



PHOTO/WADE NASH

Carolina's Sir Mawn Wilson heads downfield as Dallas defender Jermaine Jones tries to tackle him in Dallas' 77-52 win last week.

New coach, old trouble for Cobras

By Herbert L. White
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Eddie Khayat's out, John Gregory's in as Carolina Cobras head coach.

The Arena Football League team announced Monday that Gregory has been promoted to head coach and director of football operations for the remainder of the season. The move ends the tenure of Eddie Khayat, who has been relieved of his duties following the Cobras 2-4 start to the campaign.

Gregory will make his head coaching debut for Carolina Sunday against the defending ArenaBowl champion Tampa Bay Storm. Kickoff is 3 p.m. at the Charlotte Coliseum.

"I am grateful for all that Eddie Khayat has brought to this team," said Cobras owner Pete Loftin. "However, with the best interests of the Cobras organization and its fans in mind, I felt a change needed to be made."

Khayat originally joined the Cobras as senior advisor of football operations in 2003 before being named as the interim head coach for the final three games of the season. A 42-year veteran of professional football, Khayat remained with Carolina as head coach and director of football operations for the 2004 campaign. He led the Cobras to two road wins to open the season, ending an AFL record 17-1.

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JCSU to host CIAA spring championships

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Johnson C Smith will again host the 2004 CIAA Spring Sports Championships. But, unlike last year, all championships will be contested in Charlotte on the same weekend. Last year, the baseball championships were held in Petersburg, Va. while the track and field championships were held a week early to accommodate athletes attending the Penn Relays in Philadelphia.

"I am pleased that we were once again selected to host such an event," JCSU interim athletic director Helen Caldwell said. "We look forward to some excellent sportsmanship and the city of Charlotte coming out to support these athletes."

The championships start April 14 with a golf practice round, baseball play-in and team socials. On the following day, all sports except track and field will begin competition. Play continues on Friday and Saturday, with Sunday as a rain day if needed.

Johnson C. Smith men's tennis will try for its sixth straight title, while St. Augustine's will seek its 13th consecutive men's track championship.

Host sites for each sport include:

- Baseball: Victory Christian School
- Golf: Sunset Hills Golf Club
- Track and field: Irwin Belk Complex, Johnson C Smith
- Tennis: Hornet's Nest Park (Charlotte Indoor Tennis Club if necessary)
- Softball: Hornet's Nest Park

For a complete listing of the spring sports championship schedule, click on www.the-ciaa.com.

CHARLOTTE BOXER GETS TV MAIN EVENT



FILE PHOTO

Charlotte boxer Calvin Brock (right) is scheduled to make his national broadcast in May in a 10-round bout on NBC. Brock, a heavyweight, will take on Sergei Liakhovic in Yakima, Wash.

TV main event a step up for Brock's championship hopes

By Herbert L. White
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Charlotte boxer Calvin Brock has waited three years to fight before a national television audience.

He'll get it in May. Brock, 20-0 with 18 knockouts as a heavyweight, is signed to fight Sergei Liakhovic (21-1) in a 10-round main event May 15 on NBC. Boxing on broadcast TV is a major step in Brock's career, after going undefeated in relative obscurity. An impressive outing on NBC could push him into position as a championship contender.

"Once I get on television and get seen by the nation and all the boxing people, it means my next fight will be on NBC again or 9 times out of 10 on HBO," Brock said. "After I get

into the top 10 after my next fight, and I could be a title shot before the year is up or first of the year 2005."

Given the fickle state of boxing and the heavyweight division in particular, Brock said he is pleased with the timing of the fight.

A win over Liakhovic in Yakima, Wash., would likely mean more exposure on national broadcasts or cablecasts, which improves name recognition. A winning reputation translates into bigger paydays.

"Heavyweights don't normally get on television until they get 20-0 anyway," Brock said. "Heavyweights are made popular very fast, and once you get on television they've got to be ready to step up into the top 10. "Although this is not one of the top 10 contenders, he's 21-

1 and if I win this bout I have step up to the top 10 and fight somebody in the top 10."

Brock, whose last appearance on NBC was the 2000 Olympics, believes he's ready to step up in competition. With Lennox Lewis retired, the heavyweight division is scrambled with three major sanctioning bodies each holding up its champion as legitimate. Brock wants to add his name to the mix. "Over the past three years I've been building my record and gaining experience and molding my skills, my abilities, my talent," Brock said.

"Now that I'm ready and they're ready to put me on television in a main event, I'm going to take this guy out and once I stop him I'm going to put myself out there for a title shot."



PHOTO/CALVIN FERGUSON

IN YOUR FACE: Samuel Robbins of Salisbury lands a right hand to Johnathan Harrison's head during their N.C. Golden Gloves bout last week at Sugaw Creek Recreation Center. Robbins won, and earned a berth in the regional tournament.

Sting signs F/C Scott-Richardson

The Charlotte Sting made a major upgrade to its frontcourt by signing forward/center Olympia Scott-Richardson to a multi-year contract.

"Signing Olympia Scott-Richardson is a significant roster move for us, because she has the skills, the heart and the work ethic of a champion," Sting coach Trudi Lacey said. "During the off-season our goal was to improve our frontline. Olympia will be a tremendous addition to our team and will provide great leadership as well."

Scott-Richardson, 27, has spent six seasons in the WNBA and has a 45.1 percent (316-701) career field goal rate. She averages 6.4 points and 4.2 rebounds over 132 games.

Herbert L. White

C. JEMAL HORTON



Stand up for the longshots in NCAAs

Here's hoping Duke bites the dust.

Here's hoping Stanford gets stuffed.

Here's hoping Kentucky gets drop-kicked.

Basically, here's hoping ALL the so-called big-time teams from the so-called power conferences fall flat on their faces during this month's NCAA men's basketball tournament.

And here's hoping the little ol' Saint Joseph's Hawks, from the no-respect-getting Atlantic 10 Conference, go all the way to the top during March Madness.

Other than Alabama State or Florida A&M winning six games in this tournament - and, well, that just ain't gonna happen - there would be no better story for a national champion than if Saint Joe's won it all.

The Hawks would be basketball's version of the BCS-killers.

So that's whom I'm cheering for as the biggest basketball tournament in the world tips off his week. I'm cheering for Saint Joseph's, the underdog, the team virtually no one believes can become national champion.

I know that sounds a little weird, calling Saint Joseph's an underdog, especially considering the Hawks are 27-1, spent most of this season ranked in the top 5, and even had the No. 1 ranking all to themselves for a week.

But that's the thing about Division I sports - everything is centered around the Big Dog Theory. If something generally considered to be great is not being done against leagues full of pro draft picks, in front of sell-out crowds, in games played on ESPN two or three times a week, then people almost immediately write it off as unworthy.

It's the same silly theory that inspired a perfectly good Division I-AA football powerhouse such as FAMU to try and make the jump to Division I-A before it was ready.

And it's the same theory that has made so many people regard Saint Joseph's as a fraud for dominating its respectable, underrated conference this year.

It's pretty funny: Some of the same people who maligned the foolish Bowl Championship Series system used in Division I-A football - "Hey, in basketball, they decide the national champion on the field of play!" - are the very people writing off Saint Joseph's before the "on-the-field-of-play" tournament has started.

It's the same, jacked-up mentality that rears its head in the prejudicial BCS system in football. You would have thought basketball, with its 65-team field, chock full of small and mid-major programs with automatic bids, would be above that.

But with a solid program such as Saint Joseph's, all there seems to be are sneers.

Some are screaming that the Hawks don't deserve their No. 1 seed in the tournament because they lost to

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