

# SPORTS WEEK

NOVEMBER 15, 2012



A&T Photo by Photo by Kevin L. Dorsey  
Mike Mayhew runs some of his 141 yards on Saturday.



Guilford College Athletics Photo  
Guilford College's Robert Smith in action.

## First winning season for Aggies in nearly a decade

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

When North Carolina A&T defeated S.C. State 17-7 Saturday afternoon at Aggie Stadium, it did not deliver A&T a MEAC football championship. But for the many fans at the stadium and following the game online, it sure felt pretty close.

A&T's win guaranteed the Aggies (6-4, 4-3 MEAC) their first winning season since 2003. That happens to be the last time the Aggies won the MEAC title. After winning the '03 title, the A&T program went through numerous humbling and difficult situations. Whether it was the 27-game losing streak or the tragic death of offensive lineman Chad Wiley, to paraphrase Langston Hughes, life ain't been no crystal stair.

But the program seems to be coming out of its funk as evidenced by its victory over S.C. State, a team it defeated for the first time in 12 years. It made for a glorious senior day for the 18 Aggies playing their final football game at Aggie Stadium.

"It is so gratifying to see our guys leave this way," said A&T Coach Rod Broadway about his seniors. "I think we've only lost

two home games in two years since we've been here. That's change. That's a positive change around here. They've earned everything they've gotten. No one has given us anything."

Indeed, it was an inspiring effort by the Aggies. On the offensive end, the Aggies rushed for 250 yards led by senior Mike Mayhew's 141 yards. Ricky Lewis added 82 yards and a touchdown on the ground. S.C. State will endure its first losing season under 11-year head coach Buddy Pough, who also lost to the Aggies for the first time in 11 games.

Junior D'Vonte Graham, who blocked two first-half Bulldog field goal attempts, made the winning play. Receiver Caleb Davis fumbled the ball, but did not go after it because he thought it was an incomplete pass. Graham, the Aggies cornerback, saw it differently. He picked up the ball and ran 10 yards into the end zone. The play was ruled a backwards lateral, and thus the fumble recovery gave the Aggies a 10-point cushion with 7:38 remaining in the game.

"It's just instinct, really," said Graham about the play that sealed the win for A&T. "Whenever you see a bubble screen or any type of play behind the line of scrimmage, we practice if the ball hits the ground, pick it up. I mean what does it hurt us if the play is blown dead? I just scooped it up. Why not try to score?"

The Aggies will close out the 2012 season against archrival N.C. Central in Durham on Nov. 17 at 2 p.m. A win will go even further in helping the Aggies put the past nine years behind them.



Broadway

## Guilford has star in Smith

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE  
SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

As a speedy, sledge-hammer of a linebacker, Robert Smith is just beginning to scratch the surface. This fall, the Guilford College sophomore solidified his reputation as a defensive terror in the Old Dominion Athletic Conference.

In the process, the Winston-Salem native compiled some noteworthy numbers. He finished the season with 108 tackles (fourth in the conference) and was the ODAC co-leader in sacks with 6½.

At 6-feet-2, 230 pounds, Smith has the size to routinely deliver bone-crushing hits. And he's also fast enough to go one-on-one against tight ends, slot receivers and running backs in pass coverage.

"Robert does everything we need for him to do in our defensive sets," said Coach Chris Rusiewicz. "When he first came here, he was raw, but we could see that he had all the tools. We believed that by moving him to linebacker, he could be very successful at roaming the field and making plays.

He's very intelligent and knows our system. But just as important is the fact that he's becoming more of a team leader."

Smith, who played high school football at Reynolds, initially played safety as a freshman. But after missing two weeks of pre-season practice because of a knee sprain, Rusiewicz presented Smith with another option. He could either stay in the secondary, where he was not a starter, or he could give it a go at linebacker. The Quakers needed more speed at the position and Rusiewicz figured that Smith would be a good fit.

"At first, I was hesitant to make the change," said Smith. "But in looking back on it, I can see why they made the suggestion. They knew it (switching to linebacker) would give

me the best chance to be successful."

Smith accepted the challenge and performed admirably. He finished up as the Quakers second-leading tackler (64) and was voted second-team All-Conference.

