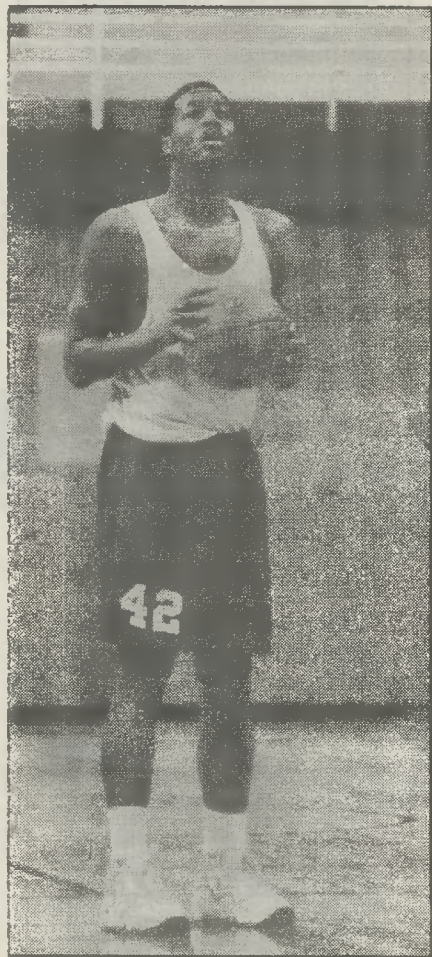


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FOCUS ON PHILANTHROPY

Midnight on the courts



A new basketball league is scoring big — at least among the 90 players. Night Flight, the Triangle's first midnight basketball league, just completed its first season. The program for young men, aged 19 to 25, offers more than sports and entertainment — the league also seeks to change attitudes and match players with jobs and educational

opportunities. For example, after requests from players, the program held a mini-course in December on how to take the Scholastic Aptitude Tests. Jimmy Black, a Durham investment broker and a star of UNC-CH's 1982 championship men's basketball team, volunteers as the league's commissioner. The program was created by James Johnson Jr., a

UNC-CH business and geography professor. Johnson says the program makes good economic sense. "It costs \$30,000 to incarcerate one man," he says. "It costs \$70,000 to run this program." More than 16 area businesses have donated at least \$3,000 each. The league's second season begins this month. Call (919) 962-8201.

The championship game Dec. 3 pitted the Sonics, a Durham team, against the Jazz, a group from Raleigh.



The Sonics, coached by William Cherry, walked away with trophies after a very close game. The final score: 83-81. About 90 young men participated in Night Flight during its first season.

Photos by Kristin Prelipp



At the finals in Durham, bleachers were filled with avid fans.

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