

# Durham talks about life on court

Anyone that knows me, and talks to me regularly will tell you that WSSU junior forward Jamal Durham is one of my favorite athletes, period.

I like how versatile he is on and off the court. I mean, he could easily be a star football or track athlete if that's where his focus was. But he's decided to concentrate on basketball, his favorite sport. I can't get mad at that. After all, he's been doing his thing for the Rams for the last two-and-a-half years. No doubt that JD has been putting it down.

I caught up with Durham after he got out of class on Tuesday to get his thoughts on the season, playing in the Joel, girls, Super Bowl commercials and a number of other things.

We also discussed whether he would consider the NFL if basketball didn't work out next year. Take a look at some of the other things he and I talked about earlier this week.

**Anthony:** What's good, JD?

**Jamal:** Nothing much. I'm just doing my thing — living life how I want to live it.

**Anthony:** I hear that. Kind of tell me about the season for a minute. How's everything been going for you all this season?

**Jamal:** The season has been a little rough. But I think it's been an improvement from last season. I think all of the new guys are coming around. I think we're going to be a pretty good team.

**Anthony:** It's kind of sad for me to see you doing your thing this season, but not being able to compete for a title. How much has that weighed on your mind?

**Jamal:** It weighs heavily. I think about winning a title every year. I just go out and play as if I have a chance at winning a championship. I just play hard every game.

**Anthony:** What is your motivation?

**Jamal:** The tradition. This school is known for basketball. We have a bunch of great legends. I'm just trying to keep the legacy going. We want to be known as hard workers and good basketball players.

**Anthony:** OK. I know you're on pace to graduate on schedule. What are some of the things going through your mind when I say that?

**Jamal:** I'm thinking about the real world. Coach does a good job of preparing us for the real world. He gives us examples of life situations that we may go through. All of that



Winston-Salem State junior star Jamal Durham backs down Wake's Chas McFarland, who's a 7-foot center.

correlates to what we do on the basketball floor. Little things like going to class and showing up on time go a long way.

**Anthony:** Speaking of going to class. I have to get your thoughts on Mike Puckett. I don't remember the last time I saw a college basketball player not make it through a season due to grades. How disappointed are you that he wasn't able to get it done in the classroom?

**J a m a l :** That's a big disappointment. Mike was coming around. He was one of our top scorers. He led us a few times. Mike was a good spark. Mike is a good driver that can create shots. We're lacking in that right now. It hurts your team to lose a player like that.

**Anthony:** Let's talk about you for a minute. How much have you improved since your freshman year?

**Jamal:** My level of basketball IQ has grown. I'm able to see the floor a lot better. I'm able to make better decisions. I'm learning to drive more, instead of settling for shots. My game has grown.

**Anthony:** I know that you have solid basketball plans, but have you considered a try at the NFL?

**Jamal:** Nah. (Smiles.)

Football is out of here. I still love watching it. I think about playing football. But not to the point that I want to try it out again. Everybody tells me that there aren't many 6-6 receivers in the NFL. I'm focused on basketball and proving the people that said I couldn't do it wrong.

**Jamal:** (Smiles.) Yeah. We tried to contain him, but he turned it up in the second half. You have to respect a player like that.

**Anthony:** What did you think about the Super Bowl?

**Jamal:** Neither team was my favorite. I wanted the Patriots to win so Moss could

get a ring. 18-1 is almost the biggest heartbreaker. The season was a failure.

**Anthony:** Which commercial was your favorite? I like the D-Wade and Charles Barkley joint.

**Jamal:** (Smiles.) Me and my roommates' favorite commercial (Doritos) was the one where the guy put the mouse trap in front of the wall and a big rat just comes out and tackles him. (Both laugh.) I also like that Coke commercial with Stevie and the Underdog floats. (Both laugh.) We like Family Guy.

**Anthony:** (Laughs.) OK.

**Anthony:** That's easier said than done. It's definitely better to play in front of a crowd. Even if it's only a pick-up game.

**Jamal:** True. The best crowd we've played in front of is A&T. They have a Sixth Man for real. Our players would probably be more hyped if we had a crowd like that. Then again, it shouldn't matter.

**Anthony:** Who's your favorite player in the NBA?

**Jamal:** Kobe and LeBron. I really can't choose. Every time LeBron dunks it seems like his head is at the rim. I wish I could do that.

**Anthony:** What do you and your room dawg usually bump around the room?

**Jamal:** We usually bump Lil' Wayne. We play a lot of those "Crank That..." songs.

**Anthony:** Where's your favorite spot to eat.

**Jamal:** It would have to be Pizza Hut. Stuffed crust pepperoni. I love it.

**Anthony:** Do you have a talent that no one really knows about?

**Jamal:** I can dance. We go to clubs and dance a lot.

**Anthony:** How many tattoos do you have?

**Jamal:** I'm pretty much even. I have two on each arm and two on my chest. My most important one is on my chest. It's a dog tag for my grandfather, who past away in July. He was my biggest fan. He was my hero. I had to get one for him. He taught me everything from how to change a tire to riding a bike.

