

Conference Titles In View

By Andrew Miller and Sherri Phillips

After a slow start at the beginning of the season, the Whirlie basketball team has come into its own, and has become one of the hottest teams in the state. Winning seven games in a row, and 12 of the last 13, has brought their record to 15-3 over all, and 6-0 in conference play.

With key conference victories over eleventh-ranked Winston Salem Parkland 59-47, fourth-ranked Kannapolis 59-55, highly rated High Point Andrews 68-52, and cross-town rival Page 55-49, the Whirlies silenced critics and proved themselves to be a major threat for the state championship. With a current AP ranking of ninth in the state, the Whirlies could possibly achieve a bid to the state playoffs.

Leading the team during this string of victories has been 6'6" senior, All-American candidate, Cedric Cokely. Cokely, averaging 18 points a game and just over 11 rebounds, has proven to everyone why colleges such as Wake Forest, Clemson, and UNC-C show interest in his abilities.

The Whirlies have a young team with two juniors in the starting line-up. Juan Austin at guard, averaging seven points a game and five assists, has proven to be the difference in the Whirlies' outside shooting. Mike Hinson, the star of last year's conference champion J.V. squad, started his first game against Reynolds, and has now fit in right to make the team gel together.

Austin said, "We finally started to believe in each other, and that's when I think the team came into its own." He added, "We have the best talent in North Carolina, but if I don't see the whole floor and get the pass or shot I need, we will not have a good chance of winning."

The Whirlies have out-rebounded their opponents 492-387. This happened with the help of 6'7" senior Jvonnie Sweeny. His 102 total rebounds, along with his eight points a game average, help strengthen their powerful front line.

Other prominent figures in the Whirlie team have been back-up point guard Wes



Lisa Miller

Taylor, or "The Iceman" as he is called by teammates. He has become Coach Phil Weaver's finest free-throw shooter on the team. Taylor's 87 percent free-throw shooting average has put games on ice at the free-throw line in pressure situations more than once this season.

The Cooper twins have also made a great contribution to the team. Kevin's nine-rebound performance at Kannapolis was one of the keys to that victory. Keith's

outside shooting and ball handling have helped the team break almost every press thrown at them. His four-clutch free-throw at Dudley clinched their second conference victory.

Felandis Brunson's return has been a welcome one to all. His two twelve-point seven-rebound performances have improved the team even more.

With the return of Brunson, and with real team play that has become obvious, it should prove to be an exciting February and possible early March of Whirlie basketball.

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With a 4-2 conference mark and 12-6 record overall, Grimsley's girls basketball team is contending strongly for the Division 7 4-A title.

Beginning the conference schedule, GHS met second-ranked A.L. Brown Kannapolis on their home court. Kannapolis won 59-53, as Anne Treadway scored 20 points. A late Whirlie rally was not enough, and Kannapolis remained undefeated in nine outings.

Grimsley's next contest was cross-town rival Dudley in what turned out to be no contest. Leigh Hunnicutt scored eight points in the first quarter, including four straight baskets, before Dudley ever got on the score board. GHS took a 20-4 first quarter lead and upped it to 42-10 at halftime.

Everyone saw action as

GHS romped Dudley 65-19. While shooting a remarkable 57 percent from the field as a team, Sherri Phillips led the way with 13 points followed by reserves Roberta Rohan and Sid Lysiak with eight and seven points respectively. Dudley had no player score over four points, and GHS knotted their conference mark 1-1 in an extremely satisfying win.

Following the romp of Dudley, GHS was soundly defeated 52-72 by Page. Treadway contributed 27 points in a losing effort. "This was a week of contrasts," remarked junior Roberta Rohan in regards to the romp of Dudley then the defeat of Page.

GHS disposed of the Parkland Mustangs 56-34 to raise their conference record to 2-1. Phillips hit eight of nine shots on her way to a 16-point performance, as teammate Treadway contributed 12. The Whirlies were ahead by as many as 27 at one point, shooting 47 percent from the field.

Grimsley upset tenth-ranked Andrews 57-45 to take sole possession of second place in the league standings. ahead 17-14 after the first period. GHS out-scored Andrews 13-1 in the second quarter to break open the game. Tenacious defense and 27 points from Treadway helped spark the win. Phillips added 12 in the winning effort.

Against West Forsyth Lisa Miller provided good play, shooting six for nine from the floor to spark the team to a 74-48 win. Treadway led the attack with 25 points followed by Phillips with 16. Treadway and Floyd combined for 22 rebounds.

"The key to the team's success lies in the team's attitude, enthusiasm, and desire to win," noted guard Sandra Smith. Playing for first place, GHS was defeated 53-47 by second ranked Kannapolis.

The strong team play, obvious thus far, must continue for the title to remain in sight.



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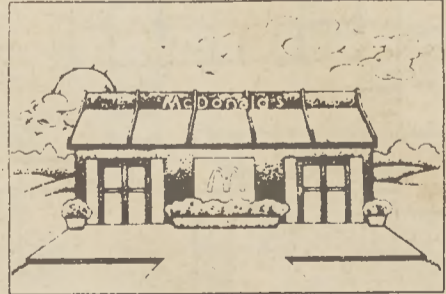
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