

Mike Kendall
Repeats As State
Champion

Bulldog Sports

EDITOR: PAUL CHILDRESS

Girls' Capture
Sectional Title

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS HIT HARD

BY PALMER BROWN

This past January 26, the day report cards came out, will be remembered as a landmark day in the North Carolina High School Athletic Association. This is the day that the new academic requirements for athletes took effect and it did have a drastic effect on many students here at Albemarle High School.

In all, Albemarle lost ten of its athletes to ineligibility. When broken down, the boys' varsity basketball team lost five, the boys' JV basketball team lost three, and the wrestling team lost two due to this new rule.

The rule came as a result of a report issued by the Academic Study Commission. The report called for all student-athletes to pass five subjects per semester in order to play in the following semester. The requirement change took effect at the beginning of the second semester of the present school year.

Many students may have mistaken this rule to mean failing no more than one subject, but this interpretation may have cost some athletes their eligibility. The requirement calls for a student to pass five courses per semester. Many students take only five academic courses and, therefore, they were forced to pass every subject in order to retain their eligibility.

Along with the individuals, the teams come out losers when these student-athletes don't make the grade. Although the rule may cause much unhappiness and chaos, the bottom line is that the rule exists for the benefit of the students.

Jarvis Watkins, a member of the varsity basketball team at the time report cards came out, became ineligible when he found he had failing grades in biology and Spanish. Jarvis made the All-County football team this past season as a sophomore, but he has to pass five subjects in the second semester in order to play next year. When asked about the new rule, he comments, "Although I was disappointed, I think the new rule is a good one. An athlete should remember that academics come first and that is what every coach tells you." Jarvis also stated that he now plans to buckle down and "pass all six classes for the year."

Apparently this is the attitude that many of the affected athletes have adopted. Sophomore Tim Ridenhour played football and was on the basketball team when he learned that he was ineligible and had to quit the team. Tim comments, "There's nothing wrong with the new rule and I believe that it is a blessing in disguise for me. I plan to hit the books harder and return to dominate the conference next year." Tim possesses this positive outlooks also and now uses the time that he would have spent practicing to catch up on his studying.

Elliot Parker, one of those who became ineligible from the boys' JV basketball team, failed auto mechanics. The aspect that made his case interesting is that auto mechanics is a two hour course. Thus, he failed just one course, but he passed only four, so he became ineligible. Elliot said of the new rule, "Sure, I'm disappointed but it's just one of those things. I plan to get my grades back up and play again next year."

While the new rule was designed to stress the academic part of school, not the athletic, several changes have been proposed to the rule. During the last week of January, superintendents and school board chairmen from across the state met in Charlotte to discuss issues in the schools with top education officials, including the superintendent of Public Instruction,

Bob Etheridge, and Executive Director of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association, Charlie Adams. In one of the sessions, Mr. Adams spoke about a possible change that would allow athletes to complete the sport that they are presently participating in before becoming ineligible. This proposal would still require the students to pass five subjects, but it would not cause an athlete to be forced to quit the team in the middle of the season.

Mr. Morgan, principal of Albemarle High School, is totally in favor of the new rule. As he comments, "I like the rule just as it is and I would not be in favor of any more or any less requirements." He also states the fact that a student needs to pass twenty courses in order to graduate and that this new rule is right in line with the graduation requirements. "An athlete should be passing five subjects per year so that he can graduate on time," Mr. Morgan comments. He is also in favor of the new proposal which would allow an athlete to complete the season of play before becoming ineligible. He says that this hurts the athletes' chances of obtaining athletic scholarships as well as hurting the team. Mr. Morgan serves on the North Carolina High School Athletic Association board of directors, and he says that he would definitely vote for the proposal if it came before his board.

While the new rule may seem controversial in many people's eyes, one thing is for certain: athletes must make the grade before playing in sports.



Tim Ridenhour makes extra effort with study time, hoping to regain athletic eligibility.



Jarvis Watkins is concentrating on academics this semester.



Keenan Tyson should be competitive in the 400m and 800m.



Travis Morehead, Keenan Tyson, Sam Davis, and Chris Gregory look to lead the Bulldogs this season.

BOYS PREPARE FOR TRACK SEASON

BY ROSS HOLSHOUSER

Spring weather is just around the corner, and more and more runners are attempting to get in shape for that special time of year - track season. Albemarle tracksters have been preparing for this year's season ever since mid-winter; some runners have even participated in indoor track. This year's team should perform well for Albemarle High School.

The Bulldog track team is coming off a 3rd place finish last year in the conference and the loss of two All-Conference performers, David Moses and Chris Campbell. Moses was the leading scorer for the Bulldog squad last year while Campbell was leader in shot-put and discus. This year's team is lead by head coach Bruce Marshall and assistant coach Paul Klutz. Returning for this year's squad will be Albemarle's third All-Conference participant from last year, Palmer Brown. Along with Brown are seniors Sam Davis and Keenan Tyson. These seniors will guide a team of outstanding performers in all the aspects of track.

Here are some faces to look for when the season rolls around:

- Seniors: Palmer Brown- 800m, 1600m
- Sam Davis-100m, 200m
- Keenan Tyson- 400m, 800m
- Juniors: Mike Czesek- 400m, 800
- Sophomores: Mike Kendall- distance
- Travis Morehead- distance

HITTING THE HIGH NOTES

BY SONNY MILLER

Welcome to another edition of "Hitting the High Notes!" Buzzing through the new year, the Charlotte Hornets are making quite an impression on the other NBA teams. The Hornets have won 15 games as of March 14. Kelly Tripucka, the leading scorer for the Hornets, is being closely pushed and pressured by Rex Chapman, who is quickly raising his point average and gaining more playing time. The Hornets may not win every game, but they always give the other team a hard fight and a run for their money.

Very bad news has come from the state of South Carolina. University of South Carolina head football coach Joe Morrison died February 5 from a sudden heart attack. He had been playing in a racquetball game that afternoon, and afterwards he wasn't getting his breath back and was very fatigued. They called the ambulance and he took a shower. While in the shower, Morrison collapsed. He was rushed to the hospital unconscious. He died minutes later. On this tragic day, Morrison was 51.

As always, the NBA all-star game, slam dunk contest, and the three point shoot-out were as exciting as ever. Michael Jordan, the defending slam dunk champ was unable to partake in this year's "slam show", due to doctor's orders of a possible overexertion of his knee. However, Jordan did play in the all-star game gathering 29 points. The winner of this year's slam dunk contest was Kenny "Sky" Walker, who fascinated the crowd with some vicious high flying jams. Also, the three point shoot-out was without last year's champion. Larry Bird was unable to show off his

magical touch from three point range due to injuries. Dale Ellis was crowned this year's three point champion. I consider Walker and Ellis lucky that Jordan and Bird weren't there to give them a run for their money.

A little closer to home, around Albemarle, Diane Smith broke a school record in the 600 yard dash with the time of 1:42 in the indoor track competition. Congratulations, Diane, on a fine performance!

Palmer Brown and Suzie Britt are representing AHS in competition for the N.C.H.S.A.A. Student-Athlete Scholarship. The award honors those who best exemplify the concept of "student-athlete". To be eligible, students have to maintain an "A" overall grade-point average, and have extensive involvement and honors in athletics. Good luck to both of these outstanding student athletes.



Diane Smith now holds the school record in the 600 yard dash.