

Charlotte Bobcats becomes NBA's 30th team

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NBA Draft.

August: The Bobcats will unveil the team's uniforms featuring orange as the primary color, making them the

first team in the NBA to wear orange for their primary road uniforms.

October: C-SET (Carolinas Sports Entertainment Television) — a new regional

sports and entertainment network serving the Carolinas that is owned and operated by the Bobcats — will launch round-the-clock sports and entertainment

programming, including up to 60 Bobcats games per season. C-SET recently entered into an affiliation agreement with Time Warner Cable, the region's largest cable

operator. In addition, each season 15 Bobcats games will be broadcast in Charlotte by WJZY-TV, a UPN affiliate.

November: Bobcats will tip

off its inaugural season at the Charlotte Coliseum, playing in the Southeast Division of the Eastern Conference. In addition to Charlotte, the division includes the Atlanta Hawks, Miami Heat, Orlando Magic and Washington Wizards.

November: Bobcats begin play in a new, state-of-the-art arena now under construction in the center of Charlotte's business district. The arena will seat 18,500 for basketball games.

Staley, Sutton-Brown agree to terms with Sting

FROM STAFF REPORTS

A couple of the Charlotte Sting's core veterans will be back for at least another season.



Staley

The WNBA team re-signed veteran guard Dawn Staley and center Tammy Sutton-Brown to contracts.

Staley signed a one-year deal while Sutton-Brown's contract keeps her in a Sting uniform for the next two seasons.

"Signing Dawn and Tammy has been at the top of our priority list this offseason. Everyone is excited to get the paperwork out of the way and focus on playing basketball," said general manager and head coach Trudi Lacey. "Both players were very busy this winter - Tammy in Korea and Dawn with Temple and USA Basketball. It is crucial to our team's success to now have them join us in training camp and preparing for the 2004 season."

Staley, 33, has been a member of the Sting for the past five seasons after being

selected with the ninth overall selection in the 1999 WNBA Draft. A three-time All-Star, Staley ranks among WNBA career leaders in assists per game (fourth), free throw percentage (seventh), minutes per game (ninth), minutes (17th), assists (third) and assists per turnover (ninth). Staley has posted 9.4 points and 5.5 assists per game during her time with the Sting, which includes starting all 162 games of her career.

"Dawn ranks as one of the greatest players in women's basketball history," said Lacey. "She is the best floor general in the WNBA and will again be a key figure in the success of this team. Dawn is the leader of this team and the younger players will no doubt learn from her infinite wisdom on the court."

Staley played in Spain, Italy, France and Brazil before signing on with the Richmond Rage of the now-defunct American Basketball League. A two-time Olympian and gold medalist, Staley will attempt to win a third gold in August in Athens as a member of the U.S. Women's Senior

National Team.

In addition to her playing duties with the Sting, Staley heads the Dawn Staley Foundation for underprivileged youth in her hometown of Philadelphia and serves as head coach of the Temple University Women's Basketball Team. This past season, Temple won the Atlantic 10 Title and advanced to the NCAA Tournament, with Staley picking up A-10 Coach of the Year honors along the way.

Sutton-Brown, 26, was drafted by the Sting in 2001. Over her three-year pro career, Sutton-Brown has started 83 games and posted averages of 9.1 points, 5.5 rebounds and 1.3 blocks per game. As a rookie in 2001, Sutton-Brown helped the team advance to the WNBA Championships vs. the Los Angeles Sparks. In 2002, she was named to the Eastern Conference All-Star Team.

"Tammy is a very talented young player," remarked Lacey. "She possesses the size, skills and ability to be a dominant player in the post and we look for her to return to the All-Star she was in 2002. She has the potential to be one of the best

rebounders in the WNBA."

Sutton-Brown, a native of Ontario, Canada, played her collegiate basketball at Rutgers University. A member of the Canadian National Team for the past five years, Sutton-Brown has also played internationally in Russia and Korea.

This past winter, she helped her Kumho Life Falcons win the WKBL Title in Korea.

The Sting opened training camp last week and will play a three-game pre-season schedule leading up to the season-opener on May 21 against the four-time WNBA champion Houston Comets.

The Charlotte Post

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Wesley ready to step in

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doesn't matter who they get. They can bring in Deion Sanders, I'm still going to come out here and play hard."

