

Lady Aggies fall to Gardner-Webb

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The Lady Aggies of N.C. A&T got a tremendous game from freshman LaKeisha Williams, but it wasn't enough to get by Gardner-Webb last week.

Gardner-Webb's Brittany Harmon scored a career-high 17 points and Shameka Smith recorded her second double-double of the season as the Lady Bulldogs rallied from a 13-point halftime deficit to defeat N.C. A&T 69-65. With the Bulldogs trailing 43-30 at intermission, Harmon scored 9 points, including 7 in a row for GWU, in a 17-4 Gardner-Webb run to open the half and tie the score at 47-all.

After a jumper by N.C. A&T's Williams put the Aggies

back on top by 2, Smith hit a pair of free throws to tie the game for the sixth time. Redshirt freshman Candyse Kelly nailed a jumper on Gardner-Webb's next possession to give the Bulldogs their first lead of the second half.

A 3-pointer by Yanumbe Sherman put N.C. A&T back up by 1, but Harmon was again there for GWU, scoring a layup off a Smith steal and a Kelly pass. A pair of free throws from Williams put the Aggies back on top briefly, but a Sequenta Blackman jumper with 7:26 to play gave Gardner-Webb the lead for good.

After both teams traded baskets, GWU sophomore Novia Sturdivant nailed a 3 - the Bulldogs' only one of the game - and

then made good on a breakaway layup to put Gardner-Webb up by 6. A Smith layup pushed the lead to 8 points, but another Sherman 3 and Malea Gibson free throw brought N.C. A&T to within 4 at 64-60 with just under two minutes to play.

Gardner-Webb was able to put the game away from the free throw line, as Sturdivant, Katie Gravel and Blackman combined to go 5-for-6 in the final minute of play.

Williams finished with a game-high 22 points for N.C. A&T, while Sherman scored 20, including going 6-for-13 from beyond the arc. Harmon pulled down seven rebounds to go with her 17 points and matched her career high in steals with four. Despite the defeat, Williams was named Rookie of the Week earlier this week by the league.

The Aggies fell to 1-8 with the loss.



Williams

Wright

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coached some of the best players to come out of this area. I think I can be with that group one day."

And so do Gould and many other fans that have seen the super star play.

Wright has plenty of people saying he could be the next great baller to come out of the city. Even Gould is impressed with the talent of his latest pupil.

"He's special," Gould said. "He's a very special kid. He's a key to us winning. When he goes, we go. If he doesn't go, then we don't go. He controls everything. Marcus has the potential to be one of the best guards I've coached."

That's a big statement, considering Gould has coached players such as former N.C. State and Parkland star Clifford Crawford, UNC sophomore Reyshawn Terry, Wake Forest freshman Cameron Stanley, Winthrop freshman Chris Gaynor and Chris Paul, to name a few.

"You'll see," Gould said with a smile. "He can really do some amazing things. He's such a smart player that you really don't have to tell Marcus much. He kind of reminds me of Chris (Paul). I mean, there will probably never be another Chris, but he reminds me of him."

"I still remember the first time that I saw Chris (Paul) play," Gould continued. "I begged his dad to let me coach. I immediately saw something special in him. I knew he was a very special player. I felt very similar to that the first time I saw Marcus play. He would be playing varsity if he



Marcus Wright watches an opponent prepare to shoot a free throw during a game earlier this season.

were at any other school. It would be a crime not to. He has a lot of potential. I really think he could be one of the best players to play in the city in the future."

Gould is happy as ever to have a player such as Wright on his team. He thinks Wright can do a lot for his program with his success on and off the court.

"All the players are real good kids," Gould said. "One of the best parts about coaching here is the kids on the team. Marcus is an example of that. He does his schoolwork. He works hard on the court, and he does what we tell him to do. He shows you that it's all right to come to Winston-Salem Preparatory."

Wright added: "I do whatever I need to do to help us win. I'm real confident that we will have a good season. We've got the players with the skills. We just need to play together and we'll be fine."

Wright has helped the team to a 3-4 record (as of Dec. 28). He has excelled with his scoring,

rebouncing, assists and steals. Wright averages 29 points, six rebounds, nine assists and four steals per game. He has destroyed teams with his great ball handling, shooting and passing this season. Gould said Wright and the rest of his guys have played well so far this year. He simply wants them to learn how to close out teams.

