

sports

Big South achieves parity



By Geoff Cabe
Sports Editor

Parity. It's a short word that is often discussed but rarely achieved. Check out any college athletic director or conference commissioner on the TV at halftime and that word is bound to come up when they are discussing their league.

But the sad fact of the matter is that parity doesn't occur very often. In most leagues, there is a sharp division between the haves and the have-nots. For example, even in the traditionally well-balanced ACC, there is North Carolina and Duke at the top, Clemson and Wake Forest at the bottom. I know, Wake Forest owns a victory over North Carolina this season, but don't think for a second that the Tar Heels will let the Deacons even get close if the two teams meet at the ACC tournament.

But, then again, rarely are the have-nots in any conceivable position to challenge the haves at tournament time. The have-nots are usually just automatic "Ws" for the haves on the way to the next round of action.

However, parity is something the Big South Conference may be able to claim when its tournament ceases play on March 5 in Rock Hill, S.C.

The Big South has been remarkably balanced this year. Yes, it does have a tourney favorite in Coastal Carolina, but penciling in winners ahead of time could be a dangerous art.

Take, for example, Augusta College, 3-8 and bound to finish in last place in the league standings. To their credit this season the Jaguars have victories over preseason favorite Radford (6-4).

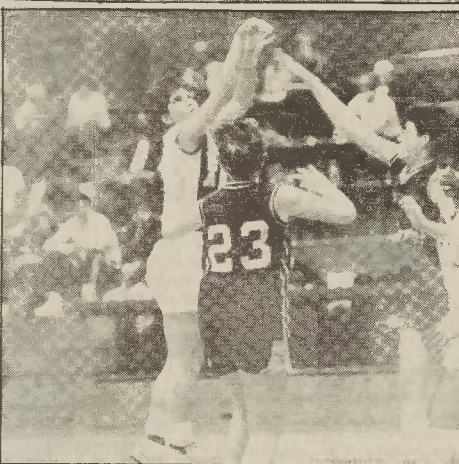
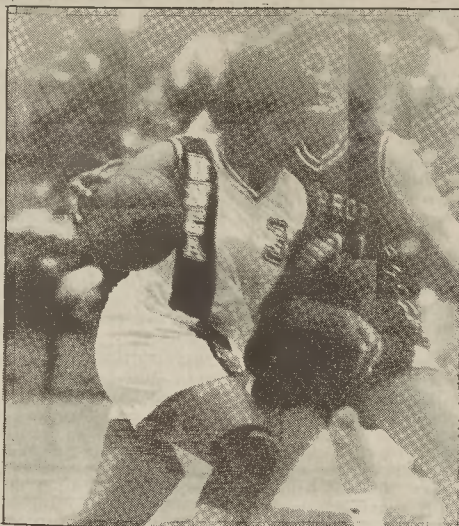
Coastal Carolina has been beaten three times, including a crushing defeat at the hands of Winthrop (5-5), which up until a few short weeks ago was in last place.

Second place Baptist (8-4) was knocked off on its home court by sixth place Campbell (3-7).

All of this should bode well for UNCA's chances. The Bulldogs have survived an up and down season and will finish in the middle of pack.

Now, their task is to put three "good" games together. In years past, it might have taken herculean efforts for UNCA to upset the top seeds. This season it won't take a miracle. UNCA came within a hair of defeating Coastal Carolina at Justice Gym and does own a victory over Baptist to its credit.

If everything falls into place, UNCA could walk away with its first conference championship. Yes, it would be considered a "mild" upset, but it would be a fitting way for a sometimes frustrating season to come to a close.



Staff Photos—Sarah Gottfried

Machio Kornegay (top) drives to the basket against Winthrop. Kornegay is averaging 15.7 a game for the Lady Bulldogs. Darlene Hewitt (bottom) puts up a jumper for the Lady Bulldogs. Hewitt scored nine points against Winthrop.

Mackey scores 20

Lady Bulldogs top Winthrop

By Bill Vickery
Asst. Sports Editor

The UNCA Lady Bulldogs ended their regular season on a winning note Monday night with a 67-62 victory over Winthrop in a Big South Conference game at Justice Gym.

Mary Mackey led UNCA (11-13, 4-8) with 20 points, while Wendy Beecher added 12. Kim Segars paced Winthrop with a game-high 29 points.

Winthrop (5-7, 12-14) out-rebounded the Lady Bulldogs 39-33 and outshot UNCA 48 percent to 41 percent from the field. However, UNCA's defense recorded 15 steals, and Winthrop committed 19 turnovers to offset those statistics.

