

SPORTSWEEK

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SECTION B

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Lady Eagles rely on talented foursome to stay on winning track



Smith High School women's track coach Earl Green.

By Damon Ford
The Chronicle Reporter

Runners, on your Mark ... Set ... GO!

And go is what the women's track team of Greensboro's Ben L. Smith High School have done this year. The team's current record is 4-2 in the Piedmont-Triad 3-A Conference.

Coach Earl Green, who has been at Smith for 10 years, is determined to keep the Eagles flying high with wins.

Some six years ago, he coached the team to the 1992 4-A Womens Indoor and Outdoor Championships. That team was pretty strong and had a lot of veteran leadership.

The 1998 squad is young but filled with talent and is optimistic about their chances of climbing to the top again.

The leaders of this year's team are a pair of juniors and sophomores.

Rosheta Webster and Amanda Hampton are both juniors, while Senta Sample and Tawana Rowland are sophomores.

Green refers to that quartet as the team's "horses" because they run various events.

"They definitely carry a team," said Green. "They are my leaders, they show the others that they can do it, even though they run several events."

Webster has a very diverse slate. She participates in the high jump, long jump, triple jump and 4x400. Hampton runs the 100, 200, 400 and 4x400. Sample works out in the 800, 1600, 4x400 and 4x800 while Rowland runs the 400, 800, 4x800, 4x400 and sometimes the 1600.

As of The Chronicle's deadline, the Lady Eagle's 4x400 team (1600 relay) comprised of Webster, Hampton, Sample and Rowland rank number seven in the state on the Track Honor Roll list.

Though the four girls are pretty even in their abilities, Green says that Rowland gets a slight edge over the others.

"Tawana is always at prac-

tice and always is willing to do more," Green said. "(She'll) do whatever I ask her to do."

Green describes Rowland as "respectable and loyal" to the program. He also believes that her continued hard work could make her one of the best female athletes in the county and the state by the time she is a senior.

Green first found out about Rowland from another Physical Education teacher during her ninth grade year. The teacher noticed that Rowland showed good endurance in distance running and felt that the track coach should know about this untapped talent.

See LADY EAGLES on B2



Sophomore Tawana Rowland (left) and junior Amanda Hampton (right) are two members of Smith's 4x400 team, which is ranked seventh in the state.

What is causing shortage of black baseball players?

Each year, as the annual rites of spring descend upon us, a key question comes up about local sports. And it is becoming increasingly difficult to answer.

Why aren't there more African-American students participating in high school baseball?

According to a recent article published in the *Winston-Salem Journal*, only 10% of the players in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County's high school ranks are of African-American descent.

That might be a cause for alarm for those who haven't been attuned to local high school sports. However, when you get right down to the heart of the matter, those numbers



may in fact be a bit inflated. A random sampling done at this week's Forsyth Invitational Baseball Tournament, played at East Forsyth, revealed that there are actually even less. If you take away the three African-Americans playing on Carver's team, there would be less than 5% percent playing.

To make matters worse, there was only one African-American coach (head, assistant or volunteer) in all of the team's dugouts combined.

For those interested in solving the local racial divide, that isn't a very good sign for diversity in Forsyth County.

And what does it say about the overall state of athletics in the local system?

Is this current situation systemic? Is it self-induced? Or are there external factors that prevent African-Americans from gaining access to the high school baseball diamonds?

