

Matkins makes his call early

Continued from page 1B

to experience this. This is truly a blessing. I appreciated every phone call. It's not a burden, but they do call all the time of the night and wake you up."

To handle the volume of calls coming into the Matkins' home, two additional phone lines were installed. The entire family — father Larry, a Charlotte police officer; mother Joan, an administrative coordinator at First Union and brother Gerald — had

All-America going to USC

a hand in helping Matkins decide. Then they swore themselves to secrecy until it was time to tell the world.

"It's been one of the great experiences of our lives," Joan Matkins said. "This last week has been chaotic. After we took our visit a couple of weeks ago, we probably knew then where Keith would be attending col-

lege, so it was hard keeping it under a cap for a week."

"Coach Scott and his staff have laid out a foundation for winning. I want to play and be a part of the building of the college of champions."

Besides South Carolina's emergence in football and basketball, Matkins said he was impressed by the school's academic programs. He hopes to

major in physical education and become a teacher or coach when his playing days end. From his first visit to the Columbia campus, the USC family — including President John Palms — treated him like family.

"South Carolina just welcomed me," he said. "The moment I stepped on the campus, it was like 'We want you, we want you to play both sports.'"

Hearing that, apparently, was worth the wait.

QB still has a date with destiny

Continued from 1B

Then there's the legacy of West Charlotte, which could also be renamed Quarterback High. The list is impressive in just the last five years alone: Pep Hamilton won the black college national championship last season at Howard. David Green started and struggled with a winless Duke squad. Benny Council, who led West Charlotte to the state championship in 1995, is catching passes as a North Carolina receiver.

"I've learned a lot from top

players in the past," Matkins said. "They get you ready for games."

Now there's Matkins, who feels it's an honor to be following a long line of passing Lions. In a way, his success is theirs, and vice versa. You can't afford to slide at Quarterback High.

"I can't let those guys down," Matkins said. "I can't let my friends and family and community down. I hope to be a great quarterback at the University of South Carolina, make my family and friends proud."

Opponents will be proud this

fall, too, especially if they nail Matkins and the West Charlotte. The Lions are usually the standard for football excellence in this neck of the woods, and Matkins' reputation will surely make him a target of everyone's best effort.

"I don't mind having that pressure on me," he said. "I saw what it was like for Steve (Shipp, a Florida-bound receiver who played at WCHS) last year and how he handled it. I enjoy the challenge."

Not that Matkins won't have some help. West Charlotte's

loaded again, especially on offense, where the points pile up quicker than O.J. Simpson sightings. If the Lions' defense is stout, Matkins could elevate himself from can't-miss prospect to prep legend.

"I think we've got a chance to win the state championship," he says. "We have a pretty young team this year, but we're fast. We've got players like Reggie Blackmon, Rashad Hair and Derrick Green. Those are top players."

And so is Keith Matkins, Quarterback High's main man.

Doby remembers breaking barriers

By David Maraniss
THE WASHINGTON POST

There is only one person alive who knows what it was like to be a black ballplayer integrating the white world of the major leagues during the historic summer of 1947. If you are young or only a casual follower of baseball, perhaps you have not heard of him.

Larry Doby is 72 years old now, and his calm manner seems out of style in this unsporting age of self-obsession. He is neither a celebrity nor the stuff of myth, simply a quiet hero with an incomparable story to tell.

This season, as the national pastime commemorates the 50th anniversary of the breaking of the color line, the attention has focused inevitably on the first black player of the modern era, Jackie Robinson, who shines alone in baseball history as the symbol of pride against prejudice. But Doby was there, too, blazing his own trail later that same year. He was brought up by the Cleveland Indians on July 5, 1947, three months after Robinson broke in with the Brooklyn Dodgers. Some of the strange and awful things that happened to No. 42 in the National League happened to No. 14 in the American League as well.

"I think I'm ahead of a lot of people because I don't hate and I'm not bitter," Doby says softly now. He has spent a lifetime "turning negatives into positives," but he is also sharp and direct in pointing out what he considers to be myths surrounding the events of a half-century ago.

Jackie Robinson in death has gone the way of most American

martyrs, transformed from an outsider struggling against the prevailing culture into a legend embraced by it. In the retelling of his legend it sometimes sounds as though most people always loved him. Doby knows better. He was there and he remembers. After that first season, he and Robinson barnstormed the country with Negro leagues all-stars. They rarely discussed their common experience in white baseball ("no need to, we both knew what the situation was"), but a few times late at night they stayed up naming the players in each league who were giving them problems because they were black.

It was a long list. "Many people in this world live on lies. Know what amazes me today?" Doby asks, his deep voice rising with the first rush of emotion. "How many friends Jackie Robinson had 50 years ago! All of a sudden everyone is his best friend. Wait a minute. Give me a break, will you. I knew those people who were his friends. I knew those people who were not his friends. Some of them are still alive. I know. And Jack, he's in heaven, and I bet he turns over a lot of times when he hears certain things or sees certain things or reads certain things where these people say they were his friends."

Playing and traveling in the big leagues that year was a grindingly lonely job for the two young black men. Which leads to Doby's second shattered myth: the notion that Robinson, by coming first, could somehow smooth the way for him.

"Did Jackie Robinson make it easier for me?" Doby laughs at

See DOBY on page 4A

Johnson C. Smith hoop camp July 20-25

By Herbert L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Young basketball players can pick up a few tips at Johnson C. Smith's annual basketball camp July 20-25.

