

Rams

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That wasn't the case against the Eagles.

"Coming into the game, I thought we had to be a great rebounding team and make our open shots," Duckett said. "We were not able to do that. I have to give a lot of credit to them."

The Eagles, perennial conference contenders, showed their poise down the stretch. NCCU capitalized on key Ram mistakes and their defense never allowed WSSU to get into an up-tempo type game.

With Central switching defense, the Rams weren't able to get any continuity on offense.

Neither team shot the ball well in the first half. WSSU made 12 of 27 field goals and NCCU was nine of 28.

The Rams had several opportunities to put distance between themselves and the Eagles, but each time they misfired on open shots or made mistakes to allow NCCU to storm back.

Neither team could gain any headway in the early going and the margin never reached more

than two points until the Rams went on a 7-1 run to take a 15-10 lead at the 12:17 mark of the half. The Rams couldn't get their working margin to grow over the next few minutes, but NCCU had its problems putting the ball in the basket.

They did get opportunities from the free throw line. Although they made only four of eight, the Eagles were able to stop the Rams' momentum and stay within striking distance.

The Eagles got a big break when Duckett was hit with a technical foul. But they missed two free throws. They did, however, come back with points from Jimmy Boston down low to cut the Rams lead to 19-21 at the 3:34 mark. That was part of the Eagles' 7-4 run in the final minutes of the half. NCCU took a 24-23 lead on a 3-pointer with 51 seconds to play but Patterson's burst to the basket gave the Rams their halftime advantage. That lead was short-lived in the second half as the Eagles took control early and never relinquished it down the stretch.

Duckett said his team didn't

have the experience factor working on its behalf.

"Central showed that their ready for that style of play," Duckett said. "It was obvious that they were used to playing in big games and in big situations because they made plays. I think we're still a little new to this and we didn't respond."

Duckett, however, downplayed the significance of his team's lack of preparation time: After defeating Fayetteville State on Sunday, the Rams had only one day to prepare for their rematch with the Eagles.

"That's part of competition," he said. "It was an emotional win on Sunday and you have only one day to get ready, but you have to get it done if you want to compete. That's part of the learning process."

The Rams will face Columbia Union tonight (Feb. 18) before entering CIAA Tournament competition next Wednesday. The Rams will go into the tournament as the No. 2 seed from the Western Division and face the No. 6 team from the Eastern Division.

Lady Rams

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She also led the Eagles in rebounding with nine, in 32 minutes of play.

WSSU was able to hold its own on the backboards, finishing tied with 40 rebounds. However, they couldn't make the key plays down the stretch to take a victory in their home finale.

Erica Leggett scored 17 points

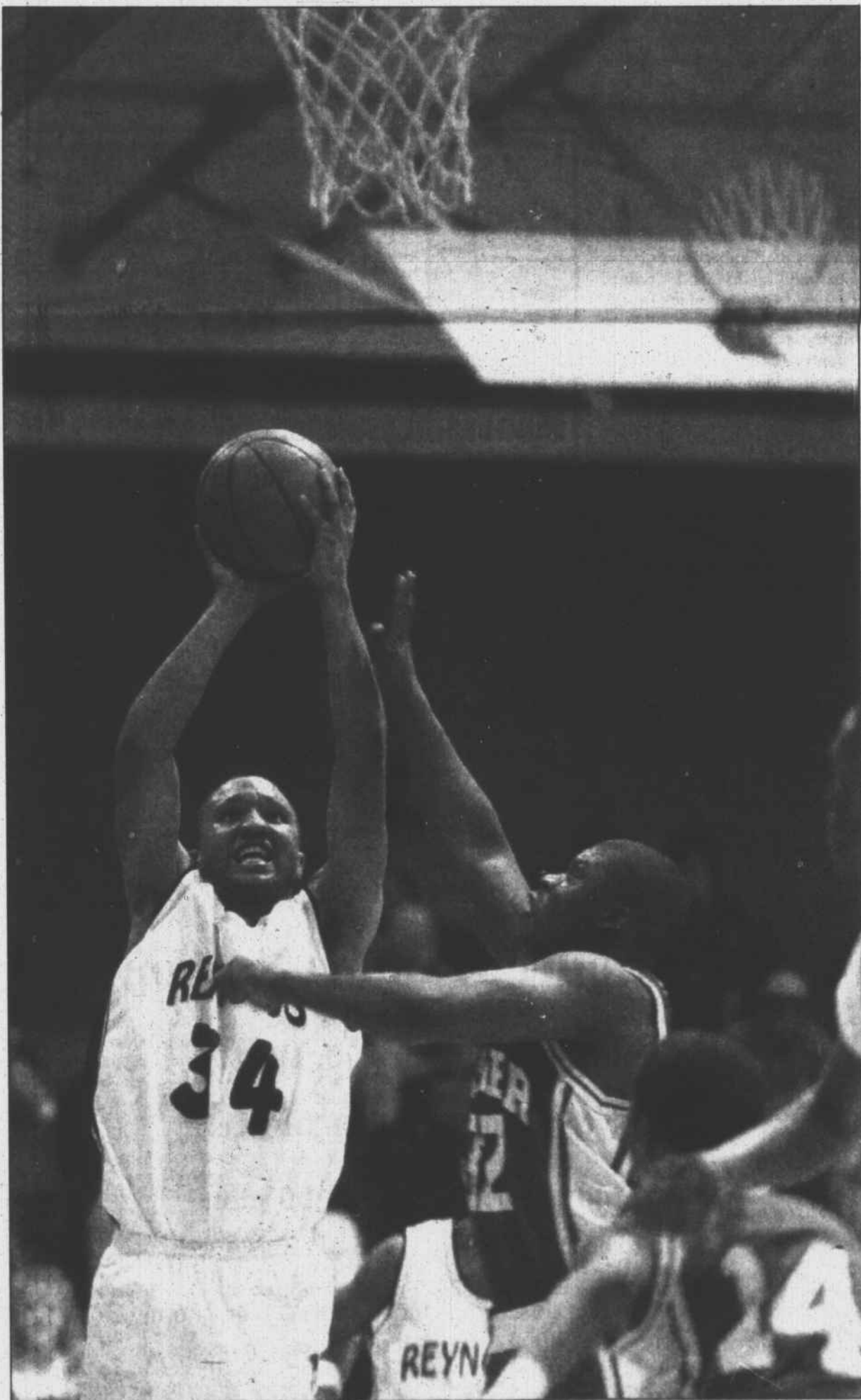
to lead the team in that category. The Lady Rams managed only 22 of 62 field goals, including a paltry two of 10 from 3-point territory.

Their shooting was off in the first half, when they went 12 of 31 from the field and was worse after the break, when they connected on only 10 of 31 field goals.

Leggett got little offensive support from her teammates. The

only other double figure scorer was Dementrice Plater, who finished the game with 10 points. The other three Ram starters finished the game with a combined total of 12 points.

WSSU's bench got into the scoring act, however, supplying 20 points. Renee Cameron came off the bench to score eight points and Christa West added six.



Teddy Petree steadied the Demons.

Reynolds JV

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through the first three quarters, King said.

Again the Demons had a bal-

anced scoring attack, with nine people getting into the scoring column in the third quarter.

With their wins, the Demons captured their second consecu-

tive conference championship. Reynolds' junior varsity is 43-2 over two seasons overall and 19-1 in the Central Piedmont 4-A Conference.

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