

## Sports

## Going for the gold

Twin City's Derrick Speas is being touted as 1992 Olympic material at age 14

By RANDY PETTITT  
Chronicle Sports Editor

ATLANTA — Derrick Speas has learned that gold is hard to come by — especially at track meets. But at the Atlanta Invitational Youth Games track and field meet last weekend, the 14 year old came away with quite a chunk of the precious commodity.

Speas, who runs for the Twin City Relays Track Club, captured gold medals in the junior boys 100 and 200-meter dashes at the Atlanta meet. Competing against 35 other athletes in both events, he was virtually untouchable.

Winning is not a new thing to Speas though. As a 12 year old with the Winston-Salem Roadrunners, Speas was undefeated, but went almost unnoticed because his age group did not have national competition.

Now his times of 11.25 seconds in the 100 and 23.5 in the 200 at the Atlanta meet already have some touting him as possible Olympic material for the 1992 games.

Coach Lemuel Johnson of the Twin City Relays is one of the believers.

"We sort of look to him as our 'Juice' number two," said Johnson, comparing Speas to teammate and intermediate

boys standout, Julius Reese.

"Derrick is running times very similar to what Julius was running at that age level. I really think if he continues to improve, that he is a prospect for the 1992 Olympics."

Speas, who is not as big as Reese in stature, has some of the same lofty goals as his Mount Tabor counterpart. He dreams of perhaps the Olympics or suiting up in a Division I basketball uniform.

But, although he loves basketball, Speas admits that track is his thing.

"Right now, track is what I do best," said Speas, who attends Paisley Middle School.

"I sort of have this dream of playing basketball for Carolina, but I guess when it comes time to trim down to one sport, track would probably win.

"I just enjoy running track, and having guys like Julius Reese to practice with doesn't hurt matters," he said.

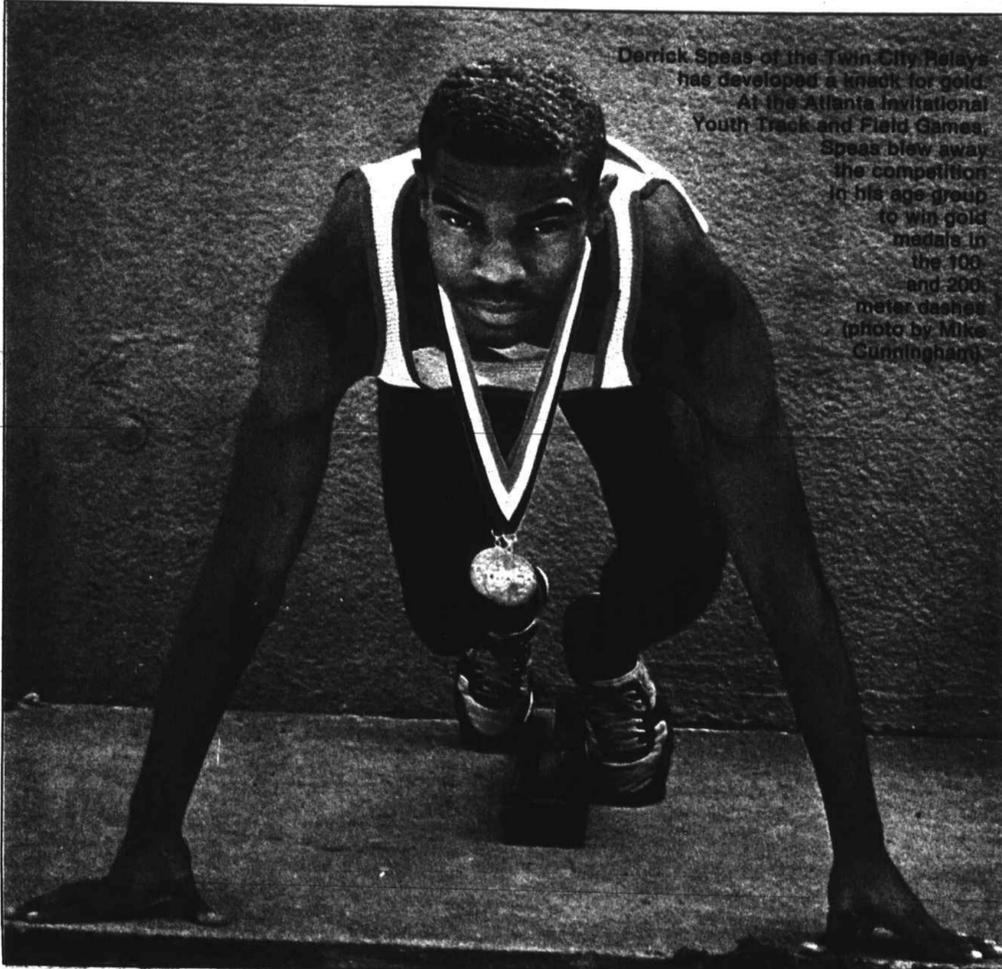
"Julius and I get along fine. We try to help each other out. He has been a big help for me.

"I told Julius when he was a senior in high school that I was going to beat him in either the 100 or 200," Speas insisted.

"He just sort of smiled."

Johnson says the two compliment each other.

