

## SPORTS

# Vikings' running back Murchinson: high hope for post-season honors

by Tonia Polston

When Viking running back Aaron Murchinson was young, he used to get teased by other kids because he wore his Cowboys jacket after a Redskins loss.

Now no one is teasing and everyone is noticing ECSU running back Aaron Murchinson.

Next year during his senior year Murchinson will take to the field with the possibility of earning three post season honors—All-CIAA, All-South Atlantic Conference, and All-American.

Running back coach Anzell Harrell Jr. has nothing but praise for his running back.

"He's the type of kid coaches dream about coaching," said Harrell. "He's a hard worker and takes what he does very seriously. He wants the best for himself and for his teammates."

Murchinson, from Fayetteville, NC, lives with his father and younger brother. Though his immediate family is "not really very athletic," football is

in the family's blood with some of his uncles having played in the NFL.

Murchinson, like Deon Sanders, used to be a two-sport man. He played football and baseball in high school, but later chose to focus on football.

"Ever since i was small I loved football," he said. "I guess I went with my heart, what I loved."

While in high school he earned All-State and Prep All-American honors. And through it all his father, his hero, stood by his side.

"Ever since I was small and my mother passed, he's been there for me," said Murchinson. "He's been at every game. He taught me right from wrong and kept me out of trouble."

After high school, Murchinson looked forward to putting on the Viking blue and white of ECSU. When choosing a school to attend his major objective was finding one that would meet his academic expectations.

When he looked at ECSU he also thought he would be able to help the

University obtain a winning season and eventually win a CIAA championship.

His main goal after graduation is the NFL. He would love to join his dream team and his favorite running back Emmitt Smith in Dallas. The Canadian Football League is also a possibility. And if for some reason football is not in his future, he would be happy to attend law school.

Football takes up most of his time but when he is free, Murchinson likes to read the newspaper, work out, and play video games, especially sports games.

Since attending ECSU his most memorable student experience was when he was a freshman on campus. Meeting new friends and having new experiences are imprinted on his mind. His most vivid athletic memory was when ECSU beat Norfolk State.

"We hadn't beat them for a long time," he said. "That time the team came together and we won."

March 19 started Viking spring foot-

ball practice, and Murchinson has been training hard. His goal for the pre-season is to be in better shape than last year. Overall he wants to prove that he is qualified to win in any category he might be nominated for.

He says his strengths as a running back are his quickness and speed.

"For my size I feel like I can maneuver the defense around," he said. "It makes it harder for me to be tackled."

He believes his catching ability is also a strength. His main weakness is his blocking ability, but with his strengths he says he has a "total package."

He and the Viking team can not wait for the 1996-97 season to begin.

"I look forward to a good season," he said. "I want to bring the University a championship my final senior year. And earn post season honors."

Hopefully, when he steps on the field in the first game against Livingstone College, he will be on his way to earning his peers' respect in all three honors.

## Talented Viking team ready for the season

by Donald Perkins

Although many ECSU Vikings say they were disappointed in spring practice, players are still looking forward to a successful season next year.

Defensive back Lorenzo Mcphatter said the spring game was "the worse it's been since I've been here. We are supposed to have the number two team in the league, but we probably had the worst spring game in the whole CIAA."

"We had no mouth pieces, no referees, and no trainers," said Uwezo Frazier, wide receiver.

Despite his complaints, Mcphatter expressed faith in his team.

"Luckily we are a veteran team, and we know how to train. So we are still looking to be successful next season."

With the spring football practices the Vikings worked on key fundamentals to prepare for the upcoming season. In the first two days, they worked on agility, speed, strength, and flexibility. The team went on to test their knowledge of offensive and defensive systems carried over from last season. The next challenge was the development of better techniques of each ball player, in terms of their position on both defense

and offense. The last step involved the team modifying some aspects of offense, and developing a new defense.

