the Frank Spencer Holiday Classic finals should not be considered an upset of major proportions.

Sure, the Vikings were the overwhelming favorites to win going in. But more importantly, Carver was terribly underrated as the lowest seeded team in the tournament field of eight.

Prior to the tournament's start, the Yellowjackets had won just two of six games. In each of their four losses, the final outcome could have easily been different.

Zealous defense and game savvy are the prime reasons why the Jackets became the first team to repeat as Spencer champions in the 17-year history of the event. Carver coach Alfred Poe held all the right cards for a winning hand

### ANALYSIS

## SPENCER CLASSIC FINALS

because of five seniors who have played together under his system for at least two seasons.

The Hart twins (Daren and David), along with Eric and Roosevelt Johnson plus Tremaine Graham have gone through a number of tight game scenarios and they're all dedicated to playing stiff. I dare 'ya to score defense. That's a hard combination to beat even if the opposing team has an abundance of individual tal-

ent. Defensively, the Jackets disrupted North's offense by forcing Dameron Foster, the Vikes' prime ball handler, to give the ball up. That doesn't mean that Casey Simmons, Deshawn Wilson and Rusty Street didn't do an admirable job of handling Carver's defensive pressure. It's just that North's offense runs a lot smoother when Foster has the ball in his hands.

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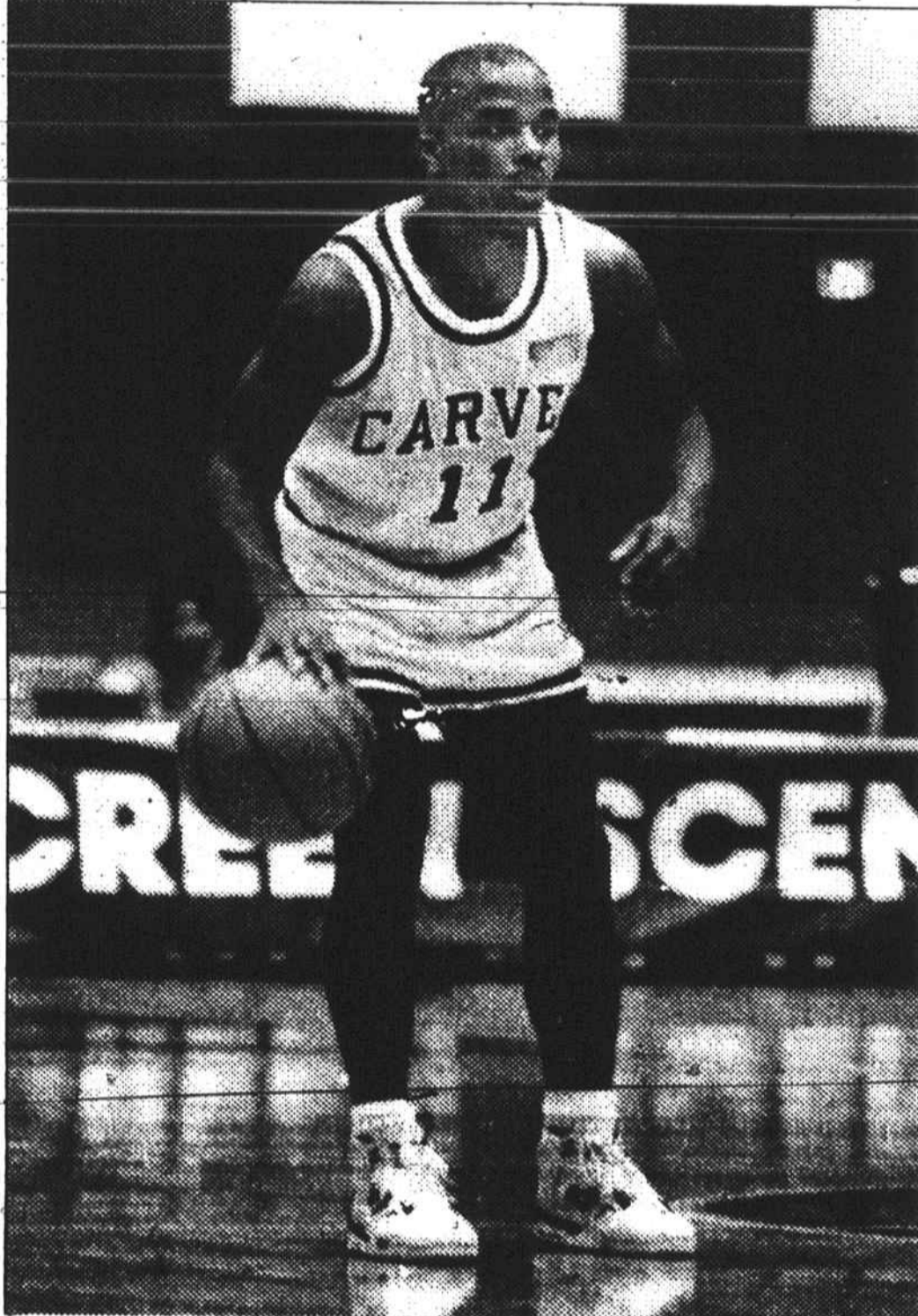


