

# Lady Cougars Place Third In Holiday Hoops Tourney

BY JOHNNY CRAIG  
Special To The Beacon

South Brunswick's Lady Cougars won two of three games, including a 52-44 consolation decision over West Florence (S.C.), to take third place in their own Holiday Basketball Tournament last week in Redding Spring Lakes.

Prior to last Thursday's win over West Florence, South Brunswick opened the second annual tournament with a 49-29 triumph over Myrtle Beach (S.C.) on Tuesday before losing to Northern Nash 45-31 on Wednesday.

Sumter (S.C.) won the tournament championship with a 43-38 edging of Northern Nash in the title game. Sumter avenged a second-place finish in last year's event, which was won by the host Lady Cougars.

## South Wins Consolation

"We worked real hard defensively to build a lead but our inexperience showed when they began to press in the fourth quarter," South Brunswick Coach Mike Isenberg of his team's win over West Florence.

"I never felt like we had a lock on this game despite an early lead," Isenberg added.

The South Brunswick lead, which grew to as many as 20 points early in the second half, dwindled to six in the final minutes before the Lady Cougars used delay tactics to preserve the win.

"We haven't even practiced our delay game this year, but it certainly helped us to hold on tonight," Isenberg said.

South Brunswick (5-4) never trailed the 4A Lady Knights and led by as many as 11 points (14-3) in the opening quarter.

West Florence managed to close within 18-13 on Nicole Brooks' only basket with 1:55 to play in the first half.

The Lady Cougars then went on a 15-point tear that extended midway through the third quarter. South Brunswick scored the final nine points of the first half for a 27-13 lead at the break while getting six straight from guard Michelle Sellers.

The Lady Cougars continued the 15-point run by scoring the first six points of the third quarter for a 33-13 lead with 5:22 to play in the period.

Shannon Hughes broke the 5-minute scoreless drought for West Florence when she connected from the field with 4:53 to play in the quarter.

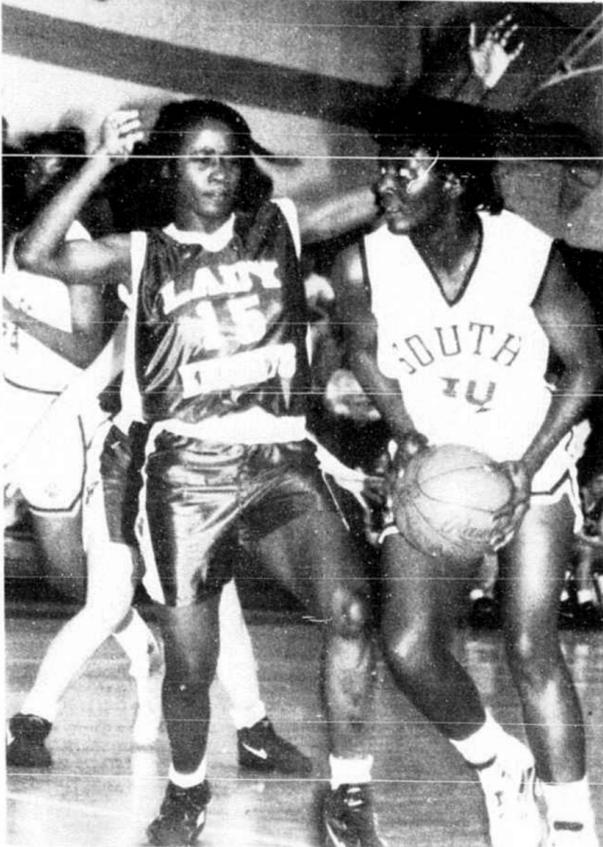
The Lady Knights managed to close within 15 points, 37-22, at the end of the third period and cut the deficit to 40-30 with 5:09 left.

West Florence then outscored South Brunswick 7-1 during a two minute stretch and Lady Cougar starter Natalie Smith went to the bench with her fifth foul.