Guilford didn't challenge for the ODAC title, but posted a 5-5 record this season, its best showing since 2007. Smith is confident that what he and his teammates accomplished this year will serve as a springboard for better things to come.

"None of us are surprised that we won as many games as we did," said Smith, who was named the ODAC Defensive Player of the Week for Oct. 7. "We knew we had it in us. It was simply a matter of us putting everything together.

"I like playing hard and showing what I can do. But it's not about me making 10 or more tackles every game. It's all about winning, that's the ultimate goal. I'm proud to be part of a group that's changing the culture here. As we win more games, people will start to look at Guilford College football a lot differently than they have in the past."



Smith

## City lands track championships

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Winston-Salem has won the bid to host the 2014 NCAA Division II Indoor Track & Field Championships from March 12-15, 2014.

It will be the first time Winston-Salem has hosted the event, which is expected to bring more than 500 athletes, 1,700 total attendees to the city and generate more than \$600,000 for the local economy.

"With the recent opening of the JDL Fast Track and the strong support of Winston-Salem State University, being awarded this prestigious tournament is a significant win for Winston-Salem as it squarely places us as a viable contender to host national collegiate sports events and tournaments," said Richard Geiger, president of Visit Winston-Salem.

Winston-Salem joins an impressive list of other U.S. cities that have hosted this event, including Houston, Texas, Albuquerque, N.M. and Boston, Mass.

The JDL Fast Track is an indoor



A view of the the JDL Fast Track.

JDL Fast Track Photo

track and field facility located at 2505 Empire Drive that opened earlier this year. It includes a 200-meter Mondo track; two pole vault runways; two long/triple jump runways; a throws circle and high jump area.

"JDL Fast Track is extremely excited to showcase our facility on a national stage and are confident

that our facility will exceed the expectations of the coaches, athletes and spectators attending this event," said Craig Longhurst, general manager of the JDL Fast Track. "Hosting this event is an honor and testament to the hard work of all the people involved in (the) construction and operation of this state-of-the-art facility."

## Volleyball honor for WSSU's Smith

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Winston-Salem State Lady Rams senior middle blocker De Ann Smith was named the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) Volleyball Player of the Week on Wednesday, Nov. 7.

The honor marked the first of the season for Smith, who stepped up her efforts for her team.

Smith had a strong week for the team with 24 kills and 11 blocks (four solo) in four matches for the Lady Rams. She began the week on a high note, leading the team to a three-set win over the Johnson C. Smith Golden Bulls. The win solidified the team's place as the third-place team in the CIAA Southern Division and put them within reach of tying for second place in the division.

The Lady Rams will next take the court at the 2012 CIAA Volleyball Championship Tournament at the Boo Williams Sportsplex in Hampton, Va. The tournament will be held from Nov. 16-18.



WSSU Photo by Garrett Gans

De Ann Smith playing hard to help her Rams.

## WFU's boys of summer do well

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Former Wake Forest pitcher Brian Holmes has been named an Organization All-Star for the Houston Astros, while Jack Fischer, Matt Pirro, Connor Kaden and Conor Keniry — all four of whom are also Deacs — all were recognized for their summer performances by Perfect Game, a top baseball scouting company.

Holmes was named to the NYPL All-Star Team and posted a 7-4 record with a 2.57 ERA. He also held opponents to just a .165 batting average after being selected in the 13th Round of June's draft.

Fischer, who pitched for the Wisconsin Woodchucks of the Northwoods League, was named a Second Team Summer All-American by Perfect Game. Pirro and Kaden were picked as the 14th and 24th best prospects, respectively, in the Perfect Game Collegiate Baseball League after spending their summer playing for the Amsterdam Mohawks.

Pirro went 4-1 on the mound in six starts and seven appearances, while posting a 2.88 ERA in 25.0 innings. He finished the summer with 34 strikeouts and 15 walks and held opponents to a .177 average.

Keniry played for the Newport Gulls of the New England Collegiate League. The Gulls were named the No. 1 summer team in the nation by Perfect Game.

"I would absolutely love the opportunity to play for a summer-league championship against the best teams across the nation," Keniry said. "If the Gulls were to play in something like that this year, there is no doubt in my mind that we would battle with the best of them, and I think we would have a great shot at winning it."



Holmes