

Winston-Salem blues...

SPORTS

Vikes knocked out of CIAA Tourney

from staff reports

Sixth-seeded Johnson C. Smith upset ECSU's Vikings in the first round of the CIAA Tournament Wednesday, Feb. 28, in Winston Salem.

The Bulls' 94-83 victory ended a winning streak for the Vikes, along with hopes for the CIAA championship. ECSU won five of its seven games in February.

The Golden Bulls leaped to a 22-11 lead at the 12:37 mark, then increased the lead to 17 by the second half.

Viking seniors Theron Curry and Sharano Woodley made the most points, 24 and 17 respectively. The Golden Bulls' Melvin Abrams, the CIAA's leading scorer, kicked in 25 of his game-high 33 points for the Bulls. He also made 12 of 14 foul shots.

"Going into the game we had the utmost confidence in the world," said Curry. "We had to be ready to face anything, because anything can happen. You're playing teams that are cocked and ready. But we thought we had faced a lot of adversity during the season. We felt strong as a team. We felt like we had gelled.

"We came out pretty flat in the first half," continued Curry. "We had dug ourselves a big hole in the first half. You've got to give J.C. Smith credit. They just hung in there and kept hitting their shots."

J.C. Smith hit 34 free throws, compared to 10 for the Vikings. The Golden Bulls (11-15) finished the regular season tied for last in the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association's Southern Division.

Smith players Ahmed Evans and Erasto Hattchett scored 12 and 13 points in the first half, which left J.C. Smith with a 45-31 lead. Evans scored a total of 20 points and Hattchett made 14.

J.C. Smith dominated the entire game, building an 18-point lead after a three-pointer by Abrams with 18:23 left. The Vikings soon rallied, however. Bernard Cooper scored six points in a Viking run that cut J.C. Smith's lead to 61-57.

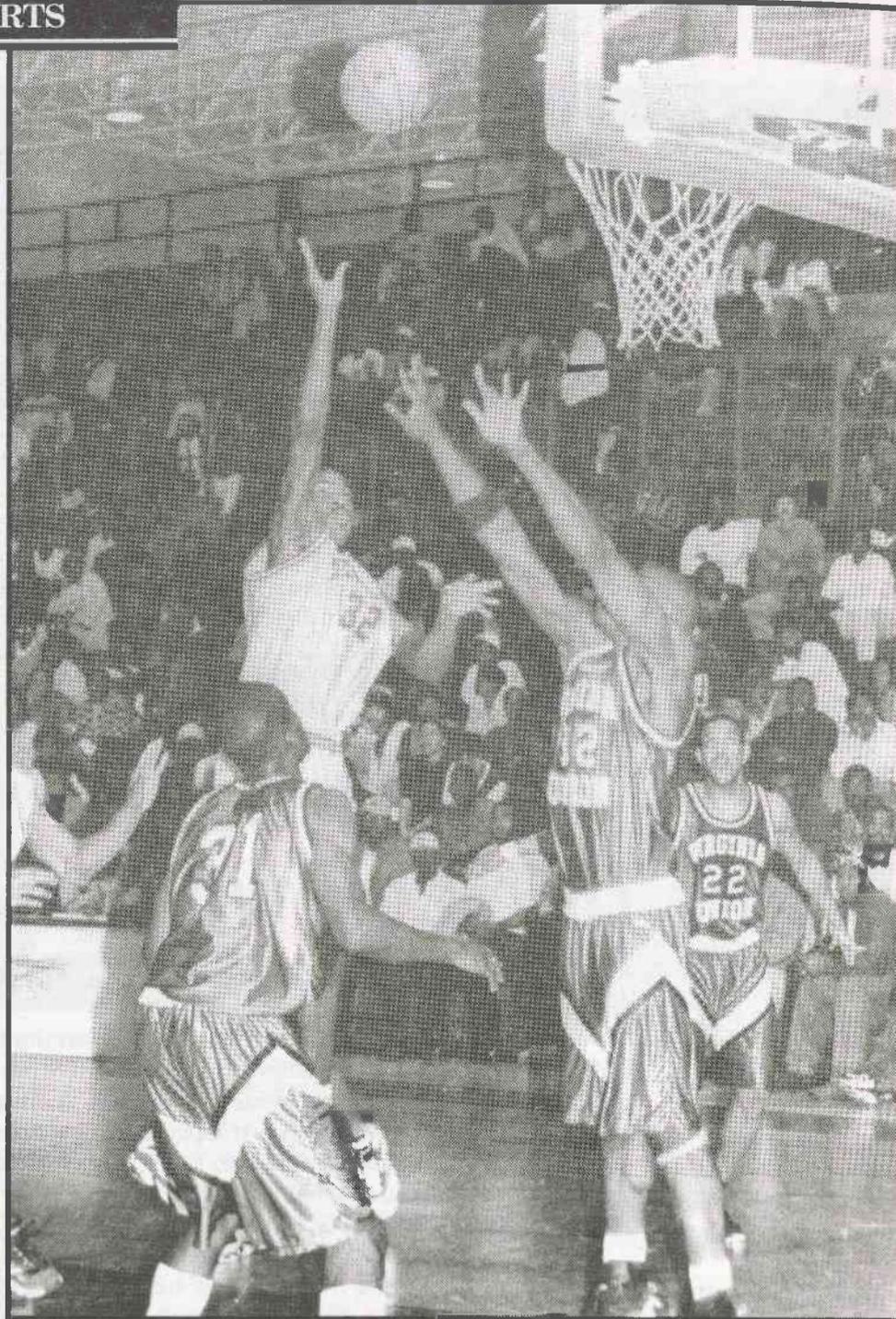
But the Golden Bulls increased the gap to 68-57 with 7:56 to play. The team was helped by one intentional foul on a breakaway, and a technical foul on the Elizabeth City bench for the resulting argument.

