

SEASON OPENER FRIDAY NIGHT

Returning Backcourt To Lead West Girls

BY DOUG RUTTER
The West Brunswick High School girls' basketball team isn't real big and it doesn't have many experienced players.

But Lady Trojan Coach Brenda Council does have something that a lot of other coaches would love to have—two guards who can handle the ball and put points on the board.

Junior point guard Kaneka Grissett and sophomore shooting guard Donicia Moody are the only returning starters this season. They will need to play solid every night for West to be competitive.

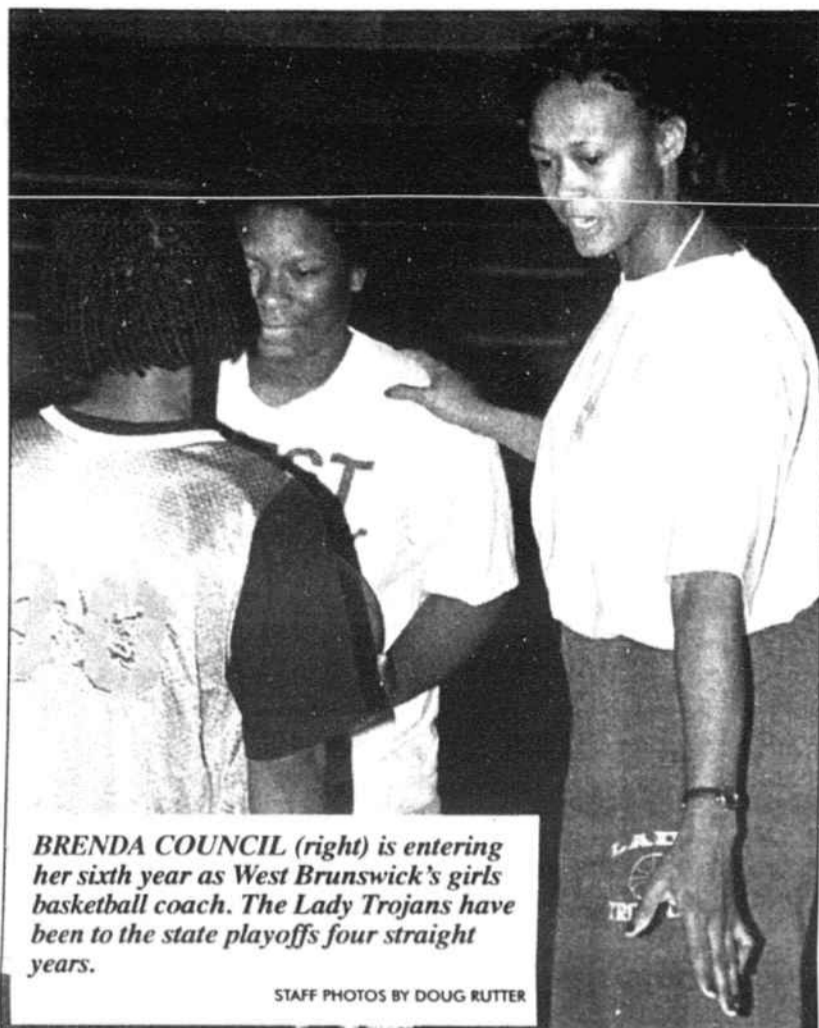
Grissett's outside shooting and Moody's ability to drive to the basket should make things easier on West Brunswick's three first-year starters, which will include two freshmen.

Council said last week either junior Michelle Long or senior Madonna Gause will start at center.

The Lady Trojans will start two ninth-graders at forward, Gisella Grissett and April Daniels.

"We're going to be very young this year, but I feel I have a group of girls out here who are willing to learn," said Council, now in her sixth year as West's head coach.

There are seven new faces on West Brunswick's 12-person roster. Besides Kaneka Grissett and Moody, the only returning players



BRENDA COUNCIL (right) is entering her sixth year as West Brunswick's girls basketball coach. The Lady Trojans have been to the state playoffs four straight years.

STAFF PHOTOS BY DOUG RUTTER

are senior Amelia Hewett and sophomores Marlana Hill and Tiffany Lance.

Newcomers to the team include Gause, Long, Gisella Grissett, Daniels, junior La'Shunda Freeman and freshmen Celita Gause and Marcus Shannon.

"We have a long ways to go, but they want to be out here and they're eager to learn," said Council, whose five-year record is 43-25 in conference play and 67-53 overall.

