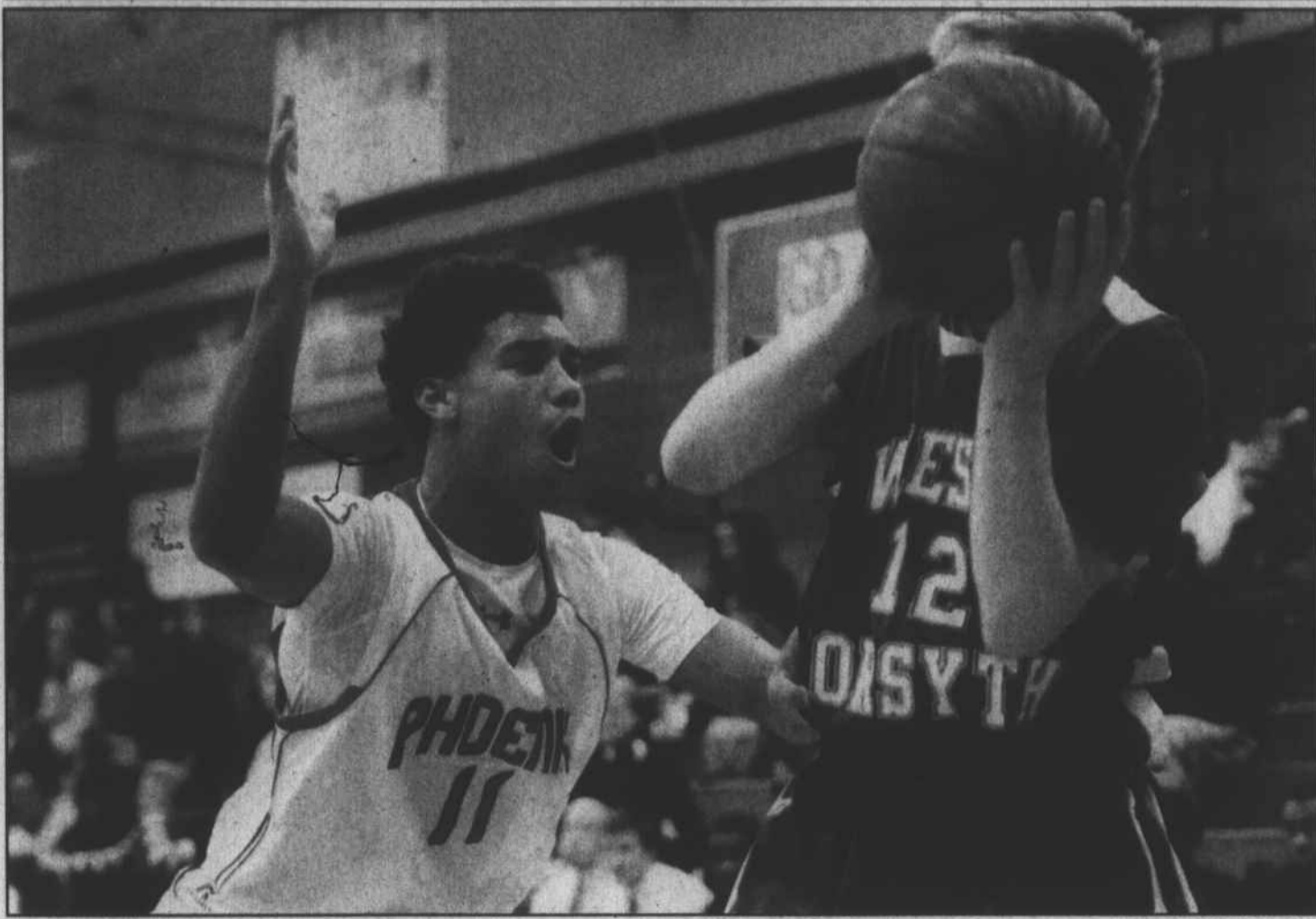


# SPORTS WEEK

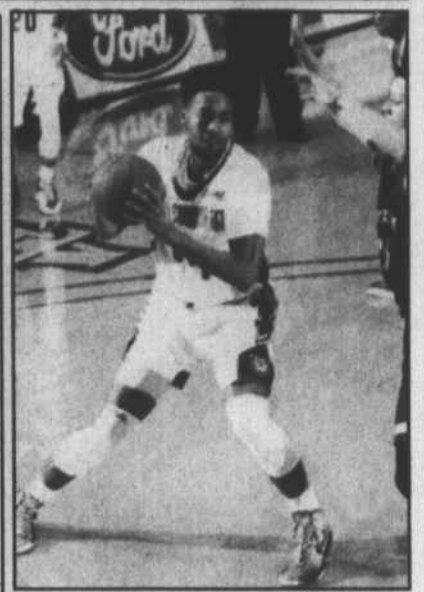
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JANUARY 1, 2015



Brandon Palmer (11) leads the press for Winston-Salem Prep's stifling defense.

Photos by Charles E. Leftwich Jr.



A&T Photo by Kevin L. Dorsey

Steven Burrough in action.

## Aggies break long losing skid

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The North Carolina A&T men's basketball team doesn't care that it was against a Division III opponent. The Aggies also don't care that they needed two late steals to do it.

After 12 straight losses, the only thing that mattered to the Aggies in their Sunday, Dec. 28 58-54 win over North Carolina Wesleyan at Corbett Sports Center was the victory. The team last won on Friday, Nov. 14, 2014, when it took down Greensboro College in the season opener.

