



Appalachian State's Ronnie Christian, the former Parkland standout, posts up on Wake Forest's Mark Cilne (photo by James Parker).

College Basketball

Christian more than just stylish

By DAVID BULLA
Chronicle Sports Editor

The wristband worn down the left arm near the elbow, the No. 23 on the jersey and the knees pointed in on free throws tell you that Ronnie Christian is among the legions of Michael Jordan worshippers.

In the face, however, Christian resembles Winston-Salem State senior Kevin Harvey, a front-line player who has made rather modest contributions to the Ram program.

Draw a line halfway between the pro superstar and the college role player and you get a rough sketch of Christian, who is becoming a very important part of the Appalachian State basketball program in only his second season at the Boone school. He played sparingly in 25 games as a freshman, averaging 1.4 points and 0.9 rebounds per game. But his playing time is up to 30 minutes a game as a starting wing for the struggling Mountaineers under first-year Coach Tom Apke.

"Getting this much playing time has helped my confidence," the soft-spoken, articulate Christian said after the Mountaineers suffered a 62-37 loss to Wake Forest at Memorial Coliseum last Wednesday night. "Coach Apke told me before the season started he thought I could help motivate the team. I don't think of it as a role. I just let my own self-motivation be an example if anybody needs to look to somebody."

After his freshman season, it looked as if Christian might be just another in-between-sized guard-forward who had been too much of an inside player in high school. Players with such profiles often fizzle in college, but the 6-foot-5, 195-pound Christian kept the faith because he occasionally went outside during his all-star career at Parkland and because he's always been something of a sharpshooter.

"Coach (Tom) Muse gave me the opportunity to go outside and shoot the ball," Christian said. "So I was prepared for the transition to college ball."

Although the Mountaineers didn't exactly light up the Coliseum last week, Christian showed flashes of offensive brilliance in totaling nine points, mostly from the outside. He made a 17-footer and a three-pointer back-to-back with about five minutes to play. Such baskets shoot down the notion that Christian's main strength is

his playground moves.

That Christian has stayed ahead of the game is almost remarkable considering that he has had to learn three different offenses in three seasons. Moreover, he has gone from being a dominant force at Parkland, where he averaged 19 points and seven rebounds as a senior, to a role player.

As a result, there are not quite as many opportunities to post up inside and take a player one-on-one.

"The way we play our offense, everyone has the opportunity to go through and post up," Christian said. "I can take advantage of my quickness

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-- Ronnie Christian



sometimes and beat my man to the basket."

Although he does not have the height, Christian does have the sheer strength to get involved on the inside. Indeed, he looks like a potential tight end for the ASU football team.

"I played football through my junior year at Parkland," the business administration major said. "I decided it would really be best for me to concentrate on one sport and I went with my heart. I don't ever doubt my decision."

Nor is there reason to. Christian raked in the honors after his outstanding senior season, making all-Northwest and being named conference and county Player of the Year.

The Appalachian sophomore now is in position to be an all-star in the Southern Conference. Yet, the Mountaineers' transition year may make that a season away. He's averaging eight points, two assists and two rebounds.

Last week's game gave Christian an opportunity to put matters in perspective. It's a long way from Please see page B10

Ram Report

WSSU gets road wins over Hampton, ECSU

By DAVID BULLA
Chronicle Sports Editor

Winston-Salem State continued its polished play with a pair of convincing road wins against CIAA Northern Division teams last week.

The Rams improved their record to 7-4 with a 78-69 win at Hampton University last Friday night and a 79-67 victory at Elizabeth City State the following night.

Alexander Hooper, WSSU's senior wing, was the leading scorer in both games, with 25 points in each.

Hooper has averaged 27.1 points and led the team in scoring

in the seven victories. By contrast, he has averaged only 14.8 points in the four losses, and in only one of them was he the leading scorer.

The wins were the first on the road this season for WSSU.

"Maybe we should stay on the road the way we've played the last few nights," Coach C.E. "Bighouse" Gaines said after the win over Elizabeth City State.

"We've had a rough time here at Elizabeth City. This was one of the easiest times we have had here that I can remember and we'll take it like this any time we can get it."

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Sports Update

Howard's McIlwaine making most of a season on sidelines

By DAVID BULLA
Chronicle Sports Editor

GREENSBORO - The only action Robert McIlwaine saw in last Saturday night's Howard-North Carolina A&T game was stopping a fight after the Aggies posted an 84-68 win at Corbett Sports Center.

The former Parkland High standout, a senior at Howard, was confined to the bench during the game, as he has been throughout the first two months of the season. Because of heart palpitations discovered in a pre-season physical, McIlwaine is a medical redshirt this season and will be back as a player when practice starts for the '87-88 season in October.

McIlwaine, an all-conference selection each of the last two seasons, had actually anticipated sitting out this season before the heart problem was discovered.

"I had fluid drained from my knee three times last season," the Howard center said last week. "I was considering letting it rest a season to see if I could take the pressure off it."

"I also thought if I didn't play maybe I could put myself in position to try out for the 1988 Olympic team."

The 6-foot-8 McIlwaine doesn't have the flashiest stats in the world. He averaged 8.3 points and 6.8 rebounds while shooting 60 percent from the floor last season.

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Sports Beat

Bogues turning in MVP-type season

By DAVID BULLA
Chronicle Sports Editor

FOUR YEARS AGO, it would have been heretical to suggest that a 5-foot-3 man would ever be Atlantic Coast Conference Player of the Year.

But back then nobody ever thought the Soviet Union would consider withdrawing from Afghanistan or that Ronald Reagan's leadership abilities would be openly examined.

In the world of college basketball, people still weren't sure if Tyrone Bogues belonged in the ACC. As a freshman at Wake Forest, Bogues had almost as many fouls and turnovers (83) as points and assists (90).

