

Understanding The Intracacies Of Recruiting

On any given day between the months of March and July, it is common to pick up your newspaper, turn to the sports section, and read about this prep super-star who just signed a grant to attend a college.

To the average reader, it may appear so simple. A college offers the youngster a scholarship, the youngster accepts, and a smooth relationship between player-coach-institution begins.

Although, this scenario may take place in the majority of signings, it is the culmination of many sleepless nights on the part of player and coach. Sometimes a lot of frustrated feelings may occur.

Before you can understand the intricacies of recruiting, you must first understand that the recruit and his performance has a direct bearing on the livelihood of the coach and the coach's family.

When a coach signs a 17-year-old or an 18-year-old to a basketball grant, he is in part, turning over his career to that youngster. If the young man adapts quickly to the academic demands of college, the large number of fans in attendance, the media blitz as well as the social life involved on a university campus, the chances of that coach having a successful tenure increases.

If too many of the recruits fall victim to any of the forementioned areas, the coach's chances of a long tenure quickly diminish.

"Because many of the major colleges with their resources are now recruiting student athletes who used to come to schools like a North Carolina A&T or a Winston-Salem State because of tradition, we are now forced to really sharpen our eyes in searching for talent," said third year A&T head coach Don Corbett.

"The high school coach has probably the most influence on what college decision a young athlete will make. If the coach is familiar with your program, knows that you as a coach, will watch out for the youngster's welfare on as well as off the playing floor, your chances of signing a youngster increase.

"Parents also play a major role in recruiting. In this particular area, so much emphasis is placed on the ACC with their extensive media coverage. It's important for parents to realize the limitations of their children and not encourage them to attend an institution where their skills cannot be utilized to the fullest and where, their academic progress remains questionable and their social development rarely blossoms."

Warren Reynolds, a former coach at N.C. A&T, now at Shaw, who signed Al Tyson, a former high school All-American, battle with several major colleges, feels that character and family background is important in recruiting.

"Talent is very important when recruiting a player but it is equally im-



"Bighouse" Gaines
Head Coach WSSU



Don Corbett
Head Coach A&T



Bob Moore
Head Coach JCSU

portant to recruit players with sound backgrounds," said Reynolds. "Mental attitude is also important because in those close games in the closing seconds, when there is no margin for error, you want to know that the young men you have on the floor can execute.

"It has always been my belief that good academics and good athletics go hand in hand. On my best teams, the academic performance was equal to the quality of play on the court."

This story would be incomplete if we didn't discuss the monetary factor.

Most schools in the CIAA and MEAC operate on small budgets. This eliminates the "camping in" on a player that can turn the fortunes of a program around.

Although, most coaches do get out to high school games in their immediate areas and others attend various camps and all-star sessions during the summer, many coaches rely on "tips" from alumni and friends on possible recruits.

Probably, the best two examples are Johnson C. Smith's Robert Moore and Winston-Salem State's Clarence "Bighouse" Gaines.

Remember, Earl "The Pearl" Monroe was probably the biggest gift surprise the Ram athletic program will ever receive.

Moore, on the other hand, has established a Houston, Texas connection which has landed him 6-4 Phil Flores, one of the top guard prospects

in the country this season.

"We do have a limited recruiting budget at Johnson C. Smith, so it is important that I establish contacts that I can rely on for information about players," Moore said. "It is important that these people understand basketball, your program, and the kind of individual that will fit into your system.

"We have been very fortunate at Johnson C. Smith to attract the right kind of individuals to our program."

Chronicle CIAA Pre-Season Poll

Northern Division

1. Virginia State
2. Elizabeth City
3. Virginia Union
4. Hampton Institute
5. Norfolk State
6. Bowie State
7. St. Paul's

Southern Division

1. Johnson C. Smith
2. St. Augustine's
3. Winston-Salem State
4. Shaw
5. North Carolina Central
6. Fayetteville State
7. Livingstone

Chronicle MEAC Pre-Season Poll

1. North Carolina A&T
2. Howard
3. Florida A&M
4. South Carolina State
5. Delaware State
6. Bethune-Cookman
7. Maryland, Eastern Shore

Pre-Season All-CIAA Team

Frontcourt: Al Tyson, 6-11, Shaw University
 Frontcourt: Larcell "Bleu" Oliver, 6-8, Johnson C. Smith
 Frontcourt: David Pope, 6-8, Norfolk State
 Backcourt: Phil Flores, 6-4, Johnson C. Smith
 Backcourt: Darryl Stitch, Virginia State

Pre-Season All-MEAC Team

Frontcourt: Joe Binion, 6-8, North Carolina A&T
 Frontcourt: James Ratliff, 6-9, Howard
 Frontcourt: Greg Wilson, 6-6, South Carolina State
 Backcourt: James Anderson, 6-3, North Carolina A&T
 Backcourt: Darryl Spence, 6-5, Florida A&M



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