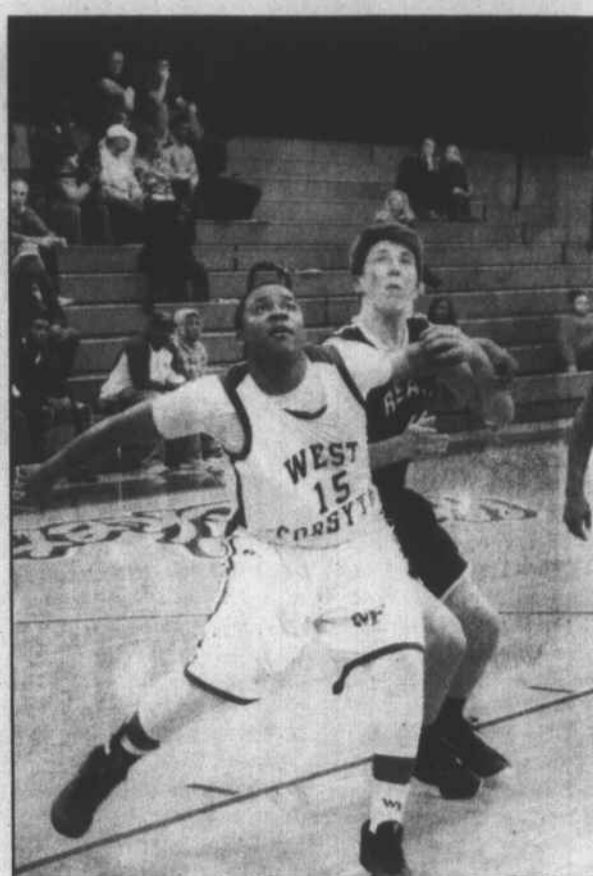




East Forsyth power forward Dominique Jones shoots over the outstretched arms of Glenn's Christian Herbin.



Dashan Adams of Reynolds pressures Lexington's Adrian Hogan. Photo by Craig T. Greenlee



C.J. Mack of West Forsyth delivered crucial baskets and rebounds in the Titans overtime win over Reagan in the quarterfinals.

# Tournament's early rounds play out as expected

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE FOR THE CHRONICLE

With the exception of a couple of mild first-round upsets, all has gone as expected at this year's Lash-Chronicle JV Tournament. The Final Four - Mount Tabor, West Forsyth, East Forsyth and Reynolds - just happen to be the tournament's top four seeds.

Here's a run-down on the Final Four teams and their prospects entering the month of January.

## Mount Tabor

The one question about this team is whether or not it will play to its true strength. The Spartans have their share of big bodies in the post - Duncan Smits, Dillon Bullard, Jaylen Moore and Cole Foley. All four players know how to muscle their way for position to dominate the glass for second-chance points.

The backcourt tandem of Carson Antis and Quest Aldridge has played well, and figures to improve as the season progresses.

Mount Tabor's inside size proved to be the key difference in its 94-84 win over defending tournament champ Winston-Salem Prep in the quarterfinals. The Spartans were at their best when pounding the ball inside.

While it's true that Mount Tabor is formidable, it doesn't mean that this team is invincible. The night before playing the Lash-Chronicle quarterfinals, the Spartans had a 67-65 road loss to Reynolds. Turnovers and missed free throws were heavy contributors to Mount Tabor's demise.

"For us to play as well as we're capable

of playing, it's all about how we dictate the ball game," said coach Willie Harrison. "When to run, when not to run. Plus, we have to do a better job of paying attention to details, especially in the fourth quarter of ball games."

## West Forsyth

Of the four semi-finalists, West Forsyth came the closest to having to make an early tournament exit. Even though the Titans maintained control throughout their match-up against Reagan, they were pushed to the limit, but managed to survive with a 59-54 victory in overtime.

In the waning seconds of regulation, Ryan Ayers hit a 3-pointer and then he hit a pair of free throws to tie the game at 49 with less than a second left to play.

In the OT, JaQuan McMillian of West Forsyth secured the win with two critical steals which he converted into fast-break baskets. McMillian finished with a team-high 20 points. Power forward C.J. Mack turned in a solid performance at the defensive end and he also contributed 11 points to the cause.

Ayers was tops for Reagan with 24 points and Shammond Dockery chipped in with 10 points.

"We shot ourselves in the foot," said coach Jeffrey Williams. "But a lot of that was because of Reagan, and how they played defense. There's a lot for this team to work on, both on the court and off the court. We're playing with mainly all freshmen and one sophomore and they're being asked to be mature for this tournament and for the rest of the season."

## East Forsyth

The Eagles suffered one regular-season loss (to Reagan), but other than that, they've been the dominant team. In the

Lash-Chronicle quarterfinal round, East Forsyth pounced on longtime rival Glenn from the opening tip and cruised to an 80-69 victory.

Point guard Josh Mahaffey led the Eagles with 16 points and backcourt mate Tanis Samuels scored 15 points. Connor Sparrow (13 points) controlled the paint at both ends of the court.

Marcus Harris was the prime offensive weapon for the Bobcats with a game-high 20 points. Paul Carlton added 10 points.

"We have an experienced team that's very hungry," said coach Rodney Minor. "When we can get the ball inside, it softens things up for our shooters. When we play to our potential, it can be very scary. We're talented from top to bottom. This team goes two-deep at every position."

## Reynolds

The Demons had an easy time of it in a 67-51 victory over Lexington.

There were times, however, when they eased up and Lexington was able to pull within seven points of the lead (60-53) with about four minutes remaining. Perhaps this was to be expected. The night before playing in the quarterfinals, Reynolds beat Mount Tabor in a game that wasn't decided until the final seconds.

