

SPORTS WEEK

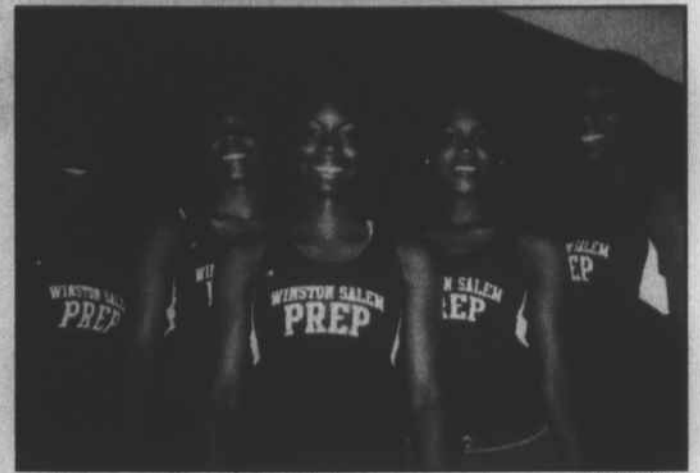
MAY 17, 2012

Victory Lap



Members of the CIAA championship-winning Winston-Salem State University Men's Basketball Team were recently congratulated for their success by Gov. Bev Perdue. Here, players, members of the coaching staff, Head Coach Bobby Collins (center) and Chancellor Donald Reaves (front row, left) pose with Perdue and the championship plaque.

Photo courtesy of the Office of the Governor



Relay team members (from left): Ashley Hicks, Sloan Williams, Deonica Reid, Mica Hargrove and Jazman Richardson.

Speedy W-S Prep girls on track for greatness

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE
SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Just how good are the track athletes at Winston-Salem Prep? Based on recent history, the answer is – amazingly excellent.

Case in point: The Phoenix girls were in position to pull off a stunning double in the sprint relays at last week's Class 1-A state championships. Prep, however, got mixed results by starting its day with a runner-up finish in the 4x200 relay. Less than an hour later, the foursome of Mica Hargrove, Sloan Williams, Deonica Reid and Jazman Richardson made amends in the 4x100 as WSP blistered the opposition with a near-state record of 48.51 seconds.

"I'm most proud of the fact that they ran faster than they did the week before," said Winston-Salem Prep Coach Derrick



Speas

Speas. "Their performance is a testimony of how badly they wanted to win." The Phoenix is loaded with young sprint talent. Richardson is the only senior, which means that everybody else will return. Reid, a freshman, will lead the way next year. She placed third at the state in the 100-meters behind two seniors. Relay teammate Williams, a sophomore, was fourth in that same race.

Prep's showing at this year's state meet was no fluke. Over the past four years, the Phoenix girls have captured two state team titles and the boys finished No. 2 in the team standings at the state meet three years ago. In the process, Winston-Salem Prep has left its mark on the track and field landscape with several of its athletes having moved on to compete at the college level (David Lindsay of UNC Wilmington; Tsanni Collier of Western Carolina; Trish Bennett of St. Augustine's to name a few).

While Prep has built a sterling reputation as a track power, the truth is that this program has delivered far more than anyone should reasonably expect. Prep does not have a viable training facility.

The quarter-mile track with the gravel surface is hardly ideal for churning out future state champions. When it rains, it takes several days for the track's surface to dry, which forces Speas to move the team's training sessions inside to the school gymnasium.

Another issue that hampers Speas is the non-availability of many of the key athletes for off-season conditioning. With the exception of Richardson, most of the relay team members (alternates included) are cheerleaders. They don't join the track team until after basketball season ends in March. In the meantime, they're absent from early-season conditioning and training in the form of running cross-country and indoor track. This puts Prep at a huge disadvantage in comparison to their counterparts.

As a result, Prep's athletes typically don't perform anywhere close to their best until very late in the outdoor season. Still, it makes you wonder how much better these athletes would be if they competed in cross-country and indoor track. The way things are now, the track season ends before they can realize just what their full potential might be.

"We don't ever start to peak until right before regionals and the state," Speas explained. "We know we can run faster. I believe we can break 47 seconds (in the 4x100) this year."

Speas has visions of having an eight-lane track at Prep. If and when that becomes reality is anyone's guess.

"When you look at what has been accomplished in track and field at Prep, it's hard to explain how everything that's happened has come to pass," he said. "We should have our own track facility. It will enhance the abilities of our athletes. We've earned it."

Craig T. Greenlee is the author of "November Ever After," <http://NovemberEverAfter.com>.

Big names to compete at W-S Open

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Tickets went on sale for the Winston-Salem Open at Wake Forest University this week. Now in its second year, the tournament, which will be held August 18-25 at the Wake Forest Tennis Complex, has already signed on several top players.

Returning champion John Isner, a native of Greensboro, Andy Roddick, Alexandr Dolgoplov, Kevin Anderson, Donald Young and James Blake have already signed on.

The Winston-Salem Open is offering several enhancements to this year's tournament, including free parking for everyone and padded seats throughout the main court. There also will be approximately 15 percent more seats available this year to accommodate seating demand for peak sessions.

"With the return of warm weather, people have tennis on their minds. Fans already have been calling our office to inquire about ticket availability," Winston-Salem Open Director Bill Oakes said. "With John Isner and Andy Roddick already signed on to compete – and more to come – there will no doubt be strong demand for seats."

