

SPORTS



James Cuthbertson
Post Sports Writer

A Wish List For 1990 Year In Local Sports

Wishes for 1990 ...

- ... Twenty-five victories for the rejuvenated Hornets and a finish above the Minnesota Timberwolves in the Midwest Division.
- ... For Robert Reid to finish his outstanding NBA career in Charlotte.
- ... Rex Chapman to keep emerging as the outstanding superstar that he is.
- ... Dell Curry to continue on his road to prove that he is a great NBA player.
- ... The Harding High School Rams of Coach Bob Moore to have many games like their early season upset of A.C. Flora.
- ... The basketball program at JCSU under Coach Joyner to continue on its road to prominence in the CIAA Conference.
- ... All CIAA status for Smith basketball players Columbus Parker, Mark Sherrill, Reginald Torrence and Christopher Hicks.
- ... The women's basketball program at JCSU under Coach Hythia Evans Leibert to rock the CIAA Conference.
- ... All CIAA status for Kim Brewington, Julie Hogan, Tracey Hilliard and Darlene Gordon.
- ... An NFL league team in Charlotte named the Charlotte Titans.
- ... A Mid-Eastern Conference tournament basketball championship for all of our local NC A&T fans, some of the most loyal college fans that I have ever seen.
- ... More stamina for Tyrone Bogues who is emerging as one of the best point guards in the NBA, despite his 5-3 height. He very seldom makes a turnover.
- ... Increased playing time for the awesome Armon Gilliam who shows us what a power forward should be.
- ... Continued sellouts for the Charlotte Hornets.
- ... More wins for JCSU, UNC Charlotte, Davidson and North Carolina.
- ... A CIAA football championship for Coach Horace Small and the stampeding Golden Bulls of the gridiron.
- ... City tennis championships for my nephews Comyrton, Melvin, Ritchie, Anthony, Darian and Cottes.
- ... A good start in tennis for my niece Shantria who is four years old and has already been named as a Homecoming Queen for her Pop Warner football team, PAL North.
- ... Good health and strength for myself, all the members of my family and my brothers and sisters of the world. We are all in this together. United we stand; divided we fall.
- ... An on-campus football stadium seating 7,500 at JCSU.
- ... A CIAA tournament championship for the Basketbolls and a trip to the NCAA playoffs.
- ... A new field house seating 7,500 for JCSU.
- ... A top notch Charlotte Christmas tournament hosted by the Golden Bulls for Coach Joyner.
- ... NFL status for two outstanding football players at JCSU -- linebacker Otis Prioleau and wide receiver Joachim Weinberg.
- ... A CIAA basketball tournament in Charlotte and Landover, Maryland instead of Norfolk and Richmond.
- ... Best wishes for the CIAA Conference office and my friends Anne, Linda, Danny and Leon.

Notes & Musings ...

With the admittance of Pennsylvania State to the Big Ten Athletic Conference and the search for a 12th member to round out the difference, look for some Big Eastern and Mid-western universities who are football and basketball powerhouses to consider joining the Big Ten.... Watch out for Pittsburgh, Syracuse or Louisville.

How would the ACC look with two additional teams who are natural rivals and would enhance the conference's image? How about an ACC with Clemson, Georgia Tech, North Carolina, Wake Forest, N.C. State, Maryland, Duke, Virginia, West Virginia and South Carolina.

How about a Mississippi Valley Conference with Vanderbilt, Kentucky, Louisville, Virginia Tech, Mississippi, Mississippi State, Tulane, Southern Methodist, Rice, Baylor, Texas Tech and Texas Christian.

How about a Southeastern Conference with Alabama, Florida, Auburn, Tennessee, Louisiana, Georgia, Florida State, Miami of Florida, Texas, Arkansas, Texas A&M and Houston.

How about a Sun Belt Conference with UNCC, UAB, Western Kentucky, South Alabama, Jacksonville, South Florida, Old Dominion, Virginia Commonwealth, New Orleans and Evansville.

How about a Mid-Southern Conference with JCSU, Morehouse, Paine, Tuskegee, Livingstone, NCCU, WSSU, FSU and Benedict.

How about a Mid-Eastern Conference with NC A&T, S. C. State, Maryland Eastern Shore, Coppin State, Howard, Florida A&M, Morgan State, Bethune-Cookman, Delaware State and Norfolk State.

NFL Playoffs Start

The Associated Press

Two years ago, the San Francisco 49ers finished 13-2 and were prohibitive favorites to reach the Super Bowl. Then they were summarily dispatched by the Minnesota Vikings in their first playoff game at home.