In the tournament win, point guard Ian Henderson led all scorers with 15 points and Charlie Mensh finished with 12. Four other Reynolds players scored six points or more.

For Lexington, Saafir Craven scored a team-high 12 points, while Jayron Roberts and Nasheed Peoples contributed 10 points apiece.

"Coming in, I knew we would have to fight against a let-down from the night before when we beat Mount Tabor," said

## Lash-Chronicle Score-

(Parentheses denote tournament seed)

### Quarterfinals results

(No. 2) West Forsyth 59, (No. 10) Reagan 54, OT

(No. 3) East Forsyth 80, (No. 11) Glenn 69

(No. 1) Mount Tabor 94, (No. 9) Winston-Salem Prep 84

(No. 4) Reynolds 67, (No. 5) Lexington 51

### Semifinals, Dec. 21

East Forsyth vs. West Forsyth 6:30 p.m.

Reynolds vs. Mount Tabor, 8 p.m.

### Finals, Dec. 22

3rd-Place Consolation, 6 p.m.

Championship, 7:30 p.m.

### First round results

East Forsyth 81, Walkertown 14

Reynolds 87, North Forsyth 65

Lexington 68, Atkins 27

Glenn 64, Parkland 54

Reagan 62, Thomasville 61

Winston-Salem Prep 70, Carver 32

coach Mike McCulloch. "Lexington cut into our lead and made us sweat a little bit.

"Looking ahead, the key for us is to play defense and box-out. If we try to rely on our athletic ability without boxing-out, we're going to find ourselves in a lot of dog-fight type of games."

# Demons, Eagles beat top seeds to reach title game

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE FOR THE CHRONICLE

The top two seeds in this year's Lash-Chronicle JV Tournament will have to settle for the consolation prize. That's because No. 3 East Forsyth and No. 4 Reynolds, the lowest seeds of the tournament's Final Four, prevailed over the higher seeds in the semifinals played on Monday night.

Reynolds whipped No. 1 seed Mount Tabor, 77-70 in the nightcap. East Forsyth topped No. 2 seed West Forsyth, 53-47 in the opening game. Here's a replay of how each team advanced to the title round.

## Reynolds tops No. 1

The Demons proved to be the better team in their match-up against Mount Tabor. Intense pressure defense and timely shooting set the tone for the victors. The Spartans managed to stay in contention, but were unable to make a complete comeback in the second half.

"We attacked the basket and made good shots," said coach Mike McCulloch of Reynolds. "I was happy with 95 percent of our shot selection. When you make shots, it's much easier for us to get into our full-court press, which

allowed us to control the tempo. We wanted to play full-court for the first three quarters."

Treviz Murphy, who finished with 21 points, spearheaded a balanced Demons offensive attack. Ian Henderson scored 13 points, while Dashan Adams and Mysta Goodloe chipped in with 11 points apiece.

Late in the third quarter it appeared that Mount Tabor was on the verge of finding a rhythm. Jaylen Moore's put-back cut Reynolds lead to 49-48 with about three minutes remaining. By the end of the quarter, the Demons pulled away with a 9-3 run to go up by seven points (58-51).

Mount Tabor did close the gap to 74-70 with 12.7 seconds left on a Quest Aldridge drive. Reynolds put the game away on a Murphy free throw and Rashon Bethea's basket.

Coach Willie Harrison wasn't pleased with how his Spartans performed against a team that it had lost to three nights earlier. Aside from Reynolds' defensive effectiveness and offensive execution, Mount Tabor contributed to its downfall with mental lapses at both ends of the floor.

"From the beginning of the ball game until the very end, we didn't have enough energy," said coach Willie Harrison of Mount Tabor. "The effort wasn't there. We just didn't play hard enough to win a championship. We didn't move the ball too well on offense. As for our defense, that's something - that as a coach - I have to fix. Hopefully, we'll have this all straightened out by the start of January."

Aldridge scored 19 points to lead the way for the Spartans. Although post players Dillon Bullard (14 points) and Duncan Smits (13 points) scored in double digits, both had off-nights offensively.

## East Forsyth triumphs

For the first half, neither team was able to fully impose its will on the other. But all that changed in the second half when East Forsyth outscored West Forsyth 15-5 in the third quarter.

Connor Sparrow was the top scorer for East Forsyth with 14 points. Josh Mahaffey, who sank a pair of foul shots in the waning seconds to help seal the win, finished with 10 points.

Although the Titans made a gallant comeback bid in the fourth, they

weren't able to totally erase the 43-34 deficit at the end of the third. The Eagles had command of the game and a 46-36 working margin with 4:14 left to play in the game. That's when the momentum began to shift in West Forsyth's favor.

JaQuan McMillian of the Titans hit a 3-pointer to cut the Eagles' lead to 48-47 with 1:25 remaining in the contest. On the next possession, McMillian stole a pass and dribbled down court for a lay-up, but his shot, which would've given his team the lead, rimmed out. With the game still in doubt, West Forsyth had a turnover on its next possession, which squashed its rally.

"In the first half, we committed 13 turnovers and they beat us to every 50-50 ball," said coach Rodney Minor of East Forsyth. "That's why the game turned into a dog-fight. In the second half, we rebounded well and we defended well, and that's what ultimately got us the win."

For the Titans, McMillian was the leading scorer with 15 points. Backcourt partner Jaylon McMillon chipped in with 10.



Jaylen Moore of Mount Tabor scores on a put-back. (Photo by Craig T. Greenlee)