

Former Wake Forest standout enjoying first lap around CIAA

By SAM DAVIS
THE CHRONICLE

Tracy Connor is seeing the CIAA in a different light this week.

Connor, a first-year assistant coach with Winston-Salem State, went through the league for the first time this past season. Now, she's experiencing her first league tournament.

Connor, who played collegiately at Wake Forest, said she's gaining a new appreciation for the CIAA.

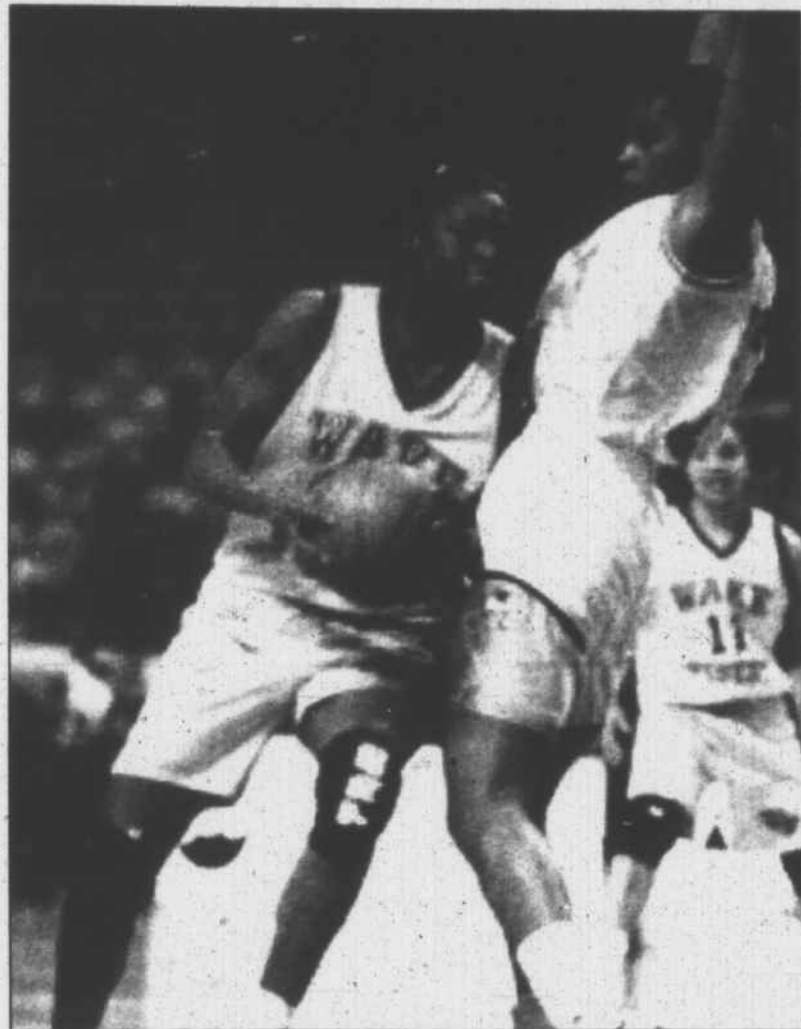
"It's very different," Connor said of her first tour through the loop. "It's more of a personal expression of culture. It has something to offer for the whole African American community."

The whole experience is new for Connor. As a coach, she is getting a chance to view the game of basketball from a different perspective. The CIAA Women's Basketball Tournament is celebrating its 25th Anniversary this year. Connor said she glad to be a part of it.

"This is part of history," she said. "History is being made this season and I feel privileged to be here."

Connor has traveled in good company throughout her athletic career.

She was one of the top prospects in the nation when she graduated from South Rowan High in China Grove. She had her pick of the nation's colleges but chose to attend Wake Forest, where she made an immediate impact. She was named the ACC Women's Rookie of the Year for the 1992-93 season. She set records for rebounds in a game (22) and season (316), a big splash. Connor was well on her way to a record-setting career when she suffered a severe knee injury. That sidelined her for a season and curtailed a career that was on the rise. After sitting out a season, with a medical redshirt, Connor started looking at things



Tracy Connor

from a different perspective. Academics began to take on an even larger role in her life. She graduated with an undergraduate degree and then received her masters while completing her fifth year of competition.

