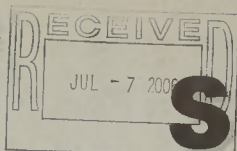


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Section



SPORTS

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INSIDE
Carolina Panthers hire Don Gregory to lead college scouting. 3C

Morrison fits Bobcats with savvy, recognition

By Cheris F. Hodges
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If Adam Morrison is the Charlotte Bobcats' savior, he's going to have to prove it.

At an introductory press conference for the third pick in the 2006 NBA draft, Bobcats head coach and general manager Bernie Bickerstaff said that Morrison, who's best known for crying after Gonzaga lost in the Final Four and his diabetes, fits in with the current Bobcats' roster.

"We know that Adam can shoot the basketball and score the basketball, but that

was not the selling point to us. It was how he plays the game. He fits right in with our young men," Bickerstaff said.

Though it hasn't been said by the organization itself, Morrison also brings crossover appeal that may energize Charlotteans into coming out to games. Last season, the Bobcats ranked 22nd in league attendance and only had seven home sell outs.

Bickerstaff said Morrison fits the profile into what a good Bobcat is and despite what people have heard, fans have been supporting the team.

See TOP/2C



PHOTO/CURTIS WILSON

Adam Morrison, the third pick overall in last week's NBA draft, shows off his new jersey with Charlotte Bobcats coach/general manager Bernie Bickerstaff.

WSSU plays game of wait, see

Division I still a go as MEAC holds off membership vote

Two years ago, Winston-Salem State shocked the CIAA nation by announcing it would apply for Division I status and seek membership in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference — a move that seemed guaranteed.

Two weeks ago, the university received a shock of its own when the MEAC presidents/chancellors voted to delay its membership vote.

On June 13, that shock turned electrifying after President Harold L. Martin announced his departure to take a top position with the UNC system.

Martin is credited with reviving a dead institution when he took the helm in 2000. Nothing like having a president/chancellor who values the importance of academics AND athletics.

Like North Carolina Central, which also has applied for D-I status, WSSU's biggest athletic paydays were homecoming and any game against North Carolina A&T. Once the MEAC issued a ruling that no conference school could play more than one Division II opponent, WSSU was dropped from the Aggies' schedule. The Eagles got the boot last year after droppingkick A&T's behind in the Aggie-Eagle Classic.

WSSU's entry into the MEAC — re-entry for NCCU — means a reunion party like no other. But that reunion could get shortchanged.

Who's to say if Martin's successor will be what the media like to term

See WSSU/3C



BONITA BEST

U.S. soccer needs better athletes to compete

By Kenneth J. Cooper
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

The United States has won more Olympic medals than any other country since the modern games started a century ago, almost twice as many as its closest competitor, the late Soviet Union. In another international athletic competition held every four years, though, the United States has not fared nearly as well — soccer's World Cup.

The early elimination of the best American team ever from the 18th World Cup tournament, still underway in Germany, has sports commentators bantering about what went wrong. How badly did it go? All you need to know is the U.S. team did no better than Trinidad and Tobago, a two-island nation of 1.3 million making its first appearance in the finals, in tying one game and losing two in the first round.

Poor coaching strategy, the under-achieving of individual players, a mix of professionals from different leagues, unfair placement in a group of four tough teams and the relatively low level of pre-tourney competition have all been blamed.

However, none of those reasons quite explains why no squad fielded by one of the world's most populous and athletically dominant countries has ever made it to the championship game, even more than a decade after youth soccer leagues began priming young talent. You have to look more deeply at the evolution of both the sport and the competition at what is the most-watched athletic competition on the planet.

Unlike the nearly monochromatic Winter Olympics, you can see the color of the world at the World Cup. Every populated continent, except single-country Australia, is guaranteed berths in the 32-team tournament. Europe gets the most because of a high number of quality teams, drawn from the continent's professional leagues, which are the world's best. North America, South America, Asia and Africa are always represented.