Photo by Max Dunhill  
David Hart came off the bench to deliver some offensive spark for Carver in the championship finals.

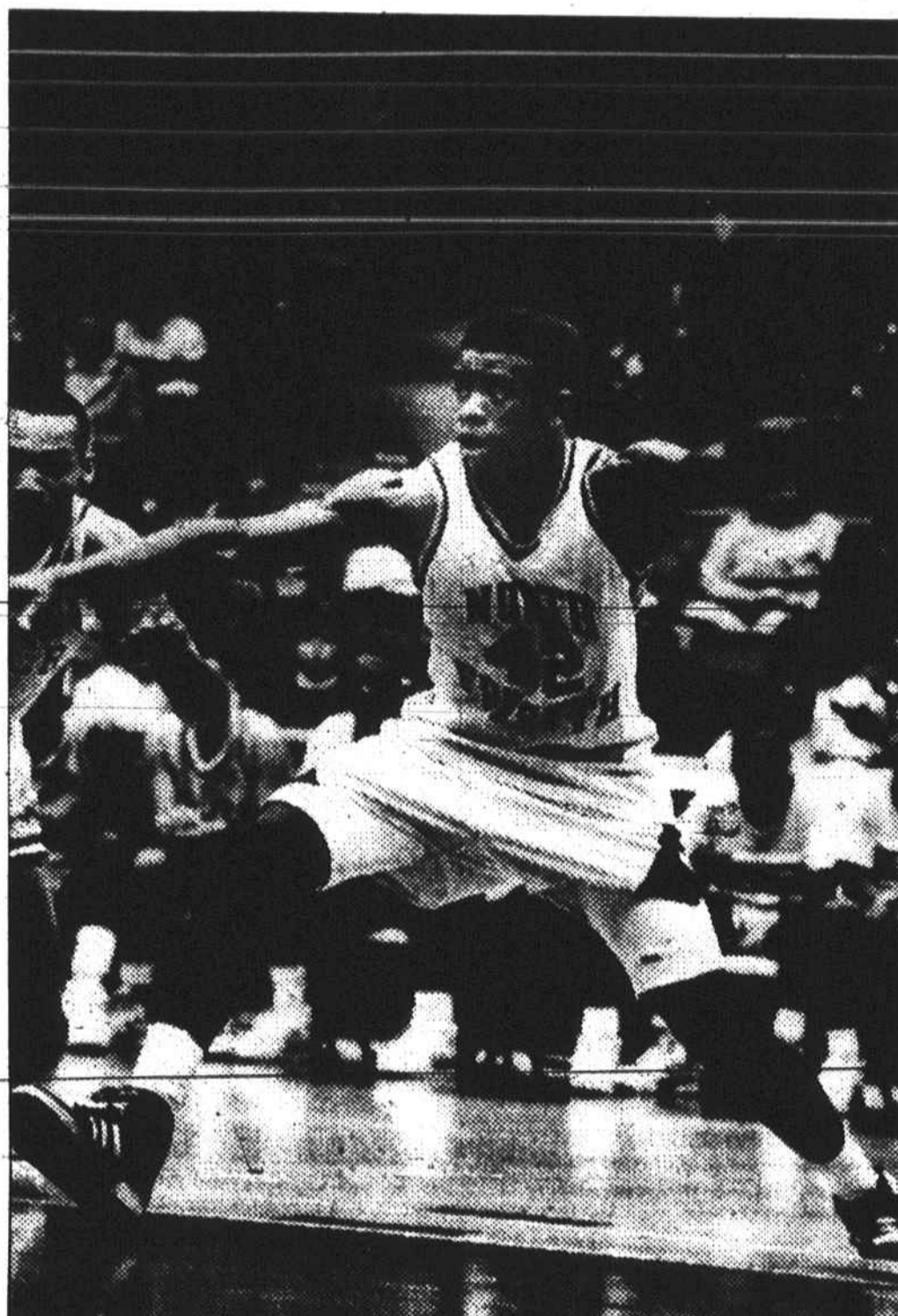


Photo by Chronicle Staff  
North's Rommie Crowell averaged 23 points a game to firmly establish himself as the tournament MVP.