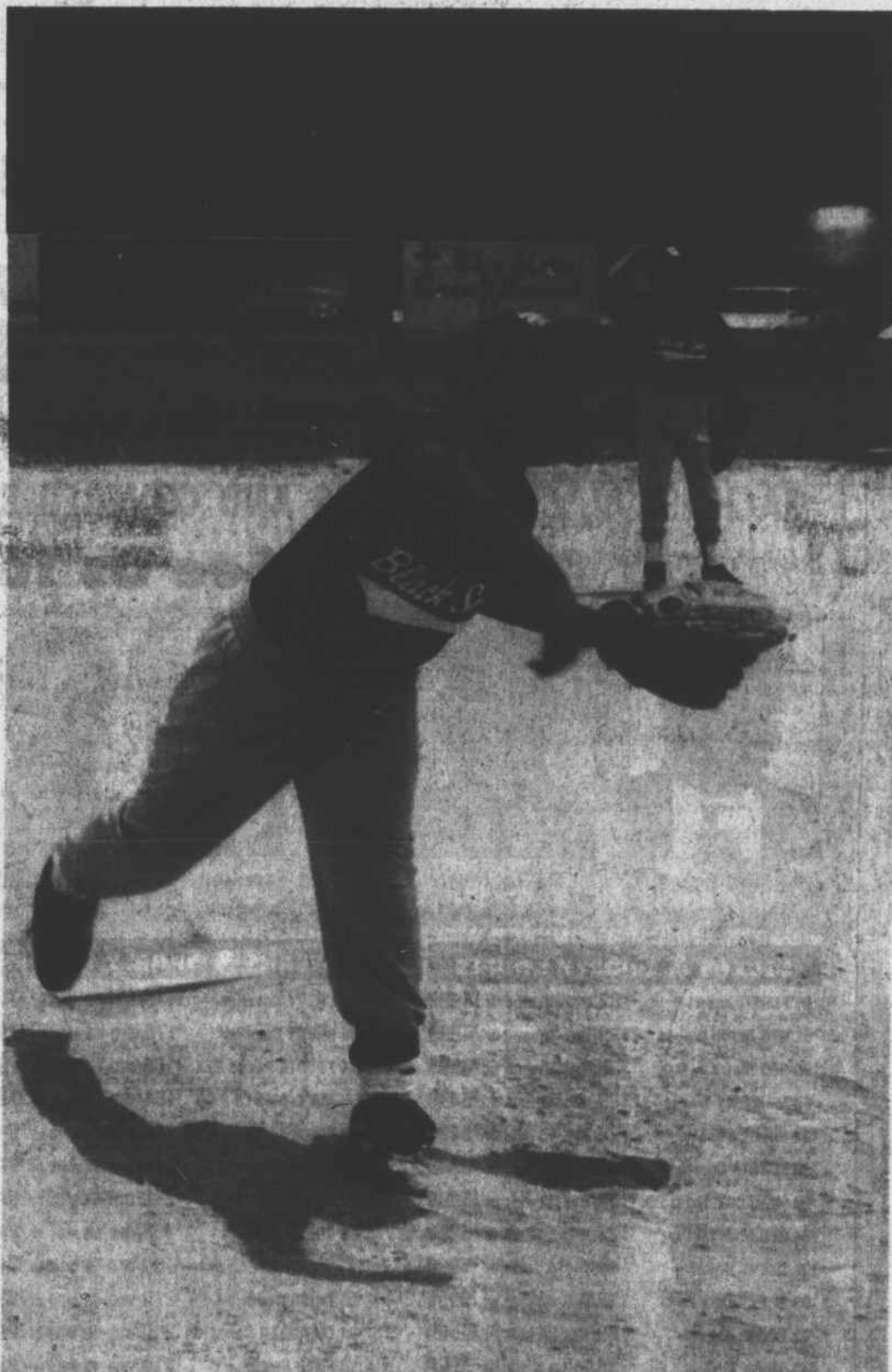
Some people might try to justify the numbers by saying that African-Americans aren't playing baseball in high school because they haven't had exposure to the sport. The same could be said for the lack of African-American coaches. But that is more fiction than fact.

One only needs to look at the local Little League programs to prove that line of thinking wrong. The success of the Twin City Little League blows the whole theory apart.

In recent years, the league has produced its share of top-flight athletes who have gone on to make their marks in high school. But few of them ever made it to the baseball diamond. Most are pushed off into other sports when they reach high school

See BASEBALL on B2

Twin City Little League prepares to begin 36th season



Jarmal "Big Daddy" Shell of the Minor League's Black Sox throws a pitch during last season's action.

Photos by Inas Sivad

PLAY BALL!

By Sam Davis
The Chronicle Sports Editor

Batter Up!
That sound coming from the umpire and the crack of aluminum bats will be heard frequently at Twin City Little League's facility on Waterworks Rd. on Saturday when the league begins its 36th baseball season.

