

Frank Spencer MVP C.J. Harris chats

I met Mt. Tabor's junior guard C.J. Harris (6-foot-2) when he was only a ninth grader at East Forsyth. I wrote a story on how much potential he displayed in his first year in high school. Now, C.J. is doing most of the displaying himself while he tears down opponents on the basketball court.

He'll probably never tell anyone how good he is. He's simply a modest and humble kid. But I'm here to tell you that Harris is the best baller in the city. He's going to give you everything you want in an athlete. He's coachable. Harris makes good grades. The star point guards is extremely skillful with or without the basketball. And, his teammates respect him. So do opponents.

I hit C.J. up on New Year's Eve to see what he had in store for the new year. Harris didn't have a whole lot to say during the interview. He was straight to the point with his answers. That's similar to the way he plays. He's not going to do a lot of dribbling around. C.J. is more than likely going to take it to the rack, or shoot it when he feels the time is right.

Take a look at what C-Harris and I discussed during a cool interview during the holiday.

Anthony: What's up, C.J.?

C.J.: Nothing much, man. Just chilling.

Anthony: Mr. Frank Spencer MVP.

C.J.: Yeah.

Anthony: (Smiles.) Just kind of give me your thoughts on the team winning the Frank. Also, tell me how's it feel to win MVP.

C.J.: It felt great. We came together as a team. That was something that we really wanted to do. And, winning the MVP was great. That felt good.

Anthony: A lot has happened since you and I hooked up for that story two years ago. You've kind of blown up.

C.J.: Yeah, I know. It's just a lot of hard work, man. I've been working.

Anthony: That's what's good. What are some of the things you've been working on?

C.J.: I worked on getting stronger. I wanted to get faster and quicker. I also worked on my shot, and all-around skills.

Anthony: Hey, some people were talking about you this summer, man. It seems like you were making some big time AAU noise this summer.

C.J.: (Laughs.) I was trying, man. I had a good squad (CP3 All-Stars). We played in



Mt. Tabor's C.J. Harris, who's a junior, goes up strong on a few Titans during the Spartans win over West last Saturday.

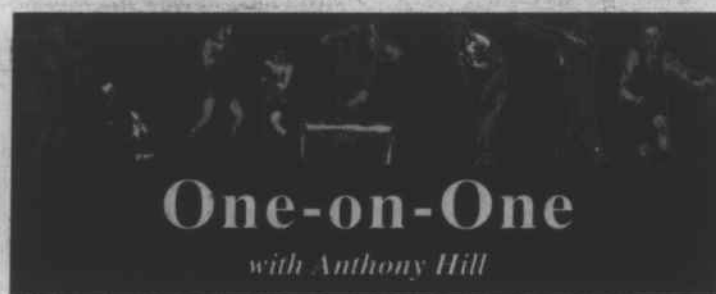
some good tournaments. I did well.

Anthony: No doubt. Who are some of the guys that you've watched through the years to take things from? Are there any particular athletes you've modeled your game after?

C.J.: Hmmm. Let's see. That's a good question. (Pause.) Probably, Kobe.

Anthony: So, where does the number 10 come from? No number 8 or 24 (Kobe's numbers)?

C.J.: It's the only number that was left, because seniors



got to pick jerseys first.

Anthony: I never have asked you why you left East to attend Mt. Tabor. So, why did you?

C.J.: I just felt like it was the right thing to do. I didn't

feel that comfortable at East. It worked out well, though.

Anthony: Did you have any doubts about leaving at first?

C.J.: Of course I had doubts because I didn't know

how everything was going to turn out. Everything has turned out well.

Anthony: Let's go back to the Frank Spencer for a minute. You guys beat West (62-45). But, did you kind of want to play Winston-Salem Prep for the championship?

C.J.: Honestly, we did. (Both laugh.) I think that would've been a good game. But we really didn't care as long as we won.

Anthony: (Smiles.) You're such a modest guy.

C.J.: I am. (Laughs.) I can't help it.

Anthony: That's all right. I'm going to put you on the spot real quick.

C.J.: OK. Go ahead.

Anthony: Give me your top five of Winston ballers.

C.J.: Top five. I'm going to have to put me at one. Then, Big Reggie. Uh, Josh Hicks. Put Mike (Grace) up there. And, Allen Jones. He's shown me a lot.

Anthony: Which school is your favorite right now?

C.J.: I really want to go to Wake. That's where I want to go.

Anthony: That would be nice to keep you in the city.

C.J.: I know, right.

Anthony: Who are your favorite Wake players?

C.J.: L.D. and Ish are my favorite players. James is real good too.

Anthony: If you weren't playing basketball which sport would you probably be playing?

C.J.: Probably baseball. That's what I was into before basketball. It started to not be as fun after I started playing basketball.

Anthony: OK. How are the grades?

C.J.: As and Bs. I gotta stay on top of that.

Anthony: That's what's good. Who's better: LeBron or Kobe?

C.J.: Kobe. LeBron is good. He's just not clutch yet. He'll get better as he gets older.

Anthony: What's a characteristic to describe your style of play? Are you clutch, versatile or what?