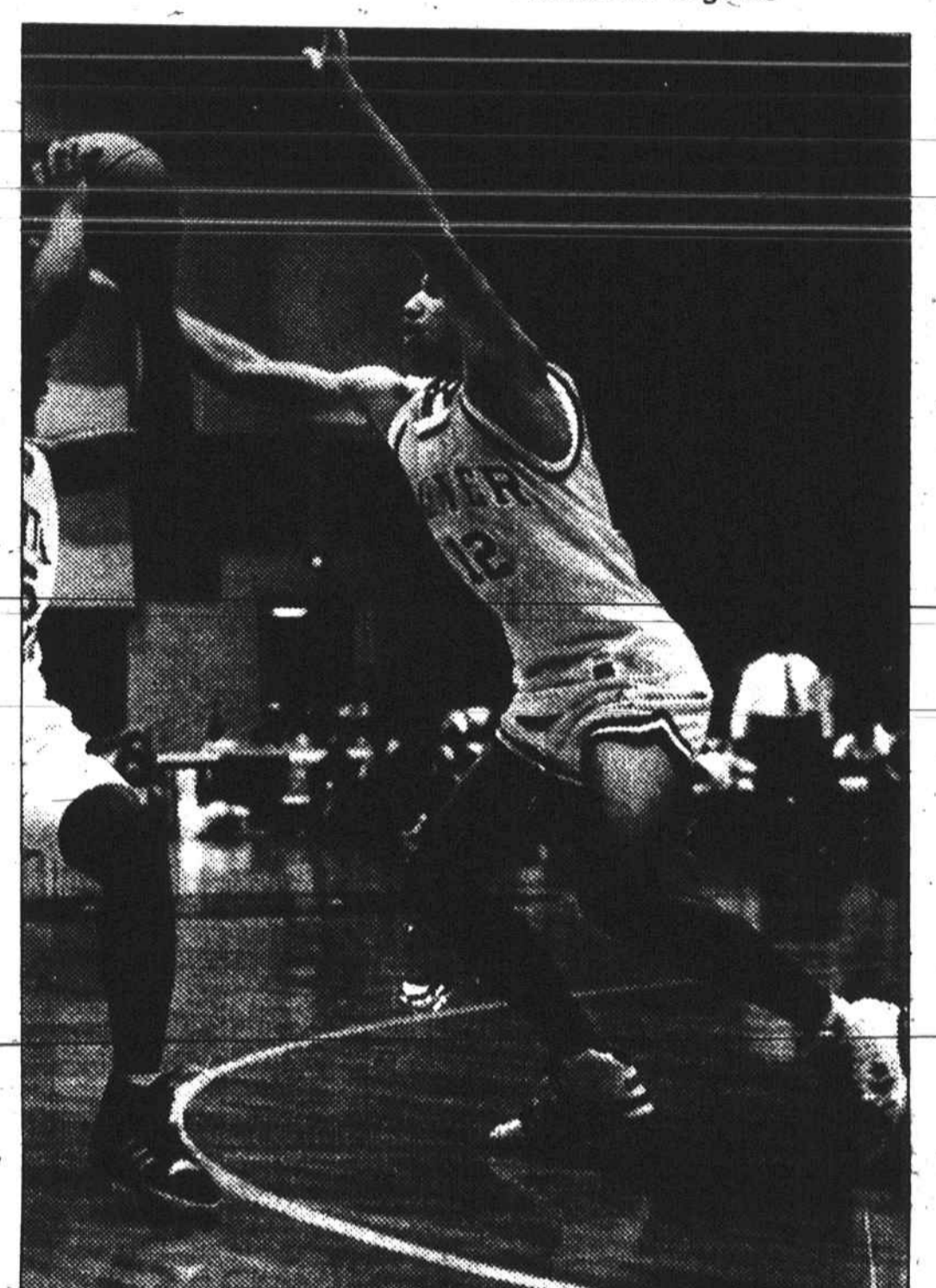


Photo by T-Lee  
Carver's Roosevelt Johnson (12) applies defensive pressure on the ball.