The Winston-Salem Open is an ATP World Tour 250 event with a total purse of \$625,000. The tournament will be the final men's event of the Emirates Airline U.S. Open Series.

Tickets to the Winston-Salem Open are available online at www.winstonsalemopen.com, by calling (336) 758-6409 or in person at the Wake Forest ticket office located at Bridger Field House at BB&T Field.



Rising star Donald Young.

W-S Open Photo

Wake Forest University women have new coach

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Jennifer Hoover is Wake Forest's new head women's basketball coach.

"I am excited for the addition of Jen Hoover to our staff at Wake Forest," said Wake Forest Director of Athletics Ron Wellman. "She had a tremendous season at High Point last year and is a great basketball coach. Jen is in the Hall of Fame here at Wake Forest and knows what it takes to be successful. We expect fabulous results for our women's basketball program under her tutelage."

Hoover returns to Wake Forest, where she starred for

the Demon Deacons from 1987-91. She was a three-time All-ACC selection and still holds the school's career records for points (1,728) and rebounds (1,006). Hoover was a member of the ACC Academic Honor Roll and a member of the South team that won the bronze medal at the 1989 Olympic Festival in Oklahoma City, Okla. She also led the Deacs to their only NCAA Tournament appearance in 1988. Hoover was inducted to the school's

Athletic Hall of Fame in 2002. She is one of just three women's basketball players in the Wake Forest Athletic Hall of Fame.

Hoover comes to Wake Forest after one season as the head coach at High Point University. In her first head coaching stint, Hoover guided the Panthers to a 20-13 record and just the school's second appearance in the WNIT. The 20 wins were tied for the most in a single season since High Point moved to Division I in 1999.

Hoover was named the 2012 Spalding Maggie Dixon Division I Rookie Coach of the Year.

Hoover's assistant coaching career began in 1994 and includes stints at Cal, Virginia and Memphis. A post player herself, Hoover has an impressive reputation for developing forwards at the highest level. Hoover was named one of the ACC's top-50 all-time players and is still the only Demon Deacon to surpass 1,000 career points and 1,000 career rebounds.

Hoover married her husband, John, in 2001 and the two have one daughter, Maggie.



Hoover

Nationals-bound Winston-Salem Mavericks fall in State finals

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Winston-Salem Mavericks traveled to Charlotte earlier this month for the AAU State Championships. The Mavericks were the top-seeded team going into the weekend event.

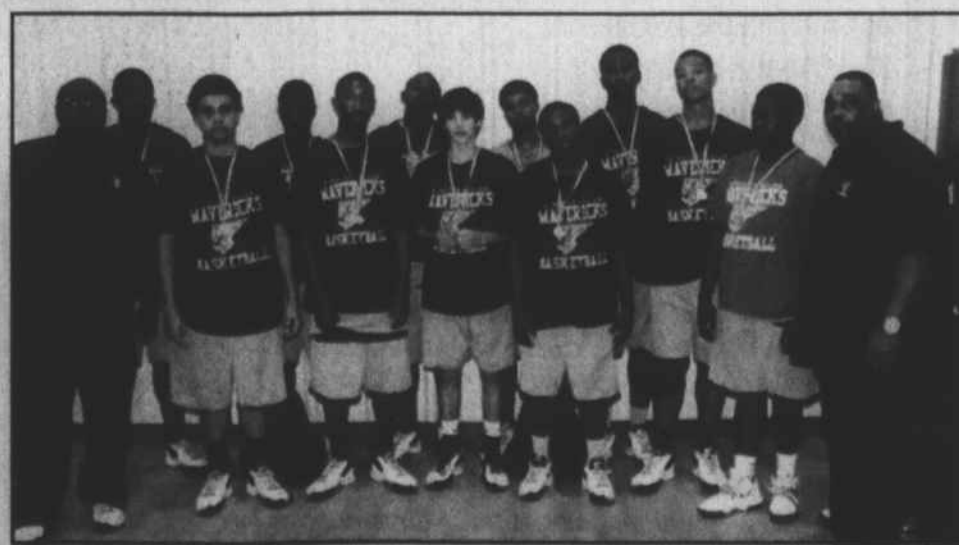
In the second round, the team beat Team Storm of Charlotte 76-61. The Mavs then faced the Carolina Flame of Weaverville, a team that had previously beat the Mavericks in overtime. The Mavericks won the rematch 89-78.

The win put the team into the championship game, where they faced Chapel Hill's KBC. The

home team fell to the KBC 75-62, but the team's strong performance was good enough to punch its ticket to the AAU Nationals, which will be held in Little Rock, Ark. from July 10-15.

The team, a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization, is owned by Mike Gonzalez and Willie "BB" Patrick Jr. To make donations to the team, contact Coach Patrick at 336-416-0907 and make all checks payable to Winston-Salem Mavericks.

The team states that if you are unable to donate, then keep them in your prayers as they go on to represent Winston-Salem with pride.



(Front row, from left) Head Coach Willie "BB" Patrick Jr., Keeshon Patrick, Chavin Peebles, Greg Ballas, Ryan Henderson, (second row) Cameron Mack, Taris Young, Alex Bailey, Xavier Jackson, Jarian Johnson, Michael Hinton, Naeem Razzak and Assistant Coach Taft Mack.

Submitted Photo

