

Athletes well-engaged at QEA

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Quality Education Academy's Fighting Pharaohs have been busy representing their city and school well.

With a five-game winning streak over the past week and a half, they are gearing up for this week's big games. Today (Thursday, Jan. 29), Bull City Prep (Durham) will come to Winston-Salem. QEA will travel to Raleigh on Saturday to take on rival Word of God. The Pharaohs fully intend to continue on their winning streak and maintain their ranking of #20 in the nation.

The Fighting Pharaohs are not only busy on the court but also in the commu-



The team poses while cleaning Parrish Road.

nity. Winston-Salem's team Road) and can be seen raking in an effort to beautify the has adopted a street (Parrish leaves and picking up trash community.

Comer

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grueling summer sessions at a training center in Mocksville, which attracts many of the area's top high school wrestlers. "Since day one, I fell in love with the sport," he said. "With all the weight I've lost and all the training I've gone through, I have no regrets. I'm thankful for all the time that I've put in."

While there's no question about the physical demands of the sport, Comer has come to understand that the mental aspect is equally important. He openly admits that he's glad that he never listened to friends who warned him that wrestling would be far tougher than he ever imagined.

"I never paid attention to what people told me," said Comer, who wants to pursue a career in cellular research so he can help discover cures for diseases. "Competing in this sport has taught me how to push myself and not be concerned about what others might say or think. Yes, it takes hard work and it takes discipline. But that's what it takes to compete at a high level in this sport. It's worth it."

In some ways, wrestling seems to be somewhat of an odd fit for Comer, an accomplished musician who plays the piano and trumpet. Before trying out for the wrestling team, Comer, a Boy Scout, played trumpet in Reagan's marching and jazz bands.

On the other hand, wrestling doesn't seem so out of place when you consider Comer's family roots. His father, William Comer Jr., was a city champion wrestler at Hanes High School in the 1980s.

Even though this is Comer's final high school season, he has no plans for this year to be his last hurrah on the mats. He plans to continue in college, whether it's on a wrestling scholarship or as a walk-on.

"My entire senior season continues to be a learning experience," he said. "I had to get accustomed to how strenuous wrestling is at the varsity level compared to the junior varsity. My objective is to keep working, keep getting better and we'll see what happens."



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee
William Comer

DASH HAVE A NEW MANAGER

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Coaching veteran Tim Esmay will manage the Winston-Salem Dash in 2015.

Esmay is the 44th manager in Winston-Salem's 102-year history of baseball. He will be joined by pitching coach J.R. Perdew, hitting coach Charlie Poe, athletic trainer Josh Fallin and strength and conditioning coach Shawn Powell.

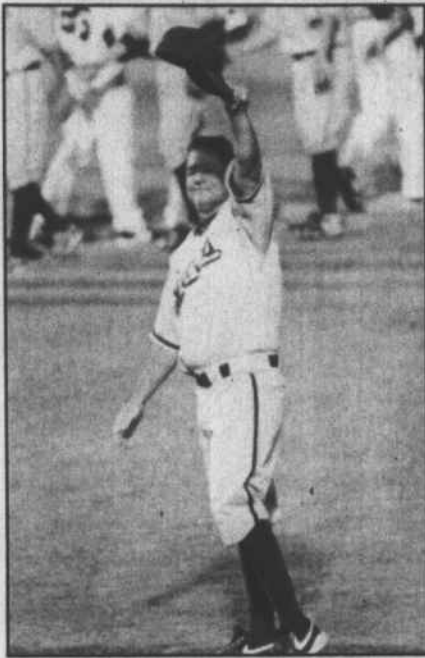
Esmay will manage in the professional ranks for the first time, but he boasts extensive experience in the collegiate ranks. Following a successful playing career at Scottsdale Community College and Arizona State University, Esmay was an assistant coach for six seasons before netting the head coach position at the University of Utah. He spent eight seasons with the Utes, and he became the first head coach in school history to lead the program to a Western Athletic Conference division title.

In 2005, Esmay returned to Arizona

State and acted as an assistant coach for five seasons. He took over the Sun Devils' head coaching position in 2010, during which he led ASU to a 52-10 record, the number one national seed in the NCAA Tournament and a spot in the College World Series. During his five-year tenure as Arizona State's head coach, Esmay posted a 201-94-1 (.681) record and always finished at least 11 games above the .500 mark.

Tommy Thompson, Winston-Salem's 2014 skipper, will manage the White Sox Low-A affiliate, the Kannapolis Intimidators, this year. Gary Ward, last year's hitting coach, will possess the same role with the rookie-level Arizona League White Sox.

The Dash's 2015 season begins on Thursday, April 9 in Frederick, Md., while BB&T Ballpark's sixth season kicks off on Thursday, April 16 with a 7 p.m. game against the Myrtle Beach Pelicans, the Cubs' new High-A affiliate. For tickets or more info, visit wsdash.com.



ASU Photo
Tim Esmay is taking the helm.

Atkins

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we've been emphasizing. There's more unity among the players. Earlier this season, we played a lot of 'me' ball. Now they're finding out that playing team ball is the way to win games. We didn't help ourselves with the way we shot at the foul line. If we make some free throws, the game wouldn't have been as close as it turned out to be."

Even though Syrus Sadler (14 points) was the only Atkins player to score in double figures, his teammates provided sufficient support to help deliver the victory. Justin Nolan, who finished with six points and a game-high 10 rebounds, scored two of his baskets during the latter stages of a tense fourth quarter.

Atkins led 24-19 at halftime, but Bishop McGuinness bounced back to cut the Camels' lead to 37-33 with 4:15 left to play in the game. Nolan scored from inside to push the lead to 6 points, but C.J. Cappuccio hit a 3-pointer and Brad Standen added a free throw to make it 39-37



DJ Williams (2) of Atkins dribbles past the defense.

in favor of the Camels.

On Atkins' next possession, Nolan broke free on a drive from the left wing and delivered what proved to be the game-winning points. The Villains responded with a score by Andrew Desalvo, but they were never able to draw closer.

The two teams traded turnovers on back-to-back possessions in the final minute of play. Desalvo



Coach Prim

attempted to tie the game with a short jumper, but Garrett Whitaker blocked the shot. In the meantime, the Camels missed four free throws, which gave the Villains one more opportunity to win with time running out. For the game, Atkins went 6-of-17 at the free-throw line.

On Bishop McGuinness's final possession of the game, Standen found enough space to get

off a potential game-winning 3-pointer. But the shot was off target, and Montel Twyman of Atkins grabbed the rebound as the final buzzer sounded.

Standen was a source of irritation for the Camels the last time these teams met in early December. The Villains won by double digits and Standen scored

25 points. This time, intensified defensive efforts produced a different outcome, and Standen was held to 14 points.

"We did a much better job on him this time," said Prim. "The defense made it a lot more difficult for him to get good looks at the basket."

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