C.J.: Versatile is a good one. I can shoot, get to the hole. I can defend. Personally, I think that's a good description.

Anthony: A lot of people talk about your game, and think you're good. How do you see your game? Do you think you're good?

C.J.: I see myself as being a good player now. But I've got a lot of work to be where I need to be.

Anthony: Have you always seen yourself as a point guard?

C.J.: Not at first. I used to play shooting guard. I was always a two until I got older.

Anthony: How much do you enjoy playing with the CP3 All-Stars?

C.J.: It's great. It's a good atmosphere. We have good players, good coaching. Being able to talk to CP isn't that bad either.

Anthony: No doubt. What's the best advice he's (CP) given you?

C.J.: He's told me quite a few pointers. He told me how to be a leader on the court. He's definitely given some good advice about being a leader.

Anthony: What was the last good movie you went to see?

C.J.: I just saw "Alien vs Predator 2." That was pretty good.

Anthony: OK. (Smiles.) How are the little ladies treating C.J. Harris at Mt. Tabor?

C.J.: (Laughs.) They're all right. I'm trying to stay away from them, though. I got to stay focused on school and basketball.

Anthony: I'm glad to hear that. Hey, have you and Mike (Grace) played each other before?

C.J.: Yeah, we play a lot. It goes back and forth. Me, Josh (Hicks) and Mike go at it.

Anthony: You three play really well together. You're like a well-oiled machine out there.

C.J.: (Smiles.) I know.

Anthony: You said, "I know." (Laughs.)

C.J.: (Laughs.) We've been playing together for so long. We have known each other since we were kids.

Anthony: That's cool. Does coach Muse get on to you?

C.J.: What? That's an understatement. He pushes us hard. He's a great coach.

Anthony: (Laughs.) I hear that. Let's finish with free association. C.J. Harris.

C.J.: Good player. Has a lot of work to do.

Anthony: Coach Clyde Reynolds. (East head coach.)

C.J.: Great coach and good friend.

Anthony: Mt. Tabor Spartans.

C.J.: Uh, best team in Winston.

Anthony: Brooks Harden. (Mt. Tabor teammate)

C.J.: Monster down low.

Anthony: Mike Grace.

C.J.: Great point guard.

Anthony: Carter Cook. (Calvary Baptist star.)

C.J.: Prolific scorer. Great athlete.

Anthony: That's what's up. We're done. Happy New Year to you.

C.J.: Thank you. You too.

Wake tunes up for Maryland game with win over Longwood

Demon Deacons set new Joel Coliseum scoring defense record

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The Wake Forest women's basketball team shut the door on 2007 in style, with a 57-26 win over the Longwood Lancers at the Joel Coliseum on Sunday.

With the win, Wake Forest improves to 12-2 and will enter Atlantic Coast Conference play with a three-game winning streak. The loss set the Lancers back to 6-8 for the season. If you had to sum up Wake's non-conference season with two words, they would probably be Scoring Defense, with Sunday's win marking the lowest opponent score yielded in 2007. Wake Forest leads the league in the category, limiting opponents to an average of just under 49 points per game.

The game was a Wake Forest WBB record in the Joel Coliseum for opponent points yielded, the closest mark coming in 2005 when Morgan State only picked up 33 points. The Lancers' 26 points was the third lowest opponent mark in Wake Forest program history, the other two lowest totals occurring in 1971 and 1972.

Junior Alex Tchanguou put up 17 points to lead the Deacons in scoring on Sunday, while classmate Corinne Groves and senior Christen Brown led the Deacs on the glass with seven a piece. Cierra Barker was the high scorer for Longwood with points.

Courtney Morris broke a 2-2 tie by picking the pockets of Lancers' leading scor-

er Keiva Small in the game's opening minutes. Morris then drew a foul on the fast break shot to put the Deacons up 4-2 with her free-throw buckets. On the next Longwood possession, Tchanguou mirrored the same play, stripping the ball from Courtney Dyer and converting on one charity stripe shot.

Together, Morris and Tchanguou combined for seven steals during the contest.

With a 5-2 lead Wake Forest charged ahead and didn't look back, stretching the advantage to 15-2 by the 12:30 mark. The Deacon defense held the Lancers to a microscopic shooting percentage of 15 percent during the first half, including an 0-8 mark during Wake's 10-0 run.

The arc was a cruel force for both teams on the eve of New Year's Eve, with Wake putting up just 20 percent in 3-point shots, while the Lancers were 13.3 percent shooting 2-for-15. Neither team was able to net any 3-point buckets during the first half.

Sophomore Mekia Valentine shined in the second half, grabbing five boards and four points during the final 20 minutes. Valentine also had monster block on a Lancer layup with 4:29 to play, her 26th block of the season and 76th career block.

Wake Forest will open 2008 and ACC action on Jan. 3 (today), when it plays host to the Maryland Terrapins at 7 p.m.



Wake's Alex Tchanguou finished with 17 points in a tune-up win over Longwood on Sunday. Tchanguou and the Deacs will host Maryland tonight.