

Sports

Freshmen teams could offset middle school losses officials say

Forsyth coaches and athletic directors: Ninth-grade teams could be a compromise for losing interscholastic sports in the middle schools

By RANDY PETTITT
Chronicle Sports Editor

A lot of people were pretty happy when the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System adopted a four-year high school plan in 1984.

But four years later, some of those same people -- coaches, athletic directors and administrators -- have grave concerns that the lack of interscholastic sports in the middle schools has left a tremendous void in the county's high school athletic programs. With the passage of

four-year high schools, athletic programs were replaced with intramurals at the middle school level.

The void, they say, is beginning to show in junior varsity sports and in some cases, at the varsity level. Without interscholastic activity in the middle schools, many coaches feel declining athletic programs will simply get worse.

"It's getting harder and harder to convince young people that it's worthwhile to come to practice and work hard," said Don Puckett, the head coach of the boys junior varsity basketball team at Parkland High

School.

"For a typical ninth-grader coming in with no experience, they have to really fight just to make the

go to work and buy them a car and take it easy.

"Eventually, this is going to show up in our varsity programs.

"Hell will freeze over before we get sports back in the middle schools. This could be our only hope for a compromise."

-- A top administrator on the lack of middle school sports.

junior varsity team. Then, they may not get to play very much. A lot of kids feel it's much easier to

in some cases, it already has."

While there has been no great effort on the part of parents to

revive athletic programs at the middle school level, a compromise could be on the horizon. Though most strong supporters of athletics feel the best solution is to get interscholastic sports back in the middle schools, some think having freshmen teams in a limited number of sports could help.

Schools in the Greensboro City School System -- Dudley, Grimsley, Smith and Page -- already have freshmen basketball teams. According to one coach, the ninth grade teams are a key in having successful varsity programs.

"Everyone needs it," said David Bulla, who coaches the freshman boys basketball team at Dudley High School.

"But you have to find people who want to work hard and make the program work. It would be very beneficial for Forsyth County Schools to have ninth grade teams in basketball or any sport.

"Having the program does a lot of things for you," said Bulla, a former sportswriter with the *Chronicle*. "It gets kids used to playing organized basketball and it helps

Please see page B4

Rams halt FSU; await Saturday's clash with unbeaten N.C. Central

By RANDY PETTITT
Chronicle Sports Editor

Winston-Salem State went in for its 20,000 mile checkup this week and used a 96-80 Monday night win over Fayetteville State University as a tuneup for an upcoming long haul at home.

Though the Rams will enjoy their next six games before venturing outside of the Twin City, Coach Clarence "Bighouse" Gaines isn't too thrilled about meeting the next visitor on the list -- North Carolina Central.

The Broncos, who dropped to 3-10 with the loss, were more-or-less a stepping stone for the Rams, as they look ahead to Saturday's matchup with unbeaten Eagles in Memorial Coliseum.

The Eagles, 11-0 overall and unscathed in the CIAA at presstime, will bring with them the CIAA's top rated defense and a starting squad that's shooting over 53% -- tops in the league.

Gaines said, as always, the matchup with Central will weigh heavily on the outcome in the race to capture the Southern Division title.

"It will be a very important game for us," said Gaines. "But it's not an end of the world type thing. There are a lot of teams in the league who can sneak up on you."

The Rams will attest to that summation, as they played poorly in the stretch last weekend and bowed to Saint Augustine's in Raleigh.

"We're going to have to play some smart basketball to beat Central," said center Gary Cromartie. "They are always tough and right now, they have the momentum."

Gaines said the Rams must rebound well and take good shots to win. "They don't score a 100 points every night," said Gaines. "They just play good defense and have five very active players. They are keeping most teams from getting that second and third shot."

Central has looked almost invincible at times, but was bothered by FSU in a recent contest. Since pulling out a 57-56 thriller over Norfolk State, the Eagles have used that momentum to win six straight.

Against Fayetteville this week, WSSU took advantage of several early FSU miscues and breezed through the first half, owning a 47-35 lead at the break. They quickly stretched the margin to 57-39 in the opening three minutes of the second half before hitting the skids. A five-minute full that saw the Rams produce only four points, allowed FSU to climb back in it.

The Broncos managed to cut the deficit to 10 when Robert Stone threw down a transition dunk, but they never got any closer than nine the entire second half.

After the two teams traded baskets for the next two minutes, Kevin Reid and Matthew "Iceman" McMillan ignited the Rams' stagnant offense. Reid started an 11-2 onslaught with a dunk and McMillan finished it off with a pair of free throws and a one-armed smash of his own. The spurt appeased a packed house at the Gaines Center and provided the defending Southern Division Champs with a 75-56 lead that was never challenged.

Despite early foul trouble, WSSU center Gary Cromartie and forward Kevin Reid accounted for 11 rebounds each and held a pair of 6-10 centers, Robert Stone and Charles Isom, to just two rebounds each.