Many commentators have observed that most teams reflect continental or even national styles of play. The Europeans tend to be methodical and rough, exemplified by the strapping, rugged Teutons fielded by Germany. African teams are fast and physical.

Latin American teams play a flowing game with fancy footwork, improvising moves to get down the field and go for goals. Brazil, whose five World Cup championships outnumber any other nation, have virtuoso players whose bipedal mastery of the ball makes it seem they have been drinking coffee and turning pages of newspapers with their feet their entire lives.

What, then, is the distinctive American style? There isn't one. (To be fair, Asian nations seem to lack one, too.) The U.S. team that could not win a match in Germany played much like the Europeans, controlled and deliberate, but without as much banging.

The American squad would do bet-

See U.S./2C



PHOTO/CURTIS WILSON

Charlotte's Monique Currie, Tammy Sutton-Brown and Sheri Sam surround Sacramento's Kara Lawson. Wins have been more difficult to corral for the Sting, now 3-13.

Midterm struggles

Sting missing too many ingredients to be a WNBA playoff contender

By Herbert L. White
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When Muggsy Bogues took over the Charlotte Sting late last season, there was hope the former Charlotte Hornets star would bring NBA dash to the struggling WNBA franchise.

It hasn't happened.

The Sting is floundering at 3-13 and near the bottom of the league in every meaningful statistic. Precious little is going right, and to his credit,

Bogues is shouldering the blame.

"We do things in practice and once we get on the court, we can't seem to keep that same aggression going," he said "It's my responsibility. I take all the losses, all of it is my fault because I'm responsible for it. I've got to make it work, and for some reason I'm not getting what I need. I'm not getting consistency out of my players."

That's no understatement

Please see STING/2C

Going down

At the midpoint of the WNBA season, the Sting is near the rear on both ends of the floor.

Category	Sting	WNBA rank
Opp. points	79.31	11th
Opp. rebound	30.5	14th
FG shooting	37.44	14th
3-pt shooting	39.4%	13th
3-pt defense	30.7%	13th

Former Livingstone star 2nd in nationals



PHOTORUN PHOTO

Former Livingstone sprinter Jordan Vaden (right) finished second in the 200 meters at the USA Track & Field Championships.

By Herbert L. White
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Jordan Vaden has emerged as one of the world's top sprinters.

The former Livingstone sprinter finished second in the 200 meters at the USA Outdoor Track & Field championships last month in Indianapolis with a time of 19.98 seconds. World No. 1 Wallace Spearman won with a clocking of 19.90. Vaden also finished fourth in the

100 with a personal best 10.20.

Vaden is on the verge of finalizing a sponsorship contract with Nike and has received a schedule to compete in one more meet in the U.S. before spending the rest of the summer running in Europe.

Vaden, an eight-time all-America at Livingstone, won the Division II 200 meter title and finished second in the 400m in 2004.

Asbury takes over as Shaw head coach

By Eric N. Moore
THE TRIANGLE TRIBUNE

RALEIGH — Less than two weeks after losing their head football coach, Shaw University has found a replacement.

"It is my joy to introduce the new head coach for football at Shaw University," said President Clarence Newsome at an afternoon press conference for Darrell Asbury, who became the third head coach since Shaw revived its gridiron program four years ago.

Citing an impressive list of offensive statistics from Asbury's previous position as offensive coordinator and assistant head coach at North Carolina Central, Newsome literally handed a football and cap to his new coach, expressing confidence that Asbury would continue the success he had experienced in the past.

In 2004, Asbury helped engineer the Eagles to the top-ranked offense in the CIAA. NCCU led the conference in total offense, and passing and scoring offense. The team finished second in rushing offense.

Last season, NCCU averaged nearly 31 points per game on their way to the conference championship and a berth in the NCAA playoffs.

A native of Baton Rouge, La., Asbury lettered two seasons as quarterback at Jackson State, and played professionally in the Canadian Football League and NFL Europe.

As a coach, he has been an offensive



Asbury

Please see N.C. CENTRAL/3C