

Chronicle Profile

Davis had the chance of a lifetime

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In inner-city New York, especially down on 153rd Street and Seventh Avenue, cement was too dangerous a turf to play tackle football. Instead, you played basketball -- the man's game. It was how you proved your manhood.

Basketball, the dreamer's game, where in your imaginary world the *ahhhhhh*, a sound effect you made by expelling air from your lungs, was the audience that cheered as you scored a 20-footer from downtown, much to the displeasure of a Lakers guard.

That's how the Wake Forest Basketball Hall of Famer, Charlie Davis, describes the "dreamer's game" he and other New York youngsters played. He played at Wake from 1968 to 1971. For Davis, the dream turned into reality when he played guard for two and a half years with the Cleveland Cavaliers and the Portland Trail Blazers.

"They fired me," says Davis. "The bottom line is I just wasn't playing well enough. Pro ball is a business and they pay you well for performing well. "I always think about how I had the opportunity to live the dream," he says. "I dreamed about playing Oscar, Wilt and Kareem. I played 'em and I smoked 'em, too."

Davis, who was inducted into Wake's Hall of Fame in February, is the first black in the school's 150-year history to be endowed with the honor. Today, he is a personal banker at the East Winston Branch Wachovia Bank and Trust Co., N.A., and a

family man.

Norwood Todman, the spoiler of Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's high school basketball records and the first black ('66-70) to play on Wake's basketball team, lived across the street from Davis. When Todman got a glimpse of him on the court, he let Wake in on the secret. And it was the assistant coach, Billy Packer, also a former Wake basketball standout and now a sports commentator, who followed up on Todman's tip and offered Davis a chance to play at the school. It was Todman, Davis, Charlie Scott and Gil McGregor who were the integrators of the university's formerly all-white basketball team.

Those dreams that materialized into reality for Davis are only memories now, and the slightly graying 34-year-old has at least two reminders that pain him the most -- a bad knee and a bad foot.

"I started playing basketball on cement, dirt and hardwood floors at nine," he says. "Now it's taking its toll on my knee."

"My rookie year with Cleveland, we played the Detroit Pistons," Davis says. "Bob Lanier's 22 stepped on my foot and I was out for six weeks. Talking about a man falling down in front of 5,000 people and crying. Yeah, I cried."

For the past 16 months, Davis has resided in Winston. After leaving Portland, he lived in Roanoke, Va., and later New Jersey as a sales representative for R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., then Keds and then Equitable Life Insurance Co. He majored in English and minored in speech at Wake.



Unlike many of his inner-city playmates, Wake Forest University Hall of Famer Charlie Davis had the opportunity to live a dream (photo by James Parker).

"Banking is just an extension of everything else I've done," he says. "Everybody else thinks I'm just a basketball player. Only two and a half years of my adult life have been basketball."

It's seldom that Davis says he even attempts a game of Horse or Twenty-one. The aches and pains grow more intense with age, he says.

Although Davis says he would like to have re-

mained in the pros for at least 14 years and retired in glory, he isn't bitter he says, because he did get the opportunity to play in front of a "real audience." His focus now is his banking career, his wife, Linda, and his daughters, Sharrika and Sydney, whom he says he would rather bring up in the South.

"Hopefully, I can find the same level of success in business as I found in sports," says Davis. "If I do, I'll do all right."

Tucker and Banks receive promotions

Mrs. Julia W. Taylor, president and chief executive officer of Mechanics and Farmers Bank, announced that Mrs. Julia V. Banks and Walter Tucker had received the top positions for the local branch.

Banks has been promoted to vice president-branch manager of Mechanics and Farmers Bank Winston-Salem branch and Tucker has been transferred to the local office as senior vice president-city executive.

Banks joined Mechanics and Farmers Bank in 1978 as new accounts clerk and head teller in the Raleigh office. Previously, she has served as assistant vice president-manager of the Rock Quarry Road Branch of Mechanics and Farmers Bank.

She is a native of Raleigh and has served in many capacities with the bank. She came to Mechanics and Farmers Bank with over 10 years banking experience from another North Carolina bank.

She has served on many boards including the American Institute of Banking and the Raleigh Wendell Branch of the NAACP. She is presently a member of the board of directors of the Wake



Walter S. Tucker



Julia V. Banks

County Chapter of the Institute of Banking and is a member of the Saint Matthews Baptist Church in Raleigh, where she co-chairs the board of trustees.

Tucker previously served as senior vice president-city executive in Charlotte. He is a graduate of Virginia State College and Stonier Graduate School of Banking at Rutgers University. Tucker has worked with Mechanics and Farmers Bank over 25 years, initially in Durham and transferring to Charlotte to assist in the Bank's opening of the Charlotte branch.

Tucker presently serves as a member of the board of directors of Mechanics and Farmers Bank, as a member of the board of trustees of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,

and is a member of the board of managers of Hunterville Hospital, member of the board of visitors of Johnson C. Smith University, member of the Housing Authority of the City of Charlotte and a member of the Mecklenburg County ABC Board. He is a member of the University Park Baptist Church.

He has served as chairman of the Redevelopment Commission of the City of Charlotte as well as chairman of the board of the Minority Economic Development Corporation. He served as a member of the board of directors of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce and as a member of the Mecklenburg County Health Commission.

Dixon awarded UNC-G scholarship

Doretha Dixon, daughter of Virginia B. Dixon of Free Street, has been awarded an Alumni Scholarship to attend the University of North Carolina at Greensboro this fall.

Valued at \$1,500 a year, the Alumni Scholarships are awarded annually on the bases of academic standing, intellectual promise, character, leadership ability and demonstrated ambition. The scholarships are renewable for up to three additional years of undergraduate study.

Dixon, a senior at Asheville High School, plans to major in communications and theatre or computer science at UNC-G.

Listed in "Who's Who Among American High School Students," Dixon is treasurer of the National Honor Society at her school, a member of the dance club and active in the



Doretha Dixon

Junior Classical League.

In addition, she was a semifinalist for a National Achievement Scholarship and she won first place in a Optimist speech contest. She also is a member of the youth choir at her church and a junior member of the YWCA board of directors.

The Alumni Awards Program at UNC-G is funded by contributions from alumni and friends through the University Annual Giving Program. During the 1984-85 year, approximately 17 students will hold Alumni Scholarships at UNC-G.