Although she never regained all of her skills, Connor is still one of the top scorers and rebounders in the school's history.

The Wake schedule prevented Connor from experiencing a CIAA Tournament. She finally got a chance to see some of it last year. This year, however, she's gotten an opportunity to get an inside glimpse.

More importantly, she's gotten a chance to gain valuable

experience as an assistant coach under Debra Clark.

"It has been a great experience for me," Connor said. "I have a chance to study under a coach who has a lot of experience and savvy. She's a pleasure to work for. I just hope that I can continue to gain experience."

Right now, Connor said she's happy with what she's doing. Come August, however, she might have to make a career decision. That's when she's slated to graduate with a degree as a Physician's Assistant.

"Right now, I'm hoping that I can continue coaching and my career in the medical field," she said. "I enjoy both and I don't want to give either of them up."

Roundup

From page B1

their full-court press and raced to a 10 point lead.

Six minutes later Fayetteville State led 23-4 and the Lady Tigers only scored 11 more points in the first half while turning the ball over 22 times.

The Lady Broncos held a 43-15 advantage at intermission behind Michelle Dent's 10 points and two steals. Nattie Pearson, Sonja Walker and Shavonne Brown, the only seniors on a team chock full of freshman and sophomores backed her up with 14 combined points.

Pearson, a 5-4 point guard, also added four assist, two steals, two rebounds and just one turnover.

In the second half the Lady Broncos continued to put the pressure on St. Pauls forcing another 23 turnovers. The Lady Tigers could not find an answer to Fayetteville State's press or to guard Shaunici Morgan as they went on to lose 77-55.

After only playing three minutes in the first half because of a pulled achilles Morgan, an All-CIAA pick, finished the game with 19 points and three steals. Dent chipped in 14 while Marian Moore and Walker hit for 12 points apiece.

LaKisha Phifer seemed to be the only player on St. Pauls' (6-20) able to get anything going. The slim 6-1 senior, who is the top shot blocker in Division II history with 533 rejections almost posted a triple double scoring 14 points, grabbing 25 rebounds and swatting nine shots.

For the game, the Lady Broncos (14-11) swiped 24 balls with their unrelenting press but they also turned the ball over 29 times and shot a dismal 35 percent from the field, which raised the ire of Eric Tucker, their coach.

Tucker, who is in his sixth year at FSU liked what his team did defensively but says they must continue to work to shoot better.

"A win is a win in the tournament," he said. "We're such a young team and I know I always say that but it's true."

The evening session of the women's tournament pitted



Alicia Hill of J.C. Smith goes after a loose ball.

Johnson C. Smith University against the Lady Bears of Shaw University.

The Golden Bulls had been on a roller coaster during the regular season and it's that same principle that proved to be the telling aspect of their first half.

The Lady Bears held as much as a 17 point lead against JCSU but that's when they turned to the doctor-Blanche Doctor to be exact.

The freshman scored 8 points while sophomore Lawanna Davis snatched 12 boards to pull the Golden Bulls out of a hole and stake them to a 42-35 halftime lead.

Shaw, which was without the services of All-CIAA forward Sundiate Davis raced were paced by Marsha Tennants 12 points, 8 rebounds and five steals.

During the intermission JCSU first year coach Barry Street told his players to relax and "get back to our game."

That's exactly what they did as the Golden Bulls picked up their defense and displayed "more discipline" on offense on their way to a 88-79 win.

JCSU out rebounded the Lady Bears 53-38 and continued to do the little things that are needed to get a victory.

Doctor totaled 16 points for the game while Davis chipped in another 11 points and 19 rebounds. Marquisha Clayburn scored 15 points and dished five assist and Taneika Reader finished with 11 points.

Five girls scored in double figures for Shaw (17-9). Sheree Bates lead the way with 17 points.

Tennants finished with 16 points and 10 rebounds with Shannon Edwards and Angela Ellis scoring 12 and 10 points respectively. Simone Gilliam put in a work-womanlike effort amassing 12 points, nine assist and six steals.



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