

SPORTS WEEK

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Kalin Jarvis in action.

WSSU Photo by Garrett Gurns

Trio of CIAA titles for Rams

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Women's Tennis

It was a match for the ages when the Winston-Salem State Lady Rams (27-1) took a 5-4 win over the Shaw Lady Bears to win the 2011 Central Intercollegiate Athletics Association (CIAA) Women's Tennis Championship held Saturday afternoon at the Virginia State University Tennis Complex. The match, which took nearly four hours, featured a titanic battle between the two top women's tennis teams in the CIAA.

In the end, it came down to the number four singles, which went into a tiebreaker in the third set before the outcome was decided. With the first CIAA championship in school history hanging on the outcome of her singles match, WSSU sophomore Kalin Jarvis dug deep to take the 4-6, 6-1, 7-6 (7-4) win. Neither competitor showed an ounce of quit as Jarvis battled her way to the victory.

"I had a lot of pressure on me, but I just had to take my time and play my game," Jarvis said following the victory. "I just had to play like I practiced. I think I got caught up in everybody cheering and I just had to remember to keep the balls on the court."

Baseball

The #3 Winston-Salem State Rams (30-19) worked themselves all the way back from a first-round defeat to win the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) Baseball Championship, completing a remarkable comeback and improbable season for the first-year program.

The Rams defeated No. 2 Saint Augustine's College Falcons (36-18), 7-6 and 3-0, Saturday afternoon at Whaley-Colbert Field on the



Coach Kevin Ritsche

Virginia State University campus in the double-elimination tournament. With the win, Winston-Salem State earns the CIAA's automatic qualifier spot to the Atlantic Region Tournament.

"It's been our goal from day one to come out here and be winners in our first year," WSSU junior catcher Michael Robbins said. "It's all about hard work. Everybody was working their butts off. Every time somebody was called on they did their jobs and now we're champions."

With the win, the Rams completed a very unlikely feat as the team won its first CIAA baseball championship in its first season back from a 37-year hiatus.

"Being a first year program, even though I knew we had the talent, a lot of people didn't give us a chance to win," WSSU Interim Head Baseball Coach Kevin Ritsche said following the championship. "I'm really excited about the way that the way these guys played and came together and really gelled as a team."

Softball

With her team still down by two runs in the bottom of the eighth inning, Winston-Salem State head coach LaTaya Hilliard-Gray pulled her team over and had one simple point to make. "This is what we do," she said. And with that, in the midst of what looked like an improbable comeback, the Rams made that improbability a reality, scoring five runs in their last at-bat to stun Chowan 7-6 and win the 2011 CIAA Softball Championship on Saturday.

"All we had to do was believe the way I believe in them," said Hilliard-Gray.

In a fitting manner, it was a Lady Ram senior who came up big for the team to score the big win. With three runs in and the bases still loaded with two outs, WSSU senior outfielder Candace Spinks hit a rocket toward Chowan shortstop Fahren Munro. The sharp grounder got by Munro for an error and bounded into left-center field, allowing two runs to score, including the game-winner.



Spinks

Salem wins track medals

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Salem College track team earned three medals at the Livingstone Classic in Salisbury earlier this month.

Courtney Hedgecock recorded Salem's highest finish ever as she earned a silver medal in the 1500 meter run. Hedgecock finished the race in 5:38, just two seconds behind the race winner.

Natali Olveda earned a bronze medal in the 800 meter run (2:51). She also finished in fourth in the 1500 (5:45). Mackenzie Schmidt was just one spot from a medal when she finished in fourth in the 400 meter run (1:05).

Salem's relays also had a strong day. The 4 X 400 relay consisting of Schmidt, Akaya McElveen, Steph Hubbard and Tatum Justice also earned a bronze medal.



The 4 X 400 squad.

Salem Photo



Lataya Hilliard-Gray (above, left) and John Martin (center) are presented with their awards.

Coach of the Year honors go to WSSU's Martin and Hilliard-Gray

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Head Softball Coach Lataya Hilliard-Gray was named CIAA Softball Coach of the Year and Head Women's Tennis Coach John Martin was named the 2011 CIAA Women's Tennis Coach of the Year.

