

# Aggies get defensive, win Thanksgiving tourney

*A&T coach Bibbs wins 400th game during event*

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The North Carolina A&T women's basketball team shot just 36.4 percent from the field and hit only 3 of 16 3-pointers against Boston University.

It didn't matter because the Aggies played defense in their 62-54 win over the Terriers in the championship game of the UNC Greensboro Thanksgiving Tournament at Fleming Gymnasium. Junior guard Amber Bland led the Aggies with 20 points and a career-high 12 rebounds to register her third career double-double.

Bland's performance helped her win Tournament MVP honors. Ta'Wuana Cook also earned all-tournament honors, while Lamona Smalley chipped in with nine points and eight rebounds last Saturday.

"We're not going to play great offensively every night," said head coach Patricia Cage-Bibbs. "When you're not shooting well you need to bear down with defense. I believe you can play great defense every night. You can score points through playing great defense."

The Aggies played great defense throughout the tournament. They forced UNC Asheville into 34 turnovers on Saturday. In the first half of Saturday's game against the Terriers, Boston shot just 10 percent from the floor on three first-half field goals.



Aggie coach Patricia Cage-Bibbs celebrates with her squad after winning her 400th game.

Photo by Mike Simmons

The Terriers were able to find their way to the basket against the Aggies defense in the second half. The Terriers cut the Aggies 12-point halftime lead to four, 44-40, with 7:58 to play. But Smalley took a perfect bounce pass from Tyrionica Alford and scored. She was fouled on the play and completed the 3-point play to put the Aggies ahead by seven.

The Aggies increased their lead back to double figures

again three minutes later, but the Terriers made another run. Two Jesyka Burks-Wiley free throws put the Terriers down 53-50 with 2:16 to play. It was the closest the Terriers had been since the 14:30 mark of the first half.

Burks-Wiley had a chance to cut it to one, but her shot rimmed out. After Alford and Brittanie Taylor-James hit one free throw apiece, the Aggies sealed the game with more

defense. Freshman Jalessa Sams forced Aly Hinton into a five-second violation with 1:37 to play. The Terriers never seriously threatened again.

Bibbs and the Aggies have a lot to be thankful for during the Thanksgiving Tournament. Last Friday, Bibbs earned her 400th career win. The Aggies by far proved themselves to be the best team at the event by trailing for only four minutes and six seconds throughout the

entire two-day tournament.

"I'm just so proud for my ladies," said Bibbs. "We have a long way to go to reach our potential. But I'm happy we had an opportunity to come here and prove we belong. We're starting to get it. They're starting to understand more and more. We wanted to come here and confuse people with our defense. And these young ladies executed. I'm elated about that."

## Hill

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(Clinton Portis) event in Florida. His boys called him Meast. He and I weren't tight. But I knew him. And, it's sad to see people that you know go. It's even sadder when they should probably still be here.

This was no typical incident. We all have heard and seen reports of athletes or whatever getting into altercations outside of clubs or bars. Taylor was shot during a robbery attempt at his home. I can only use my imagination to see how things actually went down. And, I can only sit back and feel sad for the life lost. I went to his Myspace page on Tuesday to see all of the rest in peace, we will miss you messages that made me kind of sad again. Some people were leaving him messages as if he were going to check his page later that day which was also sad. One guy wrote about how he had to pull over when he heard the news while driving to work. Another guy stated that heaven just got a hell of a safety. That's just an example of how much he was loved, and will be missed. It's just a shame, really.

### Mt. Tabor still rolling

The Mt. Tabor Spartans, led by Hunter Furr's 180-plus rushing yards and three touchdowns, did their thing against Gastonia Ashbrook to the tune of a 41-20 win last Friday. Lemar Wilson also got down last Friday. Donny McElveen also continues to play well for the Spartans. My man, Lamont Atwater told me that a lot depended on how well McElveen played a couple weeks ago. I'd have to agree with that.

I can't mention Mt. Tabor without at least mentioning how dominant the Spartan defense played. The Spartans are now one game away from a trip to their second state championship game since 2002. Mt. Tabor will have to travel to snowy and cold Watauga (No. 1 seed). The winner of that game will move on to battle for a state 4A title at Groves Stadium. I mean, BB&T Stadium. Let's get it Spartans.

On a sad note, Carver was beaten pretty good last week. The Yellowjackets still had a good season. But it's like USC over there. It's either a state championship or failure. I'm here to say that this season wasn't a failure for the Yellowjackets or a number of other teams that were bounced earlier than expected. Several teams have a lot to be proud of. West will be very good next year. East will continue to improve. Parkland's offense, led by DJ Adams and Nick James, will be scary next year. Reynolds still has Jeremy Peterson. Carver will still be



File photo

Mt. Tabor's Ed Gainey hopes to stiff arm Watauga on Friday.

Carver. And, Glenn will be moving up a lot of talented JV kids. So, this season wasn't a failure. I'll call it a re-building year for some.

I guess it's officially basketball season around here now.

### Letter to the editor about Garber tournament team

This is the portion of a letter I received earlier this week pertaining to the selection of the Mary Garber all-tournament team. I won't reveal his name, but I will use his initials.

T.C. said, "Mr. Hill I was surprised not to see anything in the paper pertaining to this past Garber b-ball tourney. I would like to know if you have had any

dealings in the past with this tournament and/or the Sportsman's Club that sponsors the tournament."

"Myself, along with many of the spectators of the tournament (especially the championship game) watched in total disbelief as the winners of the all Garber team were announced," T.C. continued. "If you were there you would know exactly what I'm talking about. One of the recipients from Mt. Tabor played less than half of the championship game before leaving the game with an injury. Mind you that her play, stats, as well as her impact in the semifinal round was far less than two of her teammates. Since the coaches vote on the all tournament team and the MVP, one has to ask what tournament were they watching? I would hate to think that politics somehow influence the voting, but there's speculation in the air that two more deserving players may have been slighted because both of

them turned down an offer to transfer and attend a particular school. I would like to get your feelings on this."

I don't have a comment for the transfer issue, T.C. And, I really don't have a comment about the tournament team selection. I was not a part of it, nor do I know how it was conducted. I will say that politics might play a small role in this tournament all together. I mean, what other reason wasn't the champions from a year ago (Forsyth County Day) even invited to play this year? From what I'm hearing, county ADs are trying to keep FCD out of events due to unfair advantages it may have during a given year (but not this year). That's pretty political right there. I know that. Everything else is up for the debate.

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Adams

## Wake's Adams named ACC Rookie of the Year

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Wake Forest running back Josh Adams on Tuesday was named the Atlantic Coast Conference's Rookie of the Year. Adams is the second consecutive Demon Deacon to win the award, following quarterback Riley Skinner who took the honor in 2006.

Adams is a 6-0, 180-pound redshirt freshman from Cary, N.C. who is the leading freshman rusher in the ACC with 887 yards. He was the league's Rookie of the Week four times this season and posted three 100-yard rushing games including a season-high 140 yards against Florida State on Oct. 11. Adams set school records for the most rushing yards and most touchdowns in a season by a red-shirt freshman.

Adams is currently third overall in the ACC in rushing with an average of 80.6 yards per game.

Adams, who earned his fourth ACC Rookie of the Week award on Monday following his 111-yard rushing performance at Vanderbilt, is the fourth Deacon to be named ACC Rookie of the Year. Prior to Skinner in 2006, Michael Ramseur received the award in 1982 and James McDougald in 1976.

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