### COACH'S PERSPECTIVE

## Poe: 'Our defense is our offense'

By Chronicle Staff

Few people thought that Carver would get past the first round of this year's Spencer. Much less make it to the finals

and win it. But the lack of faith didn't mean very much to Alfred Poe, Carver coach.

Poe's Yellowjackets played with a lot of purpose, which enabled them to make the key

plays when they needed to. Poe expresses his thoughts on this year's tournament.

Chronicle Sports: What does this win mean for your team at this point of the season?

Poe: This will give our people confidence. We started out like this last year. So we're looking to go on to better things.

Chronicle Sports: Carver's reputation for defense is well known. Still, you have to score points to win. Are you very concerned about the Jackets offensive output?

Poe: Our defense is our offense. We hope to create pressure and turnovers which enables us to run and score. We're not bad on offense. But we are better now than we were  
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## Butler: 'Kids handled things well'

By Chronicle Staff

North Forsyth was the big favorite to win their sixth Spencer, but Carver spoiled those predictions by winning a tightly contested game.

Vikings coach William "Sonny" Butler felt that his guys could capture another trophy, but he also knows his team still has more to learn as the conference part of their season approaches. Butler provides his insights on the '91 Spencer.

Chronicle Sports: Being the tournament's top seed always creates high expectations. How do you feel your team reacted under those circumstances?

Butler: It's pressure. Pressure on them, pressure on me. We didn't win like people

expected, but I feel our kids handled things well. I have four sophomores, five juniors and one kid who has never played organized ball. But we'll be OK as they gain more experience.

Chronicle Sports: Were you surprised that Carver made it to the finals in spite of where they were seeded?

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## Rams to face Liz City in Smoke On The River Classic

By Chronicle Staff

The results from Winston-Salem State's first seven games indicate that the Rams are better off when they aren't playing within the confines of the C.E. Gaines Complex.

The Rams, 3-4, are looking to reach, then surpass the break-even point this weekend at the Smoke On The River Basketball Classic in Wilmington.

Winston will play Elizabeth City State in the opening round on Saturday at 8 p.m. The winner of that game will play the winner of St. Augustine's vs. North Carolina

Central on Sunday at 2 p.m.

Winston's inconsistency is puzzling to coach Clarence "Big-house" Gaines, whose team has recorded two of its three wins on the road. "I don't know what it is," Gaines said. "We play better on the road than we do at home. It's a pure psych situation."

Gaines is looking to get his guys back in synch after a long holiday break. But he's all too aware that the Rams won't be packing much of a punch if they play like they did against Hampton University in an 88-70 loss two weeks ago.

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"We know it's going to be an uptempo game, so it will come down to which team is playing better."

- Clarence "Big-house" Gaines  
Winston-Salem State coach

exhibitions that I've seen from us in the last two or three years," Gaines said. "It looked like our people were fatigued. I don't know if it was physical or mental. But we weren't ready to play. I look at the game tapes and see Hampton coming down on the break five on none. And that hap-

pened several times."

Gaines has stressed from the start of the season that the Rams must play uptempo in order to make a strong run in the CIAA's Southern Division. Against Elizabeth City, the Rams shouldn't have any problems because the Vikings (3-5) like to run.

The Vikes have no problems putting the ball in the hole (86 ppg, 48.1 FG%). John McNeil (19.7 ppg), Nate Higgs (17.5 ppg, 11 rpg) and Martin Laceywell (15.7 ppg) are the primary offensive weapons.

Liz City's major flaw, however, is its inability to stop people. The Vikings are the league's worst in scoring defense (90 ppg) and field goal percentage defense (.527).

"Elizabeth City has lost a lot of games," said Gaines, "but they have been in several close games. They have a good team. We know it's going to be an uptempo game,

so it will come down to which team is playing better."

In order for the Rams to emerge triumphant in Wilmington, Gaines feels some changes are needed, which includes maintaining a quick tempo offensively and fronting the low post people on defense.

"We need to improve our offensive spacing and our timing," the coach said. "We run an open offense so we can take advantage of pick and rolls and people cutting to the basket. We've worked on that all week and we'll continue to drill that into our players' heads."