

Sports Review

with
Flaye Hammond

Much has been predicted for the Blackbird Basketball team, especially since the locals put on a fine show in their first games. However, the real tests come after Christmas.

Most of the games so far have been non-conference affairs and have no direct bearing on the AAA championship. From these games fans may get some idea of how the Birds will come out in the loop clashes, however.

Smokey Lancaster has proved to be the Birds' top ballplayer in the opinion of most spectators. His jumping and accuracy on shots from all angles are a winning combination. Dave Barnes, Bobby Patterson, Stanley Still, Clem Edwards, and Harold Gilbert, in about that order, are other high scorers.

As the Big Four basketball picture begins to shape up, we find that Wake Forest is perhaps the top cage team in the state. The Wolfpack was rated 7 in the nation before the season began; but since then they have been defeated by the Deacons, and it seems certain that they won't be ranked in the top ten. Duke has a high scoring ball club but lost to Vanderbilt recently. They will be about third. Carolina is showing slim hopes for a successful season and are in the number 4 slot.

Furman is one of the stronger teams in the state with All-American Frank Selvy in the lineup. Davidson and Clemson don't appear to be strong but can't be counted out of the race.

Carolina and Navy fans walked from the grandstands disappointed to their arch rivals Duke and as the season ended. They had lost Army. Duke polished the Tar Heels while Army easily won over the Middies, 20-7. Well, maybe next year.

The Winning Five



CAGERS—These five boys make up the varsity basketball team, which has won every game played so far this season. They are (left to right) forward, Stan Still; center, Joe Lancaster; forward, Dave Barnes; and guards, Bobby Patterson and Craig Horn. All are lettermen except Craig, who is a transfer student from Atlanta, Georgia.

Three Birds Make All-Eastern Team

Three players from the 1953 Blackbirds were chosen to play on the All-Eastern AAA team. These three players, from Rocky Mount's best team in 10 years, are Johnny Warren, halfback; Joe "Smokey" Lancaster, end; and Baxter Savage, tackle.

The All-Eastern football team chosen by coaches in the Eastern AAA Conference and sports writers around the area. Three players were chosen from each of the top three teams—Durham, Fayetteville, and Rocky Mount and one each from Wilson and Goldsboro. Each boy selected was a senior and an outstanding player on his team.

Parker Wins Cup

At a supper given by the Sportsmen Club for the football team, Lee Parker was presented the Billy Smith Linesman - of - the - Year trophy, given annually to the lineman who is considered outstanding by the club.

In 1947 the parents of Billy Smith set up this award in memory of their son, who had died of cancer. Billy had been an outstanding Blackbird lineman during his high school career.

Lee is the fourth player to receive this honor. His name will be inscribed on the permanent trophy and he will be given a small identical trophy to keep.

The official presentation is to be made at the Annual Awards Day assembly in the spring.

Locals Beat Whirlies For Fourth Victory

Varsity Outclasses Red Devils, 74-52

Winning all the way, the Blackbirds easily outclassed Kinston, 74-52, last Friday night.

Led by forward "Wild Bill" Proctor, the fast shooting Blackbirds completely bewildered the outclassed Red Devils. The Birds showed an all-around show of court knowledge, which was un-derstander by the Kinston defense. Half-time momentarily stopped the high scoring contest at 33-20.

Taking the court once more, the Birds had a 23 point third quarter, led by Proctor with 10.

But the final quarter was a sloppy affair. This was mainly caused by the full court press applied by Kinston. Both teams were guilty of every infraction of the rules. Thirteen fouls were committed in the last five minutes. The main scoring for the Blackbirds went like this:

C—Lancaster	19
P—Proctor	17
G—Patterson	13
G—Edwards	11

Grad Earns Fame

Bob "Monk" Bartholomew, it appears will become Rocky Mount's first All-American. The 215 pound Blackbird star has already been named all A. C. C. tackle and Sophomore-of-the-Year.

Just missing 1953 All-American selections, which is partly attributed to a poor Wake Forest season Monk has high hopes for 1954.

Tall, blue-eyed and blond, Bob was a 60-minute man throughout the season. Against Richmond and Duke he was at his best, credited with 31 tackles.

With a perfect record of four victories against no defeats, the Blackbirds are really eyeing a State championship.

In dropping Greenville 57-45 last Friday night, the Birds again showed the power-packed game which has enabled them to win every contest. "Smokey" Lancaster and Bobby Patterson led the victory in the non-conference game with 15 and 14 points respectively.

Starting very fast, the Birds had built a 16 point lead by half time. Yet the Whirlies were not to be entirely over-run as they dominated the play in the second half. But it was all Rocky Mount in the long run as they proved the better team by 12 points.

Last Friday night's contest was the last non-conference affair for coach Lundy's boys. As these games were more-or-less practice games, they stood as tests to the Bird's ability. The record speaks for itself—four wins; no losses.

Pre-season predictions had Raleigh as the team to beat. But Kinston, a double A club did it, and the Birds later defeated them. Also Goldsboro, another conference foe was whipped by Kinston.

There's no question now as to the Blackbirds power, they simply have it. Led by Lancaster, Proctor and Patterson, the Birds will prove a tough nut to crack for conference teams.



BISHOP LAUNDRY
Rocky Mount



RM Cagers Defeat Henderson, 76-34

In the first basketball game of the season, the Blackbirds defeated Class AA Henderson, 75-34, in the local gym, December 1.

Henderson struck first but the Birds immediately tied the score and broke into the lead. By the end of the first quarter, the score had moved to 20-1 for Rocky Mount.

Henderson put up a little more fight in the second frame but the

locals increased their lead 3 points, bringing the halftime score to 33-20. Another surge of power from the Birds in the 3rd quarter gave the Blackbirds a 21 point margin.

The Birds emptied the bench in the final quarter. The subs proved strong and the game ended at 75-34 with Rocky Mount on top.

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