

SPORTS

The News Argus: The Winston-Salem State University Student Newspaper

Rams vs Deacs

Rams play tough against Division I Demon Deacs

By Brandolyn Love
ARGUS REPORTER

History was made on Nov. 11 when the Rams took on the Demon Deacons in the first ever "Twin City Shoot Out." About 12,000 fans turned out for the game, including the legendary WSSU coach, Clarence E. "Big house" Gaines, who was honored during the pre-game show.

The final score was Rams 61 and Deacons 89, but that didn't seem to matter to fans on either side of the court. WSSU's fan section and Wake Forest University's "Screaming Deacons" pep squad set an upbeat tone that permitted the historic showdown.

"I have to give a lot of credit to Winston-Salem State," Wake Forest Head Coach Skip Prosser said after the game. "I think they played very hard and very well. They stayed with the plan. Again, I thought that they were out-manned in terms of size — they scrapped — and we need to give them all the credit in the world."

The first half of the game was controlled by the Deacons as they held the Rams to only 22 points. Wake Forest University point guard, Chris Paul, led his team with a total of 15 points. Eric Williams and Jamal Levy were close behind with 14 points each. On the Rams end, it was all about Allegrie Guinn, who scored 23 of the team's 61 points.

Final score aside, the WSSU team earned the respect of fans and foes alike.



Junior guard, Allegrie Guinn, attempts to move the ball past Wake guard, Justin Gray.

Photo by Mission eXtreme Imaging

NBA lands hard on instigators of brawl

By Ben Schmitt
KRT WIRE SERVICE

DETROIT - The NBA suspended Indiana Pacers forward Ron Artest for the season along with two of his teammates for at least 25 games following the recent fracas at the Palace of Auburn Hills.

Pistons forward Ben Wallace was also hit with a six-game suspension.

"The penalties issued right now deal only with one aspect of this incident, that of player misconduct," NBA Commissioner David Stern said in a news release recently.

"There are other issues that the NBA must urgently focus on at this time. First, we must re-define bounds of acceptable conduct for fans attending our games and resolve to permanently exclude those who overstep those bounds."

Suspended players are not paid, and cannot practice or sit on the bench during games. Meanwhile, Oakland County prosecutors recently said criminal charges are imminent in the now-infamous Pistons/Pacers brouhaha.

"You never say never, but I can't conceive that there won't be at least some charges coming out of this," said James Halushka, a deputy Oakland County prosecutor in charge of warrants and investigations.

Who will be charged and when the charges will be filed remains undetermined.

Besides Artest, Pacers forward Jermaine O'Neal will serve a 25-game suspension and guard Stephen Jackson will be out 30 games. Pacers guard Anthony Johnson was suspended for five games and guard Reggie Miller, who didn't play, will miss one

game for leaving the bench. The players have the right to appeal, but Stern said recently he is confident the suspensions will hold up.

Pistons players Chauncey Billups, Elden Campbell and Derrick Coleman all received a one-game suspension for leaving the bench.

Pistons Coach Larry Brown lamented the extended loss of Ben Wallace, but also expressed sympathy for the Pacers' organization.

"It's hard to really focus in on basketball," Brown said. "It's such a black eye for our league and our sport. I'm sick about that for Indiana. They have a great franchise. They had the best record in the league last year."

Of Wallace, Brown said, "We lost our heart and soul."

And while the country questioned the actions of Auburn Hills Police and Palace security, Halushka said there was no reason to take anyone into custody during the recent brawl.

"We haven't seen the police reports, but it seemed like an out-of-control melee and it wouldn't have made sense to take anyone into custody," Halushka said Sunday. "You can only keep someone detained for 48 hours if you don't bring charges and a case. In a case like this, the investigation may be lengthy."

Halushka said his office would wait for police to complete their probe before getting involved, but said Pistons and Pacers players most likely will have to give police statements.

"It's going to take awhile for the investigation to unfold," Halushka said. "You're probably talking December before our office even gets it. It's still at the police level and at the very least, it's going to be a few days before

our office gets involved with the case. I don't anticipate any charges over this weekend."

Tom Wilson, president of the Palace of Auburn Hills, said he's not sure whether security procedures will change.

"That's one of the trickiest parts, you know, yesterday we were talking about putting canopies over the player tunnels," he said. "Do you do that so the players are secure? Isn't one of the special things having players high-fiving on both sides, home and visitors, high-fiving those kids as they run past them?"

Macomb County Sheriff Mark Hackel, who teaches at various police academies, recently trained Palace security in crowd control and the use of force. He emphasized a technique called "verbal judo," in which security guards use non confrontational methods to defuse tense situations. Palace security guards do not carry weapons, he said.

