



Winston-Salem State grabbed a huge win over Hampton over the weekend.

WSSU photo

WSSU spoils Hampton homecoming

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

It may have been Homecoming for the Pirates of Hampton University, yet Virginia native Kermit Blount felt right at home back in the Commonwealth as he led the Winston-Salem State Rams to a 35-30 victory over HU last Saturday en route to tying Bill Hayes as the winningest coach in WSSU history with a school-record 89 victories.

The Rams (2-6, 0-0 MEAC) handed the Pirates their second consecutive loss and relegated Hampton to 5-3 overall (4-1 MEAC) as WSSU used a complete effort on both sides of the ball to spoil the HU Homecoming for the 14,877 fans in attendance at Armstrong Stadium.

The Pirates struck first in the contest as a Carlo Turavani 32-yard field goal broke a scoreless tie less than three minutes into the first quarter of play as Hampton jumped out to a 3-0 lead.

Undaunted, the Rams responded with back-to-back scores as Roderick Fluellen powered over right guard for a 16-yard score to move WSSU ahead 7-3, and David Irizarry turned in one of the most spectacular plays in WSSU history to move the Rams in front 14-3 midway through the first quarter.

With HU attempting a 50-yard field goal, Irizarry lined up deep in his own endzone for a possible missed kick return. Following an HU

kick that was three yards short of its intended target Irizarry fielded the kick seven yards deep in the endzone. After a pause that seemed like an eternity, a respite that was long enough for Irizarry and nearly 15,000 fans to contemplate his next course of action, the senior defensive back acted on instinct.

In what could have been the most ill-advised decision of his career, Irizarry sprinted from his own endzone in an attempt to make a spectacular play out of a sure touchback as he took the missed kick 107 yards for the longest play in WSSU history and handed the Rams an 11-point advantage in the process.

The Rams would tally another pair of scores before the half came to a close as WSSU used a power running game to pound the MEAC's third-ranked run defense into submission as Winston-Salem State headed to the locker room with a comfortable 28-10 lead. The Pirates, playing in front of a raucous home crowd, mounted what was nearly a comeback for the ages as they scored 20 unanswered points in an attempt to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

The win improved the Rams to 2-6 overall while Hampton fell to 5-3 overall with the loss. WSSU returns to action on this weekend as they play their second of three straight road games when they travel to Dover, Del. to face defending MEAC Champion Delaware State University.

Hill

from page B1

have Pop Warner patches on some pants a couple years ago.

People were quick to point out the rules when it dealt with the Falcons. Yet, it's a laughable matter when dealing with the Oak Ridge Colts and their coach. I don't have anything against their coach. I actually like the guy. But I don't agree with how things went, though.

I also don't like how he was quick to try to turn things around on other teams that were fighting to make sure he was punished just like any other coach or team that may have broken a rule. I'm not going to mention his name either. I will say that he's got some connections, though. This guy was trying to put heat on people that may have compiled personal dirt from just about every team in N.W. Midget.

Coach ready to flip script

The Oak Ridge coach was prepared to release information about some people from other organizations that was as old as 10 years ago. Please believe things were getting ready to get bad last week when he announced some of the things he knew, and his intentions if he were to go down. (I'm smiling as I type this.) The Oak Ridge coach had to have a police escort last Thursday. It was no longer an issue with the kids after those cards were pulled.

We all know that it's personal when you dig into someone's past and threaten to tell things that people would rather forget. After all, most of us have done or said things in the past we'd rather forget or not mention. That's just the way it is. It's a shame that things got that bad. I personally don't think it's a big deal to allow a player that DIDN'T play a game of JV or varsity football on a Pop Warner field. I have no problem with that. But is is a rule, and I do have

a problem with one team being held accountable for breaking a rule, while another is allowed to go free.

High school kids shouldn't play Pop Warner ball

Another thing that should be addressed is students in high school playing Pop Warner football in the first place. That's just sad. Play for a high school if you attend a high school.

Pop Warner is for kids. You can't earn a college scholarship on the Pop Warner Field. If you think about it, there's probably a reason why a group of kids may not be on a high school team — whether it's grades, lack of discipline or something. Sometimes kids lack heart. So, they play Pop Warner one year too long. It's always something.