Wesley has one advantage over the newcomers: familiarity with Carolina's defensive scheme. That has helped him become more comfortable as he played primarily in nickel coverages. After backing up Terry Cousin and Reggie Howard last year, Wesley is confident he can move into a starting job.

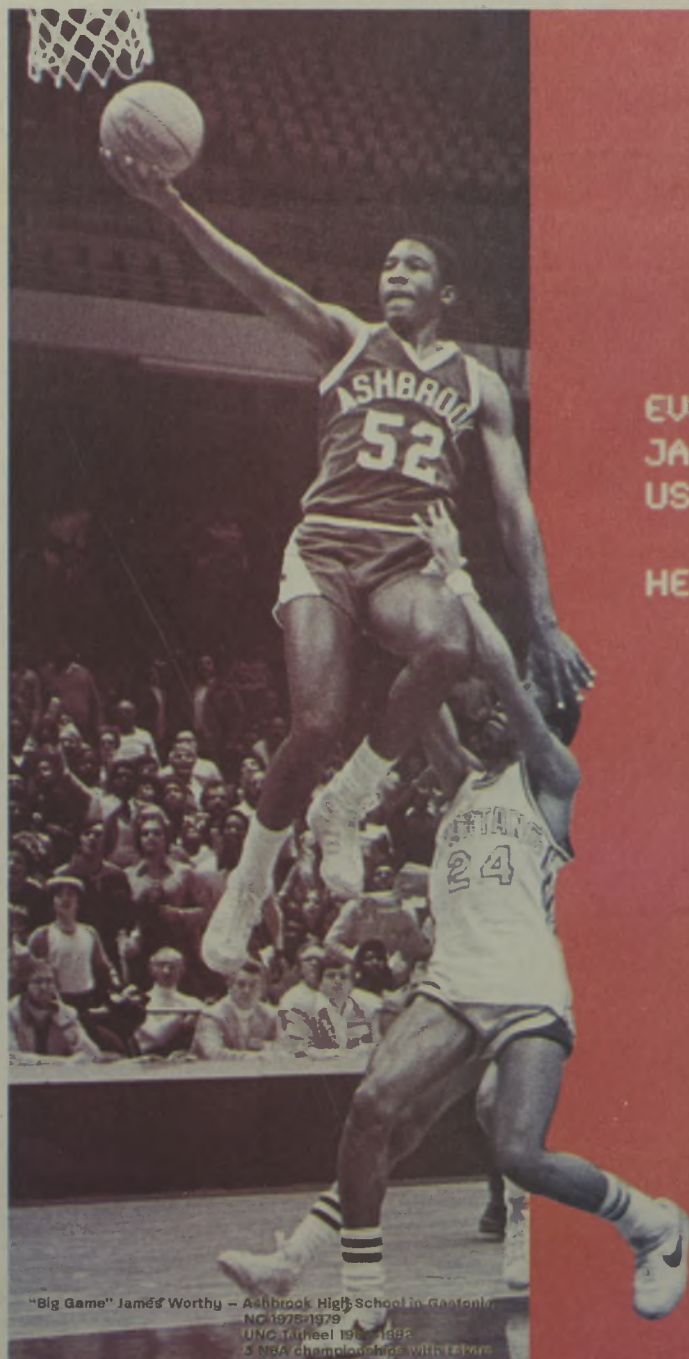
"I feel like I've developed a lot," he said. "I understand the defense a lot better. This is pretty much the first time I can go in and know pretty much every coverage, where the weakness (is) and how to play it and who's blitzing."

The secondary, which lost three-quarters of its opening day lineup, is a work in progress. But head coach John Fox was pleased with the potential at cornerback during last week's minicamp. Second-year pro Ricky Manning figures to keep the job he earned late last season, leaving the other spot up for grabs.

"We've got some new faces back there and so far in this camp I've been impressed," Fox said. "Dante, Terrance Shaw and Chris Gamble and Hank Poteat's made some plays. We've got new faces and I think we've got more size in the secondary now than we've had in the past and I like what I've seen so far."

Wesley's looking to get the coaches' notice often enough to get him into the starting lineup. He's more self-assured in his skills and where he fits into the Panthers' scheme.

I'm pretty much on top of my game and I just want to better myself and sharpen my skills - on man to man coverage, zone coverage, everything - so I can get a chance to get out there."



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