

HANG THE NET

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tion that included a dunk contest, a legends shoot out and the highlight of the day, the college hoopsters shoot out.

The Hang the Net College Shootout featured the premiere talents of Preseason All-American and University of South Carolina superman, B.J. McKie; the pride of Wake Forest University's vaunted backcourt, Jerry Braswell; Winston-Salem State's "Big Dog", Darryl Hardy; Eric Gerald, Benedict College; and the highly recruited Laquanda Barksdale, who has decided to don Carolina blue and become a Lady Tarheel.

McKie proved that his All-American status by besting Hardy, in second, and Gerald, who took third, with a barrage of 3-pointers that brought the capacity crowd to its feet.

The legends competition featured superstars of yore that proved they still had some touch from the perimeter. Former Harlem Globetrotter, Rob Little, showed that he had a deadly jumper in his

bags of Globetrotter tricks capturing the legends contest with style. Willie Griffin, former Wake Forest standout proved a worthy adversary, but couldn't quite catch Little and settled for second. Winston-Salem State head coach, Sam Hanger showed well and took third.

There was also two Hang the Net youth divisions and the kids from



B.J. McKie and Art Blevins

Hanes Hosiery took full advantage of home court advantage. Jermaine Pitts (Hanes Hosiery) won the 9-13 year old bracket out shooting Tony Lindsay (Belview Recreation Center) and Brian Crafford (Sedge Garden). In the 14-18 division it was again a Hanes Hosiery player, Mario Pitts, that took home the gold. Maurice Rogers (Hanes

Hosiery) beat out Garjay Stepney (Sprague Street Recreation Center) for the second place trophy.

The rim rocking finale featured the aerial showmanship of a dunk contest. The crowd was electrified by Brian Hauser and Gerald. Fresh off a second place finish in the college shootout, Gerald looked to lay claim to the dunk title crown, but he could not surpass the masterful above the rim performance put on by Brian Hauser who took first and knocked Gerald into another second place finish. Charles Kearns showed some real flare as well and took home the third place hardware.

The Hang the Net contest, brain child of Hanes Hosiery director Art Blevins, was a truly a basketball fans dream afternoon. The time and effort Blevins put into making it all possible was immense, but Blevins wanted to place the attention solely on the youth and the players, celebrity, college, and legends alike for their help.

"I just want this to be a great day for the kids," he said. "And we really appreciate all the players, coaches, celebrities and legends that made this day possible."

FOOTBALL

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ence championship before having to forfeit all of its games last season, will go into the pre-season with the No. 9 ranking in the 3-A poll. The Yellowjackets can boast on perhaps the finest group of running backs in the area and perhaps the state. Carver returns its top three ball-carriers (Michael Rucker, Tauric Rice and Ricardo Thomas) from last season and has added Tyree Kirby, who played at East Forsyth last season. Kirby, a junior, rushed for more than 1,600 yards last season after putting together a 1,000-yard season as a freshman.

Greensboro Dudley returns Marcus O'Neal, one of the best skilled players in the area. The Panthers, who qualified for the 4-A playoffs and will move to the 3-A level this year, will surround him with some talented players. O'Neal is coming off an outstanding spring in which he was one of the top sprinters and long jumpers in track.



Reynolds head football coach Alex Mebane test the run support of his defensive backs as the Demon Deacons prepare for the 1997 campaign with a football camp at Hanes Park

High Point Central is moving down also - from the 3-A level to 2-A and the Bison will have to replace 3-year starting quarterback Andre' Weathers. But in 6-2, 185-pound Rashad Stevenson they have a bonafide threat in the triple option. Stephenson played on the

Bison junior varsity last season where he set all kinds of records as a freshman fullback/tailback. Stephenson helped lead the Bison junior varsity to a conference championship and set a single-game record by rushing for five touchdowns in one game.

