

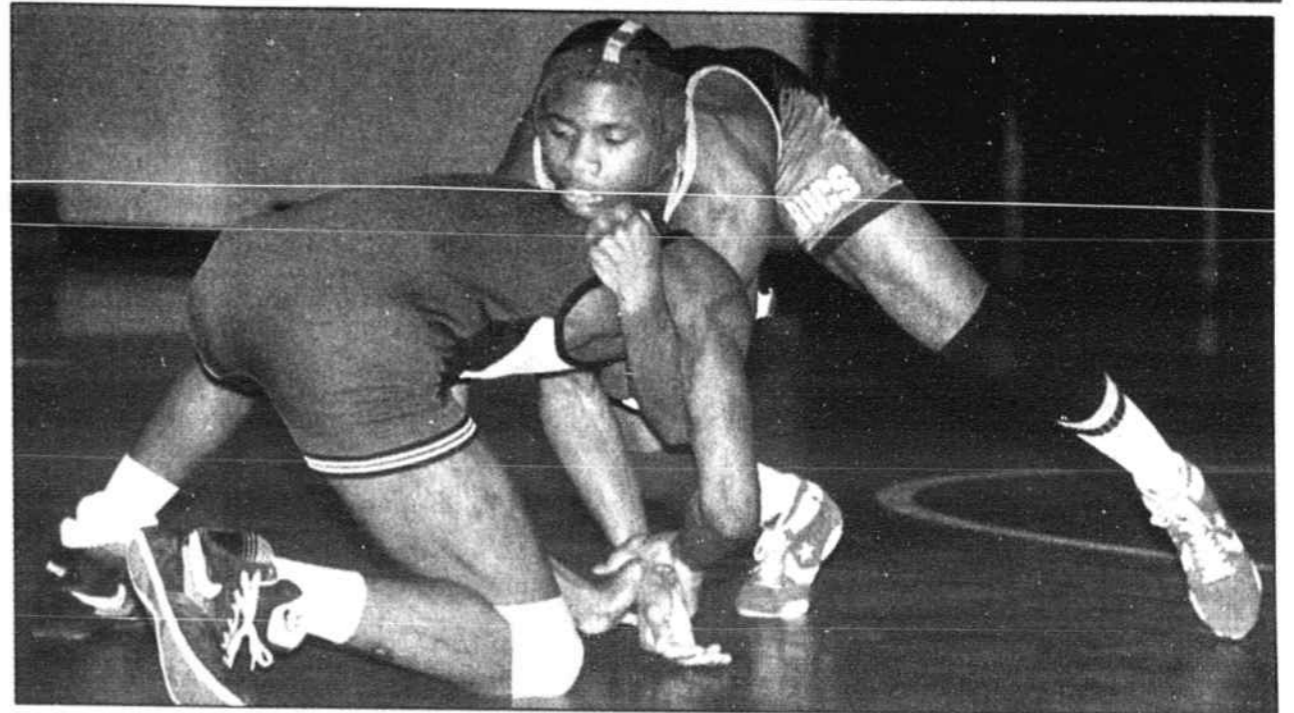
Laney Matmen Whip West

BY DOUG RUTTER
West Brunswick's young but promising wrestling team must have felt thrown to the wolves in its season opener Nov. 22 in Shalotte. The powerful Laney Buccaneers, perennial champions of the Mid-eastern 4A Conference, won five matches by pinfall en route to a 54-12 victory over the host Trojans. Arthur Williams, Jonathan Richey, Cory Hoppough, Scott Murray and Ralph Miller recorded pins for Laney, which pulled out to a 21-0 lead and never looked back. The Bucs, one of the strongest teams West Brunswick will face this season, also won two weight classes by forfeit and another by disqualification. Despite the lopsided loss, West Brunswick Coach Joe Noble said he wasn't disappointed. It was the first

match ever for six of his wrestlers, and several of them showed promise. "We've only had them together one week so I'm not disappointed," Noble said. "Basically what they learned tonight is what wrestling is all about." There were some bright spots for the Trojans, who got wins from seniors Chris Jackson and Al Johnson and sophomore Cliff Gore. Johnson posted West Brunswick's only pin of the night, rolling Laney's Anthony Parker with 11 seconds left in the first period. At 125 pounds Jackson outpointed Laney's Charlie Butcher 6-1, and Gore defeated Ray Gorum 10-6 at 189 pounds. West Brunswick forfeited two weight classes. Heavyweight Kwabena Green was out sick, and Noble

is still looking to fill the 112-pound class. The veteran coach gathered his team in the center of the mat for a long talk following the match. "I was just telling them there's no reason to have their head down," Noble said. "We only have six wrestlers with any experience and two of them are freshmen. For the rest of the guys this was their first match." One of the rookies, Joe Stanley, nearly pinned Laney's Jimmy Bonds in the final seconds but lost on points, 7-3. Although it didn't count in the team score, Woody Brown won an exhibition match for the Trojans. "We have a lot of work to do. Any time you're as young as we are