Twin City, the only African-American, nationally sanctioned Little League Baseball program in the state, kicks off its season with Opening Night on Friday night at the Anderson Center.

All of the league's 37 teams will be recognized during opening celebration. It is also a chance for parents and supporters to get to meet the league's coaches and officials.

Representatives from the group, which is trying to bring Major League Baseball to the Triad, will also be on hand to talk to the public about the impact it can have on the Triad's economy and athletic scene.

Alfred "Mitch" Mitchell, president of the league, said he is pleased to have the group's representatives to come out and participate in the program.

"They have expressed a desire to help us in any way they can," Mitchell said. "Right now, they are looking at what we need and what we want to be able to help as many kids as possible."

During its many years, the league has produced a number of athletes who have gone on to high school, college and a few have advanced to the professional ranks. Now, Mitchell said an emphasis will be placed on preparing the athletes academically for the future.

Twin City has entered a partnership with the Housing Authority of the City of Winston-Salem (HAWS) and Wachovia Corp. to help some of the league's participants. For the past five years (HAWS) has paid the registration fees for players who live in public housing communities. This year Wachovia will pick up the tab. But there are several stipulations. The most important for the athletes is that they must attend an after school tutorial program to have their fees paid. In addition, their parents must attend several sessions with them to become familiar with the tutorial programs.

"That is a plus," Mitchell said. "We have to do something to keep them in school. Then, maybe we won't have so many of our former athletes walking the streets."

"We have so many that dropped out for one reason or another," Mitchell added. "You won't have so many superstars walking the streets. So many of our kids go to college and use up their eligibility playing sports and then they're back out on the street with nothing. A lot of that is because they weren't ready. Someone realized that they were just natural born athletes. That's how they got to college."

League action officially gets underway on Saturday morning at 9:30 a.m. with three games, two in Major League and one in the Minor League.

The Crawfords will take on the Barons in Minor League action. They Yankees will play the defending champion Indians and the Reds and Royals will tangle in

See TWIN CITY on B2

State Junior Boys AAU Basketball Tournament coming to Winston-Lake

By Sam Davis
The Chronicle Sports Editor

Looking for some family fun this weekend?

You might want to consider basketball, which is quickly becoming America's favorite past-time activity.

Winston Lake AAU will play host to the North Carolina AAU Junior Boys Basketball Tournament on April 17-19.

Many of the top high school rising seniors from the state will be participating in the tournament. Past AAU standouts include Rodney Rogers, Jerry Stackhouse, Jeff Capel and Antawn Jamison.

In addition to the host Win-

ston Lake Lakers, the tournament will feature several other local teams. They include the Carolina Hornets, Kappa Magic and North Carolina Select. These teams are comprised mostly of players from the Triad Area.

Kappa Magic captured last season's 16-and-under championship and most of the players from that team have moved up to the Junior Boys (17-and-under) team. The Carolina Hornets' team features several players who were on the program's 1996 15-and-under national championship. Winston Lake's 16-and-under boys



Keegan Haggins and the Winston Lake 16-and-under team will try to make their presence felt in this week's tournament.

See AAU on B3

Rams 1998 football schedule remains a mystery

•WSSU looking at three potential sites for "home" game with Grambling State

By Sam Davis
The Chronicle Sports Editor

While the excitement continues to build toward Winston-Salem State's 1998 football season, the team's schedule still remains a mystery.

The team, coming off a 6-4 record last season, recently completed a successful spring session with its Red-White game on April 4. Coach Kermit Blount and his squad, which won four consecutive

games to close out last season, are expecting bigger and better things this season. But just whom they will face and where remains a secret - at least for now.

Anne Little, WSSU's athletic director, said she is still waiting to confirm one opponent and the site for a game against another opponent. Once an agreement is reached to play the first opponent she will release an official schedule.

"We've got a couple of games that we have to get confirmation on," she said. "I decided not to release a tentative schedule. Last season I noticed after releasing a tentative schedule early, a lot of



Anne Little

See RAMS on B3