

Basketball Improves

by Darice Witherspoon

NCSSM's basketball teams have definitely earned respect. Both the girls' and boys' teams have made themselves a threat.

After sixteen games, the girls' and boys' teams boast 12-4 and 10-6 overall records respectively. Both are 5-2 in the conference. The players, the coaches, and the student body are pleased with the season's beginning and excited about its remainder.

Jim Bostick, coach of the boys' team, is impressed with their progress. Compared to last year's team, he feels that they are much better. The overall quality of players is high. "I am extremely optimistic about the rest of the season," he says.

Not only is the coach optimistic, but so are the players. Returning senior Ray Helms stated "If we continue to improve and play as a team, I think we will definitely be contenders for the conference championship."

Bostick commented, "The players have developed into a real team this year. They work hard in both practices

and games. At the beginning of the season, our goal was to make it to the state playoffs. We are in that position if we continue our level of playing."

The entire team has displayed a good attitude. The senior leadership is excellent. Helms said "This year's team has a better attitude--a winning attitude."

Girls' basketball coach Curtis Hunter stated that the season is turning out to be a pleasant surprise. The team, compared to last year's team, is better all around as far as talent. They have more strength and a greater team speed. Hunter thinks that they are the best team in the conference.

Hunter said that it is evident that the team returned from winter break with a new attitude. "They owe the season to themselves. They have come out and worked hard. Everyone is playing with confidence."

"Team unity", promoting team play as an instrument for winning, has evolved as the team's philosophy. Junior Regina Clemmons remarked, "Our team this year has a lot of

talent. If we keep our team unity I am positive that we will go far."

Returning senior J.D. Johnston said "We are all glad that Curtis is back." At the season's beginning, Hunter returned from Australia mainly to coach the girls. It was a tough decision, but Hunter feels like he made the right choice in returning.

Hunter is completing his third year as the girls' basketball coach. "I am more developed to approach things as a coach this year. I put up with a lot of things during my first two years, but it is totally different this year."

How has the new gym affected the basketball teams? It has made all the difference by providing a place for the teams to practice. Last year's teams were inconvenienced by having to travel to a gym for practice. There has been exceptionally good attendance at home games. The fans' support has made NCSSM a difficult place for visiting teams to play. As Coach Bostick said at the pep rally, "One of the biggest reasons we have a good team is because of you, the fans."



Keith Gray goes for the jump ball.

Wrestling Dominates

by Joe Fernandez

The Science and Math wrestling team has rolled to an impressive 11-5 record this year. Led by team captains Linh Nguyen, Chris Grindstaff and Robert Burgess, the team is now ranked seventh in the state 1a/2a classification.

Nguyen has compiled a 24-3 individual record with three tournament titles this

year. He won the Capital City Classic, the South Granville Invitational wrestling tournament, and our own NCSSM Invitational. Nguyen finished fifth in state competition last year in the 103 pound weight class. As a captain, Linh has been instrumental in dual team matches by starting the match with a win to pace the rest of the team.

Junior James Banner has been a driving force at 125 pounds this year, with a record of 19-5. Also from the junior class, Jamie King has ripped through 152 pounds to post a 21-3 record.

Grindstaff, a 1989 1a/2a state finalist has won four tournaments this year. To his credit he has the Capital City Classic, the Bull Durham Tour-

namment, the South Granville Invitational, and the NCSSM Invitational. Grindstaff is 17-1 at 145 pounds, his only loss a medical default.

Robert Burgess has been a power at 160 pounds this year, winning the Bull Durham Tournament, the South Granville Invitational, and the NCSSM Invitational. He has a 28-1 individual record, his only loss was in the finals of the Capital City Classic, a close decision.

Burgess says, "As a team we have a good chance in the state individual tournament this year." Science and Math finished thirteenth in 1989, and four state qualifiers are returning. "We also have as good a chance as anyone in the state dual team tournament," Burgess added.