"In my opinion, that's a difficult expectation for a player to run into the stands and start whaling at people haphazardly," Hackel said. "It is completely inappropriate to blame the Palace security."

During the fight, three Pacers (Artest, Jackson and O'Neal) punched Pistons fans.

Artest and Jackson fought with fans in the stands and O'Neal traded blows with the fans who rushed the basketball court.

Artest also punched a fan when he returned to the court. Officials called the game with 45.9 seconds left, with the Pacers leading 97-82, as pandemonium erupted during a nationally televised game.

It began when Artest fouled Ben Wallace in the back during a

lay-up attempt. Wallace retaliated by shoving Artest's face with both hands and charging at him before players and coaches intervened.

While Wallace shouted and threw a wristband at Artest, Artest lay down on a TV broadcast table with his hands behind his head.

A fan then threw a plastic cup with a beverage at Artest and Artest charged into the stands. Jackson followed and craziness ensued.

Mike Ryan of Clarkston, Mich., said Artest attacked him, assuming Ryan threw the beverage.

"He asked, 'Did you do it? Did you do it?' I said no and he started pummeling me," Ryan, 26, said. Ryan's father, Patrick, said Sunday that the family has been advised by an attorney to decline further comment.

Alvin Shackelford of Burt, in Saginaw County, approached Artest on the court and Artest, in turn, slugged him.

Shackelford declined comment Sunday on advice of an attorney.

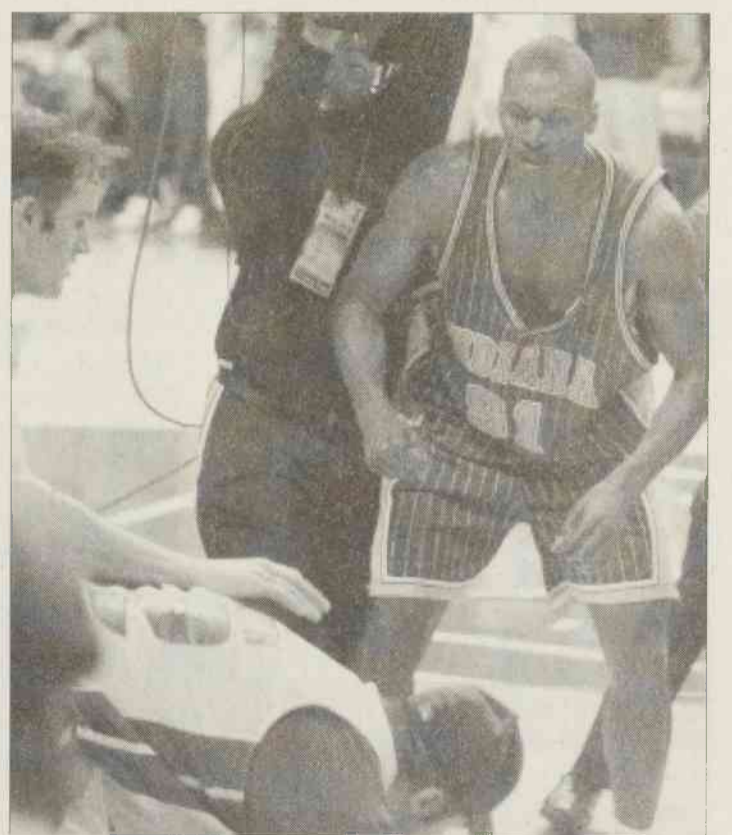
Jim Schneider, 50, of West Bloomfield said he saw Artest fighting with Ryan and tried to back away when Jackson entered the stands.

"I suppose when I saw Jackson flailing, there was some fear," Schneider recalled recently. "I'm thinking, 'My God, what is happening here?'"

Schneider and his friend Richard Sallen got pushed into the fray, and Sallen hurt his shoulder. He was treated at the Palace and released.

Schneider said he's got tickets to their game against the Miami Heat, but is not sure whether he will attend.

"I'll go if I get a promise from the Palace and security that this will never happen again," he said.



Indiana Pacers Ron Artest is shown after knocking down a fan with a punch after the fan came on the court during an altercation in the last minute of their game with the Pistons at The Palace in Auburn Hills, Mich.

KRT Photo

"I enjoy basketball. I don't enjoy what happened."

Auburn Hills Deputy Police Chief Jim Mynsberge said one person was taken to the hospital, but no one was seriously injured.

"The tape will be reviewed and there will be a full investigation," Mynsberge said recently. He added that police also would interview players and fans.

Hackel said he saw no reason to take anyone into custody recently.

"The police are doing the right thing by taking a step back to make sure they have all the right information," he said.

Auburn Hills police declined further comment, except to say that the case remains under investigation.

If police recommend criminal charges, prosecutors will decide what action to take. Those charged will then face court arraignments.