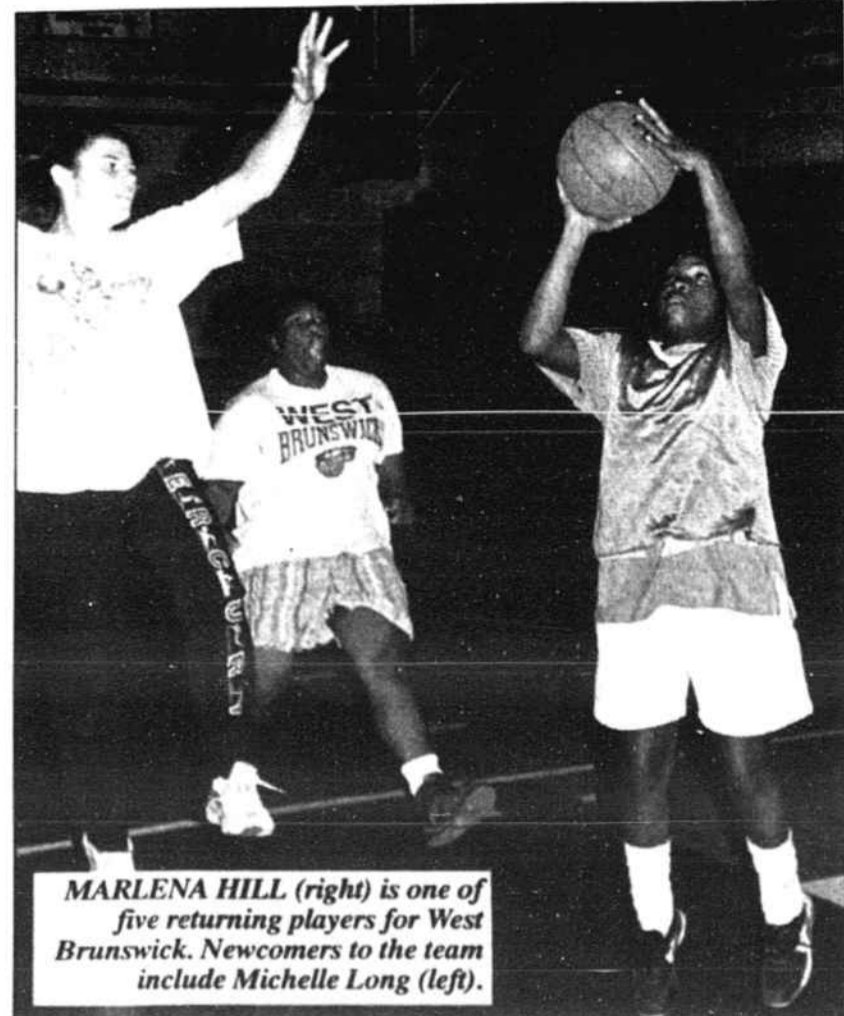
The Lady Trojans tied for fourth in the Waccamaw Conference last season with a record of 5-7 and finished with an overall mark of 8-17.

West Brunswick has been to the state playoffs each of the last four years. This season the Lady Trojans will battle South Brunswick and Pender for the Waccamaw Conference's lone berth in the state 3A playoffs.

Council said she's not sure how the Waccamaw Conference will shake down this season.

"I definitely know Whiteville is going to be very strong. Hopefully we'll be in the top three," she said.

After Friday night's season opener at North Brunswick, the Lady Trojans will face some stiff non-conference opponents in Hoggard and Laney. The Lady Trojans also will compete in this year's South Brunswick Holiday Tournament.



MARLENA HILL (right) is one of five returning players for West Brunswick. Newcomers to the team include Michelle Long (left).

West Wrestlers Off To Hard Start

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you have a lot of work to do," Noble said. "We're going to be all right. I really feel like we're going to be all right."

West Brunswick was scheduled to wrestle Tuesday night at Hoggard. The Trojans will return to Wilmington this Saturday for the Laney Invitational Tournament.

In other upcoming matches, West Brunswick travels to Socastee, S.C., on Dec. 5 and visits Laney on Dec. 6.

Results

103 pounds: Williams (L) pinned Wemyss, 1:06; **112:** Johnson (L) won by forfeit; **119:** Richey (L) pinned K. Marlowe, 1:12; **125:** Bonds (L) def. Stanley, 7-3; **130:** Jackson (WB) def. Butcher, 6-1;

135: Berry (L) def. Noble, 12-6; **140:** Hoppough (L) pinned Hill, 2:22; **145:** Johnson (WB) pinned Parker, 1:49; **152:** Lewis (L) won by disqualification over J. Gore; **160:** Murray (L) pinned Bland, 1:30; **171:** Miller (L) pinned T. Marlowe, 4:5; **189:** C. Gore (WB) def. Gorum, 10-6; **Heavyweight:** Holliday (L) won by forfeit.