"They compare notes you



Derrick Speas of the Twin City Relays has developed a knack for gold. At the Atlanta Invitational Youth Track and Field Games, Speas blew away the competition in his age group to win gold medals in the 100- and 200-meter dashes (photo by Mike Cunningham).

might say," Johnson said.

"I'm just glad they're not the same age," he laughed.

"Derrick is a good kid. He isn't jealous of Julius at all, he just wants to do as well or better. He wants to make a name for Derrick Speas."

If he continues to run the way he did in Atlanta, Derrick Speas may indeed become a household word much the way Julius Reese has made a name for himself in the track community.

According to Johnson, Speas will continue to compete in the sprints for now. But the Relays' coach hopes to eventually have a relay team in the youth division so Speas can begin to master the 400.

"Derrick is sort of like Julius was at first about the 400," Johnson explained. "He wants to just run the sprints, but I think he'll realize the importance of building up your endurance with the 400 eventually.

"It took Julius a little while to come around and begin to really work on the relays and 400. Just look what it did for his 200 times though."

Johnson is quick to point out though, that Speas and Reese are two different animals in some areas.

"Julius runs with acceleration. He's just getting to full

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## Free-throws kill W-S in NBA Pro-Am

By RANDY PETTITT  
Chronicle Sports Editor

CHARLOTTE — There are the occasional downfall of even the best of teams — free-throws.

Hit them, and you're the hero, walking away with victory by the slimmest of margins in a long, hard fought battle.

Miss them, and it can be a long ride home, thinking over what might have been.

For the Winston-Salem Chronicle All-Stars, free-throws were public enemy number one last weekend, leading to a pair of tough losses in the NBA Pro-Am of Charlotte.

Walter Funderburk, the head coach of the Chronicle team said it was the classic example of missing free-throws down the stretch that cost his team at shot coming away with a win.

"On Saturday, they made their free-throws and we didn't," said Funderburk of a 123-111 loss to the Columbia Jazz.

"Basically, we made our run and came up short. We cut the lead to three a couple of times, but missed one-and-one opportunities that could've sliced it to one," he said.

"A miss can get it rolling for the other team sometimes. Whenever we got ourselves into a position to take over the lead, we just couldn't nail down the free-throws when we needed them the most."

### Smooth Strickland

Paced by the smooth shooting of forward Terry Strickland, who finished with a game-high 33 points, the All-Stars seemed to have things going their way early in the Saturday game.

Winston-Salem forged a 27-23 first quarter lead over the Columbia South Carolina Jazz, which featured the NBA player Xavier McDaniel. After the fast-paced first quarter, the tempo slowed in favor of the Jazz, who managed to build a 52-47 lead at the half.

Pounding the offensive boards, the Jazz then took advantage of the All-Stars by reeling off nine unanswered points to lead by 15 late in the third quarter.

But the All-Stars got the fast break going early in the fourth period and began to slowly close the gap.

With seven minutes left in the game, the All-Star's Eddie Jordan connected on a thunderous dunk that pulled Winston to within one, 97-96.

The Columbia team stuck to their guns though, and connected on a pair of free-throws when Roger Mason was called for a foul.

Eddie Jordan, who came off the bench to spark the Chronicle team with 14 points, did most of his

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### Hands Up!

Everytime Terry Strickland got the ball in the NBA Pro-Am of Charlotte, he seemed to draw a crowd. But Strickland ducked his way through heavy traffic, and finished with a game-high 33 points to lead the Winston-Salem Chronicle All-Stars (photo by James Parker).

## Pond Giants: City's unfair

### Nelson Petree complains

By RANDY PETTITT  
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Nelson Petree, the President and General Manager of the Winston-Salem Pond Giants says that black semi-pro baseball teams are being discriminated against in the use of a city-owned facility.

In a press release earlier this week, Petree said that he is deeply concerned about the present policy and practices of the city and the management of Ernie Shore Stadium. He said he felt his team was being treated unfairly.

"We signed an agreement with the city and they're not sticking to it," Petree said.

"And some of the things we have to put up with is ridiculous. A couple of games, my boys had to take off their shoes and walk up the steps in the middle of the game to use the bathroom.

"As a taxpayer, I feel we should have equal access to a city owned facility like Ernie Shore Stadium."

Petree said one of his major concerns, is that the Pond Giants are not being treated fairly when it comes to booking playing dates at the facility.

He said his team is required to give 20 days notice before they can reschedule a game.

A city spokesman, who requested to remain anonymous, said Petree was given a fair deal.

"We've had to play referee between Petree and the Spirits," he said.

"The city cut a fair deal to Nelson and his team. I don't think anything we could've done would satisfy them completely. If you keep up with this sort of thing, you'd see the two just don't like each other."

Petree maintained that portions of the agreement with the city are unfair.

But Dennis Bastien, the owner of the Spirits professional baseball team which leases the Stadium from the city, says Petree's complaints are unjustified.

"First of all, for him to make a statement that this is a racial thing is totally ludicrous," said Bastien.

"The city of Winston-Salem and the Spirits have bent over backwards to get along with the Pond-Giants. I had a lease, and the city asked me to change it so they could accommodate Nelson. I changed it for them.

"Petree and alderman Patrick Hairston put pressure on the city to make me change my lease again. Why in the hell do I have a lease if they are going to keep asking me to change it?"

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