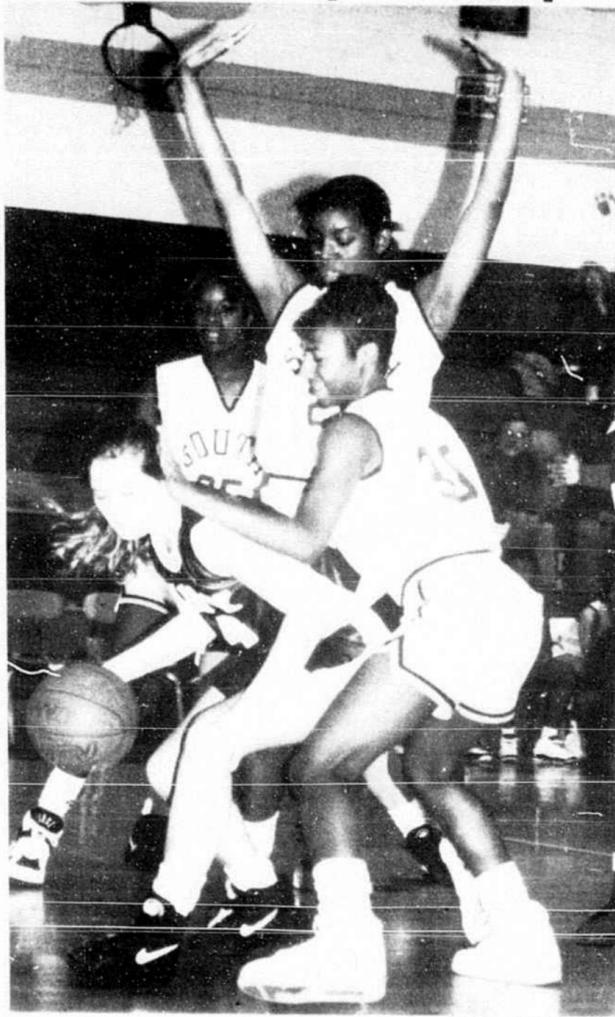
West Florence's Charlene Miller connected on a pair of free throws with 1:51 remaining and then copped a three-point goal 28 seconds later to cut the Lady Cougar lead to 48-42.

South Brunswick did not score from the field in the final 1:30 but converted four of six free throws down the stretch to preserve the win.

"Michelle Sellers (8 points) had



**SOUTH'S ERIKA BRYANT** looks to shoot over West Florence's Robin Titus. Bryant finished with nine points and 16 rebounds.



**SOUTH BRUNSWICK** played tough defense to hold West Florence to 22 points through the first three quarters of their consolation game. The Lady Cougars won 52-44.

PHOTOS BY JOHNNY CRAIG

some key goals to open things up outside for us," said Isenberg. "She hit four crucial outside shots but also did not commit a turnover the entire game."

"Erika Bryant (9 points) had a tremendous game with 16 rebounds. Also, Sheba Fullwood (17 points, 3 rebounds) showed she can drive to the basket with just about anyone."

Miller led the way for West Florence with 13 points followed by Robin Titus with 7.

Tameka Davis scored 11 points to round out the top scorers for the Lady Cougars.

## Score By Quarters

West Florence 4 9 9 22—44

South Brunswick 14 13 10 15—52

West Florence scoring: Miller, 13; Titus, 7; Ewart, 6; Caulder, 4; Hughes, 4; Burr, 3; Tinker, 2; Blankenship, 2; Brooks, 2; Bethea, 1.

South Brunswick scoring: Fullwood, 17; Tam, Davis, 11; Bryant, 9; Sellers, 8; Smith, 7.

## Nash Drops Cougars

The Lady Cougars were held to

single-digit scoring in three of four quarters as 4A Northern Nash of Rocky Mount took a 45-31, second-round tournament win over South Brunswick.

Northern Nash jumped out to a 15-5 lead in the first quarter and increased its advantage to 22-9 at the half.