HORNETS

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point. Faye's team had a 15-point lead with less than four minutes remaining in the game in its first game in championship play. However, the Hornets came apart at the seams and lost the game to New Jersey by a 63-62 score. "The bottom fell out," Faye said. "We started celebrating too early. They started pressing and we made some turnovers and all of a sudden they were back in the game. They made their free throws and that was the difference."

That game was the one that really took the steam out of the Hornets, according to Faye.

"That took the wind out of our sails," Faye said. "After that, the kids weren't themselves any more. They weren't used to that happening to them. But we felt we still had a chance to finish fifth. We were looking for another game against Atlanta, one of our rivals. But we ran up against a good Richmond team. We didn't come out with any intensity and got beat. We felt like if we got on a winning streak it would take a good team to beat us. But we underestimated them. They ran a real structured offense and nailed some threes. Then with our best shooter (A.J. Steele) on the sidelines, we didn't have anyone who could match their outside shooting."

That loss eliminated the Hornets from the 16-and-under tournament.

In the 17-and-under tournament, the Hornets got a tough draw in the opener, squaring off with the San Antonio Spurs. The Spurs handed the Hornets a 20-point loss.

In the Hornets' next game they faced one of the most athletic team's in the tournament, from Jackson, Miss.

"We knew we had our backs against the wall and we came out fighting," Faye said.

The Hornets went up by six at the half and led by nine at the end of the fourth quarter.

But Jackson's top player broke out of a slump and scored 10 points to lead his team on a 10-0 run. The game went back and forth until its conclusion. In the end Jackson took a three-point victory after the Hornets failed to get off a last-second shot.

"Even though we lost, we played a good game," Faye said. "We contained their best player for three quarters and he finally broke loose on us. He really lit it up and that made it a ball game."

The loss put the Hornets in a position that they had never experienced.

"We've never lost three games in a row since we've been together," Faye said. "We didn't want to go out of pool play without winning one game. We talked to the kids and they responded."

The Hornets were paired against one of the tournament's top teams, the Louisiana gold medalist.

"We were playing for pride," Faye said. "We knew the team we were playing was as talented as any that we had played."

Andre' McCain, Josh Inman and Kassim Richardson all came off the bench to spark the Hornets to a 15-point victory.

"The kids played well in that game," Faye said. "They played the way they were capable of playing. Our bench came into the game and gave our starters a breather. The bench gave us a bigger lead than we had when the starters were in the game."

The win allowed the Hornets to improve to 1-2. However, the team didn't make it to championship play.

"That was a tough blow for us," Faye said. "A lot of our kids weren't used to playing in the consolation round and some of them said they didn't want to play."

Nevertheless, the Hornets decided to go into consolation play.

The Hornets put together an average outing and lost their first game, eliminating them from the tournament.