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Preston Showing Great Improvement After A Very Productive Off-Season

(Continued From Page 1-D)

head coach Jerry Wainwright.

"I think he's somebody who's trying too hard," Wainwright said after the game. "Preston will be fine. He's somebody who will continue to improve. He's going to be a fine player."

McGriff said he likes the new system installed by Wainwright, an assistant coach for the last nine years at Wake Forest. It features fast breaks and pressure defense.

"It fits better for me as far as running up and down the court. I just have to get used to it and once I get used to it everything will start coming to me," McGriff said.

Wainwright replaced Kevin Eastman, who left Wilmington in May to take the head coaching job at Washington State.

"This pace suits me a little better," McGriff said. "There was nothing wrong with Eastman's style. It was a low-post style and halfcourt style. Coach Wainwright has everybody spread out, just play your game."

The junior center thinks Wainwright's style will help the team. "Instead of having two posts down there for everyone to collapse on there's just one post and four guys

spread out. It leaves opportunities for the guards."

Wainwright says he's looking for a lot out of McGriff this season, a lot more than the five points and four rebounds he put up in the first game.

"I think he potentially is a double-figure rebounder and could score 10 or 11 points a game," Wainwright said Saturday. "I expect him to be one of the best big men in the league."

In a backup role, McGriff averaged 12.2 minutes, 4.7 points and 3.5 rebounds per game last year. He showed great improvement in the off-season when he led UNCW in scoring and rebounding during a summer trip to France.

McGriff says he's a better player

after putting about 20 pounds of muscle on his 6-foot-11-inch frame in the off-season. He is the tallest basketball player ever at UNCW.

With McGriff and seven other players back from last year's 18-10 squad, the Seahawks are expected to challenge for the top spot in the Colonial Athletic Association.

"We've got high goals. Every team has high goals. Everybody wants to reach the Big Dance (NCAA Tournament)," said McGriff, a 20-year-old native of New Brunswick, N.J.

"We've got to take it one game at a time. We've got 27 more games to go. It's a long way from here to the conference tournament so anything can happen," added McGriff, the all-

time leading scorer at South Brunswick.

Wainwright said the one-point win over Coastal Carolina should give his Seahawks confidence, especially since they didn't play well.

"These are the kinds of games that can kick you in the stomach if you lose them," he said. "I think right now our kids fell pretty good about themselves."

UNCW was scheduled to play Tuesday night at Campbell University. The Seahawks will host the four-team USAir East Coast Classic tournament this Friday and Saturday.

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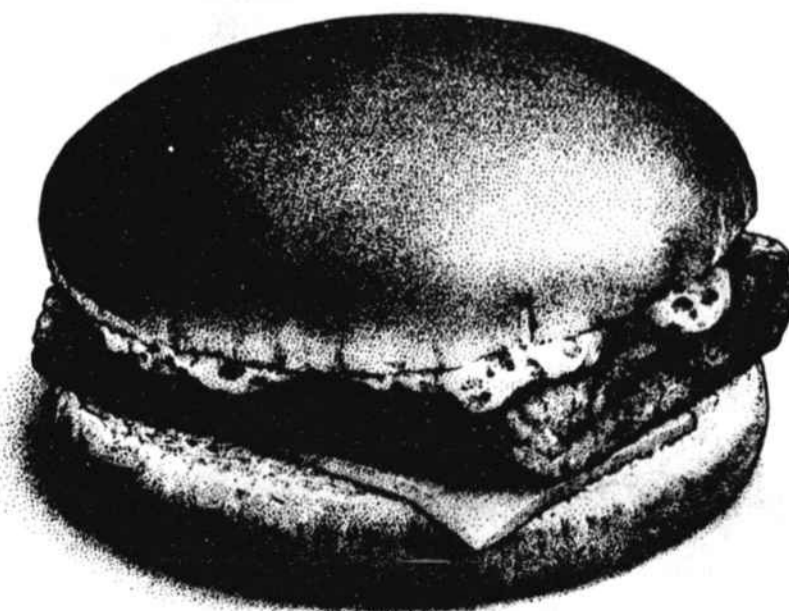
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