

SPORTS WEEK

Also Religion and Classifieds

MAY 14, 2015

Reagan Raiders unite for student athlete battling cancer



Photo by Tevin Stinson

Chase Vaden, left, and Denard Smoot, right, who were teammates of Savion Littlejohn, middle, have been one of the driving forces behind the Pray for Sae 7-on-7 football tournament. Vaden approached Savion with the idea while Smoot is responsible for getting participants for the tournament on May 30.

BY TEVIN STINSON
FOR THE CHRONICLE

Last year around this time, Savion Littlejohn, a sophomore linebacker at Reagan High School, was preparing for the summer grind of football season. This year football is not as important to the towering runstopper.

In a few weeks Savion will have his final treatment of chemotherapy.

After what seemed to be a simple back injury during the playoffs last season, Savion's grandparents urged him to go to the hospital. That's when he was diagnosed with lymphoma.

Savion, who is known for his hard-nose play on the field, took the news in stride. After four treatments of chemotherapy, he still walks the halls smiling.

"I see this as just a minor setback, but it's cool," Savion said. "I know I'll come out of this better than ever."

Head football coach

See Sae on B3



Pray For Sae 7-on-7
football tournament fundraiser

Date and Time:

Saturday, May 30, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Place:

Reagan High School,
3750 Transou Road, Pfafftown

Admission:

\$5; children 10 and under get in free

All money raised and donated on this day will be given to Savion Littlejohn, a current junior football player at Reagan High School who is battling lymphoma.

Finals will be streamed nationwide on CoachesAid.com.

For more information on the event as a whole, visit the website PrayForSae7on7.WebStarts.com or contact: Chase Vaden at jchasevaden@gmail.com or 336-354-8769.



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee

McKinley McNeil, left, runs past Eboni Roberson on the anchor leg of the 4x400 relay.

Parkland girls continue reign as state champions

Washington-Saunders of Reagan finishes 2nd in the 400

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE
FOR THE CHRONICLE

It's really no surprise that Parkland bagged another Class 4-A state outdoor track and field championship last weekend in Greensboro. There was never any doubt that the Mustangs would rule.

Parkland, who led the field with 95 points, was clearly head and shoulders above everybody else. Cary was the runner-up with 59½ points, followed by Apex (58) and High Point Central (40).

So, now the curtains have closed on the superlative careers of six seniors who helped to make Parkland a formidable factor in high

See Track on B2



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee

Hayden O'Neal has filled a variety of roles as a starter and relief pitcher.

Pitchers need support to propel Rams in postseason

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE
FOR THE CHRONICLE

Winston-Salem State University has more than enough power and punch in its lineup to make a strong run in the NCAA Atlantic Regional Baseball Championships, which begins today (Thursday, May 14) in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Scoring runs, however, is just one part of the equation. Stand-out pitching is a much-needed requisite to survive and advance. Still, even the best pitching staffs need stellar defensive support.

In postseason play, the combination of timely hitting, stellar mound work and solid defensive support, can't be overemphasized. If any one of those three elements is missing from the mix, an early exit is the most likely. That's what happened to Winston-Salem State a year ago.

The Rams went home early after losing 4-3 to Shepherd (W.Va.) and 1-0 to Kutztown (Pa.) at the regionals. Against Shepherd, WSSU committed four errors, which led to three unearned runs.

In the Kutztown game, the Rams surrendered the game's only run on a sacrifice fly in the top of the ninth inning. In the bottom half of the ninth, WSSU had a runner on third, but was unable to score a run that would've tied the game.

"Pitching-wise we're not as deep as some teams, but we do have more depth now," said Rams Coach Ken Ritsche. "Our guys pitched well at last year's regionals, but we didn't hit the ball particularly well. Plus, we didn't come through defensively like we needed to. It's important to make the big plays; it's important to make the routine plays."

Ritsche is counting on Aaron Hatcher, Sam Burton and

See Baseball on B2

Productive nucleus returns for Lady Rams next softball season



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee

WSSU's Mercedes Hargett slides into second base.

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE
FOR THE CHRONICLE

Overall, Winston-Salem State University's recently-concluded softball season was a struggle. It wasn't until the next-to-last game that the Lady Rams assured themselves of finishing above the .500 mark. On the plus side, though, the ladies finished strong and won 12 of their last 17 games.

"There were ups and downs," said Coach LaTaya Hilliard-Gray of WSSU, which finished the year at 23-22. "But with this team, it was never a question of talent. It was more about being consistent. They learned for themselves that in order to win a championship and advance to the regionals, they have to play as a unit in every game."

With three seniors departing from this year's team, Gray will have a viable cast of returning players for next season - all of whom will be sophomores or juniors. Of that group,

See Lady Rams on B2



\$40

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