Hilliard-Gray led the 2011 Lady Rams to a 25-11 record, a 15-1 record in the CIAA and a CIAA Southern Division Regular Season Championship.

"It's an honor. We haven't been able to win anything for so long and coming back in our first year and getting these accolades are a great accomplishment. I owe it all to the team," Hilliard-Gray said at the 2011 CIAA Spring Sports Awards Ceremony in



Photos courtesy of CIAA/WSSU

Petersburg, Va. "Just competing the way they did and representing me with all the hard work that they've done. I definitely appreciate what they've done and I'm looking forward to more as we compete for this championship."

Martin led the Lady Rams to a 24-1 record and a 16-0 record in CIAA play this season.

In his first season as head coach of the Lady Rams tennis team, Martin has led the team to one of its best performances in school history with a 24-1 record for the regular season and a 16-0 record in CIAA play. Under his guidance, the Lady Rams won the 2011 CIAA Southern Division championship and the CIAA Women's Tennis Championships.

New WFU tennis hub takes shape

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Wake Forest University held a ceremonial groundbreaking Tuesday for the new tennis complex that is being constructed to serve as the venue for the Winston-Salem Open at Wake Forest University, an ATP World Tour event, as well as the new outdoor home for the Wake Forest men's and women's tennis teams.

The complex, which is nestled between BB&T Field and the Wake Forest Indoor Tennis Center, will feature 13 courts with the same Deco-Turf II surface as the courts used at the US Open, illuminated by a state-of-the-art lighting system. Temporary seating will be brought in for the first year of the tournament, but future plans call for the construction of a permanent stadium.

While construction on the site officially began in February, this week's ceremony, which was attended by Wake Forest President Nathan O. Hatch, Wake Forest Director of Athletics Ron Wellman, Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines and Don Flow, Chairman of Winston-Salem Professional Tennis, marked the beginning of a new phase of the project, which is scheduled to be completed in July.

"This will be as fine of a facility as there is in the ACC and maybe in all of college tennis. Our tennis coaches Jeff Zinn and Jeff Wysner are extremely excited about what these courts will do for our tennis programs," said Wake Forest Athletics Director Ron Wellman. "With the tennis complex now joining our football, basketball and baseball stadiums on Deacon Boulevard, we are making significant progress towards our goal of making this area the sports entertainment capital of Winston-Salem."

The Winston-Salem Open, which will be held from Aug. 20-27, is part of the Olympus US Open Series and is the last ATP event before the US Open. Top American players Mardy Fish and John Isner have already signed on for the inaugural tournament. Tickets will go on sale to the public on May 10.

For more information, visit www.winstonsalemopen.com.

St. Aug Men take 14th straight track title

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Defending NCAA Division II champion Saint Augustine's College took home its 14th straight CIAA men's outdoor track and field title Saturday on the campus of Virginia State.

The Falcons have won the men's outdoor crown 31 of the last 33 years under legendary head coach George Williams. They won this year's championship behind CIAA Field MVP Orlando Duffus, who won the long jump and triple jump in addition to placing fourth in the high jump.

Duffus, the 2010 CIAA male scholar-athlete of the year, scored 25 points for the Falcons, who finished first with 176.50 points. Johnson C. Smith was second with 119 points and Winston-Salem State was third with 106 points.

The Falcons perform traditionally well in the sprints and jumps, and this year was no different. Ramon Gittens won the 100-meter and 200-meter dashes, and Jason Boyd won the 110-meter hurdles Saturday. The Falcons were first in the 4x100-meter and 4x400-meter relays. On Friday, Christopher Copeland was the high jump winner.

Led by Gittens, the Falcons placed four sprinters in the top seven in the 100. Sean Stuart was third, Marquis White was fifth and Julius West was seventh. In the 400, Josh Edmonds was second, Kelly Fisher was fifth and James Quarles sixth. Boyd also placed fourth in the 200, and Gerkenz Senesca was second in the 110 hurdles. Karym Greaves (Sr./Miami Gardens, Fla.) was second in the 400 hurdles.

The Falcons also won the highest grade point average award in men's outdoor track and field. The team posted a GPA of 3.57.



The men's track squad celebrates their victory.

St. Aug Photo

