

# SPORTS WEEK

Plus Community, Religion & Classifieds

Thursday, March 12, 2015



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee  
Chrisalyn Boston (32) has emerged as a dominant force on the boards for Prep's girls team.

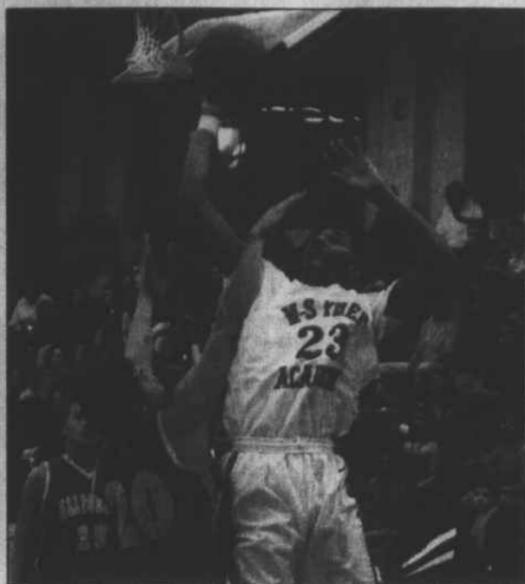


Photo by Craig T. Greenlee  
D.J. Harrison (23) is a key figure on the Phoenix front line.

## Young players prepare for showdown at combine

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE FOR THE CHRONICLE

The high school basketball season ends early for freshmen and sophomores that don't play varsity. Ninth grade and junior varsity teams are usually done for the season by early February.

To help fill that void, Next Level Youth Development of Winston-Salem will present the first annual Top 24 Rising Stars Basketball Combine on tomorrow (Friday, March 13) at 6 p.m. The site for the combine is Woodland Gym, popularly known as the "Eagles Nest," located at 200 Frampton St., near the old Woodland Baptist Church on Patterson Ave.

The Rising Stars Showdown game figures to be the combine's centerpiece. The competition between East and West teams will feature many of the area's top up-and-coming 9th and 10th-grade non-varsity basketball players. Area coaches selected the players for the combine.

Prior to the game, athletes at the combine will take part in a skill development workout, followed by a two-hour combine session. Players will be evaluated for speed, lateral quickness and agility.

The Showdown game will tip-off around 8 p.m. The East team is made up of players from Glenn, East Forsyth, Winston-Salem Prep, Atkins and Parkland. The West team is comprised of players from Carver, Mount Tabor, Reagan, West Forsyth and Reynolds.

The Showdown game should be fast-paced from start to finish. Scoring points isn't likely to be an issue.

The East squad has one of top low-post players in Connor Sparrow, who has blossomed as inside force at both ends of the floor. Sparrow will get plenty of assistance from perimeter shooters Josh Jenkins, Caleb Burgess and Kobe Young.

The West team will counter with T.J. Stevens, a rugged post player who excels as a gritty defender and rebounder. De'Sean Harrell has a knack for breaking down defenders off the dribble. Harrell's ability to get

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Photo by Charles E. Leftwich  
Kobe Young, Parkland

## Twice as nice: Boys & girls Prep teams headed to state championships

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE FOR THE CHRONICLE

Winston-Salem Prep is in position to pull off a rare basketball double. The Phoenix boys and girls' teams turned in noteworthy performances in winning their respective match-ups in the Class 1-A Western Regional finals played last weekend at the Fairgrounds Annex.

The wins put both teams in Saturday's (March 14) state championship games in Chapel Hill. Prep's boys' shocked previously unbeaten Albemarle 64-43. Eyeing its fourth straight state crown, WSP will play East Carteret in a rematch of last year's title contest which Prep won 72-71 on Kwa'Tre Hollingsworth's follow shot in the closing seconds.

The Phoenix girls delivered the knock-out blow early in a 63-34 runaway win over Cherokee. This will be the first championship game appearance for Prep's ladies who will face Williamston Riverside.

### Second quarter lock-down

Defense is Prep's calling card and it was on full display during a key stretch of the second quarter in the regional final. Albemarle rallied to cut the Phoenix lead to 24-22. Coach Andre Gould made a lineup switch, which changed the tenor of the game in Prep's favor for good.

Gould pulled his starters and put Davier Dixon, Josh Gould, Kendrick Edwards, Keeshon Patrick and Ne'Quan Carrington in the game. Over the final five minutes of the quarter, the Phoenix back-ups denied space to perimeter shooters and closed off the

driving lanes. The revved-up intensity was more than Albemarle could handle.

The usually efficient Bulldogs had problems executing and ended up taking errant shots. In the meantime, Prep (21-7) pounded the boards and scored a few fast-break baskets. In the process, Gould's crew went on a 10-0 spurt to regain command with a 34-22 lead at the half.

"We have 15 players who can go in the game at any time," said Gould. "There are 12 in the rotation, and we have three more new folks who are still in training. Regardless of how the game is going, we're going to be relentless. We're not going to back down. We compete on every sequence at both ends of the floor. Now we're looking to come out one more time (in state championship game) and get the job done."

Regional MVP Kwa'Tre Hollingsworth and Davien Williamson, who scored 17 points apiece, took turns leading the offense. Williamson scored 10 of his total in the first half and Hollingsworth finished strong with 15 points in the second half.

Coach Al Andrew of Albemarle (26-1) is familiar with Prep's style of play. Familiarity, he acknowledged, doesn't necessarily translate into success. "With their size and quickness, there's no way you can duplicate that in practice," said Andrew. "Prep has so many weapons and they're strong at every position."

### Ladies steamroller

Less than five minutes after tip-off, there was no

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### Class 1-A West Regional Championships

#### Boys' All-Tournament Team

- Jamie Stewart (Avery County)
- Davien Williams (W-S Prep)
- Lee Autry (Albemarle)
- Zaire Williams (W-S Prep)
- Terrace Ellis (Albemarle)
- MVP - Kwa'Tre Hollingsworth (W-S Prep)

#### Girls' All-Tournament team

- Kendall Toineetta (Cherokee)
- Jada Craig (W-S Prep)
- Reagan Barnard (Cherokee)
- Dominique Claytor (W-S Prep)
- Chrisalyn Boston (W-S Prep)
- MVP - Mychala Wolfe (W-S Prep)



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee  
All-Rookie pick Dedric Byrd (33) goes up for a rebound.

## Rams coach looking to replace players, focus on quality recruiting

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE FOR THE CHRONICLE

Although the basketball season is over for Winston-Salem State, there's much ground to cover over next 50-60 days. The Rams (18-10) lost four players who collectively averaged 51.3 points per game. So now there are some vacancies on the roster for next season. There are also recruiting priorities to focus on.

It's imperative that Coach James Wilhelmi bring in quality offensive firepower to replace departing seniors Donta Harper, WyKevin Bazemore, Marquez Jones and Javan Wells. Harper and Bazemore were voted All-CIAA and All-Tournament this season.

Scoring points, however, is only one part of the equation. Getting better on the boards is the other part. Bazemore was the league's top rebounder at 9.8 per game. But even with his presence in the paint, Winston-Salem State was still routinely beaten on the glass by an average of 5.9 rebounds per game against conference opponents.

"We have needs to fill across the board," said Wilhelmi. "But there's no question

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March **WSSU** is the Tom Joyner School of the month



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