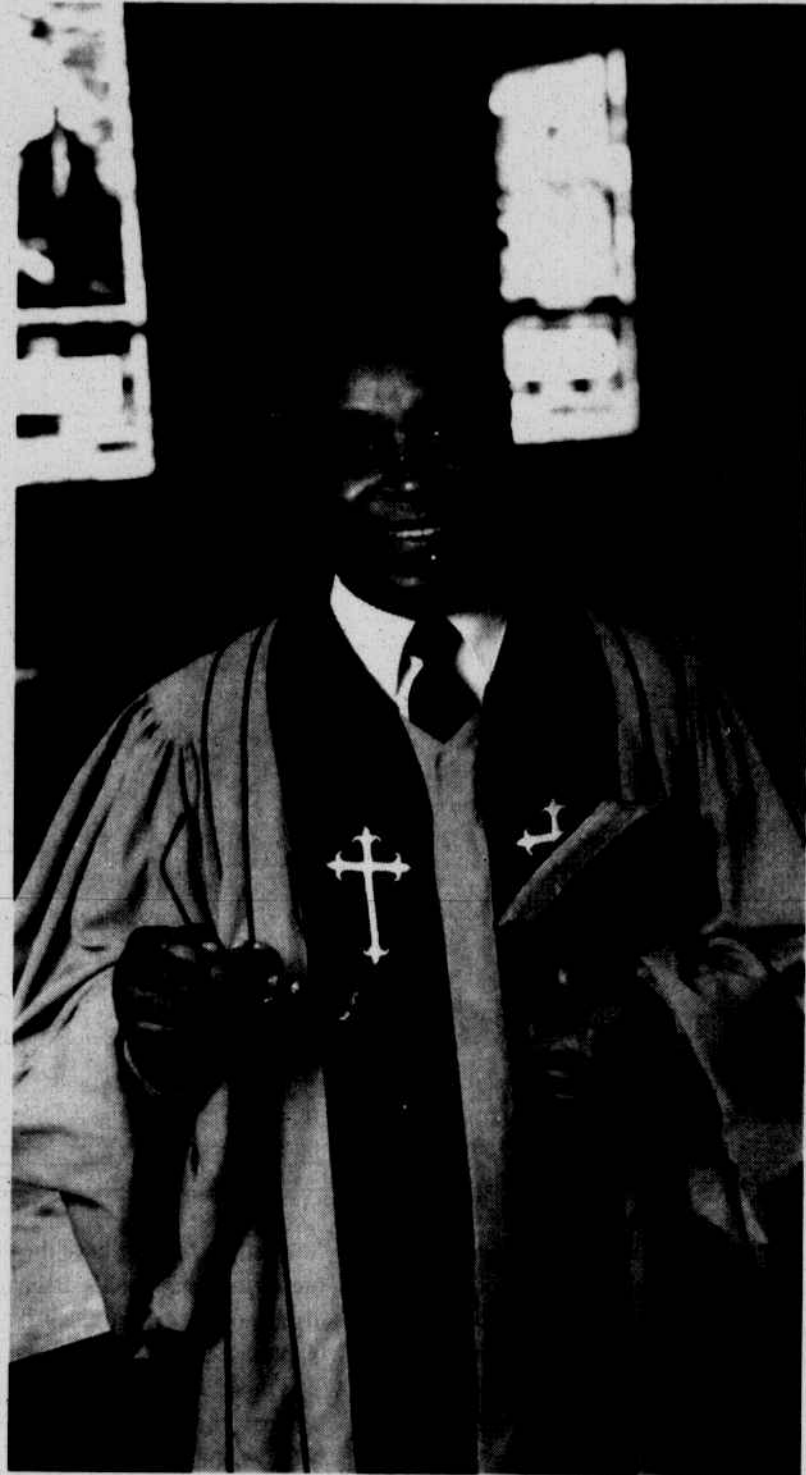
"It was a good game," Faye said. "We played a good team. But I thought we could have won it."

Looking back on his team's experience, Faye said it learned a lot.

"The play in the 16-and-under tournament was dominated by guards and in the 17-and-under it was dominated by the big men and the forwards. I really thought it would be the other way around. But in a way it helped us because we're going to prepare ourselves for play in the 17-and-under next year. We know what we have to face. But we won't be competing in two tournaments."

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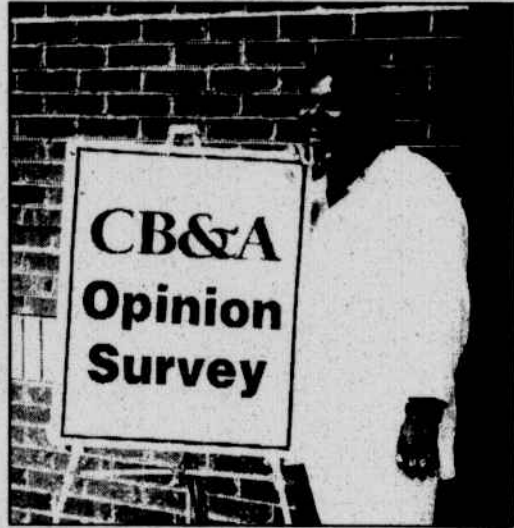
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