

SPORTS

Celebration: A ring for Earl "The Pearl" Monroe

By Steven J. Gaither
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

More than 40 years after leading Winston-Salem State to the 1967 College Division (Division II) championship, Earl "The Pearl" Monroe finally got his championship ring. Monroe and his teammates received their rings on November 2 at WSSU's Celebration of Champions.

"I couldn't be happier," Monroe said. "There are a lot of things that I've done in my life, but the most important thing that I've done in my life was come to Winston-Salem State University. The preparation I got here at Winston-Salem taught me how to handle those things out in the world."

He credited the closeness he and his teammates shared off the court for their success on it.

"After all these years, we're still best friends. That's the thing that made us be winners."

Monroe also took the time out to acknowledge Clara Gaines, widow of former basketball coach Clarence "Big House" Gaines.

"Mrs. Gaines, thank you for all the times you let Coach out the house," Monroe said. "We knew practice was over when he got the call."

After Monroe spoke, his framed No. 10 jersey was unveiled and it was announced that it would be retired and hung up in the rafters at the Gaines Center.

"Your legendary exploits catapulted the name of a small teachers college to national prominence," WSSU Chancellor Donald J. Reeves told Monroe. "Yours is an honored place in our history and should always be held in the highest of esteem."

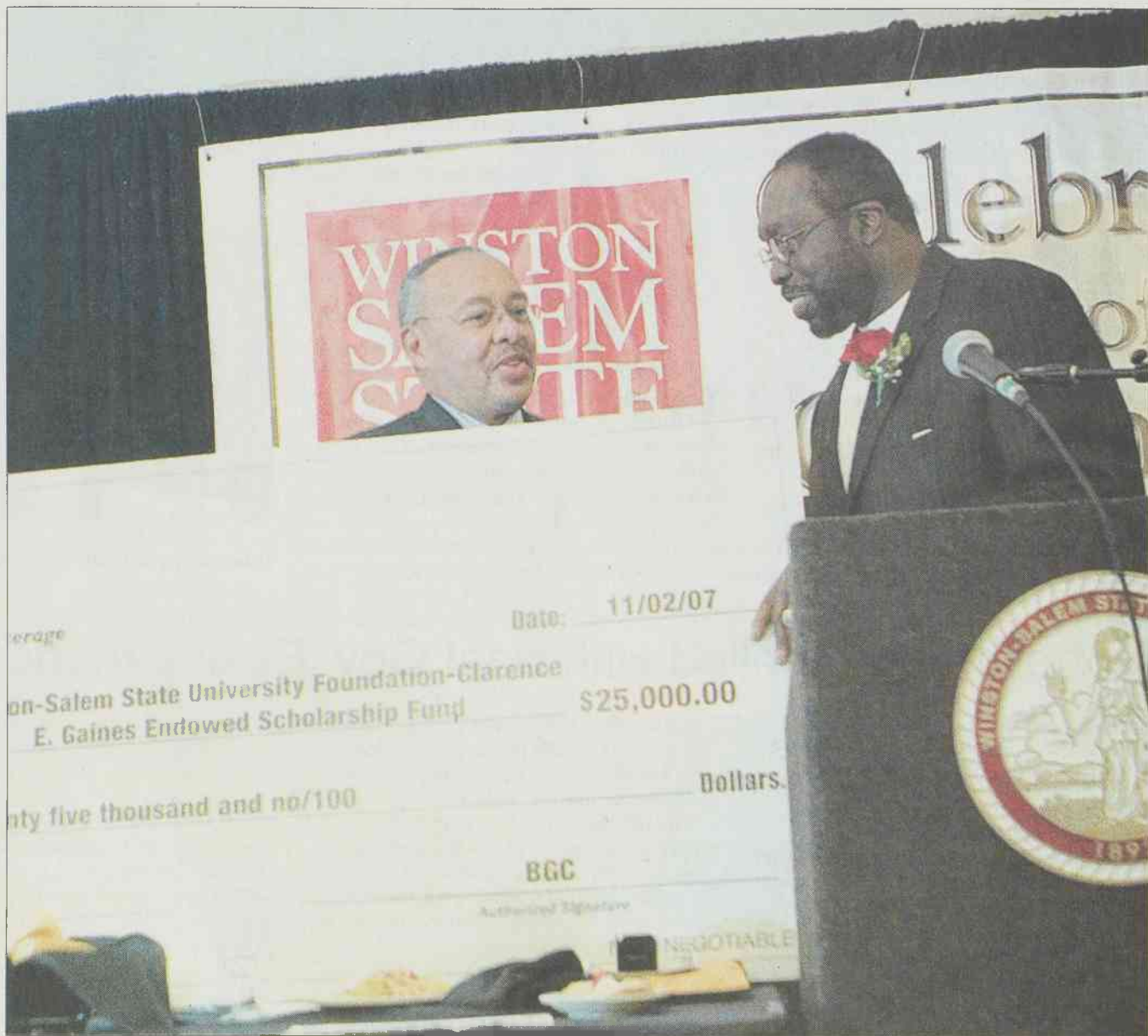
Also honored were the members of WSSU's 1977 and '78 football teams, both of which went undefeated in regular season en route to CIAA championships. Those teams were headlined by future Dallas Cowboy running back Timmy Newsome and current Rams head football coach Kermit Blount; and coached by current North Carolina Central Athletic Director Bill Hayes.

