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SPORTS

JCSU adds teammates to women's hoops recruiting class

By Herbert L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Johnson C. Smith has rounded out its women's basketball recruiting class with a pair of high school standouts from South Carolina and a junior college transfer from New York. Natasha Morgan and Veronica Thomas of Hillcrest High in

Fountain Inn, S.C., have signed national letters of intent, as did Kristina Zemaityte of Manhattan (N.Y.) Community College.

Morgan, a 6-1 center, averaged 8 points, 8 rebounds, 1.5 assists and 1.5 steals as a senior. She was named all-region, all-tournament and team co-MVP. Thomas, a 5-9 guard, averaged

8.5 points, 3.3 rebounds, 2 assists and 1.6 steals during the 1999-2000 season. She was named all-state, all-tournament and team Co-MVP.

Zemaityte averaged 19 points, 5.0 rebounds and 4.0 assists per game as a sophomore at Manhattan. Morgan, Thomas and Zemaityte join Joi Surratt,

Tykesha Williams and Krystal Wesson in Smith's 2000-01 class. Surratt, a 5-4 guard from Olympic High, was the scoring and assist leader in Charlotte-Mecklenburg area high schools averaging 22 points and 5 assists per game. Throughout her four-year career Surratt amassed a total of 1,430 career points. Surratt was all-MEGA 7 4A and

conference player of the year; team MVP.

Williams and Wesson led Shelby High to the Southwestern 3A conference regular season and tournament championships and the South Piedmont 2A regular season and tournament championships.

Williams, a 5-11 guard, averaged 19 points, 6 rebounds, 5

steals and 2.0 blocks per game as the Golden Lions' MVP and an all-conference pick.

Wesson, a 6-4 all-conference center, averaged 9 points, 8 rebounds, 1.0 steal and 7.0 blocks per game. She hit 69 percent of her free throws.

Smith won the CIAA Western Division championship with a division record of 9-1.

NCAA gets hostile rebel flag response

By Pete Iacobelli
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHARLESTON, S.C. — The NCAA has received hundreds of e-mails about its call to remove the flag from the Statehouse dome, most of them from people adamantly opposed to taking the flag down.

"As somebody whose e-mail address is out there, I've gotten some e-mail that I couldn't tell you about," spokeswoman Jane Jankowski said this week.

Last month, the NCAA's executive committee, acting on a request from the National Association of Basketball Coaches, said it would not hold its men's basketball regionals at Greenville's Bi-Lo Center in 2002 if the flag still flew. In addition, no other NCAA championships would be held in the state if the flag remained.

Many of the e-mail responses were anonymous or signed with chat-room nicknames, Jankowski said. But "there are a lot of people who have taken time in much detail to explain why this is an important issue with them," she said. "Many have done that very eloquently. Some of them have been rude."

The NCAA sent a brief statement May 11 after South Carolina's House, as the Senate did in April, approved a plan to take the flag from the Capitol dome and place a similar banner on a pole at the Confederate Soldier Monument on the Statehouse grounds. Gov. Jim Hodges is scheduled to sign the bill tonight.

