

SPORTS WEEK

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FEBRUARY 18, 2016

Teams seek a breakthrough at CIAA Tournament

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE
FOR THE CHRONICLE

So far, both Winston-Salem State basketball teams have experienced up-and-down seasons. Even so, optimism abounds that the men's and women's teams have the capability to pull off a few surprises when the CIAA Tournament tips off next week in Charlotte.

With two games remaining in the regular season, the WSSU men (11-14, 4-4 CIAA Southern Division at the start of the week) appeared to be in free fall. A three-game losing streak damages their chances of a top-three finish in the division, which would assure a first-round tournament bye.

The women's team (11-13, 4-4) will

most likely end up in fourth or fifth place in the division. Here's a summarized look at the prospects for both teams as the conference tournament approaches.



No clear-cut favorites

With only two players returning from a year ago, the Rams had to start all over again with a practically brand-new roster. Among the key losses from last season was power forward WyKevin Bazemore, a four-time All-CIAA pick who is now playing professionally

in Spain.

Leading scorer Terrell Leach (14.5 points) and C.J. Ford are the key contributors who played last year. In the meantime, a cast of newcomers - Rayvon Harris (10.2 points), William Crandell and Jamel

See Teams on B2



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee

The Lady Rams have the stingiest defense in the CIAA (points allowed and field goal percentage defense). Taelor Mandeville (11) guards Virginia Union's Jasalyn Denkins in a CIAA match-up earlier this season.

JV BASKETBALL

With help, Mount Tabor grabs top spot in Central Piedmont



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee
Power forward Dillon Bullard of Mount Tabor was a prime factor in the paint.

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE
FOR THE CHRONICLE

Even though Mount Tabor won the mythical championship of the Central Piedmont 4-A Conference in JV basketball, it didn't happen the way coach Willie Harrison thought it would.

The Spartans took a big step toward sealing the title with a convincing road win over West Forsyth last Monday. One night later, however, they suffered an overtime loss to Davie County in their final conference game

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of the season.

Mount Tabor (18-3, 10-2 CPC) claimed sole possession of first place in the conference when West Forsyth (16-5, 8-3) beat Reynolds last Tuesday. Prior to that game, the Demons (15-4) had only two conference losses. They

needed to win in order to force a first-place tie with the Spartans.

With Reynolds losing, Mount Tabor made good on its season-long objective to finish at the top of the CPC standings for the second year in a row. "By default, we backed in to win the conference," said Harrison. "Against Davie, we played like we already knew we had it (conference) won. Our defense wasn't what it needed to be. On offense, we played too much one-on-one."

That was hardly the case the night before in the

See Mount Tabor on B2

Parkland's McNeill cruises to state indoor title

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE
FOR THE CHRONICLE

As expected, McKinley McNeill of Parkland claimed ownership of the 500-meter dash at last week's Class 4-A state indoor track & field championships held at JDL Fast Track in Winston-Salem. The senior quarter-miler bided her time over the first half of the race, and then closed with a killer kick to win by a comfortable margin.

McNeill covered the distance in 1 minute, 14.24 seconds, .14 seconds shy of the current state record, which was set a year ago. The victory over second-place Kleo Torres of Southeast Raleigh was hardly surprising. Entering the state meet, McNeill had the second-fastest time in the nation at 1:13.02.

McNeill entered this race with every intention of shattering the state record. As things turned out, though, it wasn't going happen. During the early stages of the race, McNeill didn't get out fast enough to give herself a reasonable chance to go after the record.

See Track on B2



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee

Parkland's McKinley McNeill left battles with Kleo Torres of Southeast Raleigh during the first leg of the 4x400 relay. McNeill beat Torres to win the 500-meter dash title at the state meet.

THE CLARENCE E. "BIG HOUSE" GAINES ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME

The WSSU Department of Athletics is now accepting applications. Nomination must be submitted by Friday, April 1, 2016.

For more information contact the WSSU Department of Athletics (336) 750-2141