Blount jokingly recalled how Hayes used tears as a way of motivating his teams.

"In the offseason of '77, I saw Bill Hayes cry more than I've seen a baby cry," he said.

Several times during the ceremony, Reeves said that the celebration was long overdue. He also said he would recommend that a committee be formed to honor the school's legendary athletes and teams.

"With such a committee in place, the national achievements in our athletic teams will never be overlooked again," he said.



Winston-Salem State legend and NBA Hall of Famer Earl "The Pearl" Monroe presents WSSU Chancellor Donald J. Reeves with a \$25,000 check towards the C.E. Gaines Endowed Scholarship Fund during Nov. 2's "Celebration of Champions Ceremony." Monroe's 1967 team won the NCAA College Division National Championship.

Photo by Lee Adams



Photo by Garrett Garris

WSSU's men's and women's teams will play the bulk of their schedule off campus.

Home away from home

Grant Fullton
ARGUS STAFF

The 2007-08 season will have both men's and women's basketball teams playing away from C.E. Gaines Center, but they'll be playing at a familiar place: the Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum and Annex, on University Drive near Wake Forest University.

Winston-Salem State students will still get to see their teams play for free, but they will have to travel to the Coliseum area. The Annex is next to the Coliseum. It's about a 10-minute drive from campus.

The Rams will play Fresno State and Howard at the Coliseum, and the remaining home game will be played in the Annex. The Rams will also play Wake Forest in the Coliseum on November 23; however, they will be considered the visiting team.

"WSSU will be providing a shuttle service, but if students do not ride the shuttle they will be required to pay to park at the Annex," said Tonia Walker, associate director of athletics.

In the past the Rams have played some games at the Coliseum and Annex, but the

bulk of the games took place at the Gaines Center, which was completed in 1976.

However, WSSU's movement to Division I and increased enrollment have changed the athletic department's approach.

"The reason why they moved the games to the LJVM Annex is because on campus for the games, people could not find places to park, and it's too small for the size of the enrollment the school has," she said.

The C.E. Gaines Center has a seating capacity of 3,500 — too small to seat everyone who wants to watch WSSU play rivals such as Wake Forest and NC A&T.

"I would rather the game be put in a bigger facility so that I can see WSSU play A&T, because you know that games like that are going to be a packed house; and if I don't get in, I am really going to be upset," said senior Denise Beason.

As far as home games are concerned, Walker said that the games that are likely to see the least attendance, Alabama State on Dec. 17 and Ferrum College on Dec. 19, are scheduled while students are on winter break.

"Some WSSU students feel

that moving all the games to a neutral site takes away the home atmosphere that the C.E. Gaines offers.

"I feel that if we have all of our games in the LJVM Annex, then it's not going to be the same as having the game in your own gym, because C.E. Gaines in my opinion can be quite intimidating for the opposing teams," said junior Cornelius Hector.

"LJVM Annex is trying to create a home atmosphere for the WSSU Rams," Walker said.

