

## Read on

Rams and Lady Rams win

NBA —What's up with the dress code

## SPORTS

## NBA trying to make basketball a sport for the masses

Commentary by Steven Gaither  
ARGUS SPORTS EDITOR

When Sean Carter encouraged us to "change clothes" in 2003, we quickly followed suit. When NBA Commissioner David Stern ordered his employees to do so in 2005 he ignited a debate and stirred up deep emotions.

The NBA's dress code, which went into effect on opening night, is the latest attempt by Stern to clean up the league's "image problems."

The dress code, which Stern labeled "business casual," applies to players during all league and team functions. The code calls for slacks, dress pants and shoes; it also bans T-shirts, jeans, sun-

glasses, medallions worn outside clothing and headphones.

Of course, those who have been affected the most, the players, have made their opinions heard. Orlando Magic forward Grant Hill supports the league's move requiring more formal gear.

"Personally, I like it. I like to dress up," Hill told the Washington Post, "It was a little weird, the NBA turned into a fashion show. But I think it's good."

MVP Tim Duncan of the San Antonio Spurs is against it. "I think it's a load of crap ... I don't understand why they would take it to this level. I think it's basically retarded."

Still others, such as Indiana's Stephen Jackson, have taken it a step further and are calling the code "racist."

"I have no problem dressing up ... because I know I'm a nice-looking guy. But as far as chains, I definitely feel that's a racial statement. Almost 100 percent of the guys in the league who are young and black wear big chains. So I definitely don't agree with that at all."

First and foremost, the NBA is a business. Stern made his decision based on the bottom line.

Attendance league-wide is down significantly since the NBA's golden era with stars such as Magic Johnson in the '80s and Michael

Jordan in the '90s.

Although most of the players in the NBA are young and black, most of the people who buy the tickets are middle-aged white men. This is not news to anyone, least of all David Stern. The key in business is to market your product to those who are most likely to buy it. Basically, hip-hop fans buy jerseys; businessmen buy tickets. It's not too difficult to come up with an answer based on those facts.

However, can putting on a suit transform you into a different person? Is there a magic sports coat that makes you a good person? Does wearing oversized jeans and medallions make you a thug? It's

like the NBA has sent a memo to fans saying "Hey look, these guys used to be thugs, but we took away their ice and made them wear suits so now they are on the straight and narrow."

If rap music and the clothes that come with the culture are so dangerous, why are rap songs being played in every NBA arena? The NBA is trying to be all things to all people. It wants to be hip and edgy for the younger crowd, and at the same time be conservative and laid back for the older crowd.

The NBA is trying to sell the same product with a different wrapper. If people didn't like it before, they'll continue to leave it on the shelf.

## Lady Rams down but refuse to give up, defeats Wingate by a narrow margin

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The Lady Rams defeated the Wingate Lady Bulldogs 76-74 in a pre-Thanksgiving thriller on November 22. Keoshia Worthy's fall-away jumper sealed the game for the Lady Rams, who won their third game in four tries.

The Lady Rams fell behind by as many as

seven points in the second-half, but freshmen Abekia Williams hit two big three-pointers to keep the Rams close.

The Lady Rams were sizzling from behind the three-point arc in the game, as they shot a blazing 5-8 (63 percent) from long range.

WSSU also shot 54 percent for the game. Guard

Latoya Armstrong was especially hot from the arc, shooting 3-6 and pacing the Lady Rams with 19 points. Joining her in double-figures were Janet Robinson (16 points), Williams (12), and Candace Saunders (10).

Wingate guard Tanetra Barrett led all scorers with 24 points on 9-14 shooting.

## Rams score first win of the season

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In a game that was worth staying on campus for, the Rams picked up their first win of the season against Tusculum College 64-62 on November 22. It was a much-needed win for the Rams, who came into the game with a 0-2 record.

WSSU was down 35-33 at the half, and came out with a lot of intensity in the second half. The Rams forced 28 turnovers and scored 40 points off them. The Rams defense

allowed their offense to get in-sync in the second half, where they turned a two-point deficit into an 11-point lead with less than seven minutes to go in the game. However, in less than a four-minute span the Pioneers cut the Rams lead down to one (64-63). With 11 seconds remaining in the game, Frank Johnson hit one of two free-throws to give the Rams a two-point lead. The Pioneers had a chance to win it, but missed a jumper with less than two-seconds remaining.

Allegrie "Bizzy" Guinn lead the team with eight steals to go with his game-high seven assists. He also scored 15 points, including a breakaway slam that changed the momentum of the game. Point guard Roy Peake managed to steal the ball seven times, and Corey Parker contributed four thefts to go along with his game-high 19 points.

Matt Ferris led Tusculum with 18 points on 8-14 shooting.

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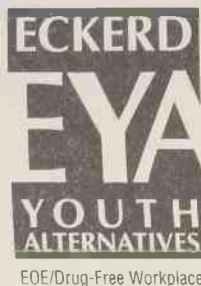
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