

Smith goes for seventh win

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Early in the season, Smith moved the ball, including a 38-point outburst against Division I-AA S.C. State, but the emphasis has shifted. Now that the offense is less proficient, the Bulls are trying to find new ways to score.

"There's a definite effort to change, but still you have to keep pushing for the offense and defense to contribute to

that main goal of winning," McNeill said. "Earlier in the year, it was all special teams, then defense has taken it all along. Offensively, we've done enough to win football games. Of course, we'd like to have more point production."

At this point in the season, McNeill said Smith's record hasn't been a surprise. Although the Bulls were picked to finish last in the

CIAA, McNeill said it was only a matter of time before they'd start winning more often than not.

"We expected it last year," he said. "It just happened for us this year. I'm not actually surprised because we had some feelings about the abilities we had. If it hadn't been for a turnover or two, we could've been in the same situation last year."

Game determines champ

Independence ready for West Charlotte

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"They do have the No. 1 ranked offense in the state but we have the No. 1 ranked defense in the state, and to be honest with you our special teams is better than theirs, so I hope it comes down to special teams play."

When the Lions have the ball, the Patriots will try to create confusion with a defense which has only given up six touchdowns in its last 10 games.

"I think the key to the game for us is we have to get to the quarterback. Matkins is 6-5 quarterback that is a Division I prospect," Jester said. "We want to put some pressure on him, and make him think about some things, make some bad decisions."

Not doubt, the pressure Jester is referring to circles around his all-state inside linebacker, D'Angelo Lloyd.

"D'Angelo has been ready for this game for four years, ever since he put on an Independence football jersey, but he has some special players around that can play too," Jester said.

Offensively, Independence has racked up 26 points per game, but Jester has no plans to con-

trol the clock.

"If we can score, we're going to try to score. We have to mix it up, there hasn't been a time when we've had to rely on our offense to win games, it's been our defense," he said.

Although both teams are undefeated, with identical records, this Southwestern 4A Conference dogfight is billed as the game of the year.

"This is probably going to be the easiest preparation week, because we do a lot of the same things that they do on both sides of the ball," Jester said. "It's tough going 10-0. Our character has been tested several times this year, but we are already in the playoffs. This is just for bragging rights."

Curry a link to the Hornets' past

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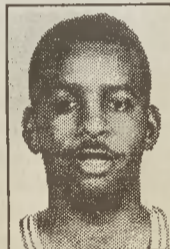
team, which is definitely what we need, so I'm excited about it. I think that if we stay healthy and everybody lives up to our own expectations and not what other people want us to do, we'll have a good team."

Cowens expects Curry and Glen Rice to be the go-to guys, down the stretch when games are on the line. He found out during the preseason, the two can "just flat-out shoot the ball." He also expects a lot of leadership from his veterans. Curry wasn't named as one of the teams co-captains, that honor going to Bogues and Rice but Curry feels the leadership role will be spread among many different players.

"Everybody was talking about Larry was the big leader, he was but we all took part in that role, Muggsy and myself, so it's not going to be anything different," Curry said.

"Guys know that we are professionals here, guys know what they have to do to get themselves ready but every-

body will have some type of role in that but people like myself and Muggsy will stand out more, because we've been here the longest. It's just natural."



Curry

What's becoming all too natural the last few seasons, is hearing boos cascading down on the Hornets from the faithful. Poor home efforts late last season against Chicago and Milwaukee killed the Hornets playoff hopes. It looked like the last thing the Hornets wanted to do was play a basketball game. Curry says with this year's new theme, "Hard Ball," the Hornets will play hard every game.

"We definitely want to do that. That's professionalism," he said. "Those games that you speak of, I don't know if whether it was we just weren't playing hard, or we just got stale. Now we have a whole

new look, so I don't foresee any games like that this year."

The Bugs' new look may not come as much on offense, where the team expects to run a lot, just like under former coach Allan Bristow.

"From what I'm told, we're going to go up and down so I don't think my role will change that much at all," Curry said.

"Whether we go up and down or set up and call plays, you still got to get the ball to people that are going to score."

Curry played in all 82 games last season, starting 27. He had a decent year, averaging 14.5 points and shooting 40.4 percent from three-point range. The Hornets expect to score enough, though they struggled offensively in the preseason. It's on defense, the Hornets must put up a bold new look.

"Hard work, that's definitely what we need," Curry said. "Some toughness, that's what makes good teams, so we're not going to lack either one."

Now the Hornets must deliver on "Hard Ball" or expect to have a very hard time winning.

Robinson ready to lead Central

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season the team faded in the second half in crucial games.

"We are not bad players," she said. "We had our problems in the second half. We would just get tired. We have to work on it."