Northern Nash outscored South 16-14 in a high-scoring third period before the Lady Cougars managed an 8-7 scoring advantage in the final quarter.

Tameka Davis led the Lady Cougars with 12 points, including nine in the second half.

Nikki Richardson scored 16 to lead Northern Nash, while Tina Williams and Mandy Frazier added eight each.

## Score By Quarters

Northern Nash 15 7 16 7—45

South Brunswick 5 4 14 8—31

Northern Nash scoring: N. Richardson, 16; Williams, 8; Frazier, 8; T. Richardson, 7; Pittman, 4; Burgess, 2.

South Brunswick scoring: Tam, Davis, 12; Sellers, 8; Bryant, 4; N. Smith, 3; Tam, Davis, 2.

## Cougars Dump Seahawks

South Brunswick held Myrtle Beach to nine, second-half points from the field in whipping the Lady Seahawks 49-29 in the tournament's

opening round last Tuesday.

After the two teams battled to a 10-10, first-quarter deadlock, Myrtle Beach managed just one point in the second period as the Lady Cougars grabbed a 19-11 halftime advantage.

In all, Myrtle Beach scored only 18 points in the final half including 13 by Megan Dombrowski, who finished with a team-high 16 points.

Sheba Fullwood led a balanced South Brunswick scoring attack with 11 points followed by Tameka

Davis with nine, Natalie Smith with eight and Erika Bryant with seven.

The game was South Brunswick's first in 10 days after taking an early break during the Christmas holidays.

"We hadn't played in a while and it showed," said Isenberg. "We played well defensively but struggled offensively."

## Score By Quarters

Myrtle Beach 10 1 3 15—29

South Brunswick 10 9 13 16—49

Myrtle Beach scoring: Dombrowski, 16; Demattio, 4; Campbell, 3; Watts, 3; Walker, 2; Jarrett, 1.

South Brunswick scoring: Fullwood, 11; Tam, Davis, 9; N. Smith, 8; Bryant, 7; Sellers, 6; Lee, 2; D. Smith, 2; Dishman, 2; Karkker, 2.

## Tournament Notes

Sumter's Tina Williams and Nicole Gamble highlighted the all-tournament team. Williams scored 23 points to lead Sumter in the championship game while Gamble added eight.

Northern Nash's Nikki Richardson and Mandy Frazier, who scored 15 and eight points respectively against Sumter, also were named to the all-tourney squad.

South Brunswick's Michelle Sellers and West Florence's Charlene Miller rounded out the six-member team.

Dixon High School, led by Nikki Gurganus' 17 points, won the fifth-place consolation game, 44-36, over Myrtle Beach.

Tabitha Rogers scored 21 points to lead Union over Jacksonville, 47-46, in the seventh-place game.

Sumter's three-game sweep in the tournament gave the team an overall record of 11-1. A member of the 4A Region IV Conference, Sumter lost only two starters from last year's state playoff team.

The loss in the championship game was Northern Nash's first of the year. Northern returns to Rocky Mount to begin league play with a 9-1 mark.

Other first-round results: Charlene Miller scored 16 points to lead West Florence to a 54-45 win over Jacksonville.

Nicole Gamble's 18 points paced Sumter in a 59-41 rout of Dixon. Lisa Ruggs led Dixon with 13.

Nikki Richardson scored 24 points to lead Northern Nash past Union 71-36.

In the second round, Dixon topped Jacksonville. Myrtle Beach defeated Union and Sumter downed West Florence.

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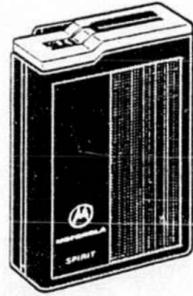
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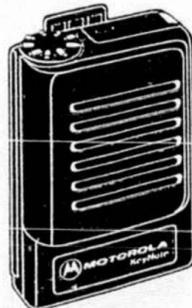
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