Despite my disappointment or gripe, I still wish the kids on that Oak Ridge team the best of luck. I also wish that coach the best of luck. Most importantly, I wish everyone went by the same rules in Pop Warner.

No All-Pop Warner Squad

I'm sad to announce that I will not be putting out an All-Pop Warner team, which I planned on releasing next Thursday. I simply felt like we should explore this idea for another year. I think I'm going to do it next year with the Midget Division.

I was talking with a colleague of mine at the Wake game this past weekend and we both agreed that young kids can be negatively affected by not making a special team like that. I thought about that to start with, but I still thought it would be a good idea to give some of the young standouts some recognition.

But it's probably best to only award the older kids. My colleague then told me that we'd probably have to deal with recruiting after bringing out an All-Pop Warner team for the Midget Division players. I told him that I wasn't concerned with that. Coaches don't really have to recruit. Kids are the best recruiters. That's why college coaches allow their players to take out high school recruits.

Another reason why I decided to hold off on this special team was because of the difficulties I was having getting SOME teams to submit players. I mean, some coaches were talking about how they were a team and didn't have any standouts. That's fine, but come on now.

If I were to bring the team out and leave off some of their guys I wouldn't hear the end of it. I would like to say thank you to everyone that was very helpful in my efforts to compile the team. Guys like Lawrence "Ferg" Ferguson with the Grayhounds, Ken Mackovic with the Oak Ridge Colts — as well as several Indian, Falcon, Viking and Packer coaches. j

I honestly appreciate the assistance. I apologize for not being able to honor some of your standout players this year. I would also like to thank Northwest Midget for their help in this matter. We'll get it right next year.

Our annual All-County JV football team will be released on Nov. 20. I'm definitely looking forward to that special team, as I do every year. Be on the look for that in a couple of weeks.

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Photo by Anthony Hill

The Winston-Salem Prep varsity basketball squad may be stronger on the court this season.

W-S Prep

from page B1

the way with 18 points, five rebounds. Michael Spease followed with 16 points, eight assists and three steals. Krishawn Noble contributed with 9 points and 11 rebounds.

"We played hard," Gould said. "We still had a number of mental lapses. And we were outsized in the post. But we fought hard. I saw that we're a scrappy bunch. I'm excited about that. My motto is tough guys win games. We're showing some toughness already. I'm really excited about this team."

Senior guard Corey Gantt (12 points against Oak Hill) added: "I'm excited about this team. I think we're going to be ready. We have the best backcourt in the state. We're not a big team. We have to find a way to rebound. But coach always says that tough players win. So we're going to play hard and tough."

Team Chemistry

Despite the new additions, Winston-Salem Prep already seems to have great chemistry amongst each other.

"The chemistry is coming

along," said senior shooting guard Justin Parham, who finished with 11 points against Oak Hill. "I think we're bonding really well. We just need to stay focused on the goal and maintain what we started last year. We know what we can do. We just need to get it done. We're trying to repeat."

The Phoenix will test itself again when they host River Mills Academy on Friday (7:30 p.m.). Winston-Salem Prep will also host talented teams like Cherish Prep, Northern Guilford, Atkins, Durham School of the Arts, Parkland, Glenn and Reidsville this season.

"I know that we can make another run this year," Gould said. "The guys from last year have to step up. And, the newcomers have to be ready for the rivalries and competition that we face. They're adjusting to that. I'm sure we'll be ready. That's what we're preparing for."

Gantt added: "Everybody is working hard. I think we've got a better team this year. We just don't have Big Reggie and a go-to-guy in Marcus. But the whole team are go-to-guys. We all can contribute. We've all worked hard. I know I have. I've even been lifting a lot of

weights. I know you can't really tell, but I have. We just have to get it done."

Winston-Salem Prep home games

All games, but Cherish Prep (6 p.m.) begin at 7:30 p.m.

- Nov. 7 River Mills
- Nov. 15 Cherish Prep (@ Joel)
- Nov. 18 Atkins
- Dec. 2 North
- Dec. 6 Carver
- Dec. 16 Durham School of the Arts
- Dec. 18 West
- Dec. 26 Frank Spencer
- Jan. 2 East
- Jan. 10 Cherokee

Jan. 14 Parkland

Jan. 30 Mt. Airy

Feb. 4 Glenn

Feb. 12 Reidsville

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