



SOFTBALL

Riley is just beginning to scratch the surface

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE FOR THE CHRONICLE

For Chyna Riley, there's no such thing as hitting a routine ground ball.



That's because she's as swift as they come in jetting from home plate to first base.

Riley, a utility player on Winston-Salem State's softball team, is a headache for opposing infielders. Speed allows her to beat out more than her share of infield hits. When Riley hits a grounder, it's not unusual for opposing

infielders to rush their



Riley

throws. Sometimes they throw the ball away. At other times, inaccurate tosses pull the first baseman off the bag.

In either case, Riley, a slap hitter who bats from the left side, reaches base safely, which frequently leads to Rams scoring opportunities.

"Teams know that I have speed," said Riley, who majors in exercise science and minors in sports medicine. "If I hit a ground ball, they know they have to be fast at getting the ball out. If they don't, they know I'm going to beat the throw."

Riley, a junior and three-year starter, was All-CIAA as a utility player a year ago. This season, she's continuing her all-star level of play for WSSU, which had a four-game win streak prior to Wednesday's road game against Barton College. Riley was hitting .289 with 14 RBIs and she leads the team in hits (22) and runs scored (22).

"There's no question that Chyna's speed helps her get on base," said Winston-Salem State coach LaTaya Hilliard-Gray. "The main thing we're working on right now is



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee

Entering the first week of April, Chyna Riley of the Rams led the team in hits and runs scored.

helping her develop consistency."

Speed, however, isn't the only major positive that makes Riley a valued con-

tributor. She's also the Rams No. 2 pitcher. In 13 starts, Riley has a 7-4 record with a 3.24 ERA. When she's not handling

pitching chores, she splits time between second base and the outfield.

See Riley on B2

It's getting close to decision time for QEA's Coprew

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE FOR THE CHRONICLE

It was 10 months ago when Deshawn Coprew of Quality Education Academy made a summer trip that planted the seeds for what proved to be a spectacular basketball season. The 6'-5", 180-pound shooting guard opened a lot of eyes at the NBPA Top 100 Camp, which annually attracts the best of the best college prospects.

As a late selection to the camp, Coprew came in without any fanfare to speak of. But after four days of showcasing his talents against elite-level players, there was no doubt that he deserved to be ranked among the nation's best. Some scouting services have him ranked among the top 60. He was 98th in ESPN's Top 100.

Coprew added to his resume considerably as the prime factor for the Pharaohs, who recently advanced to the Grind Session's national championship game before bowing out to Victory Rock Prep (Fla.). Over the course of the season, Coprew became a prize recruit for a host of major-college programs, which included Kansas, Florida State, Cincinnati, Texas A&M, Nebraska and Missouri - to name a few.

Here's a brief

summary of observations from the college scouts: Coprew is athletic and quick enough to defend any position on the perimeter. Offensively, he has the complete package as a ball handler who can score off the bounce and from mid-range, as well as from beyond the 3-point arc. He is a physical player who routinely finishes at the basket in spite of body contact.

For the season, Coprew, a senior from Norfolk, Va., averaged 32 points, 7 rebounds, 5 assists and 2 steals.

There was never a question in coach Isaac Pitts' mind that Coprew would prove himself as one of the top high school players in the country. "Deshawn has always been a very good player," Pitts said. "The biggest area of improvement is basketball IQ. For him, it became a thinking game."

"He performed at a level which made everybody around him better. Not only that, but he learned how to pick his spots (to take over a game) and make the right plays at the right time."

Looking back on last summer, Coprew realized that compared to many of his camp counterparts, he was an unknown and definitely not on the recruiting radar screen of a lot of big-time college basketball schools. As far as he was concerned, that was never an issue. All he wanted was the chance to show what he could do.

