

Wellness important to Burrell, Hornets' chances

By Karl Petraroja
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Charlotte Hornets forward Scott Burrell can't wait for the new NBA season to start.

After playing 65 games in the 1994-95 season, Burrell was held to just 20 games last year. He got off to a late start after recovering from a partially torn right achilles tendon from the 94-95 season. When he finally got back on the court last November, Burrell dislocated his shoulder, then dislocated the same shoulder five weeks later in practice. Burrell was left feeling very frustrated.

"It wasn't like it was a hamstring or an ankle, it was a serious injury that you can't do anything about, a dislocation

Veteran Charlotte forward says he's back to 80 percent healed

of a shoulder," he said. "It's just a freak accident. The play was a freak accident."

"I'm going to go out there and try to do the same things I know I can do and try to get back in the shape of things and let my game come to me because I haven't played since December in a five-on-five situation."

When Burrell's at his best, he plays very tough defense. He was becoming known as one of the top defensive small forwards in the NBA when his achilles injury sidelined him in his second season. Burrell is expected to fit into the

Hornets' new style of tough defense through the "Hard Ball" theme of rookie coach Dave Cowens.

"Nastiness comes from within a person," Burrell said. "Once we're out on the court, you've got to play defense. I think sometimes people can't be nasty, it's just not in their personality, but if we just go out there and play tough defense, that will win some games for us and put fear in a lot of teams, which we didn't have last year."

Burrell, who says his arm and shoulder are back to about 80 percent, is not just a tough

defender. He's got a pretty decent jump shot which he likes to hit with regularity from three-point territory. He averaged 11.5 points a game in 1994-95 and 13.2 points last year. Burrell hopes he can shake the rustiness and get back to being an all-round player.

"Right now I'm working on all the aspects of my game," he said. "I haven't played since December and it's going to take sometime for all my things to come back to me," Burrell said. "I just got to go out there and play hard and try to work on all my skills and hopefully, they'll all come back."

Cowens is pleased with what he's seen so far in training camp from Burrell. Anytime a

player is coming back from a serious injury, he's out to prove something to his teammates and fans.

"I know that Scott Burrell kind of feels like the forgotten Hornet," Cowens said before training camp started. "He wants to do well and show people that he's back to his old form. He has a big heart and I just hope that we can keep him healthy because we're going to need him and Muggsy (Bogues, healthy now after knee surgery) to have a successful season."

There will be some important new faces to the Hornets in center Vlade Divac and power forward Anthony Mason. Since Bogues only played six games last year, he's basically start-

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PHOTO/CLAVIN FERGUSON

After missing all but 20 games in 1995-96, Charlotte Hornets forward Scott Burrell is trying to make another comeback from injury. After a year of rehabilitation, Burrell says he's about 80 percent recovered.

The Running Man

Johnson makes most of chance

By Herbet L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Anthony Johnson's waited a long time to have a starring role in an NFL backfield.

And like any good understudy, he's making the most of his turn as leading man.

