

HICKS HOPES FOR ANOTHER SPENCER TITLE

Mt. Tabor senior guard Josh Hicks is so underrated it's kind of confusing. If you watch him play then you'll be quick to wonder where he's going to college. Then, you might be shocked to find out he only has one offer.

He's starting to get more looks. But they're not coming fast enough. He's only been in Winston for two years, and he's already a household name thanks to his best friends — C.J. Harris and Mike Grace. Hicks is actually one of the more complete players in the city this year. I caught up with one of the city's best ballers to see what he was thinking about heading into the Frank Spencer.

I wanted to see if he and his teammates were nervous with that big target on their backs this year. It's no secret that most teams want to beat Mt. Tabor. Hicks and I also talked about Mrs. Martha Land, North's Jairus Sims, Reynolds junior Kendall Wicks, Kobe Bryant, coach Andy Muse, colleges and a few other things.

I enjoyed talking with Hicks. He seems like a well-mannered guy. Take a look at my conversation with J-Hicks from Monday evening.

Anthony: What's going on, Josh?

Josh: Nothing much.

Anthony: You have the Frank Spencer this week. (Smiles.) Kind of give me your thoughts of on this big tournament coming up.

Josh: Oh, I'm excited. I'm happy that we were fortunate enough to have the number one seed. It's always a pleasure to have the 8:30 game. We're ready to play Parkland. We're ready for them. And, I'm really looking forward to it.

Anthony: How much pressure is on a team that won it a year ago?

Josh: Uh, to be honest with you we don't feel like there's a lot of pressure on us. A lot of people would think that we have a lot to live up to with the expectations so high. But we're working hard in practice and getting prepared for Friday night. We don't really feel too much pressure. We've played in it before. We're just taking it as another game.

Anthony: Do you feel like teams don't simply want to beat Mt. Tabor? It seems like teams want to embarrass you guys out there. Do you sense that?

Josh: Oh yeah. Every night. We know that we have a target on our back. We don't look ahead of anyone on our schedule. We play hard every game. We make sure we do whatever we need to do to get the job done.

Anthony: I hear that. Josh, did you feel like you were being overshadowed when you first got to Mt. Tabor?

Josh: No, not really. Last year was more of a learning system. I had a new coach, new system, new teammates. Last year was more of a get ready for this year type of thing. This year I'm comfortable. I know my system. I



Mt. Tabor's Josh Hicks is ready to fight for another Frank Spencer title.

Photo by Charlie Pfaff

know my coaches. I know what's expected from me. So, that's why I'm able to play and perform a little bit better.

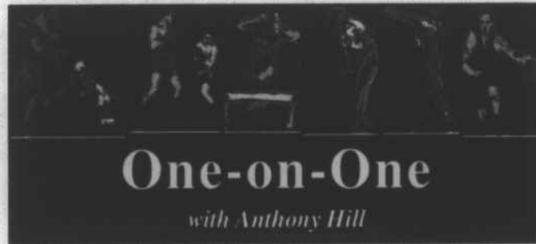
Anthony: It's funny you said that because Mike (Grace) told me the same thing about you being comfortable this year, and how much you've adjusted to coach Muse.

Josh: Right.

Anthony: What exactly did you have to adjust to with coach Muse?

Josh: Oh, definitely the up tempo practices. We didn't really have to run at my old school (Greensboro Day). You didn't get yelled at if you made a mistake. He'll yell at you a little. But it wasn't too much. If he doesn't think you're practicing hard then coach Muse is going to put you on the line and make you run. (Both laugh.)

You'll run until he's tired of seeing you run. He expects a lot out of us. He makes sure he



One-on-One with Anthony Hill

gets everything that he can out of us.

Anthony: Does everyone get yelled at?

Josh: Oh yeah. He'll call out anyone. He mainly gets on to me, Mike and C.J. He'll find something to yell at us about. He'll yell at us if our shirts aren't tucked in. He even call out guys that don't get that much time to let them know he's still paying attention to everybody.

Anthony: (Laughs.) Ole ball coach. Hey, everyone knows where your boys are

going to school. What are your choices?

Josh: Um, I only have one offer. That's by Lenoir Rhyne down in Hickory. I've been talking to a couple other schools. Old Dominion and Chattanooga have come down and watched a couple games. I'm just keeping things open right now. Maybe I'll be able to make a decision on where I want to go after the season if I have any offers by that time.

Anthony: Is it frustrating to not be getting the attention from colleges that you would



Hicks

want right now?

Josh: No, not really. A lot of people think that I should be worried. And, some people are just wondering why I haven't been offered yet. I get that question a lot. I just tell them that it's not my time. My time will be coming. I just keep my head up, and keep working hard. Someone will come knocking at my door if I continue to do the right things.

Anthony: Let's go back to that loss to Charlotte Vance in last year's playoffs. How much did that affect you?

Josh: A lot. Everybody was a little emotional after that loss because of what it meant to the seniors. The seniors meant a great deal to us. That loss taught us a lot. Coach Muse showed us game tape of that very game. I think that's why we've started the way we have so far. Hopefully we'll be able to get that ring this year.

Anthony: What's the best part of your game?

Josh: Shooting.

Anthony: If you could play one-on-one against any baller who would it be?