"Marcus has helped us really get off to a good start," Gould said, "but we've still got to improve on some things. We need to learn how to close out teams. We've lost four games by a total of 9 points, and we were leading in every one of those games."

Wright added: "Sometimes you just can't pull out games. I'm confident in this team, and I think we can do some good things for our school this year. We'd like to win the Lash tournament and then close out the season with some wins. I think we'll do pretty (well) the rest of the season."



Calvin "J-Man" Gantt gets harassed during an earlier game this season. Gantt realizes his weaknesses as a player.

Gantt

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even sacrificed playing his best position (small forward) to help the team with his leadership, passing ability and knowledge of the game from the point guard position.

"I'd rather play the three," Gantt said. "...but I'll play where I can. I'm trying to do what I need to do to help this team. Sometimes it works, and sometimes it doesn't."

Gantt's ability to play basketball isn't really some kind of rumor or product of the media. According to several people familiar with Gantt, he has been good for a very long time.

"I knew he was going to be special when he used to play at Carl Russell," said local coach Angela Lambson, who is also Gantt's aunt. "He's a great young athlete with a lot of

potential. He has some things he needs to work on. He knows that. One of the things is his right hand. He's got to develop a right hand."

Gantt added: "Yeah, I do need to work on my dribbling, especially with my right hand. I try to always get better. And I may come across as cocky or whatever, but I'm always trying to get better and listening to advice from older people like my aunt, my dad (Calvin Jr.) and Aaron (Bailey)."

"I also need to work on my attitude sometime," Gantt continued. "My dad, my aunt and my mom tell me about my attitude most of the time. I'm just an emotional person sometimes. I let situations get the best of me sometimes. But I'm working on that being my number one thing, seriously."

Gantt's best skill seems to be his defense. His wing span is a lot longer than the average ninth-grader, and he never seems to cease with his attack

on opponents.

"He's got great hands-on defense," McCoy said. "He gets his hands on a lot of balls, and that leads to a number of steals. That really helps us in the long run."

One would think that Gantt's best attribute would be his jump shot, with a nickname like "J-Man."

"No, that's not why that's my name," Gantt said with a smile. "My grandma gave me that name when I was little. She called me that when I was born. I pretty much knew my name was J-Man before I knew it was Calvin."

Now Gantt has his mind on helping the Demons have a good season. He is also concentrating on accomplishing some of his long-term goals.

"There's a lot that I want to do with my life," Gantt concluded. "I want to go to college, hopefully Division I, and play basketball. I'd like to go to the NBA. If I don't make it to the NBA, I'd like to start my own business. If everything works out like I hope, then I'll make those things happen."



McCoy

One-on-One

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(keeping) our teams here and inviting teams from around the nation to be showcased. Guys are getting the opportunity to play guys from all over, in front of all kinds of college coaches simply by playing in the Frank now.

Anthony: I can't help but believe you're happy with the exposure you might be getting with the Frank Spencer being so big now.

Jeff: Yeah (smiles), but you've got to showcase yourself every year, in all kinds of games. So I'm happy to showcase my talent in front of more coaches. You never know who might be watching.

Anthony: Everyone has been talking about Eric Wallace, but who would you say is the most important part of this team?

Jeff: Everybody has their role. You can't really single one person out. There are so many people that are important to this team. This is a team thing.

Anthony: Do you like playing for coach (Lee) Reavis?

Jeff: Yeah, coach Reavis keeps us in line. He makes sure we dress up for games. He makes sure we look alike. He makes sure we stay ahead of the game with books and things like that.

Anthony: He kind of seems like a player's coach. Do you-all get along with him better than most athletes do their coach?

Jeff: Oh yeah (smiles), he interacts with us a lot. He's a real cool coach.

Anthony: Now Glenn had a pretty good football season. You all also finished well in baseball last year. If things go right, basketball season will be a success too. Now, does that make Glenn the top school in the city in your eyes?

Jeff: We've been that for a while. Glenn has a tradition of being the best school, athletic-wise. I mean, Josh Howard went to Glenn and so many other players. We just don't get any



Jeff "J-Rich" Adams also plays in recreational leagues at Reynolds Park after the high school season concludes.

credit. After this season, we should be considered the best.

