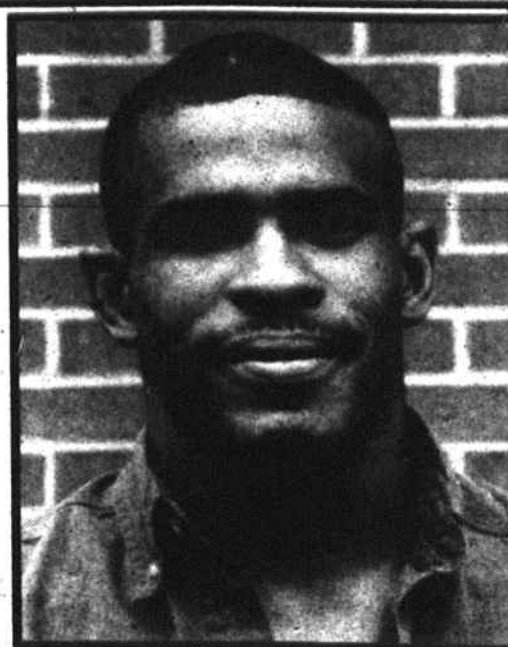


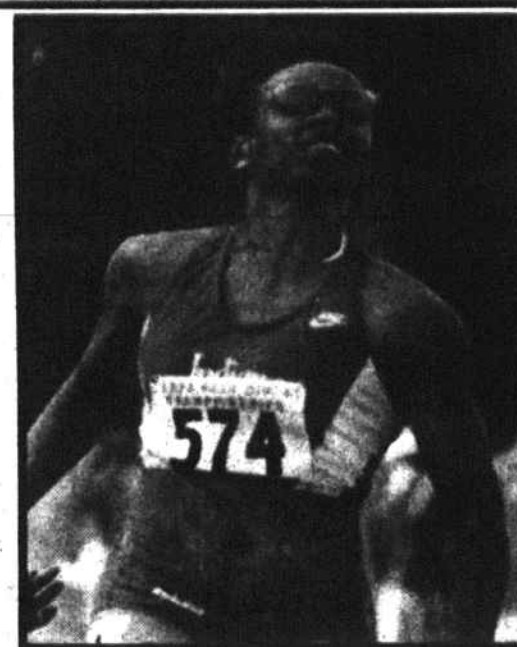
Dallas Cowboys all pro running back Emmitt Smith recently celebrated his 25th birthday in style to raise money for "I Have A Dream Foundation."
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Donnell Rawls, 125.5 pound wrestler, dreams of joining the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta.
below



Holli Hyche of Indiana State wins the women's 100 meters in 11.23 seconds at the NCAA Track and Field Championships.
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SPORTSWEEK

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Taking The Express

Local Talent Finds Victory Sweet in Jaunt to Hickory



The Carolina Express (front row, left to right): Mike Russell, Brett Devlin, Matt Anderson, Maurice Moten, Tim Bowman, Chris Paul, manager, (second row) Mark Stiver, manager; C.J. Paul, (third row) Assistant Coach Danny Anderson, Brent Coffey, Andy Helms, Aaron Caldwell, Mike Rice, Willie Byrne, Brandon Greene, Andy Poplin, head coach, Craig Poplin, assistant coach. Not pictured: Dovonte Edwards, Jeff Ogle and Travis Pritchard.

Coach Teaches Other Things Such As Life Lessons

By JEROME RICHARD
Special to the Chronicle

Forget the elaborate psycho-babble espoused by sport psychologists and coaches concerning teamwork. Save your money on high-priced guesses. Creating teamwork is simple. Just have sleepovers.

That's 11-year-old Mike Russell's theory. It must have some validity since the team he plays for, the Carolina Express, practices the concept and now is the reigning 11-and-under state AAU champions.

"We got to know each other better when we had more sleepovers," the Old Town Elementary School honor student

said. "Through the sleepovers, we got to know and trust one another. We got to know our teammates and realize we could count on each other."

The sleepovers are the brainchild of Coach Andy Poplin and are usually held at his house after practices or games. The family atmosphere certainly has been a key to the Express' success, but so has talent.

Two of the most talented Express players are Russell, a small forward, and C.J. Paul, a shooting guard. Both are from the Winston-Salem area. Each averaged 10 points per game during their first season with the Express, a Hickory-based team comprised of players from

five western counties. In fact, it was Paul's free throw that earned the Express the state title and a trip to the national AAU tournament in Cocoa Beach, Fla., August 6-13.

Paul's free throw with eleven seconds to play lifted the Express to a 44-43 victory over the Raleigh-area Garner Road Rockets in the state championship game several weeks ago. And his defensive play in the warning seconds sealed the victory.

"We were up by two points at the half and Andy told us that nobody can beat a team on a mission," said Paul, an honors graduate of Moore Elementary

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Parents of Trio Juggle Drive Time of Players to Hickory

By JEROME RICHARD
Special to the Chronicle

The Carolina Express stresses teamwork as a major tenet of its winning philosophy.