Josh: Definitely Kobe Bryant because he's my favorite player. That would be a great chance to learn something from him. I know I'd lose. But I'd take it.

Anthony: What about around the city? Who would you like to play?

Josh: Probably Jairus Sims. I know his game. We're about the same height. That would make me better.

Anthony: A lot of people have been talking about North Forsyth this year. How excited are you about the possibility of playing those boys?

Josh: Um, I'm pretty excited. But I'm not really looking forward to it right now. I'm focused on Parkland right now. But I've heard a lot of good things about that North team. I heard they're pretty deep. I heard they're explosive. I also heard they can match up with us pretty well. I grew up with Jairus Sims. It's going to be a good game if we both advance. We have to take care of Parkland first.

Anthony: No doubt. OK, Josh. Give me a top five of Winston ballers.

Josh: I definitely have to put my teammates, Mike (Grace) and C.J. (Harris). Then I would go with Allan Jones from West Forsyth. Definitely Jairus (Sims) from North. And, Will Carpenter.

Anthony: What about Kendall Wicks, from Reynolds?

Josh: Uh, he's pretty

good. He's a real good shooter. I haven't really seen him play since last year. I've heard a lot of good things about him. He's only a junior. And, it's still early. He'll only get better.

Anthony: How much love are you getting on campus?

Josh: Uh, people know me. I'm pretty cool with the principal. I've known her all my life. I know a lot of people.

Anthony: How did you get close with Mrs. Land?

Josh: My dad used to be a principal at Mt. Tabor when I was younger. He used to bring me to football games. He used to bring me to work with him. I think Ms. Land was new to the school at that time. She's always kept an eye on me even when I wasn't in Winston-Salem.

Anthony: That's good. What would you be doing if you didn't play basketball?

Josh: Probably soccer. I was a real good soccer player when I was younger. I kind of gave up soccer to play basketball. I'd probably be a soccer player.

Anthony: Who's going to win the ACC basketball title this year?

Josh: Oh, Wake Forest all the way. I've always been a Wake fan. I think we have the team to get the job done this year.

Anthony: Do you have a favorite class at Mt. Tabor?

Josh: I would say English. I have a lot of friends in my class. I also like the teacher, Mr. (Keith) Donnelly. I also like English as a subject.

Anthony: What's your favorite television show?

Josh: The Fresh Prince of Bel Air. I've seen every episode at least three or four times.

Anthony: What do you listen to before games?

Josh: Uh, some of everything. I just put the iPod on shuffle. I listen to Gucci Mane, Wayne, Jay-Z and the old Nas.

Anthony: Who's the best point guard in the city?

Josh: Mike Grace. He runs the team with his assists. And, he can score whenever he needs to. He can pull up whenever we need a tough bucket. Mike has got a nice mid-range game.

Anthony: No doubt. Uh, free association. (Pause.) Josh Hicks.

Josh: Guy that gets looked over. But is starting to get some recognition. Plays with a chip on his shoulder.

Anthony: Mt. Tabor.

Josh: Best team in Winston.

Anthony: Coach Andy Muse.

Josh: Best coach in the state.

Anthony: L.D. Williams.

Josh: Most athletic player at Wake Forest. Most exciting player.

Anthony: Best female baller in the city.

Josh: I don't really know any girl ballers. I guess Jazmin (Cromartie) from Parkland.

Anthony: That's cool. Hey, good luck to you all in the tournament.

Josh: Thanks.

Anthony: No problem, man.

SIAC names Gregory Moore new commissioner

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The SIAC Council of Presidents announced earlier this week the appointment of Gregory Moore as the new Commissioner of the SIAC, effective Jan. 19.

The announcement was made by Dr. Benjamin F. Payton, Chair of the Council, who also serves as President of Tuskegee University. In the capacity as SIAC Commissioner, Moore will serve as the head of the SIAC Office and staff and coordinate intercollegiate athletic activities among the 13-member schools. He will report directly and be responsible to the SIAC Council of Presidents.

"Moore brings a wealth of educational and professional experiences to the position," Payton said. He holds a B.A. degree in Political Science from the

College of New Jersey, and a J.D. degree from the University of Oregon School of Law.

He has served as General Counsel for the Jersey Express Basketball Club where he played a key role in the recruitment and hiring of legendary NBA player, Darryl Dawkins, as head basketball coach. He has also served as Legal Counsel/Government Relations Director for the Essex County College of

Newark, New Jersey; and has maintained a successful law practice, The Moore Law Group, LLC in New Jersey, which deals with sports law and commercial transactions, et. al. Mr. Moore has also served as Deputy Counsel for the New Jersey State Legislature.

Moore has broad experience in sports administration, sports marketing, broadcast licensing agreements, NCAA compliance policies and issues, media

relations and staff management, among others.

Moore expressed appreciation to the search committee for "affording me the opportunity to serve as the next Commissioner of the SIAC. It is my sense that SIAC student athletes are the embodiment of what is best about college sports and I will work tirelessly to broaden the platform to showcase these outstanding young men and women," Moore said.

The Council of Presidents met in a special session on Dec. 18 and elected, Moore as SIAC Commissioner in a unanimous vote. The entire SIAC Council of Presidents joins the Executive/Search Committee in the expectation that Moore will lead the Conference to a new level of performance with quality and integrity.

The Office and staff will retain the current location in Atlanta.



Moore

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