

Men fall to Winthrop, now No. 6 in conference

By Devon Dow
STAFF WRITER

The Winthrop Eagles soared past the men's basketball team (7-16, 3-6 BSC) for the second time this season on Saturday at the Justice Center.

"We didn't play the type of defense you need to play to win games," said head coach Eddie Biedenbach. "We got their lead down in the second half, but then we gave up two easy threes to them that propelled them to make a run on us."

Bryan Smithson, junior guard, led the Bulldogs in points with 20, his fifth time this season in the 20-point range.

"I think we got off to an O.K. start," Smithson said. "During the middle of the second half, we gave away too many open looks from 3-point land."

On Wednesday, the Bulldog's ended their two game losing streak, defeating Division II opponent Brevard College (8-15).

Bench players led the Bulldogs, scoring a combined 50 points. Matt Day dropped 12 and snatched five boards, Reid Augst scored 12 and Brett Warner scored 10 to lead the Bulldogs past the Tornados.

Defensively, the Bulldogs shut down the Tornado offense forcing them to just 39.7 percent shooting from the field.

In Saturday's game against the Eagles, it was a different story. The Eagles, ranked first in the Big South, shot 54.5 percent for three and 53.6 percent from the field, led by Michael Jenkins, who went 5-7 from 3-point land and scored 25 points.

"A team like Winthrop is going to cash in on opportunities like that," Smithson said. "They have been in big games before so they are not afraid to take the big shots if needed."

The Bulldogs (7-16, 3-6 BSC) exchanged leads with the Eagles during the first half before Winthrop took the advantage, going on a 12-0 run with under six minutes left to play.

"We wanted to come out to a good start and be aggressive," said junior forward Vincent James. "We got some easy shots. Everybody was going, and that started around the paint tonight."

At the half the Eagles led the Bulldogs 38-25.

"During halftime, coach wanted us to create a little more



CLINT LATHINGHOUSE - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Bryan Smithson goes up for a layup in Saturday's loss against Winthrop. Smithson led the Bulldogs with 20 points. The Bulldogs struggled with injuries from their big men, forcing Garrett Moles to play for 25 minutes, up from his season average of just over 14. Moles added four points for the Bulldogs.

movement in the offense, set screens and get people open," James said. "He always wants us to continue running plays on transition and create lanes for

the guards to get better looks at the basket."

The Eagles shot 60 percent from the field in the first half while the Bulldogs shot 33 per-

cent. "They shot 12 for 23 from 3-point land. You can't give up that many open 3-pointers," Biedenbach said.

In the second half, the Bulldogs came out strong, cutting the Winthrop lead to 47-55 with just over 10 minutes left, but the Eagles went on a 11-0 run spearheaded by back-to-back 3-point daggers by Jenkins and Chris Gaynor.

Big man Phillip Williams scored 19 points on 5-6 shooting and grabbed nine rebounds for Winthrop. Williams also led the Eagles in their 42-61 win over the Bulldogs earlier this season at Winthrop.

"In both games against us this year he has done well," Biedenbach said.

The Bulldogs outscored the Eagles in the paint 30-28, but the big men for the Bulldogs were out rebounded 13-18.

"Our big guys aren't healthy enough to play a long period of time," Biedenbach said. "We're undermanned down in the paint. We have had big men with injuries and they are working through them. We have to continue to get better playing without them. When we put our big men in tonight, Winthrop came out shooting jump shots versus driving to the lane, and it worked for them tonight."

Big man C.J. Walker did not play at all for the Bulldogs despite suiting up, while Brett Warner and Kenny George only played seven and eight minutes respectively.

"We have to practice harder," Biedenbach said. "We have to have better intensity and play with a better attitude. You don't prepare for the game come game time, you prepare for the game all week long."

The Bulldogs face the nation's leading scoring team, the VMI Keydets, in their next Big South game.

The Bulldogs lost to the Keydets last month 102-97 at home. Fox Sports South will televise the game live.

"We've got to get tougher," Smithson said. "When some other team makes a run we have to contain it. We have to be able to keep our momentum going, come back and make a run of our own. Right now we are folding up in the second half of our games. Experience is some of it. Maturity is some of it as well, and we just have to continue to work harder and get better as a team."

Sports Briefs

By Ben Smith
SPORTS EDITOR

Baseball gears up for start

The men's baseball team starts their season against ACC opponent Florida State in a three-game series on the road from Friday to Sunday.