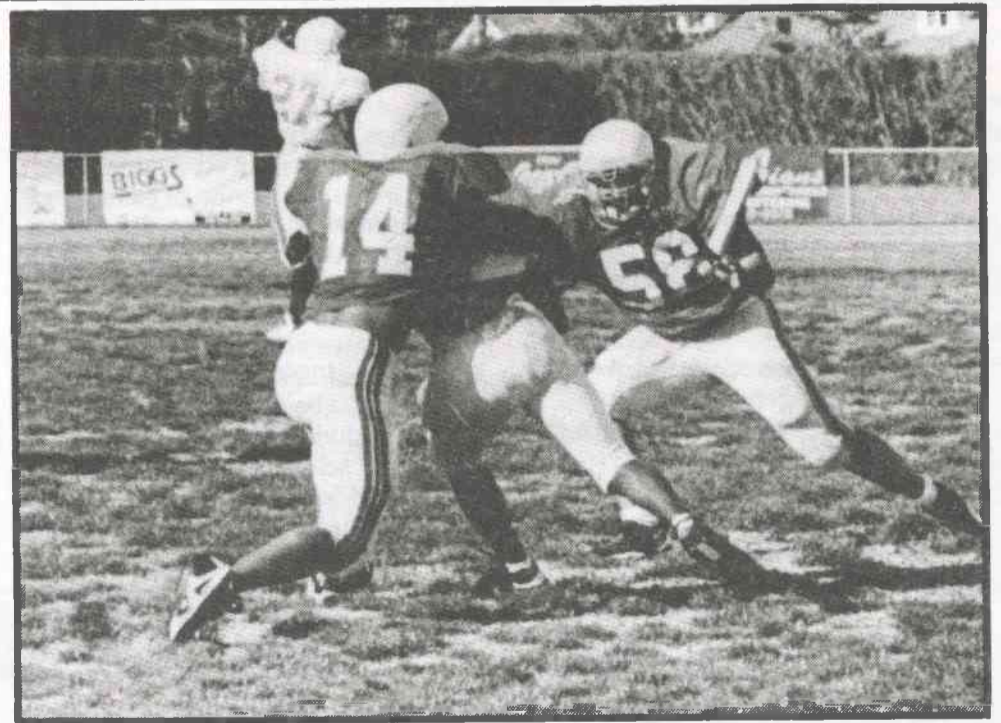
"Last year we didn't do an evaluation period at the beginning of spring practice," said Coach George Moody. "This year we tested them at the beginning, and at the end to see their progress."

Players say the team is loaded with talent. A prime example is returning quarterback Kenny Crump, who had an outstanding season last year.

"Crump is an offensive and team leader," said Moody. "I expect nothing but an excellent season from him."

Returning running-backs for the Vikes are Aarron Murchinson, Lamont Avery and Malcolm Mackey, three players who Moody predicted are on their way to becoming "three of the best backs in the conference." Moody said All-CIAA defensive back Steven Carter will be the leader of the defense.

The Vikes are losing a few linemen to graduation, but gaining fifteen new recruits, including Craig Byers, a 6'3" 285 pound tackle from Kansas City, Kevin Jones, a 6'4" 270 pound tackle from Camp Lejune, and Pierre Talavera,



During the annual blue and white game held in Roebuck Stadium, the ECSU offense and defense display the skills they learned during spring practice.

a 6'2" guard from Brooklyn.

"I feel as though the new recruits will pick up and contribute to the system pretty easy," said Murchinson.

Some players are extremely excited about next season.

"I want to win the CIAA make the playoffs and compete for the National Championship," said quarterback Kenny Crump.

"This team is full of leaders who wish to lead on and off the field, and they

will do whatever is necessary to bring home the ring," said defensive tackle Ivan Deloatch.

Running back coach Anzell Harrell, Jr. pointed out that last season the Viking team "came very close to" winning the CIAA championship.

"They got a good taste of what could have been," said Harrell. "I feel they don't want to look at what could have been; instead they'll focus on what will be."