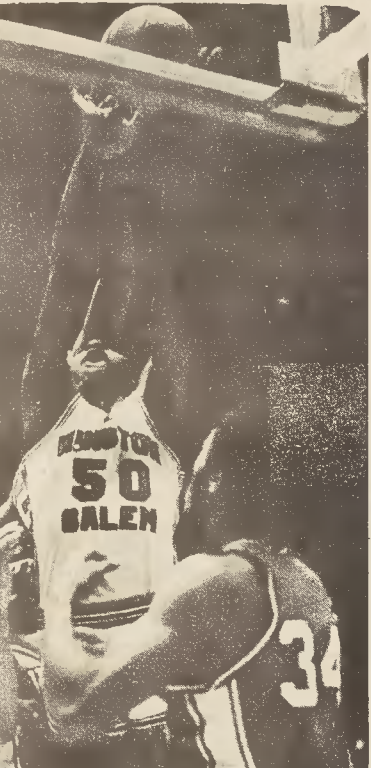


CHRONICLE SPORTS



Rams Tune Up For CIAA

By Robert Eller
Sports Editor

The WSSU Rams toyed with their final opponents before the CIAA tourney for the first 12 minutes Monday night, before seizing the tempo and routing Elon 89-67.

Coach Red Miller's Christians of the Carolinas Conference (10-15) scored the game's first basket in their attempt to avenge a 78-60 loss at home early in the season.

After the Rams built up a 22-16 lead, the Christians, hot off an 83-63 drubbing of Atlantic Christian on Saturday, knotted the game at the 8:06 mark on a jumper by Clarence Dickerson.

Then the Rams took charge much to the chagrin of Miller, an old rival of "Bighouse," would like nothing better than to beat the "Master."

Over the next four minutes they outscored Elon 12-2 by taking charge of the boards and quickening the tempo.

By the time Ray Jones took a shuttle pass from Reggie Gaines and scored a slam dunk that nearly awakened the sparse crowd from their restless sleep, WSSU was on top 34-24.

The second half saw the Rams pull away as Jones, the game's leading rebounder with 19, helped his team build a 47-27 advantage on the boards. Meanwhile Reggie Gaines continued to score with ease on passes from David Harold. Gaines finished with 30 points on a 14 for 19 shooting night, and added 8 rebounds. Mark Clark and Jones added 14 each, Clark's from downtown, and Jones' from the inside jungle. Harold meanwhile directed the attack at contributed 10 points.

Gaines (the coach) looked quietly confident after the win while alluding to his team's slow start. "We didn't make the decision to play until the last seven minutes of the first half. We didn't practice yesterday and didn't make the decision to play the game until about

1:00. The kids came to practice and found out they had a game. We let them set the tempo for awhile."

The Rams won their final CIAA contest before the tourney by besting Virginia Union 77-76, Saturday night, as Union's Lamont Echols missed the second half of a one-and-one with :03 left in the contest. The Rams trailed 30-29 at the half after leading by five at one point. The second half, like the first was a hip and tuck affair, and the Panthers seemed to have the upper hand when Ray Jones went to the bench with his fourth foul at the 7:53 mark.

But Torin McKenzie came in to score 8 points in the next five minutes and put the Rams up 70-61 with 3:03 remaining. David Lewis' tip in with 11 seconds left pulled Union within one. Harold hit the front end of a one-and-one putting WS up by two before Echols' second shot went out of bounds of a teammate rather than sending the game into overtime.

Mark Clark scored 30 points for the

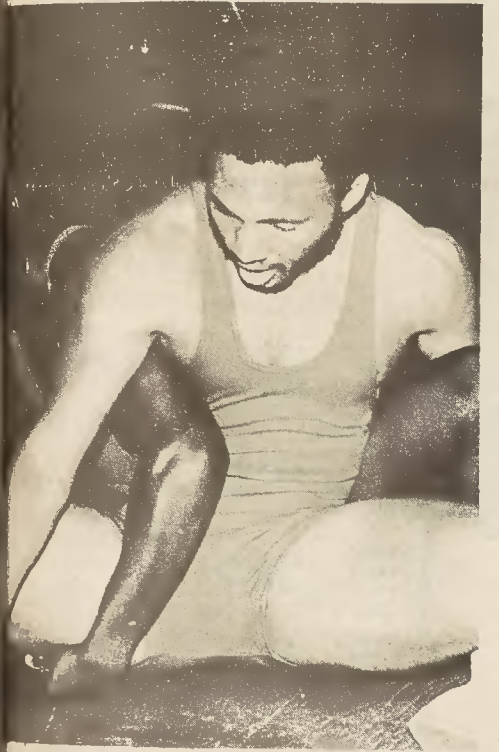
winners, most on long jump shots over the Panthers' zone defense. Harold added 15, Gaines 14 and Mike Robinson 8 points and a game high 14 rebounds.