Charlie Spell led the scoring with 22 points, while Steve Hood had 19, Reid added 16 and Mike Lesane and Cromartie tossed in 15 and 11 points respectively.

WSSU Booster Club, City honor Hayes and Rams as CIAA champs

By RANDY PETTITT
Chronicle Sports Editor

It has been more than two months since Winston-Salem State defeated Hampton for the CIAA football championship, but the university is still savoring the victory.

Last Saturday night, the Winston-Salem State Booster Club sponsored a dinner at the newly renovated Anderson Center to officially congratulate Hayes and his championship squad.

Larry Womble, the alderman for the Southeast Ward in Winston-Salem, presented Hayes with a resolution signed by the Board of Aldermen and Mayor Wayne Corpening to officially congratulate WSSU's achievements on the football field.

"We, the city of Winston-Salem decided it was time to do something about it besides giving them a pat on the back," said Womble, who was supposed to be in Madison to organize the Jesse Jackson presidential campaign there. He said the occasion was important enough for him to cancel.

Womble said too many times WSSU has been ignored for their outstanding achievements.

"The mayor challenged me to take it upon myself to complete the task," he told the crowd of Booster Club members, coaches, players and friends of the university. "So, I did. It's time this city paid official respect to the university for its outstanding achievements. Too many times they say, 'Oh that little university on the hill.'"

"Look at the wonderful things Winston-Salem State has done with such limited resources. They go head to head with much larger and wealthier schools and win on a regular basis.

"Winston-Salem State has to take a backseat to no one."

Jerry Gilmore, III, the President of the WSSU Booster Club, presented Hayes and his coaching staff with a token of their appreciation. He said it was a conversation with Hayes that prompted the organization of the Club.

"He said he needed someone to talk to one day," said Gilmore at the ceremony. "And I was convenient. He told me how disgusted he was at the lack of support the school received. It really got to me and I decided to do something about it."

Please see page B3



Postin' Up

Val Crowell of North Forsyth fights off Sharon Doby of South Stokes. The Sauras avenged an earlier loss and got a layup from Robin Ragsdale in the final seconds to upset the Lady Vikes, 55-53. Crowell led North with 20 points, while teammate Angel White finished with 14. Anita Tuttle's 18 points led the Saura upset, while Leann Myers had 16 (photo by Randy Pettitt).



Andre McCallum of Durham Hillside's Jayvees sets a Hornet fast break in motion with a steal. Carver put the brakes on the 'Hornet Express' and took a 72-52 win at home (photo by Randy Pettitt).

Wake Hires Webster

Former Atkins, Parkland star will be a Deacon Asst.

By RANDY PETTITT
Chronicle Sports Editor

James Webster Jr. has done his share of traveling as a journeyman assistant college football coach over the years. The former Atkins and Parkland High School standout decided two years ago that only a special situation would bring him out of retirement from the sport he grew up with.

That special situation came about a few weeks ago when Webster was offered an assistant coaching job at Wake Forest University -- a chance for him to work for his former college coach, Bill Dooley. Without hesitation, he took the offer.

"Most people don't get a chance to go home again," said Webster, who, like his father James Webster Sr., is enshrined in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County High School Sports Hall of Fame.

"I gave up coaching a couple of years ago, but I knew if a special situation came along, I might get back in it," he said.

"The opportunity to move back to where I grew up and help Coach Dooley at the same time was too much to turn down. It is really a golden opportunity for me -- a chance to say thanks to all the people who had a part in making me a successful athlete and a successful individual."

Webster is the replacement for Defensive Coordinator and linebacker coach, Gary Darnell, who left Wake for a coaching position at the University of Florida. The Deacons have yet to hire a Defensive Coordinator or a replacement.

Please see page B5

Yellowjacket J.V.'s top Durham Hillside

Hargrove's 17 leads Carver to a 72-52 win

By RANDY PETTITT
Chronicle Sports Editor

If the junior varsity boys team is a true indication of things to come, then the basketball future at Carver High School looks very bright.

The Yellowjacket jayvees have one of the best teams in the city and further proved that point with an impressive 72-52 win over Durham Hillside last Thursday night. Carver had their hands full early on, but outscored the Hornets 19-12 to put the game away in the fourth quarter.

Coach Greg Starbuck said despite a long layoff, his team played well.

"We didn't shoot as well as we normally do," he said. "But we got a lot of easy baskets on our transition game."

Though Carver led by 15 points at halftime, the Hornets rallied to get back in the game behind 14 points from Yashima Radloff.

Hillside took advantage of two Yellowjacket miscues and converted both to trail 44-38 late in the third quarter.

The Jackets got a three-pointer from Danny Piggott and two layups from Junior Hargrove to reannoy the Hornet command with a 53-40 lead at the end of the third period. Carver outscored the Hornets 19-12 in the final quarter to hold them off and improve to 8-3.

Please see page B2