It took teamwork by the Express to win this year's 11-and-under state AAU basketball championship, but it also took and continues to take teamwork by parents to get the three Winston-Salem area players to practice and games in Hickory, the team's base of operations.

get the three players to practice.

"I missed the game (NBA playoff) last night," Charles Paul chuckled as he spoke about the logistics of getting three energetic 11-years-olds to practice and games in a city over an hour drive away. "It is fun because it is for the kids. I'm sure Dovonte's parents would do the same for us if the situation was reversed.

"It's amazing how everything has clicked," Paul continued. "We didn't know the Edwards, but



Dovonte Edwards



Charles Paul

"It's amazing how everything has clicked"
— Charles Paul

Express players Mike Russell and C.J. Paul live in the Winston area, but teammate Dovonte Edwards lives in Chapel Hill. Edwards' parents, Darryl and Melissa Edwards, drive their son to either the Paul or Russell residence and then Charles or Robin Paul or Jo Ann or Tommy Russell drive the players to practice games in Hickory.

"It's like a relay," Jo Ann Russell said, noting that she drove the players to Hickory last Saturday for a pair of games. The evening before it was, Charles and Robin Paul's responsibility to

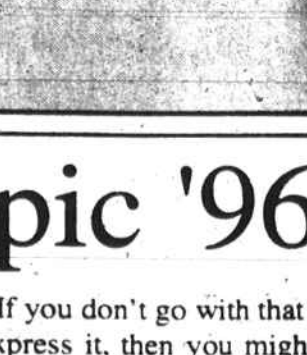
talked with them on the phone and they asked if we would do it. That's what it is all about—helping each other."

Though sometimes weary, Robin Paul sees benefits beyond basketball for her son.

"Playing for the Express is good experience for basketball, but it goes beyond that," she said. "Take the trips to D.C. for the Capital Games Shootout. The boys saw homeless people laying around and people getting their food out of the garbage can. Those things leave an impression. That's life experience."



Mike Russell



C.J. Paul

Donnell Rawls Takes One More Step Toward Olympic '96

By JEROME RICHARD
Special to the Chronicle

Some people dream of great accomplishments and do nothing to make them come true. Others see their hopes and dreams flourish and come to fruition. What separates dreamers from achievers? Olympic hopeful Donnell Rawls thinks fear of fortune separates the two.

Rawls is a dreamer, one that has seen his share of dreams come true because he is not afraid of failure.

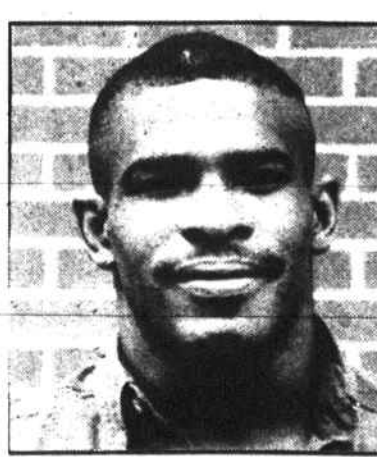
As a youngster growing up in Fayetteville, Rawls dreamed of becoming a champion wrestler. He achieved that goal in 1991

when he won the Division II national championship as a sophomore at Winston-Salem State University. When the Rams dropped wrestling, Rawls transferred to Appalachian State University where he became the Mountaineers first All-American wrestler. Rawls is now on the brink of fulfilling another wrestling achievement—Olympic Gold.

He took a major step in that direction June 3-4 in Philadelphia when he earned a spot on the U.S. National Wrestling Team. Rawls is one of three wrestlers in the 125.5 pound weight class to make the team. As part of the U.S. National Team, Rawls will wrestle at home and abroad over the course

of the next 12 months, having his skills for next June's tournament that will decide the 125.5-pound representative to the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta.

Win or lose, Rawls has taken a step most people never attempt.



Donnell Rawls

"A lot of people sit and dream about what they want to do in life and never take the step," he said. "Just taking that step was a victory. It doesn't matter what happens because I feel like I already won when I took the step to pursue the Olympics."

A fear of failure holds most people back from pursuing their dreams, says the 23-year-old Rawls.

"I think a lot of people are afraid to try things and fail," he said. "I'm not scared of failure. I don't think failure means you lost. I think it just gives you a chance to start over again with a new outlook."

"I think life is a gift for everybody and everybody possesses a certain talent that God

has given them. If you don't go with that talent and try to express it, then you might as well not be living.

"That keeps me going."

Rawls faces an on-going financial battle. He is not supported by a club or sponsor, thus having to finance his training, travel, equipment, and lodging at tournament through his own means. If you would like to contribute to the non-profit Donnell Rawls Olympic Fund, you may do so by contacting:

Kenneth B. Darty, Attorney at Law, 213 W. Sixth Street, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27101, 777-8081.

ENTERTAINMENT



ArtsReach's Cheryl Harry writes about listening to music under the great open sky.
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RELIGION

The Rev. Wendell Johnson will be the guest speaker for Men's Day at St. Stephen Baptist Church on Sunday.
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BUSINESS

The newest agent, Tannon Hardy, has joined the family business of Mundy Realty.
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