The camp, which features college players and coaches as instructors, will be held at Brayboy Gym on the Smith campus. Registration is July 20

from 4-6 p.m. at Brayboy and the first session will begin at 6:30 p.m. Campers will be housed at Greenfield Hall, where a full-time residence hall director will be present.

Activities will be supervised by JCSU men's coach Steve Joyner and his staff, college players and successful high school coaches from the Charlotte area.

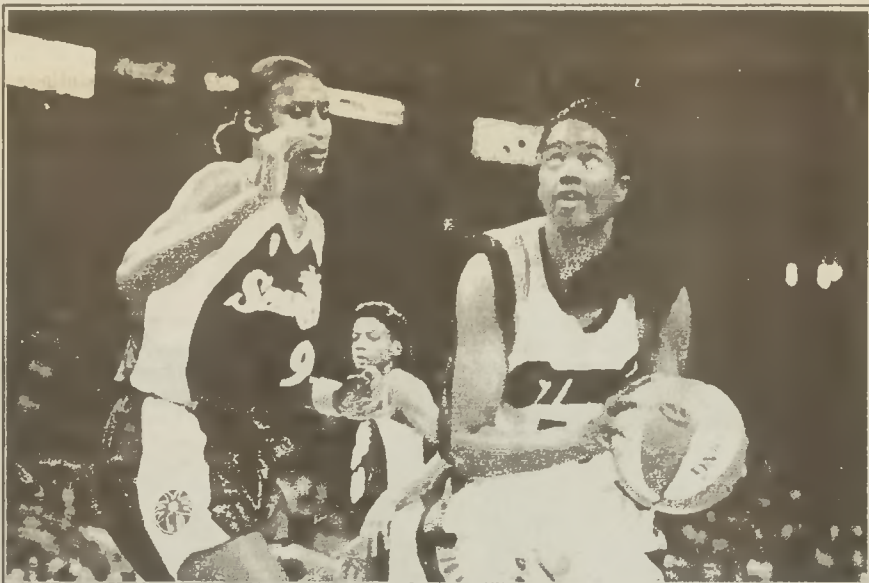
Day sessions only are \$175, which includes insurance, a T-shirt and awards as well as lunch and dinner. Overnight campers' fee is \$240 and includes breakfast.

Campers will also participate in Shoot for the Stars, a training program that emphasizes the development of positive role models. The program enhances awareness, promotes

changes in attitude and contributes to development in self-concept, communication skills, refusal skills, problem solving and academics.

Shoot for the Stars will be conducted by Wally Jones, a former Philadelphia 76ers player and Miami Heat player.

For more information, call 378-1206.



PHOTO/WADE NASH

Charlotte Sting center-forward Sharon Manning looks to get off a shot against the Los Angeles Sparks' Lisa Leslie. Manning is a valuable reserve for the Sting, who face Cleveland Sunday at 5 p.m. at Charlotte Coliseum.

Manning settles into role

Continued from 1B

helped her settle down. Their encouragement has been to stick with the fundamentals for a team that's still learning.

"Rhonda and Vicky have been talking to me and they were saying 'when you come in, just relax and just give us what you've got,'" Manning said. "That really helps my confidence level knowing they want me to score and play defense."

"Sharon is a great player, but Sharon gets nervous at times," Charlotte guard Andrea Stinson said. "Once Sharon gets settled down, she plays hard. She stops the silly

Valuable substitute for Sting

fouls and makes great moves and rebounds. She concentrates."

Coming off the bench is difficult, Manning said. After six seasons of starting in Europe, Manning's biggest adjustment in the WNBA has been the reduction in minutes. Instead of picking spots to become a factor, she has to get into the flow earlier and sustain it.

"I'm still trying to get used to that," she said. "I played six years overseas and overseas you play 40 minutes a game, so I'm still trying to get

used to coming off the bench and playing five minutes (at a time)."

Against Los Angeles, for instance, Manning lived up to the promise that made her a four-year starter at N.C. State and a star for six years in Europe. Stinson, Charlotte's best player, told her to relax and have some fun. Now, Manning is doing more of it.

"I told her to go out there and have fun, settle down and play your game. Don't let them dictate what you're going to do."

Local teams master N.C. AAU meet

Continued from 1B

the nation last season, will try to win a second AAU national title.

The Striders' Duan Barrino, Kevin Chambers and Donand Beamer swept the 100 meters for 13-14 year-olds and with teammate Charles Grant, won the 400 meters with a clocking of 46.21

seconds, more than three seconds better than the second-place Flight. Barrino had an excellent meet, winning the 100 in 11.66 and taking second in the 200 (24.12) and long jump (18 feet). Beamer was first in the 200 at 23.44 seconds and second in the 100 at 11.75 seconds.

Fred Staton was impressive in the 15-16 division for the Flight, winning the 100 in 10.94 and 200 in 22.49, as well as a couple of relays. The Charlotte Country Day sophomore anchored the 400 relay team that finished first in 42.79 seconds and 1600 relay at 3 minutes, 32.22 seconds.



GRAND OPENING

SOUTH BOULEVARD LOCATION



Special Weekend
Rate

Rates starting at
\$78.³²



6400 C. South Blvd. (Next door to Harrelson Ford.)

643-1111

Airport Number 359-4640

Specializing in Special Occasions

*Individualized
attention to detail*

*Accommodate
rehearsal dinners
for 30 to
full receptions
for 100*

*Rooms available
for all size parties*

*Facilities
available for
corporate catering*

*Personally
designed menus*



631 North Tryon Street
Charlotte, NC 28202
(704)333-8899