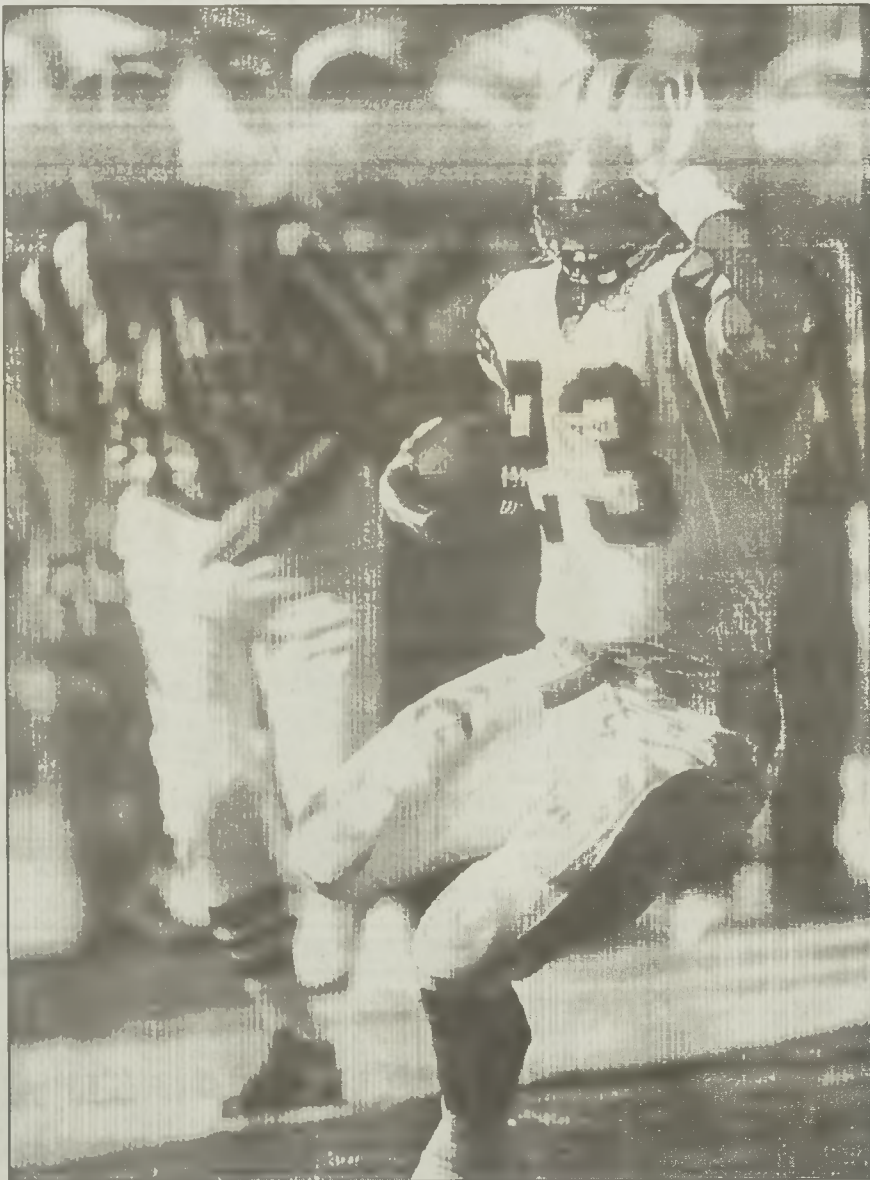
The Carolina Panthers running back goes for his third straight 100-yard game Sunday against New Orleans at Ericsson Stadium, something that he didn't accomplish once in college at Notre Dame or in seven professional seasons. In last week's 45-13 win over St. Louis, Johnson ran 22 times for a team record 126 yards. While his success as Tshminga Biakabutuka's replacement is stunning, Johnson is quick to give credit to others.

"I feel humbled," he said. "I feel thankful, first to God and also to the guys up front - (fullback) Howard Griffith, the tight ends, the o-line. They did a good job pounding them."

When Biakabutuka went down with a season-ending knee injury in Jacksonville three weeks ago, Johnson, a stalwart on special teams, inherited the job. He promptly fumbled away a chance for Carolina to mount a comeback against the Jaguars but has since put together the Panthers' best rushing performances this season. He's 10th in the NFC with 303 yards, and his 4.8 average per carry is tops in the conference.

"He's come in and filled in great for Tim," tight end Wesley Walls said. "Anthony has not let up a bit. The offen-

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PHOTO/VERN VERNA

After seven seasons of being a role player, Carolina Panthers running back Anthony Johnson is adjusting to leading man. Johnson is 10th in the NFC in rushing with 303 yards, and his 4.8 yards average is tops in the conference.

N.Y. loves 'Bernie Baseball'

By Tom Withers
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BALTIMORE - Hundreds of Yankees fans stood behind the team's dugout soaking up every ounce of the Game 5 victory over Baltimore that sent their team into the World Series.

Clapping in unison, they began to chant for their main man. "Ber-nie Base-ball, Ber-nie Base-ball," they sang as Bernie Williams came onto the field at Camden Yards for some postgame television interviews. Then the fans began signing another tune, "M-V-P, M-V-P."

Williams smiled and acknowledged his fans. But he didn't gloat, didn't prance, and didn't showboat. He simply acted like he always does despite being the best baseball player of this October.

Williams went 9-for-19 with two homers and six RBIs against Baltimore as the Yankees eliminated the Orioles in five games to advance to their first World Series since 1981.

