

SPORTS WEEK

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SECTION B

APRIL 27, 2006

Award goes to Bishop's Robinson

Varsity girls coach one of eight recipients

BY ANTHONY HILL
THE CHRONICLE

Bishop McGuinness head girl's varsity coach Brian Robinson can add another honor to his trophy case in a few weeks.



Robinson

After leading his girls to a phenomenal year on the hardwood that was capped off by a state championship, Robinson is set to receive another honor for his efforts.

Robinson will be one of eight coaches that will receive the Homer Thompson Memorial, Eight Who Make a Difference award at the Fletcher Opera Theatre at the Progress Energy Center for Performing Arts in Raleigh on May 14. The award was named in honor of the late Homer Thompson, who was a longtime coach at Parkland and is a member of the NCHSAA Hall of Fame.

"Obviously, this is a great honor, especially since it is named after coach Thompson," said Robinson. "I met coach Thompson once, when I was a sophomore at Reynolds high school in 1987 (Robinson graduated from Reynolds in 1990). "We were playing JV basketball at Parkland and the meeting was very brief. He said hello to me, and that was it. He didn't know who I was, but I knew of him."

"I had heard many of my coaches at Reynolds, especially Mike Muse (who coached me in both baseball and basketball), talk about what a great coach and person he was at the time," Robinson continued. "... and how he tried to do things the right way. So, for me to receive an award named after a person who exemplified these type of qualities is a tremendous and flattering honor."

NCHSAA executive director Charlie Adams added: "It is fitting that Homer Thompson's name be affixed to an award about coaches who make a difference for Homer certainly did make a difference in the lives of many and truly was an outstanding role model."

See Robinson on B3

BALANCING THE BOOKS AND THE BALL

North junior places emphasis on studies

BY ANTHONY HILL
THE CHRONICLE

North Forsyth junior quarterback Girard Miller knows a lot more than signals and snap counts. The rising senior also knows a lot about what he's learning in school, and places equal emphasis on his academics as he does athletics.



Oakley

The talented Viking presently has a cumulative grade point average of 4.0. He also recently scored a 1540 on his SAT, in only his first time taking the test.

"I figured that if I did well at football and my academics it would better my chances of getting a scholarship," Miller said. "It would also make my life easier if I didn't quite get an athletic scholarship. My dad (Girard Miller Sr.) made me realize the importance of education back when I was in the first grade."

Miller, who states math as his favorite subject, has made a few grades lower than A's in school since he was in the first grade. He hasn't made enough to dent his near-perfect grade point average, though. Miller seems to be everything a coach could want out of a quarterback. He has a high IQ, and remarkable leadership ability — to go along with great athletic talent. Miller also gets on to his teammates that may



Photo by Anthony Hill

North's rising senior quarterback Girard Miller Jr., has been nearly perfect in the classroom.

See Miller on B3



Photo by Charlie Pratt

AND1's John Humphrey, aka Helicopter, soars for a dunk during an AND1 game at the Joel last year.

Helicopter's flying high

N.C. native making big waves in Japan

BY ANTHONY HILL
THE CHRONICLE

John Humphrey, also known as Helicopter, has come a long way since playing at "The Center" in Beaufort, N.C., near his hometown of Moorhead. He's even come a long way from playing junior college ball at Louisburg College, before later moving on to Middle Tennessee State University.

Now, Humphrey is a rising star on the AND1 circuit, who's getting more popular by the week. He hasn't simply settled for AND1 fame either. Just like most ballers, or athletes — Humphrey, has aspirations of making it to the NBA. So he uses his fundamental skills, as well as his ridiculous, high-flying (42-inch vertical leap) talent to increase his fan base and get more looks from NBA scouts by playing in other leagues. For the past three years he's showcased some of his talent in the ABA. He even recorded the second-highest game total in league history when he scored 65 points against a Maryland team last January.

"Ultimately every competitive basketball player strives to play in the NBA," said Humphrey, who's 25 years old. "I'm still working hard to fulfill my goal of making it to the NBA. But if the NBA isn't for me I'd be fine doing what I'm doing. I'm still getting paid to play basketball. I love playing with the AN1 team."

From the growing number of Helicopter fans — many spectators enjoy watching the 6-1, 205-pound high flyer do his thing on the court, with no restraints or controls. When Helicopter performs for AND1 he's usually a carefree dunker that won't hesitate to dunk on anyone. When AND1 and Humphrey paid a visit to Winston-Salem last year, he finished the game with an amazing 33 points, which was a game high. He had 8 points off thunderous dunks and 7 points on alley oops.

That's basically how Humphrey was discovered by AND1 a couple years ago — dunking over competition. Well, actually he was first noticed after dunking without any opponents on the court. A member of the AND1 team was so impressed with Humphrey's dunks after watching him win ESPN's 15th Annual College Slam Dunk (2003) contest his senior year that he made it a point to keep in touch. When Humphrey didn't get drafted by the NBA that following spring, he was then asked to play in the Raleigh Open Run that following summer by that AND1 player.

"I killed it," Humphrey said of the the open run. "Then they (AND1) invited me to play in Europe, and now I'm here (Japan)."

He's presently in Japan playing professional basket-

See Helicopter on B4

Friends say 'goodbye' to longtime coach Sapp

They say that the best part about being a coach is the press conference to announce you after the hire is made. Well, a ceremony to honor former Mt. Tabor head football coach Bob Sapp was just as exciting on Monday. I was one of the many people that packed the Mt. Tabor lunchroom on Monday night to say bye to coach Sapp. He's officially retired as a football coach. Now he's set to concentrate as the citywide athletics director.

I already knew that Sapp had quite a following, but I had no idea what type of following I was going to see once I got to the event.

It was a wonderful scene, honestly. There was a mixture of parents of present and past players, coaches of present and past staffs and several other supporters at the event. Charlotte Independence's head football coach was even there. The only thing missing earlier this week were the cameras from ESPN to broadcast the event. Dave Goren and WXII were there, though. The ceremony was definitely long enough to be on television. (I'm smiling as I type this.) Some people definitely stood up and spoke a lot longer than anyone wanted

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See Hill on B4

FROM THE HUDDLE

Anthony Hill



Photo by Anthony Hill

Former Mt. Tabor coach Bob Sapp was honored during a ceremony at Mt. Tabor earlier this week.

