

TWICE

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Photo by Craig T. Greenlee
Eugene Love, Winston-Salem Prep girls' coach

doubt about the final outcome. The Phoenix ladies buried Cherokee with an early-flurry and went on cruise control the rest of the way.

Tournament MVP Mychala Wolfe hit three 3-pointers in the opening quarter and Prep (23-3) controlled the action at both ends of the floor. The Phoenix went up 29-5 by the end of the first quarter and never looked back.

Wolfe scored a game-high 20 points and Jada Craig contributed 12. Dominique Claytor and Chrisalyn Boston chipped in with 10 points apiece, mostly on offensive put-backs.

The victory erases the haunting memory of last year's match-up against Bishop McGuinness in the regional semifinals. Prep had the Villains in trouble, but icy free-throw shooting set the table for a heart-wrenching loss.

"This team is a year older and a year wiser," said WSP Coach Eugene Love. "We've gotten accustomed to playing in big games, so it's nothing new to us any more. Now, we're one step away from getting to where we want to be."

Cherokee (25-4), a team that advanced to the regionals five years in a row, was confident about its chances to earn a trip to the state title game. The Braves, however, never had much of a chance after falling behind by such a big margin so quickly.

"Prep hit a lot of shots, grabbed a lot of rebounds, and things just snowballed from there," said Coach Chris Mintz of Cherokee. "Their defense wouldn't allow us to get into anything we wanted to do offensively. They are by far the best team we've played over the last five years and that includes those (state championship) Bishop McGuinness teams."



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee
Andre Gould has guided Winston-Salem Prep to four state titles since 2008.



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee
Mychala Wolfe scored a game-high 20 points against Cherokee and was named Girls West Region MVP.



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee
Winston-Salem Prep's Ne'Quan Carrington (left) and Kendrick Edwards (4) put the defensive squeeze on Albemarle's Lee Autry in the regional title game.

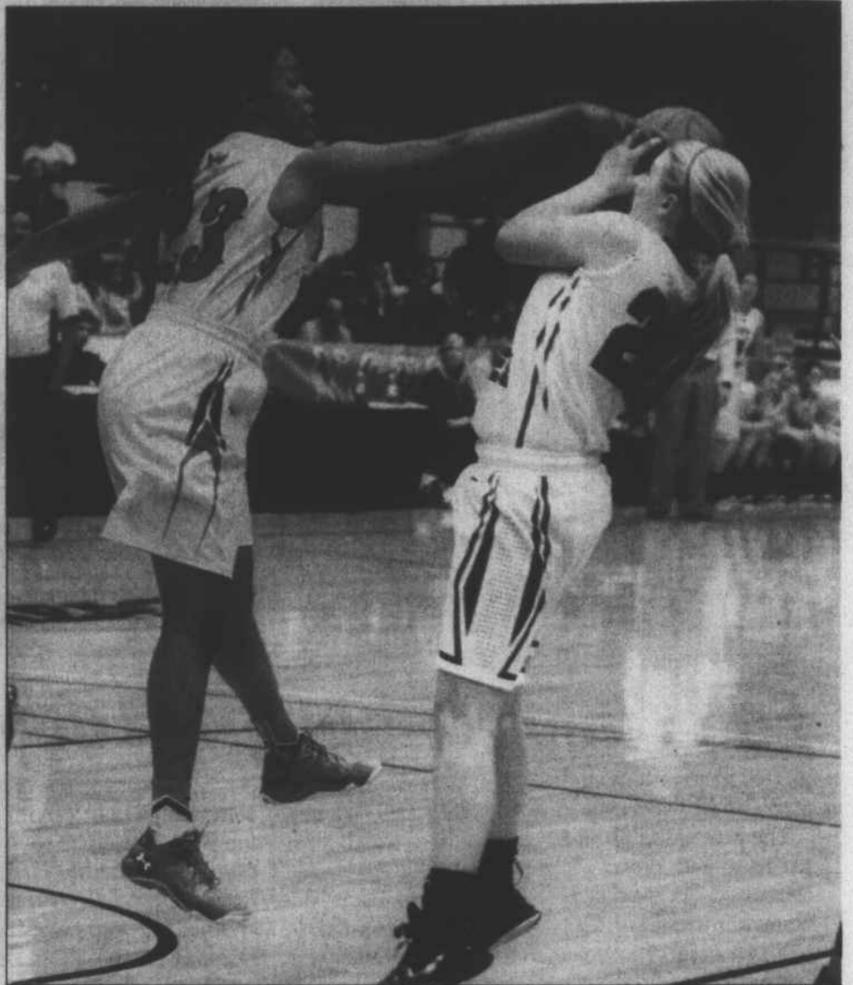


Photo by Craig T. Greenlee
Prep's girls have played tough defense in the playoffs. Kayla Robinson (left) blocks a shot by Zoe Jacobsen of Hiwassee Dam in the West Regional semifinals.

SHOWDOWN

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to the basket and score or find open teammates will help keep the West team in contention.