Robinson is not neglecting the offense, which averaged a dismal 57 per game compared to 72.7 for opponents.

"We have put in a new offense," she said. "We are learning to look around-recognize and take advantage of the openings. It's really different for them."

Robinson is also at a disadvantage in size. Her tallest player, a six foot center, will see only sporadic minutes off the bench. Her starting center will be 5-11. But Robinson is quick to point out the bright spots.

Senior guard Michelle Harrison was a named pre-season all-CIAA. Senior forward Kristy Daughtry garnered honorable mention. Harrison feels things are looking up.

"I think we're definitely going to turn the program around," Harrison said. "We're looking to go nowhere but up."

"In my opinion, we can get it done-turn this thing around in one year," she added. "I know

that is my goal. I think the other guys see it as a team goal."

Harrison saw the problem last year as one of a lack discipline, as well as the inability to finish a game strong.

"I think we need to work on every aspect of the game," Harrison said. "Last year, we did not start playing until the second half. We had to play hard to catch up. We had problems as far as substitutions. Some of us played the majority of the game. It was hard at the end to finish strong."

Harrison believes that Robinson has brought a new winning spirit to the team.

"She brings discipline, respect and commitment," Harrison said. "She definitely gets the respect and is committed to the program. She has a winning attitude. You can't help but want to win."

Robinson has also brought the schools first Women's Classic. Central, Livingstone, Morris and USC-Aiken will meet Nov. 22-23 at McDougall Gym. The men's team will meet Payne on Saturday, followed by the women's consolation and championship games.

"I am really excited about the classic," said Robinson. "We don't often get that kind of exposure. The men's game will

definitely draw people."

Harrison is optimistic about a winning start.

"If we win, that will be a great way to start the season," she said. "It will be a stepping stone for the rest of the season."

No matter what, Robinson is living out her dream.

"One thing about the program is there is no pressure. We're predicted to finish last," she said. "There is only one way to go - up."

Tiger Woods' impact on golf is felt by African American golfers

By Eric Bozeman
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Tiger! Tiger! Tiger!

He has broken into the game with the flair of a big cat swiping at its helpless prey. Tiger Woods has arrived, and black golfers are taking note of every swing.

In a conversation with a couple of middle aged golf fans at Revolution Golf Course, Woods has become a drum major for generations of black golfers.

Carol Clark, who has been playing for 10 years, is a staunch Woods supporter.

"I thought, it's great for the game, Tiger makes a lot of people around him better because they don't want to be beat by him," Clark said. "It's amazing the impact that he is already having. I go to Taylor's barber shop and you'd be surprised at the guys who don't even play golf are talking about it."

Bob Ellis, a club pro at Revolution, says the enthusiasm that Woods has brought to the hearts and minds of black youths will be part of the sport for some time.

"I don't think this is a passing phase," Ellis said. "I teach out at Revolution, and I've had 50 kids out there wanting to learn how to play."

Ellis hopes that Woods, who has already won two tournaments as a pro, will redirect the attention of reckless youngsters.

"Golf is kind of a gentlemen's game, and I think it would keep the kids minds off those guns," he said. "In my opinion, it's not that the kids don't want to play, it's that they can't afford to play."

Clark, who has been teaching his 8-year-old son to play, feels that starting early is the key with such a demanding sport.

"Some of our kids have not even seen a person of color playing golf," Clark said. "My son has as pretty a swing as you every want to see, and he loves golf. I love it too, but I just started playing 10 years ago, and my son will be much better than I'll ever be. It takes years to perfect that swing."

Even though Woods is a black man, there are those who have said he has denied his heritage. Clark doesn't agree.

"They were trying to label him as a great black golfer, and Tiger was saying, 'Why can't I be a great golfer,' and the media took it and ran with it saying, 'Oh he doesn't want to be black,'" Clark said. "What Tiger was saying, was 'Don't look at me as a black golfer, look at me as a golfer.'"

"You see, white folks think its their sport, and I'll tell you one thing, I can take five or 10 of the



PHOTOWADE NASH

Tiger Woods, the 20-year-old golf phenom, has had a positive impact on African Americans. More blacks are not only playing the game, but paying more attention to it than before.

best black golfers, and play with anybody around."

The original drum major of golf in the modern era has been Michael Jordan. With no disrespect to Calvin Peete, youngsters have been more able to identify with the flamboyant basketball player.

"Jordan is good, and will probably do commercials for the game, but he is a basketball player, and he can only be so good. I still say it takes years to factor the timing into that swing," Clark said.

What is needed by the game's newly appointed ambassadors of the game is even more than just their fresh faces gracing golf courses around the country.

"Michael Jordan is building driving ranges, but why not build a course where the kids can play all day," Ellis said. "That's how you get your game sharp."

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