"Our defense won the game for us," said UNCA Coach Mary Ann Myers. "We've been struggling with our offense for a while, but our defense really came through tonight."

Mackey scored on a drive with 15 minutes left to put the Lady Bulldogs on top 37-36. However, Winthrop rallied back with two quick scores to regain a 40-37 lead.

UNCA then went on a 14-1 run over a six-minute span to take a 51-41 lead with six minutes remaining.

UNCA then hit six-of-seven free throws down the stretch to ice the win. The Lady Bulldogs hit 16-of-20 foul shots in the game, Winthrop nine-of-14.

Jetonne Jones, who sat out the first half, started the second half and scored eight points to spark UNCA in the

second half.

"Defensively she (Jones) made the difference in the second half," said Myers. "Jetonne and Wendy did a number on Segars in the second half."

Early on it appeared that no defense would be enough to stop Segars. With the Winthrop center leading the way, the Lady Eagles opened the game with an 8-2 spurt. Segars scored six points during the run.

Melanie Rhodamer came away with the first of her seven steals and hit a layup to start a UNCA rally. Mary Mackey then hit back to back jump shots to tie the game at 10 with 14:20 left.

Darlene Hewitt's three-point field goal with 3:40 remaining gave UNCA its first lead of the night at 29-27. That lead lasted only seconds as Winthrop's Dorothy Davis hit a 18-foot jumper for a 29-29 tie. Segars then scored five points in the last 2:20 of the half to help Winthrop claim a 34-31 lead at intermission.

Segars scored 19 points in the half. Beecher and Mackey each scored eight for the Lady Bulldogs before the break. Beecher blocked three shots to bring her season total to 65. She is only three away from Sheila Ford's single-season record of 68.

The Lady Bulldogs begin play in the Big South Tournament on Saturday afternoon in Buies Creek, N.C. The pairings are yet to be determined.

Campbell knocks off UNCA, 78-60

Special to The Banner
Mike Gore

Buies Creek - Henry Wilson scored 30 points to lead Campbell to a 78-60 Big South Conference victory over UNCA Saturday afternoon.

Wilson scored 15 points in each half to help the Camels (3-7, 11-13) snap a three-game losing streak. The Bulldogs (5-6, 12-12) were led by guard Brandt Williams' 14 points. The loss broke a two-game winning streak by UNCA.

"Wilson was phenomenal. We just could not stop him the whole day," said UNCA coach Jerry Green. "I really have to take the blame for the loss. We

were not ready to play today and that's my fault. We didn't shoot the ball well at all and they just destroyed us on the boards."

"We played well for 40 minutes today and I thought that was the key today," said Campbell coach Billy Lee. "Asheville is a fine team that we feel fortunate to have beaten. I thought our defense was awful good today and Asheville did not shoot the ball well at all."

Brad Childress added 17 points for Campbell. UNCA was aided by William Funderburk and Brian Combs, who each pumped in 11 points each. Keven Jones scored 10 points in the last three minutes for the Bulldogs.

UNCA led 13-11 on a Combs' three-pointer midway through the first half when Campbell went on a 10-2 run to take the lead for good at 21-15. Wilson and Childress combined for seven points during the run.

The half ended with Campbell in front 28-22.

"We didn't feel too bad being down six at the break," said Green. "We weren't shooting the ball too well, but our defense was playing pretty well."

The second half got bad in a hurry for the Bulldogs.

On UNCA's opening possession of the second half, Funderburk drove the lane and was knocked down but no foul was called. Green disagreed with the no call and was hit with a technical foul.

Childress sank both free throws, and Wilson then made a layup to quickly build the lead to 32-22 at the 19:40 mark.

It stayed a 10-point game for the next five minutes until Campbell went on another run to put the game away.

The Camels scored 12 straight points over a four-minute stretch to build the lead to 52-32 with 10:32 re-

maining in the game. Wilson and Childress combined for eight points during the run.

Campbell build the lead to 64-38 on a Wilson dunk with 5:26 left. The Bulldogs could get no closer than the final margin.

The Camels hit on 14-of-19 field goal attempts in the second half for 73 percent, while the Bulldogs connected on 16-of-35 in the second half for 45 percent. Campbell hit on 51 percent of its field goals for the game, while UNCA connected on 45 percent of its shots.

The real difference in the game came at the free throw line and in the rebounding area.

Campbell sank 30-of-39 charity tosses for 77 percent, while UNCA sank just five-of-nine free throws for 56 percent. The Camels outrebounded the Bulldogs 35-23.

"This is the type of day that we probably should of just stayed in bed and not come to play," said Green. "However, I think a lot of credit should go to Campbell. They played very well and had a lot to do with our problems today."

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