With 4:55 left in the game the Vikes cut the Bull's lead before the Bulls brought it all home at the free throw line.

Maurice Mincey, the Vikes' second leading scorer in the regular season behind Curry, finished with two points. Anthony Harris made seven points.

In a further disappointment to the Vikings, the day before the team's loss to Johnson C. Smith Viking Coach Barry Hamler and senior guard Theron Curry were passed over by the conference's sports information directors. The SIDs selected Livingstone College's Charles McCullough as Coach of the Year, rather than Hamler.

ECSU was selected to finish second to last in the Northern Division but Hamler had his team in CIAA championship contention with three games remaining in the regular division before finishing third.



Anthony Harris (no. 32) kept the fans and team's enthusiasm high during the Vikings' disappointing loss to Virginia Union Feb. 13. Although they won five of their seven games in February, the Vikings were knocked out of the CIAA Tournament by J.C. Smith.

Photo by Tonia Polston

New coach 'loves' job

by Carlos McCormick

On May 15, 1995 Barry Hamler was officially introduced to the Viking family as the new head coach at ECSU. Hamler, former Booker T. Washington High School Coach in Norfolk, Va., declared it to be a "new day."

"We are going to do business different from how it's been done in the past," said Hamler.

Hamler, who had three ineligible players at the start of the second semester, said this situation should teach student athletes a great lesson.

"We are here to earn a degree and as long as I am head coach, that is how it will be," he said.

Hamler has backed up his rhetoric with action. Before the start of the season, he has insisted that athletes attend a mandatory study hall in the library each day. He also requests weekly progress reports on his athletes from their instructors.

"We want to make sure these kids are making satisfactory progress in class," he said, "and also have good attendance."

Hamler feels that the young men he recruits are going to conduct themselves as "young black role models" who do positive things for the community and University.

"Football and basketball players are high profile, and when they are off the court you want them to be doing the right thing to represent ECSU," he said.

Hamler said it was his lifelong dream to be a coach.

Hamler said after living in Norfolk for eight years he was ready for a change.

"Elizabeth City is a nice community, low in crime, and it reminds me of where I grew up," he said. "Also I love basketball, and ECSU was giving me a chance to do what I love—and that is to coach."

Viking Baseball Schedule

SPRING, 1996

MARCH

*8	— Chowan College (DH) (Home)	2 p.m.
18	— St. Paul's College Lawrenceville, Va.	2 p.m.
22	— St. Augustine's College (DH) (Home)	1 p.m.
24	— Virginia State University (DH) (Home)	1 p.m.
26	— St. Paul's College (DH) Lawrenceville, Va.	11 a.m.
28	— Norfolk State University (Home)	2 p.m.
30	— St. Augustine's College Raleigh, N.C.	2 p.m.
31	— Shaw University (DH) Raleigh, N.C.	1 p.m.

APRIL

2	— Virginia State University Petersburg, Va.	1 p.m.
5	— Bowie State University (Home)	2 p.m.
8	— Bowie State University (DH) Bowie, MD	1 p.m.
10	— Norfolk State University (DH) Norfolk, Va.	1 p.m.
13	— Shaw University (Home)	2 p.m.
18	— CIAA TOURNAMENT Raleigh, N.C.	TBA
*23	— Longwood College (DH) (Home)	1 p.m.

DH—Doubleheader (seven inning games)
*Non-conference games