

Bobcats hitting stride as Lash/Chronicle Tourney begins

By Sam Davis
THE CHRONICLE Sports Editor

After being away from high school sports for nearly 20 years, Robert Fulton got an early baptism when he took on the head coaching position for Glenn's junior varsity team.

Fulton, who had served as a collegiate baseball coach for 13 years at Guilford College, saw his team drop its first three games of the season. But since then the team has rallied to post two wins and will bring a 2-3 record into the Lash/Chronicle Tournament.

"We're certainly happy to have a couple of wins going into the tournament," Fulton says. "We're in a tough bracket and the kids had about 10 days off since our last

The Bobcats will square off against a North Forsyth team that



Glenn Junior Varsity

Photo by Aurelia Hill

defeated them by 14 points in their first encounter. The winner of that

Forsyth winner.

"North Forsyth has a very

good team and Reynolds has to be one of the best teams in the city

The key for the Bobcats will be getting production from their

entire team, according to Fulton.

"We play a lot of kids," Fulton says. "We have 10 to 12 kids that play regularly. The team that plays good defense is going to do well in the tournament."

The Bobcats have two groups of players who play nearly an equal amount of time. The offensive leaders thus far have been Charles Sanders, Steve Nivens and Mike Davis.

Davis and Sanders average 15 points each per game each. Nivens isn't far back with a 12-point average. Davis provides a good inside-outside threat, Sanders is a slasher and Nivens is a consistent 3-point threat.

Rayvon Squires, Delyin Williams and Jeremy Wilkerson

That trio averages eight, seven and six rebounds per game, respective-

ly. David Coplin and A.J. Coplin are the team's floor leaders. Neither do much scoring, but lend stability to the team.

Fulton, who served as an assistant to Coach Olon Shuler at North Forsyth from 1974-78, hasn't seen a game in the Lash/Chronicle Tournament, but says he realizes that it is a big tournament for his team.

"I went over to the breakfast

and the sponsors do a real good job," he says. "I have talked with a couple of the coaches around the city and they take this tournament seriously," he says.

Making a strong showing in the tournament is also important because it marks the beginning of an important stretch of games for the Bobcats. Following their participation in the tournament the team begins its conference season on Jan. 6 against Carver.

Upstart Spartans rolling along after slow start

By Sam Davis
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Admittedly, Mount Tabor's junior varsity team got off to a slow start.

Much of it had to do with the fact that the school's football team participated in the State 4-A playoffs.

The lone two losses on the Spartans' slate have come at the hands of North Forsyth. The first came in the opener and the second in the team's most recent game before the Christmas holiday break.

In between were five consecutive victories. Coach Dennis Ring says his team's 5-2 record isn't bad, considering its youth.

"We don't have any players back from last year's team," Ring says. "We have four or five from the ninth grade team and that's really helped us. We have a lot of players that are learning the plays."

The key to the team's success thus far has been based on the leadership of four sophomores who played on the ninth grade team last year.

The quartet, Jon Land, Joel Justus, Sidney Minter and Derrick Webster, have set a good example for the team's younger players.

Either Land, Justus or Minter has led the team in scoring in each of its games thus far. All three come into the tournament with 15-point plus scoring averages.

Ring has mixed in a few newcomers to make the team strong. Anthony Scott, a 6-1 freshman, has stepped in and given the team a solid inside scorer. He has also provided a strong presence on the backboards with his rebounding.

Aaron Salley adds a dimension to the team



Mount Tabor Junior Varsity

that is often overlooked by outsiders, but not by Ring. He has the defensive skills to shut down the opponents' top scorers.

"Aaron is really the key out there," Ring said. "He doesn't score many points, but he's a key piece to the puzzle. He's not a zone-type player. But when the game becomes man-to-man, he's a factor even if he doesn't score one point. When he's in the game someone's going to have a tough time scoring points."