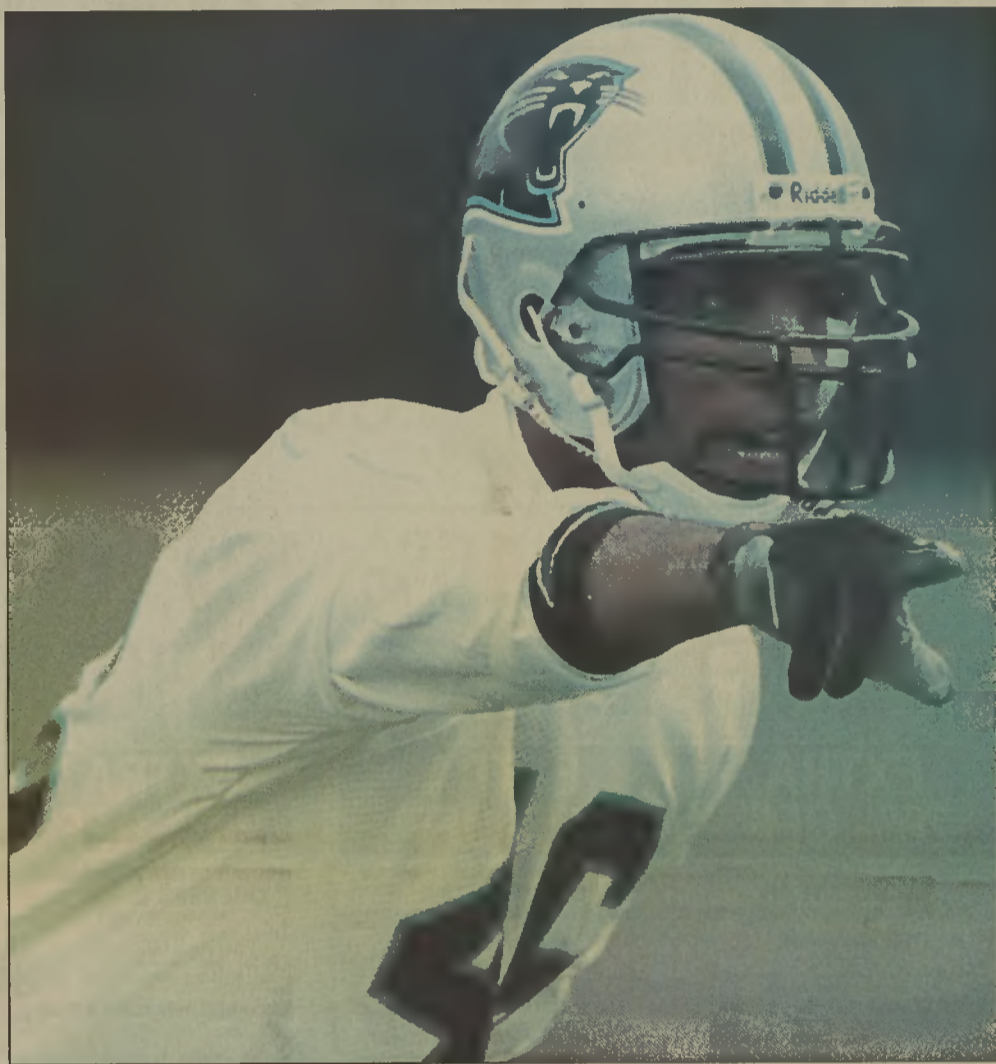
Jankowski said the NCAA executive committee would discuss the flag and whether the Legislature's measures were good enough at its Aug. 11 meeting.

"I wish I could predict what's going to happen," she said. "The NCAA's resolution was pretty specifically stated as to the flag coming down off the state Capitol. I realize that's very vague."

But very little has been clear about the flag debate. The NAACP enacted a tourism boycott of South Carolina on Jan. 1 and has tried to get sporting events in the state caught up in the discussion. South Carolina football coach Lou Holtz said the flag adversely affected some of his recruiting. The New York Knicks pulled out of a playoff camp held most years at the College of Charleston.

Serena Williams, the first black woman to win a Grand Slam tennis tournament in more than 40 years, withdrew from the Family Circle Cup last month on Hilton Head Island, citing the flag controversy.

Please see NCAA/13A



PHOTO/WADE NASH

Rookie Rashard Anderson's introduction to the NFL continues next week at Carolina Panthers minicamp. Anderson, Carolina's No. 1 draft choice, is battling Deon Grant for the starting free safety spot.

Basic training

Secondary's primary at Panthers minicamp

By Herbert L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

The next step in rebuilding the Carolina Panthers' defense begins next week.

The second minicamp, which runs through June 4, is supposed to get everyone acclimated to teammates, coaches and schemes. But, as with the May minicamp, head coach George Seifert will continue to monitor the revamped defense, which finished 26th among 31 NFL teams

last season. Of particular interest is the secondary, where the only given is change. The cornerback battle between incumbents Eric Davis and Doug Evans and free agent acquisition Jimmy Hitchcock will add another chapter. Extra spice will be added in that June 1 is the first day teams can dump huge veteran contracts to minimize salary cap restraints. Seifert has said he doesn't plan to cut either Davis or Evans, which means whoever loses that competition will make a lot of money as a reserve.