For his effort, Williams was named the American League championship series MVP, and he may have finally awakened the rest of the baseball to realize he's also one of the game's budding superstars.

"He's a special player," Orioles manager Davey Johnson said. "He's taken it to another level as far as I'm concerned."

Williams won the series opener with an 11th-inning homer. In Game 3, he dashed home with the go-ahead run when the ball slipped out of third baseman Todd Zeile's hand. On Saturday, he put the Yankees ahead for good with a two-run homer in the first inning of an 8-4 win.

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Black N.C. families build golf course

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MAPLEVILLE, N.C. - Five black families in Franklin County have broken with tradition and opened a golf and country club, one of the few black-owned clubs in the U.S. "This means a lot to me," said Mary Bridges, 75, a mem-

ber of the Massenburg family, in an interview with The News & Observer of Raleigh. "I had to shed some tears. We were all born in this area."

The Massenburgs joined with the Solomons, Keiths, Stricklands and Browns in opening nine holes Thursday

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Bulls look to buck Broncos, go over .500

By Herbet L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

One step forward, one step back.

After watching its chances to win the CIAA football championship shot down in a 21-7 loss to Livingstone, Johnson C. Smith will try to move above .500 against Fayetteville State Saturday. For Golden Bulls coach Daryl McNeill, there's some frustration in not being able to get a winning streak started, but the improvement is obvious.

"We'd like to do that, any coach would," McNeill said. "But I reflect back to last year this time when we were 0-6, so we're a much improved foot-

ball team. What we've got to do now is stick together, keep working and get ready."

The Bulls (3-3 overall, 1-3 CIAA) played hard but couldn't overcome three early fumbles that resulted in 14 first-half points for Livingstone. The Bears then turned loose its running game, which piled up a season-high 257 yards against Smith compared to 61 rushing yards for the Bulls. Together, they were too much to overcome.

"We had turnovers early against a good ball club, and you just can't make those kinds of mistakes," McNeill said.

Mentally, Smith struggled with the high of beating S.C.

State, followed by the death during its bye week of receiver Eugene Beamus. It showed on the field as the Bulls were off just enough to miss a chance to get back into contention.

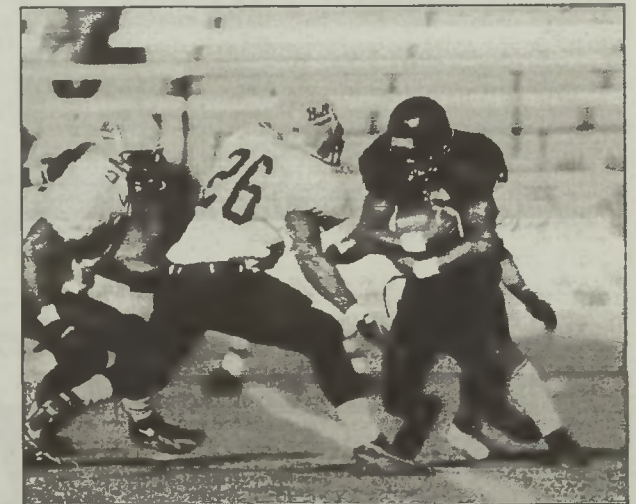
"Overall, I felt we weren't really ready to play coming into the game with the big win over S.C. State, the week off, having a player killed," McNeill said. "It was one of those situations where I felt we weren't really ready but we were ready. We'll learn from it and move on to Fayetteville."

To get back on track, Smith will have to take advantage of its opportunities. Bulls receivers dropped a couple of sure touchdowns against

Livingstone and wound up with no points when they couldn't put pressure on the Bears to respond. Fayetteville, which has one just one in six games, isn't one of the CIAA's top teams. For a team that's trying to establish its own identity, Smith gets a Broncos team that couldn't have shown up at a more opportune time.

• Smith will play its first overseas game next month.

The Bulls will play Morehouse in the African Heritage Classic Nov. 16 in Johannesburg, South Africa. Both teams will spend four days in South Africa, with sightseeing and cultural activities planned. The game will be broadcast by BET.



PHOTO/CLAVIN FERGUSON

Johnson C. Smith defenders Selester Stewart (26) and Jamie Lacy close in on Livingstone receiver Torrence Stevenson in the Bears' 21-7 win last week at Memorial Stadium.