

# NEAC Boys Race To Be Exciting

The Northeastern Conference boys' basketball season appears to be in transition this season. Eight of the league's top 12 scorers have graduated, but a talented group of returning players should provide the seven teams with plenty of exciting action in what should be a competitive race this winter.

There is a new school, Hertford County, the result of Ahoskie's and Murfreesboro's consolidation, and a new coach — Dewayne Kellum, who takes over the reigns at Williamston.

A team by team look at the Northeastern Conference:

## WILLIAMSTON

Dewayne Kellum, who came from Chocowinity in the Class 1-A Tobacco Belt Conference after leading the Indians to a 19-6 record, a berth in the North Carolina High School Athletic Association sectional semifinals and coach of the year honors in the area, will direct the Tigers this season. Last year, Williamston struggled but finished by winning seven of its last nine games to exit with a 8-13 overall record that included a 6-6 ledger in the NEAC.

Kellum has a senior-laden, experienced team this season. The three main returners are 5-10 junior Guy Spruill, 6-4 senior Walter Price and 6-0 senior Ricky Griffin. Spruill led the conference in scoring with a 21.6 points per game average last year. Price and Griffin will be expected to score inside and provide strong rebounding,

something the Tigers didn't have that much of last year.

Other letterwinners returning for Williamston are Michael York, a 6-1 senior regarded as a solid three-point shooting threat; Tyronne Bland, a 5-10 senior guard; and Norris Warren, a 5-9 senior.

## PLYMOUTH

Plymouth head coach Sammy White will field an experienced team.

For the Vikings to improve on their 11-10 record of a year ago, returning first team all-area selection Marvin Armond will have to stay healthy. Armond, a 6-4 center, was Plymouth's leading scorer last season with an 18.2 points per game average, fourth in the league. James Carter, the team's leading scorer at 19.4, the league's second-best effort last season, has graduated, so Armond, five seniors and a junior will be among the returners asked to contribute heavily.

Shawn Walker, a 5-11 junior who started at guard opposite Carter last season, is back to run the point this year. Joining him are senior forwards Torrey Hines, Michael Jordan and Gerald Puckett and seniors Chris Cherry and Keith Williams, who are pressing for time with Walker in the backcourt.

Kevin McNair, a 6-0 senior forward, will also be a contributor inside, White said.

The Vikings' run-and-gun style will not change this sea-



## Williamston Tigers

senior forward; and Darren Askew, the leading scorer last year at 14 points per game.

Joining the team from Murfreesboro team are Wendell Futrell, a 5-11 senior; Larry Brooks, a 5-10 senior; Keith Britt, a 5-10 senior that averaged 19 points per outing; Steve Stephenson, Colie Stephenson, Tyrone Joyner and Tim Smith. Ellery Lee and Nsonji White are up from Ahoskie's junior varsity team, while Dustin Schuler is another holdover from Ahoskie's varsity team.

Defensively, the Bears will pressure the ball with a full-court, man-to-man style to utilize the team's overall quickness.

Offensively, Hertford looks to get points off its transition game with an experienced group of starters and a good bench.

## ROANOKE

Roanoke struggled for most of the season last year primarily because of a lack of outside shooting and inside rebounding. For the Redskins to improve on last year's 6-15 mark, they will have to replace seven seniors — only the bad news is, the returners have had limited playing time and are inexperienced.

Jesse Carlisle, a 6-0 junior guard, will have to share the

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