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Winning Cheerleaders

North Brunswick High School's varsity cheerleaders qualified Saturday, Nov. 20, at Cape Fear Academy for the Eastern Cheerleading Association finals by taking first place in the regional competition. The squad will travel to Williamsburg, Va., for the national finals in March. Pictured are squad members (from top, beginning at left) Amanda Harper, Brandi Hickman, Brooke Odam, Marny Williamson, Hollis Drew, Nicole Hall, Erin Thompson, Kim Doyle, Kristyna Sheeden, Crystal Callihan and Nyemekia Munn. Their coach is Norma Drew.

Scorpions Win Basketball Opener

BY DOUG RUTTER

Mario Ballard scored a game-high 17 points to lead North Brunswick High to a 66-27 win over Topsail in the boys basketball season-opener last Tuesday in Leland.

In the girls game, Topsail's Tisha London scored 20 points as the Lady Pirates defeated North Brunswick 38-30. Kanecewa Ballard had 10 points for the Lady Scorpions.

North's Chris Knox scored 11 points and Angelo McKenzie added 10 in the lopsided boys game. The non-conference win snapped a 15-game losing streak for the Scorpions.

In his first game as head coach of the varsity boys team, Garry Bishop saw his squad take a 20-9 lead after one quarter and a 42-16 advantage at halftime.

Shannon Hankins and Tyrone Bullard scored eight points apiece for North Brunswick. Doug Fuller led Topsail with 13.

"I thought we played real well," said Bishop, a former junior varsity coach who has taken over the varsity

"I think the difference in the game was our intensity and hustle."

—North Coach Garry Bishop

team while veteran coach Cliff Gibson takes a one-year leave of absence.

"I think the difference in the game was our intensity and hustle," Bishop added. "We have a lot of work to do, but our transition game was good and we shot well from the outside."

North Brunswick was scheduled to play its first road game of the season Tuesday night at Dixon. The Scorpions open Three Rivers Conference play Jan. 7 against Fairmont.

North Brunswick, formerly a member of the Waccamaw Conference, has lost 25 consecutive league games dating back to 1992. Bishop said he hopes to turn that around this season.

"We're kind of undersized right now," he said. "We don't have any starters over 6 foot. We're going to have to run a lot and try to score in transition."

Although North Brunswick has moved to a different conference, the Scorpions will continue to play county rivals South Brunswick and West Brunswick in non-conference games this season.

The Scorpions are scheduled to play at West Brunswick Dec. 3 before hosting the Trojans on Dec. 17. North will play at South Dec. 10 and entertain the Cougars on Dec. 15.

Score By Quarters

Topsail	9	7	8	3	—27
North Bruns.	20	22	10	14	—66
Topsail scoring: Fuller, 13; Batts, 4; Brown, 4; Toby, 2; C. Jones, 2; J. Jones, 2.					
North Brunswick scoring: Ballard, 17; Knox, 11; McKenzie, 10; Hankins, 8; Bullard, 8; Graham, 6; Williams, 4; McKoy, 2.					

SPORTING SCENE

Tarboro Game Special For West's Jim Brett

You can't help wonder what thoughts will be racing through Coach Jim Brett's mind Friday night when his West Brunswick Trojans battle Tarboro for the Eastern North Carolina 3A Football Championship.

He'll certainly be focused on the game, doing everything in his power to lead West Brunswick back to Chapel Hill for another shot at a state championship.

But there's much more to this game than a trip to Chapel Hill. For Coach Brett, this game will be extra special because of his long-time association with Tarboro High.

Brett spent 24 years at Tarboro as a teacher and coach. That's half of his life, give or take a few years. He still has close ties to the Edgecombe County school and community.

"Personally, I'm going to have to block out the idea that Jim Brett is playing Tarboro," Brett said Monday. "This is West Brunswick playing Tarboro. I just happen to be the coach at West Brunswick."

Both of Jim Brett's daughters live in Tarboro. His youngest girl is a junior varsity cheerleader at the high school.

"They'll get a lot of ribbing this week, I'm sure," Brett said. "I'm sorry for them, but there's nothing I can do about it."

Jim and Terri Brett still have a lot of good friends in Tarboro, like the ones who helped cheer for West Brunswick in last year's state 2A playoffs...just because Jim was the coach.

"I do have a lot of friends there, but they'll all be pulling against me this week," Brett said.

Coach Brett bleeds West Brunswick green and white now. But there was a time no so long ago when it was Tarboro purple and gold rushing through his veins.

For more than two decades, Brett gave Tarboro High everything he had as a teacher and coach and athletic director.

Brett led the Vikings to 12 conference championships and one state title in 18 years as head football coach. He led the Vikings to 12 conference championships and four state titles in 15 years as boys track coach.

What will he think when he gazes

Doug Rutter
Sports
Editor



across the field Friday night and sees those familiar faces? Standing on the visitors' sideline will be players he coached and coaches he coached.

Tarboro Head Coach Russell Weinstein played for Jim Brett at Tarboro High and was an assistant coach under Brett for five years.

But Brett doesn't really see that as an advantage. "I don't know if I really know how Russell thinks. He's always been kind of hard to figure out anyway."

Jim Brett will look up in the visitors' bleachers Friday and spot fans that watched him coach the Tarboro football team to 168 wins. Maybe he'll see some old players from Tarboro's 1984 state championship team.

People in Tarboro still talk about that '84 team. In the state championship game, Brett's Vikings did not allow a single first down and defeated Kannapolis 20-0.

Tarboro hasn't been back to the title game since. And ironically, it is Jim Brett and his new team, the Trojans, that stand between the

Vikings and a date in Chapel Hill.

Whether the Trojans win or the Vikings win Friday night, you can bet that Coach Brett will be shaking hands with a lot of people on the Tarboro sideline after the game.

Jim Brett has coached in 256 high school football games during his career. A lot of them have been big games. Perhaps none will be more special than number 257.

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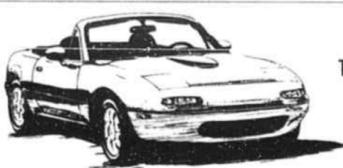


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