**Anthony:** That's cool. Let's finish with free association.

**Jamal:** (Smiles.) All right.

**Anthony:** Roy Peake.

**Jamal:** Sporadic, floor leader.

**Anthony:** Jamal Durham.

**Jamal:** Dunker.

**Anthony:** North Davidson (Jamal's old high school).

**Jamal:** My home.

**Anthony:** Winston-Salem State.

**Jamal:** My second home.

**Anthony:** Girls.

**Jamal:** (Smiles.) Beautiful.

**Anthony:** Coach Collins.

**Jamal:** My coach.

**Anthony:** (Smiles.) Coach (Tim) Wells.

**Jamal:** (Smiles.) Coach Wells is my homeboy. We go back in forth in practice. He dunks more than us. (Both laugh.)

**Anthony:** I hear that. Hey, we're done. Good luck with the rest of the way.

**Jamal:** Thanks.



**Anthony:** Let's move on. A lot of teams are looking good around the nation. Kansas is looking good. Carolina and Duke are looking good. Which team do you think is the best right now?

**Jamal:** It's between Georgetown and Kansas. They have the most experience. We seen both of them last year. Kansas is full of athletes.

**Anthony:** Who's the best player in college basketball this year?

**Jamal:** Michael Beasley. We played him, and you have to respect him. He gave us 40.

**Anthony:** Whoa.

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**Anthony:** (Laughs.) OK.

**Anthony:** That's easier

## NCAA's Brand to give address to tip off CIAA

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association welcomes National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) President and Chief Executive Officer, Myles Brand, to address participants of the 2008 Men's Basketball Tip-Off Banquet. This event is scheduled for Feb. 26 at the Westin Hotel-Charlotte; 6:30pm.

Myles Brand has served as president of the NCAA since

Jan. 1, 2003 and is the fourth chief executive officer of the Association.

Termed by some the "education president," Brand has presided over passage of the most comprehensive academic reform package for intercollegiate athletics in recent history — a package that refocuses the attention of student-athletes, coaches and administrators on the education of student-athletes. Brand has also changed the national dialog on college

sports to emphasize the educational value of athletics participation and the integration of intercollegiate athletics with the academic mission of higher education. His tenure has helped reestablished the indispensable role of university presidents in the governance of college sports.

Brand was himself president of two major universities. From 1994 through 2002, he was president of Indiana University, an eight-campus

institution of higher education with nearly 100,000 students, 17,000 employees and a budget of \$3.4 billion. Brand also served as president at the University of Oregon from 1989 to 1994.

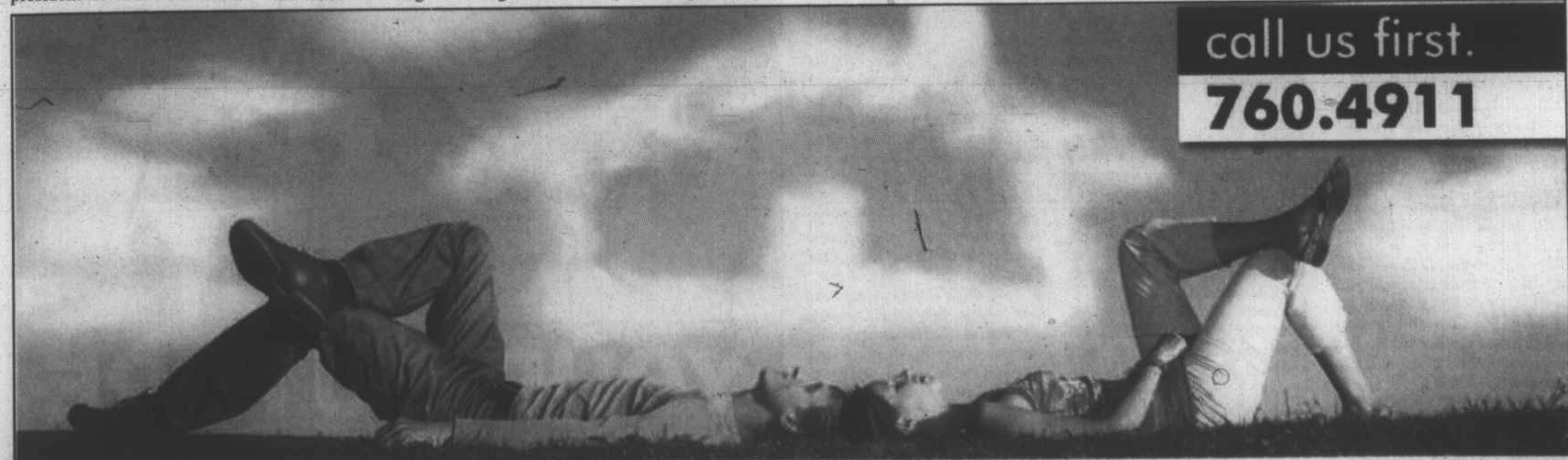
Brand has served on the Executive Committee of the Board of directors, Association of American Universities (AAU), and as board chair, 1999-2000; a member of the board of directors, 1992-97, and executive committee,

1994-97, of the American Council on Education (ACE); and a member of the board of directors of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC), 1995-98. He served too as a board member of the American Philosophical Association and of the University Corporation for Advanced Internet Development, the umbrella organization of Internet2.



Myles Brand

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