Dr. Percy "Chico" Caldwell, WSSU athletic director, recently told the Winston-Salem Journal that he has interest in putting an arena near the campus; an arena that would hold up to 9,000 people, because the C.E. Gaines is way too small for a growing school with an enrollment of 6,000. Caldwell said in the article that an area near US 52 at the Vargrave Street exit is a possibility.

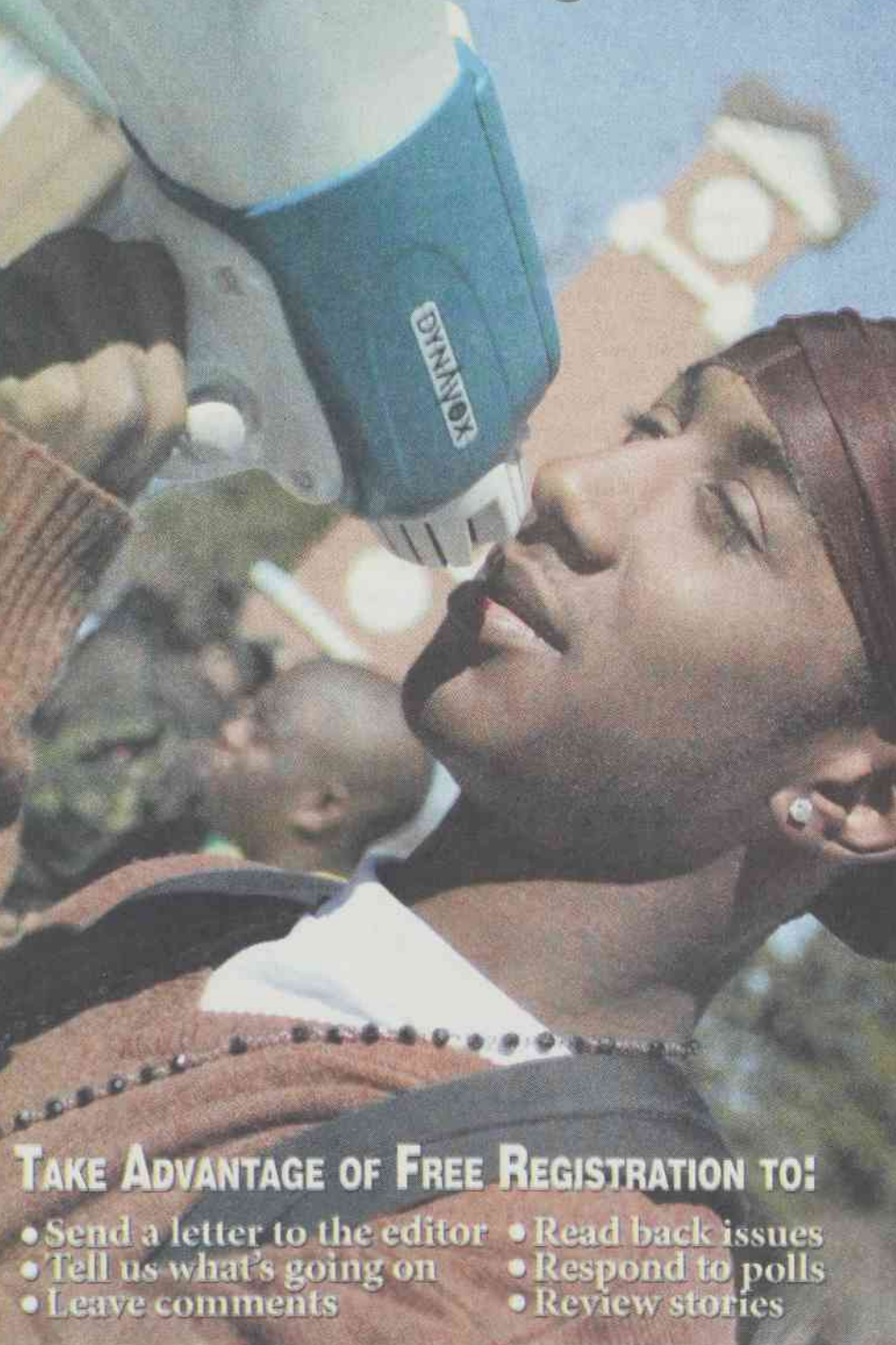
"This is one of our long-term goals that we have for the university, for the future," Walker said.

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