Maverick LaRue, a swing player who has excellent range from 3-point distance, could play a pivotal role. But there's more to LaRue's game than being an outside shooter. He's a skilled enough ball-handler to get to the basket and he has the size to post-up and score.

The game's final outcome could come down to which team can put together a decisive flurry in the closing minutes.

At halftime of the game, there will be a 3-Point Shooting Contest and a Skills and Drills competition.

Disc jockey Waleed of 102 JAMZ will provide the music. Admission is \$5. For details, call Coach Foster at 336-695-3212.



Photo by Charles E. Leftwich
Caleb Burgess, Winston-Salem Prep



Photo by Charles E. Leftwich
Mason Matrey, West Forsyth



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee
Kai Leslie, Mount Tabor

Rising Stars Showdown Game

East team:

- Ian Henderson (Reynolds)
- Russell Bradley (Carver)
- Kai Leslie (Mount Tabor)
- Nihjel Payne (Reagan)
- Mason Matrey (West Forsyth)
- Xavier Coles (Reynolds)
- Quinn Baker (Carver)
- Maverick LaRue (Reagan)
- De'Sean Harrell (West Forsyth)
- Ted Christakos (Mt. Tabor)
- Malik Miles (Reagan)
- T.J. Stevens (Mt. Tabor)

West team:

- Josh Jenkins (Glenn)
- Curtis Coleman Jr. (East Forsyth)
- Casey Wilkins (Parkland)
- Denard Williams (Atkins)
- Caleb Burgess (W-S Prep)
- Marcus Harris (Glenn)
- Sherrod Wells (East Forsyth)
- Kobe Young (Parkland)
- Brandon Palmer (W-S Prep)
- James Etter (Atkins)
- Connor Sparrow (East Forsyth)
- Justin Carter (W-S Prep)

RECRUITING

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that we must get stronger on the front line. We need some big guys to help with the rebounding."

This isn't the first time that the Rams' cupboard has appeared to be empty after suffering heavy personnel losses at the end of a season. After the 2012-13 campaign, six seniors completed their college eligibility. WSSU filled the void with a harvest of recruits comprised of Division I and JUCO transfers, plus a few freshmen.

Wilhelmi will continue to use that formula from two years ago. A good portion of that recruiting class played significant roles in the Rams making back-to-back appearances in the CIAA Tournament championship game.

Winston-Salem State is in good shape at the guard positions. Terrell Leach proved himself as a lethal 3-point shooter in his freshman season. Leach, a CIAA All-Rookie pick, came off the bench to average 12.3 points a game. In the CIAA tournament final versus Livingstone, he provided a spark with 23 points on 5-of-8 shooting from beyond the 3-point arc.

Leach will get plenty of help from C.J. Ford, who can play both guard spots. Kerry Campbell, a savvy point guard who played at Winston-Salem Prep, turned in his best performances late in the season.

Up front, there are question marks, primarily because the returnees filled in as role players who didn't get a huge amount of court time. Dedric Byrd, Nate Long, Stacy Caroway and Quinton Alton will vie for increased minutes with the newcomers that join the Rams fold.

William Crandell, a 6-foot-5 small forward who signed early with WSSU last November, could make an immediate impact as a freshman. Crandell runs the floor well and has a strong inside presence.

Now that Wilhelmi has finished his first season as a college head coach, he looks forward to the future with much optimism. "I'm thankful for all the support I've received from our administration and fans," said Wilhelmi, who joined the Rams as an assistant four years ago. "Hopefully, we can reload for next season. I'm looking forward to carrying on the great tradition here."



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee
James Wilhelmi is looking to strengthen the Rams low post game in his recruiting efforts.

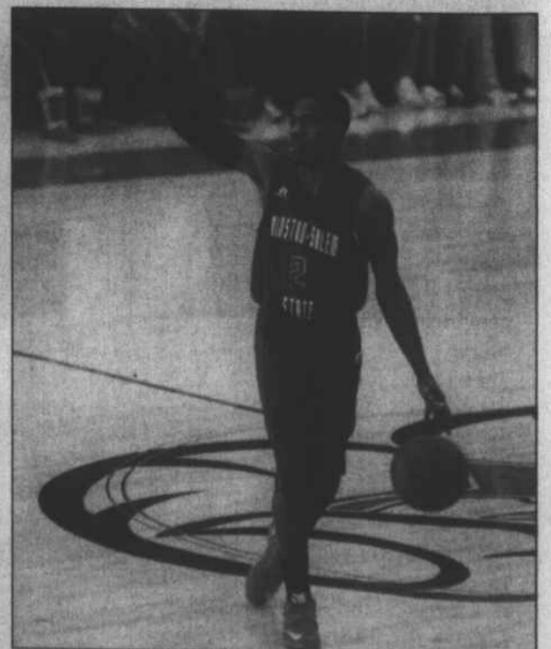


Photo by WSSU Athletics
Rams shooting guard Terrell Leach was voted to the CIAA's All-Rookie team.