



Photos by Craig T. Greenlee

QEA's Deshawn Corprew is a lethal scorer on the fast break as well as in the half-court.

Pharaohs from page B1

*Advanced Prep International: Terrance Ferguson (shooting guard), Billy Preston (power forward) and Trevan Duval (point guard) are all ranked among the nation's Top 15. Kansas is heavily recruiting all three. "I think we lost three games in the Grind Session by a total of six points," said coach Isaac Pitts of QEA. "The final outcome wasn't determined until near the end of those games. It came down to at shot a buzzer, or a play here, or a play there. So, I'm confident that we can

beat those teams. We're OK because we can match-up against everybody."

sive end in the half-court," he said. "Teams are going to play zone; they will not

"For us, it's a must that we execute on the offensive end in the half-court."

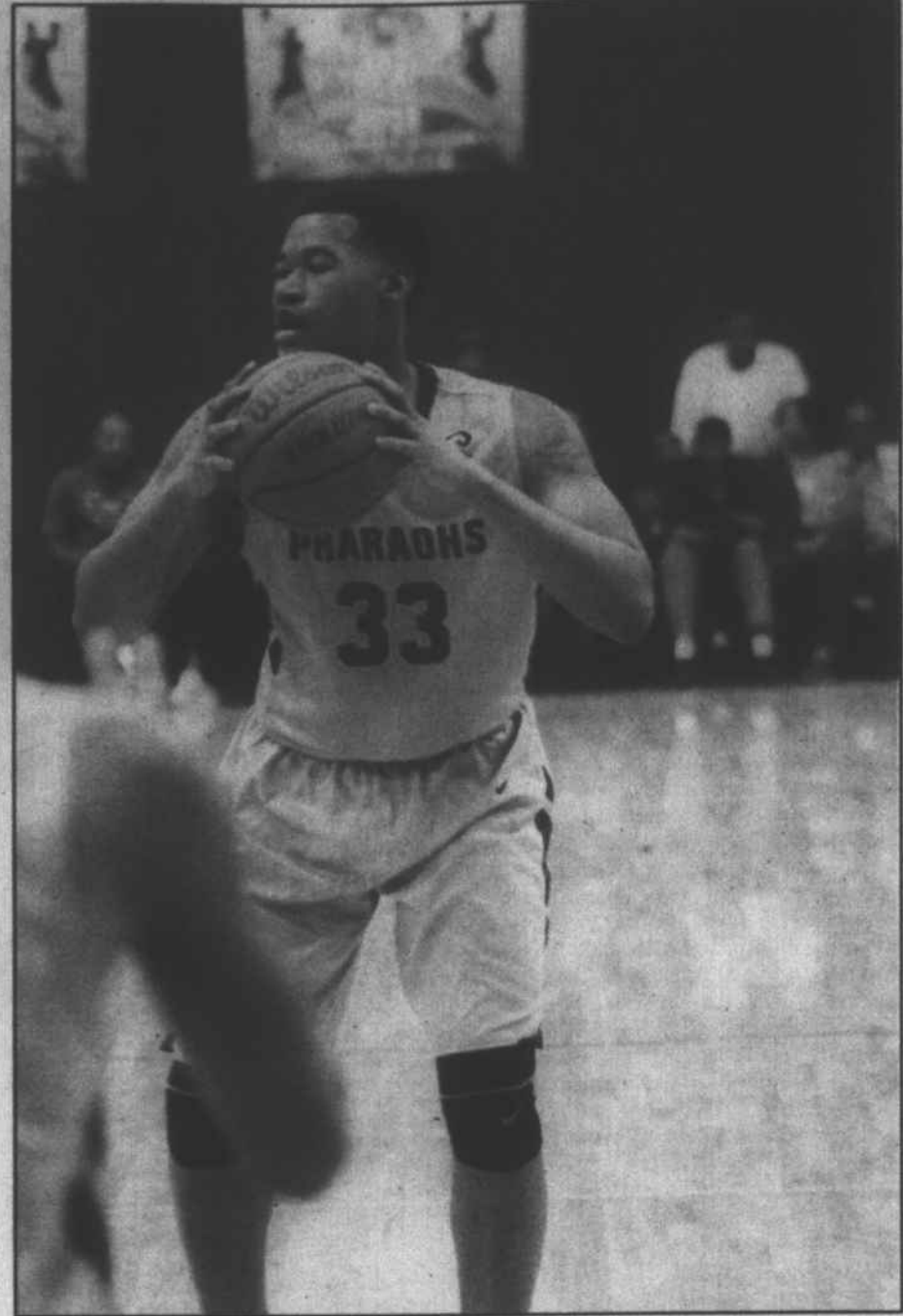
-Isaac Pitts, coach

Pitts understands that regular season success doesn't necessarily translate to the post-season. Even so, he's acutely aware that his team must excel in certain areas to boost its chances of bringing home a national championship trophy. "For us, it's a must that we execute on the offen-

play man-to-man on us. Not only that, but we have to get back to playing sound defense. That means making the right rotations in our help-side defense, getting into the passing lanes. Plus, every player must keep up with their individual assignments." QEA players look forward to the challenge to

proving themselves as bona fide title contenders on a national stage. Pape Ndiaye, a 6-9 power forward, likes his team's chances. "It all comes down to going out there and playing hard," said Ndiaye, who's beginning to round into form after missing all of last season with a torn ACL. "We have great players and we feel like we can win it. It's all about us communicating on defense. That's the key." Corprew, who averaged a little over 30 points a game during the regular season, believes that maintaining the status quo will help QEA achieve its season-long objective to bag a

Marsellis Purvis has college offers from UNC Greensboro and Robert Morris.



The Grind Session National Championships

