

# SPORTS WEEK

B SECTION

NOVEMBER 21, 2002



Photo by Bruce Chapman

Tawania Brown, a junior at Virginia State University, helped her team win the CIAA Bowling Championship this week. The championships was held in Winston-Salem. Virginia State defeated North Carolina Central University in 4 games.

## West's Paul signs with Wake Forest

BY SAM DAVIS  
FOR THE CHRONICLE

There was little drama or fanfare last Thursday when Chris Paul signed his national letter of intent to play basketball at Wake Forest next fall.

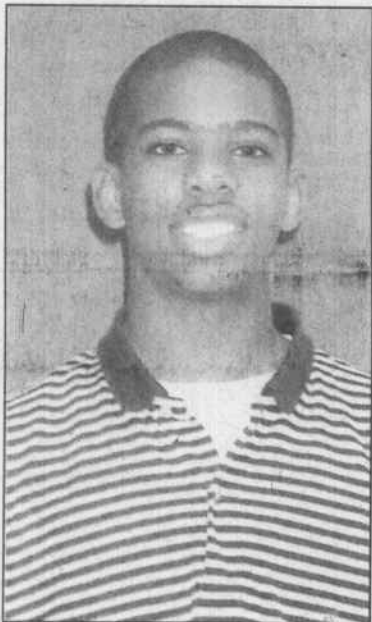
Paul, considered by many to be the top senior point guard prospect in the state, made an oral commitment to play for the Deacons last spring. He was surrounded by family and friends when he inked the pact at West Forsyth High School in Clemmons.

Paul's signing came one day after the fall early signing period began last Wednesday. Because he didn't sign on the first day it fueled some speculation about whether Paul was wavering on his decision to stay home in Winston-Salem and sign with the Demon Deacons. However, Paul said that never was a factor.

"I knew I was going to do it," and there was never any question in my mind," said Paul, whom many, including national recruiting analyst Bob Gibbons, rate as the No. 2 point guard in the nation. "The only reason I waited is so my brother (C.J. Paul) could come home for the signing. He couldn't be here on Wednesday because he's in college."

Paul was surrounded by his parents, Charles and Robin Paul; his brother—and many relatives, including his grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends. He also invited his first AAU basketball coach, John Pruitt, and John Allen, the head coach of the Kappa Magic. Paul and Kappa Magic captured the Junior Boys National AAU Tournament this past summer.

"It was great to have everybody here for me," Paul said. "There have been a lot of people who have supported me



Chris Paul

through the years."

Paul's signing by Wake Forest coach Skip Prosser marked the first time in recent memory when the Deacons have gone head to head with the University of North Carolina and won the recruiting battle. Many things played a factor in the decision, according to Paul, but the most overwhelming was the idea of staying close to his tight-knit family.

"I'm glad I made the decision to play here at home," he said. "People won't have to go buy a plane ticket or drive a

long way to see me play."

While he said he looks forward to the challenge of playing on the college level and attends a lot of Wake Forest practices, Paul said his immediate goal is to lead West Forsyth to the state 4-A championship. To do that he and the Titans will have to get past county rival R.J. Reynolds. Reynolds is the three-time defending state champion. Paul and West defeated the Demons twice last season but fell to RJR in the state semifinals.

"We open up next Wednesday against Parkland, and I'm looking forward to the start of the season," said Paul, who is also president of the Senior Class at West Forsyth. "I still feel like I have a lot to prove on the high school level, and I have some goals that I want to accomplish."

Last year Paul averaged 25.6 points per game, nine assists and four rebounds. He could have scored a lot more but chose to get his teammates involved in the game before getting into his offensive groove. West Forsyth lost much of its inside game to graduation, and Paul will be asked to shoulder even more of the load this season.

"We've got a real young team," Paul said. "We're coming along, though, and I think we can make a good run at the state championship."

In the meantime, Paul said he'd be keeping an eye on a young Wake Forest team that will be hard-pressed to duplicate its 21-13 record of last season. And when he's not playing a game or practicing at West Forsyth, Paul plans to try to attend the Deacons' practices on the WFU campus or their games at Lawrence Joel Coliseum.

"I looked at our schedule and their schedule, and they don't conflict at all as far as games are concerned," he said.

## Native inducted into Shaw's Hall of Fame

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

James Cassaberry Jr. of Winston-Salem will be inducted into the Shaw University Athletic Hall of Fame Nov. 21 at 7 p.m. Induction ceremonies will be held in the Willie E. Gary Student Center, on the campus of Shaw University.