Yet, this may well be the year of the Little-Big Man in ACC basketball, for the Wake Forest point guard is turning in the kind of season even superhuman folks dream about. No longer is he just the ayatollah of assist and sultan of steal. The Deacon senior is averaging 15 points to go with his nine assists and three steals. Moreover, he's shooting 55 percent from the floor and 91 percent from the line. He leads the ACC in assists, steals and free-throw percentage.

Bogues has put together outstanding, all-around games before his senior season. The most memorable, perhaps, was a 20-point, 10-assist and four-rebound effort against Anthony "Spud" Webb and North Carolina State in 1985.

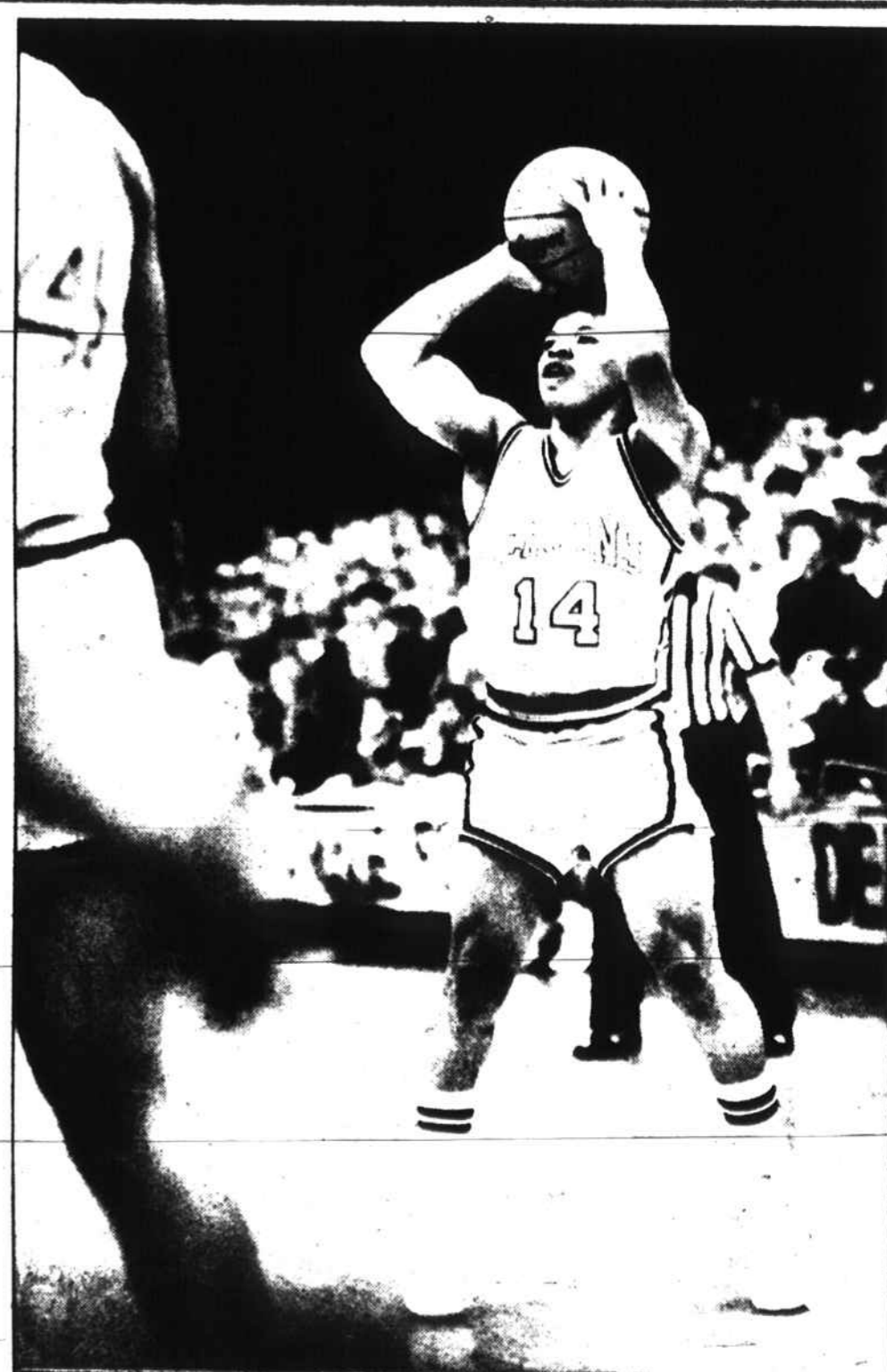


Using a complicated statistical formula that measures the overall quality of performance, Bogues is having a superb season -- what amounts to a .400 year in baseball.

Fine Point

BUT THERE is a difference this season. He is turning in solid all-around performances consistently, primarily because he is shouldering more of the scoring burden. He's averaging four more points a game than last season, his best scoring season as a collegian, and 22 percent of WFU's points, up from 19 percent from last season.

In last summer's World Championships in Spain, opposing teams dared him to shoot. Bogues wasn't all that successful, but something happened when he came back to the States. He played in the Urban Coalition League in Washington, D.C., and set the fast-paced league on fire with 37 points a game for the champion



Tyrone Bogues is a veritable Renaissance man on the court, scoring, passing and stealing in big numbers (photo by James Parker).

T&M Eakers of Baltimore

"It's more one-on-one than college ball and that's something you love," Bogues said after last week's win over Appalachian State. "That team needed some scoring. This team needs that, too, and I'll do whatever it takes to help the team be successful."

Pontiff Of Point

THE DEACON basketball program is on the upswing. Thanks to the pontiff of the point and the contributions of talented freshmen like Sam Ivy and Tony Black, Wake was 8-4

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