- (Tournament field) 22ft. Academy (S.C.), Advanced Prep International (Tex.), Athlete Institute (Ontario, Canada), Hillcrest Academy (Ariz.), Oldsmar Christian School (Fla.), Potter's House Christian Academy (Fla.), Prolific Prep (Calif.), Quality Education Academy (Winstori-Salem), Sunrise Christian Academy (Kan.), Victory Prep (Tex.), Victory Rock Prep (Fla.), Word of God Christian Academy (N.C.)

national crown. "We have to keep doing what we've been doing," he said. "We'll stay aggressive and play hard to get that (championship) ring. As for me, I'll keep my focus on running my team and being a leader."

Runner from page B1

ing added more fuel to his competitive fires for the current season. He expects to make amends. "I had a terrible 800 on that day," said Kankula, who has a 3.6 grade-point average. "That loss was very devastating and it made me stronger. I don't want me or my teammates to have that feeling again. But I'm not dwelling in the past. Instead, I'm moving forward. At the same time, though, I look at the past so I can make the necessary corrections." Kankula, who's interested in pursuing a career as a computer software engineer,

acknowledges that his dismal state championship showing progress up to this point, there's no question that Kankula will field his share of Division I offers by his senior season. As a second-year high school runner, Kankula is already receiving letters of interest from Division II and lower-Division I programs, according to Crouch. So, it should come as no surprise that the interest level among college recruiters will continue to grow. "Jeremy is determined to win and he hates losing," said Crouch. "By the time he's a senior, he'll be one of those names (in the 800) that you won't forget. This kid will be something big."

has a genuine shot at competing for a state 800 title in May. A year ago, he was the runner-up in the Midwest 4-A Regional and the Northwest Conference championships. Earlier that season, he pulled off a surprising fourth-place finish in the Brent Invitational, which is unofficially known as the City-County Championship. Not only did he place among the top four, but he ran a personal best in the process (1 minute, 59.73 seconds). Last year's state meet wasn't a total bust. Kankula ran a leg on the Camels 4x400 relay team that earned a medal by finishing fourth. This year, Atkins is considered one of the prime contenders to win that relay event at the state championships.

