

Rams Capture NAIA District 26 Championship

Rams Slip by Barber Scotia



"Bighouse" Gaines Coach of the Year- (NAIA and CIAA)

Bouncing back from a razor-edge defeat by Norfolk State in the CIAA finals last week-end, the Rams defeated the Sabers of Barber Scotia College 88-89. The thriller took place in Whitaker Gymnasium, March 4 in front of an ample crowd of 4,700 fans.

It was the Sabers who held the lead with about five minutes left in the first half, 37-33. However a persistent Ram line-up refused to let the Sabers go into the locker room with the lead. They overcame that small deficit and soared into the lead 55-49 at the close of the half.

The second half brought the Sabers onto the court determined to come back. And, that they did. They cut the Ram lead to one with about 7 minutes left in the game, 81-80. A Barber Scotia shot from 15 feet out gave the visiting team the lead at 82-81. The Sabers maintained that lead up until less than a minute left in the contest. It was 41 seconds to be exact.

However, two key free throws sunk by George Gibson who had 16 for the night were deciding factors. The Rams took the lead 89-88. Although the Sabers took six shots in the remaining 38 seconds, none of them cleared the hoop and the Rams walked away with another victory.

The win came despite the fact that three Rams weren't in tip-top condition. Tom Paulin, who was injured in the CIAA Tournament, still wasn't quite up to par. Don Helton and James Pegues were also ailing.

The Ram victory qualified them to meet Guilford College in the NAIA District 26 tournament

championship the following night.

High point man for the Rams was Carlos Terry with 22 points. Helton followed with 20 points. Conley had 17 and George Gibson 16. These were the only Rams in double figures. The Sabers had four players in double figures. McDaniell was high point man with 17.

WSSU Upsets Guilford

The team of Helton and Johnson was one of the "dynamite" combinations that helped the Rams clinch the NAIA District 26 Championship over Guilford, March 5. Horace Johnson poured in 19 points and Don Helton 23 to add to the 89 to 82 victory. Other Rams in double figures were Carlos Terry with 14 and George Gibson with 16.

The Rams, who were predicted underdogs in the contest trailed the Guilford team throughout the first half. The score at the end of the first six minutes was 17 to 7 and it looked as though the Rams would be of no threat to the Quakers. However, as the first half began drawing to a close, Johnson fired up "his engine" causing the Rams to bring

smoke! In less than two minutes, a ten point lead was turned into a tie. Fine defensive play on the part of the Rams held the Quakers scoreless, while "hitting everything that they shot" allowed them to catch up.

At the half, the Quakers held a very shaky 45-41 lead.

Most of the second half belonged to neither team exclusively. The play of both teams was matched until Guilford broke away from the Rams as closing stages of the game drew near. The score was 72-67. But the Quaker team repeatedly made one mistake after another and the Rams took over and remained on top. The latter part of the half belonged to the Rams who outscored the Quakers 22-10 in the last five minutes. Two free throws and a steal all by Don Helton in the last second of the game pushed the Rams out of the Quakers' reach.

Lloyd Free led the Quakers with 39 points. Sam Kennedy followed with 22.

The victory left WSSU with a 21-6 record.

Sanders Qualifies

Verdell Sanders, senior-physical education major, qualified for the Wrestling Nationals to be held in Sioux City, Iowa. Sanders, last year's most outstanding, qualified by taking third at weight class 177 in the National Association's Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Area Tournament at Elon College. Sanders, a 5'11" Senior from Charlotte, North Carolina, lost in the semifinals of the two-day tournament. Reginald Sherard, A freshman from Goldsboro, North Carolina finished fourth.

During the earlier part of the wrestling season, Sanders along with Abner Joyner won the Catawba Invitational Wrestling Tournament. Both Sanders and Joyner finished second in the CIAA Wrestling Championships last year, along with Terry Dunlap, Curtis Phifer, and William Hawkins. During regular season, Verdell defeated the CIAA Champ by outpointing him 13-2. Sanders finished the wrestling season with a 10-4 record. Other wrestlers for WSSU were:

- 134- Larry Dunlap
- 145- William Hawkins
- 150- Reginald Sherard
- 158- Kenneth Allen
- 167- Abner Joyner
- 190- Andrew Sauls
- Heavy Weight - Gary Raiford.

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The M.M. Hauser Student Union held it's annual Billard, chess, whist and ping pong tournaments on Feb. 19-20. The participation was tremendous. Champions in the events are as follows:

Billard Champ- 1st John Connally- Twice a winner in billiards (74-75), 2nd Larry Ritter.

Billiards- Women- 1st Brenda Hairston, 2nd Teresa Baker.

Ping Pong- 1st Philip Tatum, 2nd Lennis Harris.

Whist- 1st Evelyn Thomas and John Connally, 2nd Jan Epps and Vivian Kelley.

Chess- winner undecided at the time of this publication.