That fact should be kept in mind as the 49ers (14-2) enter this season's playoffs with the best chance to repeat as NFL champions since the Pittsburgh

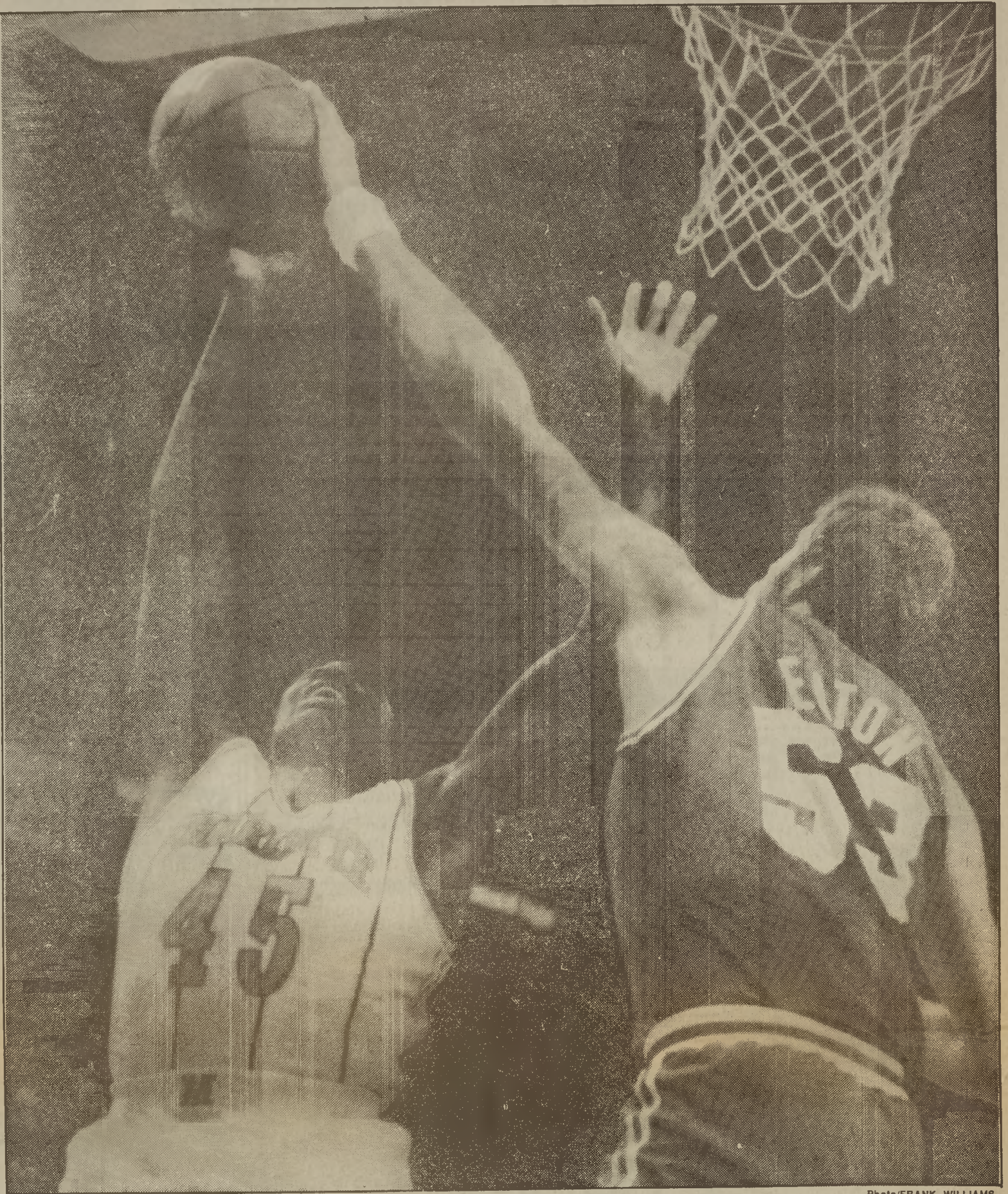
Steelers last accomplished the feat a decade ago.

Or as Coach George Seifert said after the season ended Sunday: "The trick now is to keep it going."

Still, it's not difficult to classify the 49ers as favorites going into the Super Bowl tournament that will culminate in New Orleans on Jan. 28.

It's also not difficult to suggest

See **PLAYOFFS** On Page 9B



Photo/FRANK WILLIAMS

Things haven't gone swimmingly for the Charlotte Hornets of late, especially when it comes to finding the basket. In this

case, Utah Jazz center Mark Eaton blocks Armon Gilliam's shot. The Hornets play the Cleveland Cavaliers tonight.