At this point in the season, Kankula is beginning to find his comfort zone. At the end of the indoor season, he suffered a knee injury and was ordered to sit out for two weeks to get some much needed rest. He returned to the team well rested and clocked 2:07.10 in an early-season meet, which resulted in his current state ranking. "I'm a little surprised by the ranking," said Kankula, who also runs the 1,600. "With my training, I know that in order for me to be at my best, I have to find the right equilibrium between speed and stamina." Even though Kankula still has about two-and-half years of high school eligibility remaining, he has his sights set on running track at Auburn University. Given his academic standing and his rate of track

progress up to this point, there's no question that Kankula will field his share of Division I offers by his senior season. As a second-year high school runner, Kankula is already receiving letters of interest from Division II and lower-Division I programs, according to Crouch. So, it should come as no surprise that the interest level among college recruiters will continue to grow. "Jeremy is determined to win and he hates losing," said Crouch. "By the time he's a senior, he'll be one of those names (in the 800) that you won't forget. This kid will be something big."



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee

Improved stamina and foot speed bodes well for Tametris Morrison (left) in her quest to challenge for an NCAA Division II outdoor title in the 400 hurdles.

Hudler from page B1

team that placed third. There's an undeniable air of excitement in WSSU coach Inez Turner's voice when she discusses the prospects for Morrison this season. Turner has no doubts that Morrison, who was an All-CIAA pick in cross country, can surpass last year's performance at the national meet. "Tametris ran faster 400s indoors this winter," said Turner. "Since she ran a full season of cross country, she has all the background training. The experience in the 400 hurdles is going to be there, so she is well-prepared. Now that she's getting faster and has the stamina, we're looking for great things from her." Does that mean that Morrison has a realistic shot at placing among the nation's top three in an event that's arguably the most grueling in all of track and field? Turner thinks so. "Oh, yes, definitely," said Turner, when asked about Morrison's chances to realistically compete for a national title as a sophomore. "Every time we go out there (national championships), we feel like anything can happen. When we

get on that track at the championships, it's anybody's race." The outdoor season started in grand fashion for Morrison. At the Wake Forest Open held last weekend, she won the 400 hurdles in 1 minute, 2.11 seconds, which is a NCAA Division II provisional qualifying time for the national outdoor championships. Additionally, she ran second leg on the Lady Rams victorious 4x400 relay (4:01.40) that beat several Division I schools, which included Morgan State, Pitt, Appalachian State, Duquesne and High Point University. Not only is Morrison ahead of the curve on the track, but the same is true for the classroom as well. Although this is her second track season, she's a junior academically.

SportsWeek recently caught up with Morrison, who shared her insights about the path her track career is taking. SW: Where are you in your training right now? Morrison: My training this year has been so tough. I have different coach from last year and my speed is much better than it was. So, I feel like the outdoor season for the 400 hurdles is going to be something nice. SW: What do you feel is realistic for you to accomplish this season? Morrison: A year ago I ran 59 seconds (400 hurdles). This year I'm actually looking forward to running a good old 57. That's going to be a nice drop (in time). The competition may feel they don't have to be concerned about me because it's only my second year. But they should be worried. SW: What's the biggest difference this year? Morrison: Cross country. Some people don't like it because they feel that takes away from their speed. But actually, cross country benefits you because it opens up your lungs and helps you to get your breathing right which helps your endurance (for

long races like the 400 hurdles). So, instead of struggling to breathe, you're already very fit because of the cross country (training). SW: What do you need to work on to get to the next level? Morrison: There's always something to work on. I'll work a little harder on getting out of the (starting) blocks. SW: How are things shaping up for the 4x400 relay? Morrison: We have a young team, so right now we're still flip-flopping (relay positions) and trying to figure who's going to compete in which event. We have so many talented ladies who can run that relay. It's going to be something that will be very good to watch. SW: How does it help you to have some solitude in your pre-race preparations? Morrison: My father (Fitzroy Morrison) taught me from a young age [started running 9 years ago] to find a place to sit quietly, get my thoughts together and run the race in my mind - break it down. I really have to separate myself. It (solitude) gives me the time to think about my race.

"Tametris ran faster 400s indoors this winter," -Inez Turner, coach

Have a Story Idea? Let us Know news@wschronicle.com