Last year, the Spartans lost to Carver in the semifinals and defeated West Forsyth to capture third place. The Spartans, who captured the Central Piedmont 4-A championship and posted a 20-3 overall mark, open up this year's tournament with a matchup against conference rival West Forsyth at 2:30 on Friday (Jan. 2).

The winner of that game will face the Carver-Parkland winner in the semifinal round.

REYNOLDS

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all of Reynolds' games have been decided by seven points or less.

"Every game that we've played in has been decided in the last five minutes," King says. "The key for us is we've made our free throws and we've been able to take good shots. Those games could have gone either way, but so far we've been the team that's come out on top."

The Demons have been led by Teddy Petree, a 6-3 freshman, Petree, the team's pivotman, is averaging 20 points per game.

"Teddy is just so much more stronger and physical than the kids he's playing against," King says. "He's a very mature player."

Derrele Mitchell is the team's second-leading scorer. Mitchell, a 6-2, freshman guard is averaging 10 points per game. He had his best outing of the season against Grimsley when he poured in 21 to lead the Demons.

"He's the one I thought would be a big-time scorer," King says. "He hadn't shot the ball well until we played Grimsley, but he has make up to be a big-time scorer. I hope he has confidence now and that will carry over."

"Hopefully he can step up and take some of the burden off Teddy," King adds. "We need him to score points for us. He's also a good rebounder because he has long arms."

Complimenting Petree on the inside are two players with similar ability. Michael Brinkley, a 6-1,

freshman and Trent McChesney, a 6-1 sophomore.

Both players came out late after helping the Reynolds varsity soccer team advance far into the state playoffs.

"Trent is probably the most steady player that I have," King says. "He doesn't do anything fantastic. But he can do a lot of things very well. He takes the ball out of bounds and guards the other team's best offensive player."

Brinkley is also a very cerebral player. The freshman post player is a straight A student.

"He's very unselfish," King says. "Started slow, but he's been coming on lately. He's not as much of a ball-handler as Trent, but he's very solid. He doesn't care whether he scores or not."

At the point, Kennard Plummer and Mike Russell share the responsibility of running the team. Plummer's biggest asset is his quickness.

"He has done a good job," King says. "He's left-handed and that gives him an advantage against most defenders. His responsibility is to get everyone in the right position and get the ball to the scorers."

Russell, on the other hand, is more of an offensive threat. The 5-9 freshman can also play on the wing where he gives the team a solid 3-point threat.

"Mike knows how to score," King says. "He has that mentality. With him coming in, it gives you two types of players at the point."

As a whole, the team has a strong bench. King isn't afraid to

go to it when needed. But the key to the team's chances in the tournament is scoring points.

"Right now we're only averaging about 58 points," King says. "In the past we've averaged about 75 points."

When he looks at the rest of the field, King says any of the eight teams entered could walk away with the championship.

"I think there are several teams that have a chance to win," he says. "Whoever you're playing against isn't going to be easy."

The Demons open the tournament with a battle against East

Forsyth. The Eagles picked up their first victory of the season when they defeated Carver in their last game (Dec. 19).

"I don't know much about East, but they beat Carver in their last game out," King says. "I'm sure that will give them confidence."



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TOURNAMENT

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round.

Glenn finds itself in a similar situation. The Bobcats have two wins on their slate after knocking off East Forsyth twice before the break. They also have a first-year coach in Robert Fulton, who will also be in his first Lash/Chronicle Tournament. The Bobcats play a number of people and that could play to their advantage in the tournament.

Parkland has had a tough slate thus far, but Coach Toney Barnes

thinks the Mustangs will rise to the occasion. Last year Barnes led the Mustangs' ninth-grade team to the championship. He has nearly the same group that he guided a year ago.

The ninth-grade bracket has undergone some changes since the pairings were announced. Parkland, the defending champion, will not participate in the tournament. As of press time, South Rowan had agreed to step in and play Greensboro Smith in the opening round. That leaves rivals Reynolds and Mount Tabor to battle in the other semifinal.