Hornets' Play Souring Love

This Just Isn't The Same Team In Performance And Spunk

By **HERB WHITE**
Post Managing Editor

Remember Charlotte's love affair with professional basketball? It was great, the outpouring of affection for those lovable Charlotte Hornets, who gave the home fans some thrills in finishing 20-62 in its rookie season.

Well those days are on hold for many, as the Hornets are threatening to sink to new lows in on-court performance.

The first thing people look for with this team isn't necessarily won-loss records--it is an expansion team, folks--but the HQ (Hustle Quotient). Last year's crew had if nothing else but the desire to fly around the floor after loose balls and giving the NBA's heavyweights a tough time. Heck, even if Charlotte was blown out on occasion, the Hornets were scrappy enough to give the fans a good time and competitive games most of the time.

But something's gone sour

this year. The guys in teal just don't seem to have that HQ folks loved last season. The mistakes are more easily seen and fans--and media alike are less tolerant of those goofs. One could easily point a finger in all kinds of areas, so let's proceed.

• **Coaching.** More than one person has wondered aloud why Dell Curry has been sitting on Dick Harter's bench for so long. The sharpshooting guard has been the Hornets' best outside scoring threat all year, but couldn't crack the starting lineup until tonight's game with Cleveland at the Charlotte Coliseum.

Kelly Tripucka, who was brought to Charlotte last year for the sole purpose of scoring, has been miserable most of the season. In the Hornets' last two outings, against San Antonio and Utah, Tripucka has thrown up several airballs from within 10 feet of the basket. Yet he's been a mainstay.

And Stuart Gray hasn't done

much on the court other than nearly choke the life out of Los Angeles Laker Michael Cooper. Harter was intent on getting Gray in the off-season, but it hasn't worked to the Hornets' advantage so far, giving only token support as a backup to J.R. Reid. Can Charlotte get Earl Cureton back from Italy?

• **Balance.** Granted, there is a problem with developing chemistry on a team that has seen more than its share of injuries. With the lineup being juggled constantly to achieve some balance, you wonder if it'll happen before the natives get really restless.

J.R. Reid and Rex Chapman, the franchise's prized youngsters, have shown their youth, with inconsistent outings of late. Chapman started the season on fire, but has been more like an ember at times. Reid, who is expected to knock folks out on his way to points, hasn't been the intimidator the Hornets' brass hoped for. But both should get

better once they master the intricacies of the NBA.

• **Finding the best players.** General manager Carl Scheer is going to have to look high and low for players to solve the matchup problems the Hornets face every night.

From the inception of the franchise, Scheer has stuck to a philosophy of mixing young and veteran players. The only problem is that in most cases, the Hornets are shorter than most opponents.

It got to Harter after a recent loss. "I'm not the director of player personnel (Gene Little is) and I'm not the general manager," he said. "All I can do is try to coach the players I have."

One player who has done well is Armon Gilliam, who was brought to Charlotte in a surprise trade for Kurt Rambis. He has the physical tools to play, which is a good move on Scheer's part. Once he learns the system and becomes comfortable

See **WHAT'S** On Page 8B

NFL Isn't Betting On NBA's Suit

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) --- The National Football League is supporting the National Basketball Association's lawsuit to stop Oregon from allowing betting on NBA games but the NFL is not sure the basketball league will win.

"It's up to the NBA to make any conjecture about the outcome" of the lawsuit filed Thursday in U.S. District Court of Eugene, said Jim Heffernan, NFL director of public relations, from the league office in New York.

Heffernan said Friday he couldn't comment on whether

the NFL was involved with the NBA's preparation of its lawsuit to stop the Oregon Lottery from adding NBA games to its popular Sports Action betting contest on NFL games.

He said the NFL had no plans to join the NBA in the lawsuit, but added, "should they ask us to, we would certainly be willing to discuss participating to some extent."

The NFL has criticized Sports Action but the league hasn't sued the Oregon Lottery.

"That was just our decision," Heffernan said. "The position

taken by the league, our position all along, has been in opposition to the Oregon game. We're opposed to lotteries of all forms. It's something we'll be monitoring."

Jim Davey, the lottery director, has said the NFL might have avoided a lawsuit because league officials decided they probably couldn't win in court. But Heffernan challenged that assumption, saying that "I don't think anything can be inferred by our action or inaction."

Heffernan said the NBA is in a different position because it has

a team in Oregon, the Portland Trail Blazers, which Davey has said will be excluded from the Sports Action game as a courtesy.

The NBA's lawsuit contends that Sports Action is not a legal lottery because it is a game of skill rather than chance. The suit also alleges infringement on trademark and property rights.

Heffernan acknowledged that the NFL didn't win on those issues during a 1976 Delaware court battle concerning a game

See **LEAGUES** On Page 10B