He is son of the late Elder James Cassaberry Sr. and Mother, Naomi Cassaberry.

Cassaberry was born and raised in Winston-Salem, where he starred in baseball throughout his secondary and high school education. He began his career with the Twin City Little League. It was there where he was introduced to the sport and was taught the fundamentals of the game by coach William Westbrook. Cassaberry continued developing his skills in the Twin City Little League and culminated his "Pony League" years by winning that division's first-ever All-Star game.

Other coaches who were instrumental in helping Cassaberry to develop during his Twin City Little League years were Robert Vaughn, Donald Scales, Curt "Breadman" Roseborough, Angus (Ankie) Lowery, "Hound Dog" and Mr. Gatewood.

Cassaberry played a vital role in helping Atkins High School capture the 1978 city high school baseball championship. His coach was Jack Ward.

Cassaberry was selected All-Conference during his two-year senior high school career at North Forsyth Senior High School and led his team to the 1981 state playoffs. Both his senior high school coaches, Fred Parks and Gray Cartwright, inspired him during his senior high school career.

He played four years (1981-1985) at Shaw University, where he starred at third base. During his career at Shaw, he helped lead the

1983 team to the CIAA baseball championship, and he was named to the All-Tournament Team. During that year he also was selected by the team as the Most Improved Player and was named All-CIAA by the conference coaches. He



Cassaberry

was named All-CIAA again in 1984.

In 1985, his senior year, he won the award for the highest academic average on the team for that year. During his college years he blossomed under the teachings of Hall of Fame coach Bobby Lee Saunders.

Upon graduation in 1985, Cassaberry moved to New York to embark on a career as an auditor with the U.S. Customs Service (USCS).

In 1999, after moving up the ranks as an auditor, Cassaberry was promoted and relocated to the USCS headquarters office in Washington D.C. His new position is management specialist with the Office of Internal Affairs. He is responsible for regulating the daily operations of USCS offices in the United States and internationally.

He lives in Silver Spring, Md.



Jerome Reid/All Pro

Abrams and NCCU began the season in high spirits after an upset win over N.C. A&T.

## Lady Falcons have volleyball three-peat

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

In Sunday's CIAA volleyball championship something had to give. Both N.C. Central University and Saint Augustine's College had swept their respective matches throughout the 2002 tournament.

Ultimately it was the Lady Falcons' streak that would remain intact as they defeated the Lady Eagles 30-20, 31-29, 30-17 at the C.E. Gaines Center, on Winston-Salem State University's campus.

The most competitive game was game 2, which saw 10 ties and six lead changes before the Lady Falcons edged the Lady Eagles 31-29.

CIAA Player of the Year and Tournament MVP Magaly Gomez led the Lady Falcons with 15 kills, two service aces, 14 digs and a solo block. Carmen Larrain and Katrina Johnson chipped in with 11 kills each.

NCCU's Porché Williams, the 2002 Rookie of the Year, finished with 11 kills and five



Photo by Bruce Chapman

The winning team poses with the championship trophy.

## Former NCCU coach looks back and toward future

BY BONITTA BEST  
CONSOLIDATED MEDIA GROUP

My mama, God rest her soul, had a familiar saying when something happened or someone did something that she had predicted. "My mind don't fool me," she'd say.

Same here.

After Rudy Abrams' surprising announcement that he was retiring from N.C. Central with a year left on his contract, the first words that came to mind were "My mind don't fool me."

I sensed a change in Abrams a few weeks ago at his weekly news conference.

Normally, I dreaded going after an Eagles loss because I knew what was coming. Abrams always looked and acted like someone whose wife just ran off with his best friend.

But after NCCU's loss to Winston-Salem State Oct. 19, I

noticed he wasn't his usual morbid self. I particularly noticed how he wasn't interested in reading the pre-game summary that sports information director Kyle Serba prepares each week — something he always did before. And he sounded almost relieved. I thought, "something's up."

Something was.

Abrams called recently to discuss the reasons that led to his resignation.

Abrams: You said you could tell a difference. I felt different. I wasn't really enjoying it, and believe me, when you're the head coach and all of it rests on your shoulders, when things aren't going well, and you know the things that you're doing are the things that won championships, you can't imagine how disappointing that is, and how it weighs on you. I had gotten to the point