"They gave me a chance, so I had to take advantage of it," said Coprew. "I went out and played and people respected

See Decision on B3

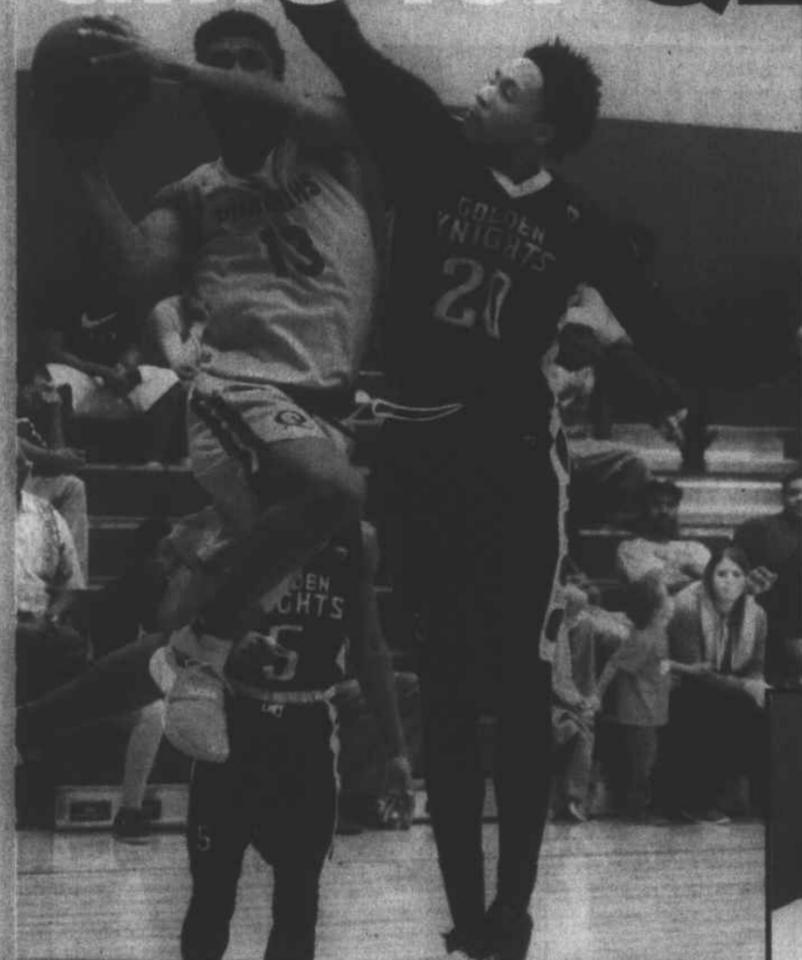
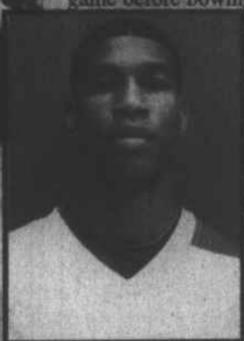


Photo by Craig T. Greenlee

QEA's Deshawn Coprew has the quickness and strength to get his shot off in tight spaces on drives to the basket.



Coprew

Rams seeking turnaround for second half of season

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE FOR THE CHRONICLE

Mental errors and sporadic bats are the key reasons why Winston-Salem State's baseball team is hovering around the .500 mark so far this season. As of April 4, the Rams were 16-16.

There are signs, however, that the Rams (16-16 as of April 4) are starting to pick up momentum. WSSU went on the road and had three wins in a four-game set at Virginia State last weekend.

For now, though, the won-loss record is somewhat surprising. That's because the Rams were slotted 21st in the pre-season

NCAA Division II national rankings compiled by Collegiate Baseball newspaper.



Division II College World Series. It was

WSSU is coming off a record-setting year in which it finished up at 42-15 and fell two games short of advancing to the

See Rams on B2

WSSU Rams, VSU Trojans split double header on Sunday

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Winston-Salem State University split a double header with the Virginia State Trojans on Sunday, April 3, dropping game one 4-3, before bouncing back with a 5-2 win in the nightcap.

With the split on Sunday, WSSU improves to 16-16 overall and 5-3 in the

CIAA. Virginia State improves to 3-22 overall and 2-5 in the CIAA.

In game one, WSSU got on the board first when Phillip Page scored off of a wild pitch in the third inning, giving the Rams the early 1-0 lead.

Virginia State answered in their half of the third, and added two more runs in the

See Split on B2

ACE AWARDS

ATHLETIC CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE

MONDAY, APRIL 25, 2016 ■ 6pm

K.R. Williams | Semi-formal/Formal attire

\$10.00 | WSSU Students with Valid Identification are FREE