Anthony: Who's the top athlete at Glenn?

Jeff: Probably Chris Jacobs. I mean, he plays all three sports, so I'd probably go with Chris.

Anthony: Who do you have the best relationship with on the team?

Jeff: Best relationship? Hmm...It's probably T.J. Leak. We grew up together at Reynolds Park. Me and Jay Singletary are close too. We went to middle school together.

Anthony: Jeff, you seem like a guy that's elevated your game, not just physically, but emotionally too. It's not rare to see you barking out orders and running the team. You seem to be more vocal this year. Have you turned into a floor general?

Jeff: (Smiles.) Yes, I mean, I have a big role. I need to make sure everybody is in line. I might not be barking out orders. You may catch me just telling someone where to go. I still have to play my part. Everyone else has

to play their part too.

Anthony: Jeff, you're so emotional. Even after the game last night, you showed your emotions by celebrating after the game. Are you always like that, or were you just real happy last night?

Jeff: I mean, I could hold back. There was a reason for that last night. I mean, we knew we were gonna win, but that showed everybody that we were gonna win. I was happy. Everybody was pulling against us, and we showed them.

Anthony: How much has the Frank Spencer been on your mind before it actually started this week?

Jeff: It's been on my mind a lot. They announced that it was going national over the summer, right?

Anthony: Right.

Jeff: I've been thinking about it ever since then, and we were in the national bracket. And everyone was talking about "Baby Shaq" and "Baby Vince Carter." (Both giggle.) I mean,

the Vince dude was pretty good. I don't know about Baby Shaq. (Smiles.) Maybe he'll develop later.

Anthony: Did you have butterflies before the first game?

Jeff: (Smiles.) Yeah, a little bit. That was a big game for me.

Anthony: Now, the team had a good season last year and seemingly fell apart in the playoffs.

Jeff: (Smiles.)

Anthony: Are you worried about having any kind of let-down this year?

Jeff: No, we're more together this year. Last year, we were together, but people started trying to do their own thing. I think everyone wants to be a team this year.

Anthony: I'm a former athlete. You know that. But when I played, and even nowadays, many athletes did things that weren't necessarily good for their health like drinking, fighting, smoking or something stupid. How have you been able to steer away from bad peer pressure and do the right things?

Jeff: I just walk away. I mean, I go out and I see what goes on. But it's not for me. It's that easy for me. No pressure at all. I can't tell other people how to live their lives, though.

Anthony: OK, who influenced you more than anyone in your life?

Jeff: That would probably be my parents and coach Reavis.

Anthony: Let's move on. Where can people catch J-Rich during your free time?

Jeff: At home. (Giggles.) You can catch me at Reynolds Park. Everybody knows that. I'm always playing basketball - shooting or something. If you fall off for one second, it's a wrap.

Anthony: What's your personal life like?

Jeff: I've got a girlfriend. I go out on Saturdays. I'll probably go out this Saturday. My life is just like anybody else.

Anthony: Have you been watching the college bowl games?

Jeff: I've been watching a

few of them. I'm waiting on the national championship game.

Anthony: Who's gonna win?

Jeff: Oklahoma.

Anthony: A'ight. Which NBA team is your favorite?

Jeff: I used to be a Lakers fan. My new favorite team is the Rockets.

Anthony: How far do you think Wake Forest will make it this year?

Jeff: They have a chance to win it all. I've watched a few of their practices. With the chemistry they have, they could do it.

Anthony: Give me your top three ballers of all time.

Jeff: Michael Jordan. Larry Bird and Dwayne Wade.

Anthony: Cool. Let's close out with free association. You know the drill.

Jeff: Yep.

Anthony: Favorite food.

Jeff: Chicken.

Anthony: Favorite song.

Jeff: "Let's Get It On."

Anthony: Justin Gray.

Jeff: Shooter and hard work.

Anthony: "J-Rich."

Jeff: Too cool.

Anthony: Kobe Bryant.

Jeff: What were you thinkin'?

Anthony: State champs.

Jeff: Big accomplishment.

Anthony: That's it, man.

Jeff: Good luck with the season.

Jeff: Thanks, man.

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