Big South preseason polls ranked UNC Asheville tied with High Point in third, behind No. 1 Winthrop and No. 2 Coastal Carolina this week.

The polls also ranked junior outfielder Kevin Mattison second in voting as Big South preseason Player of the Year. Mattison batted .317 last season with 42 RBIs and eight homeruns.

The Bulldogs return all but three of the players from last season's Big South Championship team.

Ranked dead last at the start of the season, the Bulldogs went 13-15 in the Big South Conference in 2006 and entered the post-season ranked sixth. In the Big South Tournament, the Bulldogs defeated High Point and the Liberty Flames before facing the Flames again in the Big South Championship game.

Down 10-0 in the fourth inning, the Bulldogs surmounted a comeback and scored 16 runs in the final five innings to win the championship. Rob Vernon, senior outfielder, led the way as the Bulldogs gained their first ever birth in the NCAA tournament with an eighth inning grand slam to give them the lead.

Student wins \$400 at game

Devon Sanchez-Ossorio, senior management student, brought home \$400 on Saturday at the men v. Winthrop game in the athletic department's \$100 giveaway.

At each home basketball game, students' names are randomly drawn from a bowl and called out until a student in attendance claims the prize. The prize starts at \$100, but for each game that no student claims the money, the pot grows.

Ossorio is only the second student to win since the contest started on Jan. 4. Kate Barrow, senior management student, won \$500 on Jan. 22.

The prize is currently at \$200, and the next chance to win is at the men v. High Point game on Feb. 14.

Following is the list of students called out in the past two weeks who missed their chance to claim the prize by not attending. Any student previously called out can still win:

Christian William Johnson, Roy Edsel Hall, Christian John Zamarrá, Mary Katherine Murray, Mary Kathleen Bachmeyer, Farrah Leigh Duncan, Joseph Sambraon Carranza, Carrie Diana Peeler, Steve Lamar Dellinger, Stewart Charles Graham, Jennifer Ann Nichols and Lauren Joy Wheeler.

Freshman sets track record

Freshmen sprinter Natalie Pearson set her second school record, winning the 55-meter race at the VMI Relays on Saturday.

Pearson added her 7.11 in the 55-meter to her 7.79 in the 60-meter as her two records at UNC Asheville.

Another standout performance for the women came from Carrie Trotter who finished third in the high jump.

The team only brought a partial squad, focusing on sprinters and jumpers, while the distance squad stayed home.

For the men, both Brandon Hamilton and Omar Ahmad got past the preliminaries and into the finals. Ahmad placed fifth in the long jump and Brandon Hamilton took fifth place in the 55-meter with a time of 6.66 seconds.

The Bulldogs compete again with their full squad on Thursday at the Appalachian State Relays.

Two tennis players fall in final round of tournament

Correa and Bottomley struggle with injuries after advancing to finals

By April Johnson
STAFF WRITER

Two members of the UNC Asheville tennis team lost in the final round after a strong start at the Southeastern Indoor Championship this weekend.

"It's not about the winning and losing," said head coach Larry Hubbard. "At the early stages it's all about making progress, developing your game."

Mauricio Correa and Louise Bottomley represented the UNC Asheville men and women in the finals, where arm injuries hindered Correa's match and forced Bottomley to retire.

Correa lost in a 6-2, 6-2 match-up to No. 1 seed Ryan Fleming. He experienced problems finding a good offensive rhythm, according to Correa.

"I definitely think I would have played better without the injury, but I don't want to say that I would have won because Ryan played really, really well," Correa said. "It was really good tennis he was showing out there."

In the women's finals, Bottomley

played through the first set, winning 6-4 before her injury forced her out of the competition.

"I started off fine, but I have been injured a bit since Friday, and it just got progressively worse," Bottomley said.

Bottomley said her injury affected her to the point where she could barely serve, and only hit a backhand shot on the return.

"I thought it was stupid to carry on when we've got matches that matter more than that did," Bottomley said. "We've got conference matches coming up, and I just didn't want to be out for a while."

The road to the finals

In spite of the losses in the finals, the Bulldogs made an impact in the first round of the SIC, held at the Asheville Racquet Club last weekend.

Amongst the UNC Asheville players who entered, five of the seven men and both women from advanced to the quarterfinals round, where some team members were forced to face off against each other.