The Rams will take a 12-4 CIAA mark and a 17-6 overall record into their first round tournament game against Virginia State at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 22.

Bighouse calls his team's chances in the event, "as good as any", as he goes after his ninth tournament championship. WSSU was eliminated by Norfolk State, the eventual winner, in the semi finals last season and would like to be winners of the reginally televised championship game Saturday.

CIAA or MEAC--
The Chronicle Has It

Torin McKenzie goes to the hoop despite the presence of an extra hand behind him and Mark Clark pumps for two points of his game high scoring total as the Rams edged Va. Union last Saturday at the Coliseum.



Curtis Gore

Gore Wrestles To CIAA Victory

WSSU's Curtis Gore won the CIAA 190-pound wrestling title by easily defeating Elizabeth City's Mark Higgins 8-2. But Gore's heroics were not enough as favorite Norfolk State took victories in three weight classes and grabbed runnerup honors in three others as the Spartans edged Elizabeth City 7 1/2 to 6 3/4 in winning the CIAA wrestling tournament.

The young Rams entered the conference tourney defeated in the CIAA and sporting an impressive 10-3 overall record. Coach Mike Edwards, in only his second year, had termed the season as a rebuilding year but had hopes after the great regular season showing. "I'm pleased with the team even though we didn't do as well as I had hoped in the tourney. We have a very young team and are looking forward to next year."

Ricky Hargrove placed second in the 134-pound class, losing to Norfolk's James Martin 12-5, and the Rams' Addeus Wilkins took third in the 167-pound class.

The Rams placed fourth in the event behind defending champion Livingstone. The Rams totaled 46 1/2 points while the Bears totaled 58.

Hampton's Ron Brown, wrestling at home in Hampton, was named the most outstanding wrestler, losing Mike Davis of Elizabeth City in the 150-pound class. His team however, finished last with 32 points.

Norfolk State's Earl Powell took coach of the year honors.

Black on Sports

Robert Eller
Sports Editor

Congratulations to Johnson C. Smith basketball coach Robert Moore on being tabbed as the CIAA sportswriters association's Coach of the Year. This writer wholeheartedly agrees with the selection of Moore. He has done a masterful job at the Smith helm this season. With three freshman starters, and only one experienced starter from last season's team, he has built a highly explosive club that has proved it can beat the best on any given night.

This season the young Bulls upset Hampton (94-88), WSSU (103-97) and Fayetteville State (101-95) in consecutive contests. Starting with the Hampton game Smith won five of their next seven, the last of which was a 113-100 clubbing of Fayetteville. In those seven games they scored over 100 points five times.

The biggest of those wins was an 85-83 victory over Virginia Union, the school Moore left after last season. The win on VUU's homecourt was sweet revenge for Moore who left over differences with the administration.

Moore brought great success to Union but was knocked because of his strict discipline and his failure to win the tourney. His replacement, Dave Robbins, leads the CIAA in technical fouls and fines but has failed to improve on Moore's record despite having virtually the same team.

The Panthers go into the tourney with a 10-6 league record and seeded third in the northern division last season. Moore's team is fourth in the southern division at 8-8. Still the feeling here is that Moore has a much better chance at bringing the CIAA crown back to Charlotte this season, and a clear cut advantage in years to come.

Don't know how many of you are stock car racing fans out there but for those of us who are fascinated by the speed and thrill of it, the live coverage of the Daytona 500 was just the thing to take our minds off the blizzard that was going on outside. By the end of the first 100 miles I found myself racing for my cooler to pull out a "cold one." But while CBS has a viewer lined up for the next year's 500, here's hoping they get their act together a little more before then.

The camera car idea was a good one and they picked a pretty good car to put it in. But for goodness sakes, they should be alert enough to keep up with the action. Ken Squier and David Hobbs came off like rank amateurs. They were caught completely by surprise when Cale Yarborough came charging to the front and had no idea how many laps he had lost after his first altercation with the Allison brothers.

They even had trouble figuring out why A.J. Foyt went back on the track without making a pit stop after seeing the caution flag come out while rolling down pit road. As for the blimp, well, just where was the blimp most of the time?

I only remember one shot from it and it wasn't a good one. Here's hoping CBS will continue to televise NASCAR events, since the NBA isn't what the old south

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