"We were not able to get out of first gear effort-wise," said A&T head coach Cy Alexander. "I wasn't particularly happy with our effort, but I'm happy we were able to win the game because we needed it. Now we have something to build on."



Alexander

Junior Bruce Beckford led A&T with 18 points and seven rebounds. Redshirt freshman James Whitaker had 12 points, while junior Arturs Bremers finished with 11. Sophomore Steven Burrough added seven points and a career-high seven blocks.

The Aggies (2-12) spent one month away from Corbett. In the process, the Aggies had close calls against St. Louis, Mississippi Valley State and Radford. But they were not able to win any of those games. After a 71-57 setback at Kent State on Dec. 19, the Aggies took five days off and did not return to Greensboro until Dec. 26. They had one light day of practice before preparing for the Bishops.

"We were definitely sluggish and played as if we were stuck in mud," said Alexander. "We were a day late and a dollar short to every rebound and every loose ball."

The Bishops (6-4) did have an impressive effort. They never trailed by more than nine points and an Adrian Moore 3-pointer tied the game at 50 with 1:48 to play. Seconds later, A&T's freshman point guard slapped the ball away from Adrian Moore and raced to the other end where he was fouled. He made one of two free throws to give A&T the lead again.

On the Bishops' next possession, Beckford stepped in front of Moore's pass for another steal that led to two more Aggies free throws. A&T's lead went to four, 55-51, on two Whitaker free throws with 17 seconds remaining.

The win ends A&T's longest losing streak since the 2005-06 season when they lost 13 straight.

See Prep on B2

## Secret of Their Success

### Prep earns bragging rights again

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE FOR THE CHRONICLE

The final minutes of tightly-contested basketball games bring out the best in Winston-Salem Prep's junior varsity. It's during those crunch-time stretches when the Phoenix delivers and opponents fall by the wayside.

Prep bagged its third Lash-Chronicle championship in four years by staging late-game comebacks against pesky Reagan (60-53 in semifinals) and resilient West Forsyth (69-64 in finals) last week. The common denominator in both contests was the Phoenix's uncanny ability to grab rebounds and chase down loose balls on every critical possession.

"We place heavy emphasis on making those plays at the end of games which determines the final outcome," said



Coach Tibbs

Coach Bill Tibbs. "We feel like we should get every 50-50 ball. What it comes down to is playing hard. Good things happen when you play hard consistently. We tell our kids all the time that

offense is exciting, but defense wins titles. Sometimes when you've won in the past, players listen. This group has bought into what we teach. They listen."

Pressure defense sets the standard. Prep plays at a frenzied, but not desperate pace. It's a calculating approach. Over the course of a game, the cumulative effect of Prep's pressure causes rushed shots and ill-timed passes, which frequently leads to deflections, steals and points in transition for the Phoenix.

Prep wears opponents down because it can attack in defensive waves by pressing and trapping. The Phoenix has several rangy players, who make it difficult for opposing ball-handlers to operate efficiently. Brandon Palmer, Jonathan McLaurin and Justin Carter use their size and quickness to clog the passing lanes and neutralize fast breaking teams. Palmer and Carter are both swing players who play multiple positions. McLaurin is a post player who's agile enough to serve as the lead defender on Prep's presses

## Salem's Mojica makes academic team

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Salem College's Nataly Mojica joined just eight other NCAA DIII soccer players on the NSCAA Academic All-South team.

The senior from Dallas, Texas is majoring in Economics, International Business, and Spanish and has a 3.72 cumulative grade point average. Mojica was a four-year starting center midfielder for Salem, and was a four year Great South All-Conference player.

She started all 23 games for the Spirits this season and captained the team to an 18-5 overall record. She finished with 8 goals

and 7 assists for 23 points to help the team win its third-straight GSAC Regular Season Title and their second-straight GSAC Tournament Championship. Mojica was the GSAC Player of the Week once and was on the GSAC All-Academic Team every year she was eligible.

She has earned several honors at Salem



Mojica

as well. She is a member of Mortar Board (Senior Honor & Leadership Society), Omicron Delta Kappa National Leadership Honor Society, and Omicron Delta Epsilon (International Economics Honor Society). She won the Hispanic Scholarship Fund Scholar in 2011, 2012 and 2014. She was in the Alpha Lambda Delta Freshman Honor Society and a LeaderShape Institute participant. She has been on the Dean's List every semester and won the Mary Ardrey Stough Kimbrough Leadership Award. She also was nominated by the dean of Salem College for the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Scholarship.

## A COMEBACK?

### Carver ballers showing promise

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE FOR THE CHRONICLE

Carver's varsity basketball team just might be on track to experience its first winning season since President Barack Obama's first year in the White House. The Yellowjackets, who won seven of their first 10 games, have the look of a legitimate contender in the chase for the Western Piedmont 2-A Conference title.

Positive signs abound for a Carver program that went 1-19 in the not-too-distant past (2012-13 season). The overall talent level is higher than it's been in recent years. Coach Wil Perry took command last

year as head coach and while the overall record was below .500 (12-15), the Yellowjackets more than held their own against conference competition.

Carver (7-3 in conference a year ago) was the WPC runner-up for the regular season and the conference tournament. The Yellowjackets exited the Class 2-A state playoffs early, but gave a strong indication of better things to come in a 58-53 first-round loss to Central Academy.

"I'm pleased with the progress we're making," said Perry. "They're growing, working hard and trusting each other more and more. Our com-

See Carver on B2



Photo by Craig Greenlee

Jachia Powell provides interior defense and rebounding for the Yellowjackets.

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