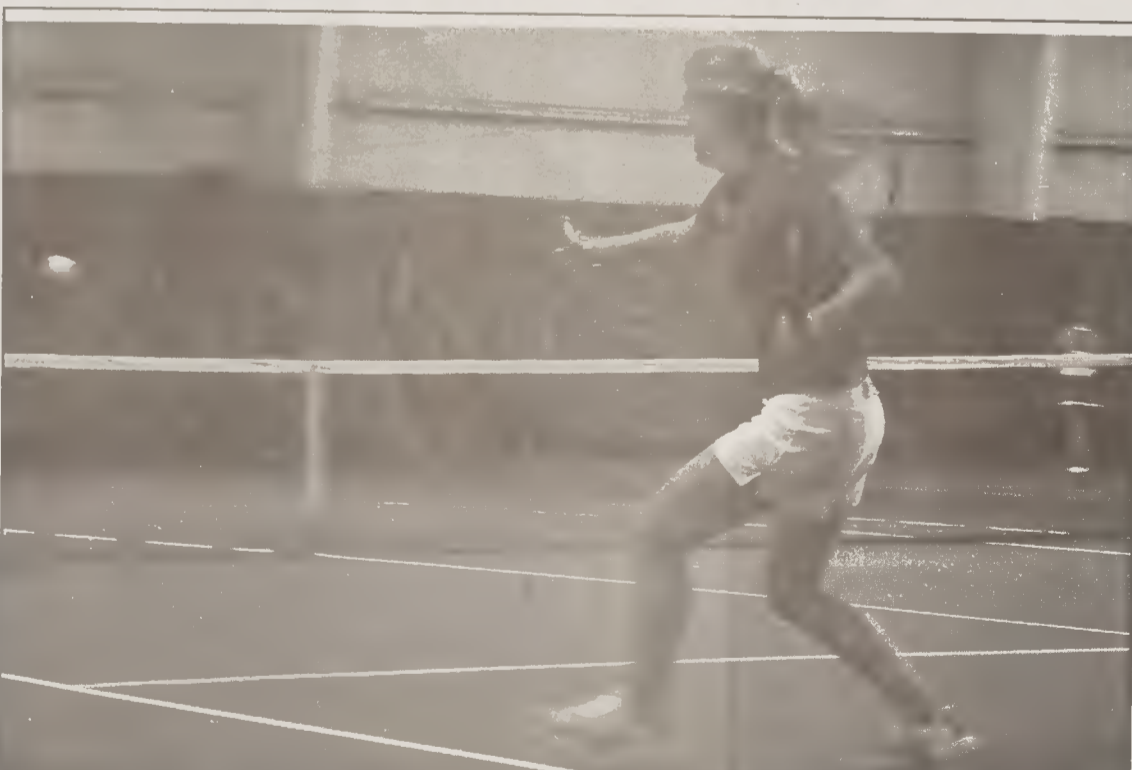
Correa faced fellow teammate Loic Hereson, who retired from play with an ankle injury after a 2-2 score in the first set.

"I was hoping it was going to be a really good match actually, but it didn't happen," Correa said. "It was going to be a battle, definitely."

Hereson, a senior from Abymes, Guadeloupe, said he felt disappointed about not finishing the match.

"Last season, I couldn't really play because I was hurt," Hereson said. "I had already hurt my legs, and this season I was in pretty good shape, and to twist my ankle like this, I mean it's not too good. I mean it's not too good for the morality."

Hereson said he hoped Correa



CLINT LATHINGHOUSE - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Freshman Louise Bottomley defeated her semifinal opponent Elizabeth Heste, 6-4, 6-1, but withdrew from the finals because of arm pain in the Southeastern Indoor Championship at the Asheville Racquet Club.

would arrive at the final round, a prediction which came true as the sophomore player faced-off and won against UNC Asheville junior Nicholas Thuell, in a 6-1, 6-1 drubbing.

For the women's team, Bottomley became the only UNC Asheville player to advance to the semifinals after freshman Tania Mateva fell to Greta Anderson 6-1, 3-6, 6-3.

"Louise played one of the seeded juniors that was in the tournament, and I believe she won the match 6-2, 6-0, so it was great for her to get that sense of confidence," Hubbard said.

Bottomley went on to defeat Elizabeth Hester, 6-4, 6-1 in match

play, before retiring against Amy Dillingham in the final round.

Looking Ahead

Before the finals took place Hubbard said competing well and building ties within the local tennis circuits remains his most important goals.

"That will be good for us, to at least have some recognition within the community and also an opportunity for the kids to gain some experience," Hubbard said.

With the women's team competing against UNC Greensboro this Saturday and the men's team facing East Carolina this Sunday Hubbard said he hoped the SIC