The Unicorn's most recent dual team win was over the South Johnston Trojans, a team that defeated them last year. South Johnston was unable to pin a single Science and Math wrestler, as Coach Mike Walters manipulated the lineup to pull the win out even after forfeiting three weight classes. Grindstaff, in his first return from injury, claimed an impressive 13 second pin.

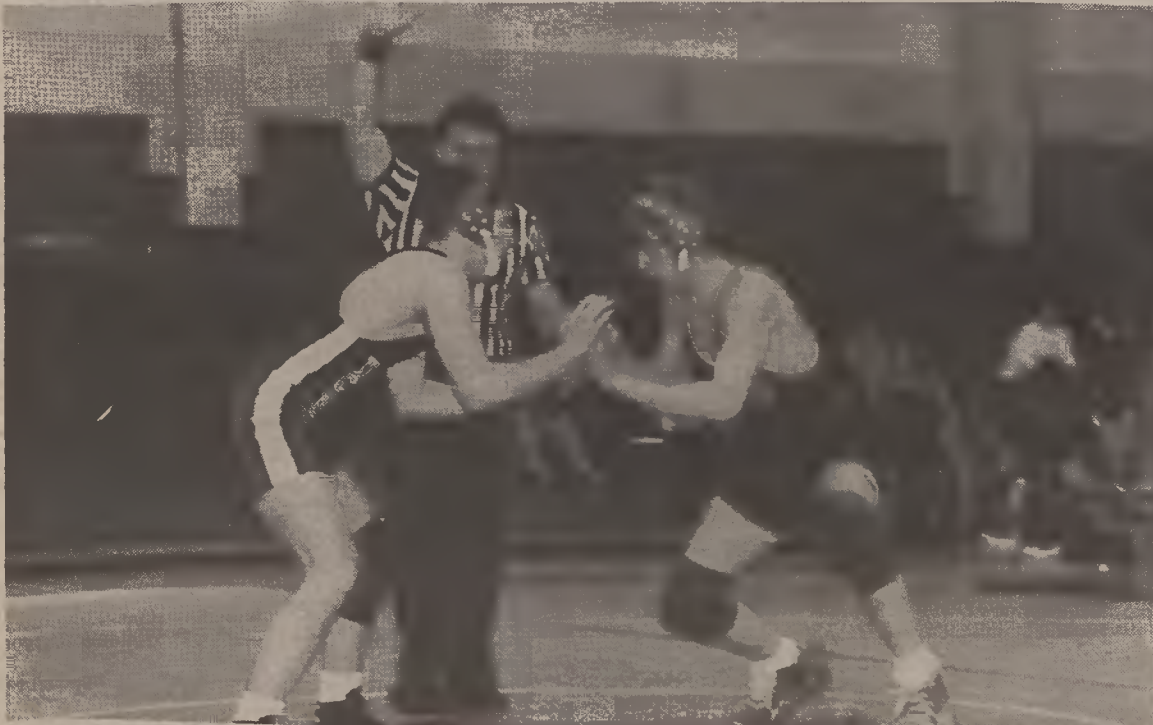
Most important in that victory was the fact that South Johnston only received three to four points for their wins.

Science and Math was able to prevent the pins, thereby not allowing the Trojans the maximum points.

Winning for Science and Math were: Linh Nguyen, Alan Cline, James Banner, Scott Shelton, Chris Grindstaff, Craig Moorefield, and Robert Burgess. The final score was 35-28; 18 Trojan points resulted from NCSSM forfeits.

On January 27, the first ever NCSSM Invitational Wrestling Tournament was held. NCSSM put forth a tremendous effort, winning three weight classes. Jordan High School was the overall team winner, Science and Math finished fourth. Hopefully this tournament will continue as an opportunity for the NCSSM population to witness a showcase of outstanding talent wrestle their very own.

Regardless of state tournament results, 1989-1990 has been the best year yet for NCSSM wrestling. As a whole, the team has shown that Science and Math is a force to be reckoned with.



Jamie King battles Dixon foe.