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JIMMY BONDS of Laney (top) tangles with West Brunswick's Joe Stanley during last week's high school wrestling match in Shalotte. Bonds defeated Stanley 7-3, and Laney won the match 54-12. STAFF PHOTOS BY DOUG RUTTER



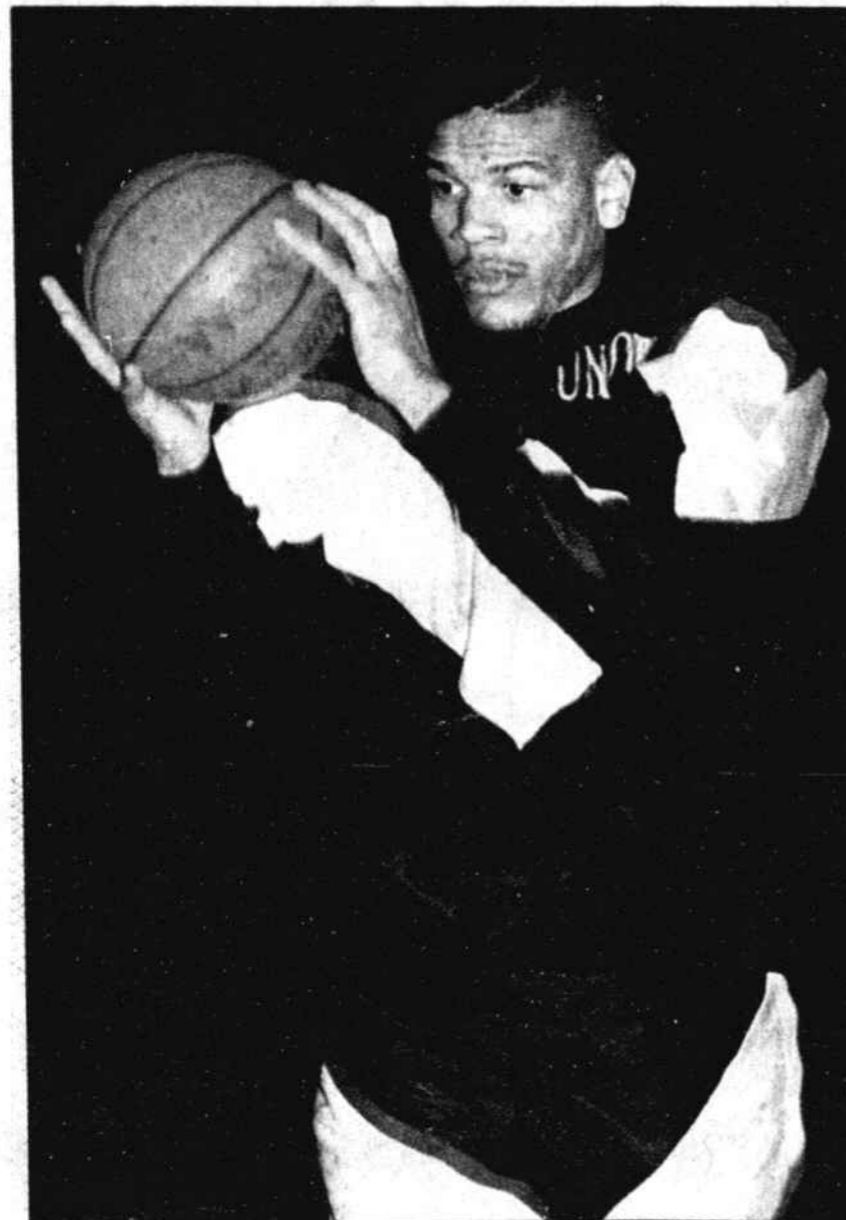
WEST BRUNSWICK COACH JOE NOBLE shouts instructions to one of his wrestlers.

Former South Star UNCW's Center

BY DOUG RUTTER
It wasn't the dominating performance Preston McGriff would have preferred, but UNC Wilmington's new starting center wasn't complaining Saturday after the Seahawks pulled out a 66-65 win over Coastal Carolina. The visiting Chanticleers outran and outthrust the bigger Seahawks and took them out of their game plan for most of the night, McGriff said following his first start as a college basketball player. But none of that mattered after UNCW's Ganon Baker drained a three-pointer from the right corner with 14 seconds remaining to give the Seahawks a 66-65 lead. Coastal


missed two shots in the final four seconds. "This teaches us a lesson," McGriff said of the season-opening, one-point win. "We just have to learn to take it one game at a time and be ready to play every time we get in there." McGriff, a former South Brunswick High School basketball star, was held in check for most of the game. He was limited to five points, four rebounds, one blocked shot and one steal in 16 minutes. There are brighter days ahead for the 6-foot-11-inch, 250-pound McGriff, said UNCW's first-year

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PRESTON MCGRIFF of Supply is the new starting center for the UNC Wilmington basketball team. STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

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