The other hot competition is at free safety, where rookies Rashard Anderson and Deon Grant will fight

to start opposite strong safety Mike Minter, who is being moved after Brent Alexander's release. Seifert wants to convert Anderson, the former Jackson State standout and Carolina's top draft choice, from college corner to pro safety.



Seifert

Physically, Grant has the size (6-4, 210) and speed to play anywhere in the secondary. The next step is to get him comfortable at safety.

Sting's still one big ache

By Karl Petraroja
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

With a week to go before the WNBA season opener, the Charlotte Sting are worried.

Point guard Dawn Staley is still slowed by off-season surgery on her right knee. Add to that injury concerns with small forward Tracey Reid, and first round draft pick Summer Erb, and the Sting is far from 100 percent.



Staley

Charlotte may be able to survive any injury except an extended one to Staley. She was third in the league in assists last season, second in free throw percentage and 14th in minutes played. She also came within one rebound of the WNBA's first triple-double, finishing with 13 points, 10 assists and 9 rebounds last July 25 at Detroit.

The 30-year-old Staley had surgery in February while with the Olympic team, but feels the right knee is almost ready now.

"I'm over two months down and it's definitely turned the corner," she said. "I'm looking forward to getting back into competitive games. My target date is June 1st, the opening game of the season, and I think I'm on target for that."

Sting head coach T.R. Dunn puts on a brave face when it comes to the injuries, but knows he needs Staley on the floor to win.

"I'm concerned about them, most definitely but the only thing we can do is let the time and rehab take its place and just hope to get them back," he said. "In the meantime we have to still play. We have to prepare and go with the players we do have."

If Staley doesn't start the season, expect veteran shooting guard Andrea Stinson to handle most of the point guard duties. She can bring the ball up the court and still find ways to score but Stinson's not overly worried about Staley's knee.

"Dawn's a tough player, she's a tough person and I think Dawn is going to do what she needs to do to bounce back," Stinson said. "I try not to worry about her because I know mentally and physically she's strong enough to get herself back into it."

There's no rest ahead for Staley in

Please see STING/12A

Report: Cowboys' Irvin urged to quit pro football

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FORT WORTH, Texas — Michael Irvin, one of the NFL's great receivers, has been advised by doctors to stop playing football because of a spinal condition and plans to retire, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram reported Tuesday.

The Dallas Cowboys' all-time leading receiver is uncertain when he will announce his retirement, the newspaper said.

The member of the Cowboys' organization, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Irvin has spinal stenosis, a congenital condition that could cause permanent paralysis, and he met with the player about it at the team's training headquarters the past week.

"I know it's hard on him," Dallas running back Emmitt Smith said Monday. "It's hard on any man that has to put down the game in the fashion that he has to put it down. It's a tough situation."

"Nobody wants to go out like that," Smith said.

The Cowboys have already moved to replace Irvin in the lineup

Please see COWBOYS/15A

Correction



PHOTO/WADE NASH

Last week's Post incorrectly identified the winner of the N.C. 4A boys' track and field championship earlier this month. Vance High (above) won the title, the first in school history.

Trailblazers' aggression poses problems for L.A.

By Beth Harris
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — Scottie Pippen's urgency set the tone for the Portland Trail Blazers. He crashed the boards, pounded the ball inside and created fouls for the Los Angeles Lakers.

Pippen's play was contagious as the Trail Blazers rediscovered their aggressiveness in beating the Lakers 106-77 Monday night to tie the best-of-seven Western Conference finals 1-1.

Games 3 and 4 are in Portland beginning Friday.

"He pressured their team into playing aggressively," Lakers coach Phil Jackson said of Pippen, who had 21 points and 11 rebounds.

The Blazers employed the same strategy

Please see AGGRESSION/12A



Pippen