

1B

SPORTS



Growing pains

Columbia, S.C., native Jermaine O'Neal says he is more mature as he enters his second NBA season. Page 4B.

Hornets get the point in Wesley

By Karl Petraroja
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

FORT MILL, S.C. — The Charlotte Hornets decided it was better to have David Wesley on their side rather than try to beat him.

The 26-year old Wesley, who signed a seven-year free agent deal over the summer, is poised to become the Hornets' starting point guard, replacing incumbent Muggsy Bogues. Wesley knows he'll be replacing a local legend, but still feels welcome in the Queen City, especially since forward Anthony Mason called him

to sing the virtues of being a Hornet.

"He was very encouraging," Wesley said. "He basically wanted to know what I wanted to do. When players on the team and coaches and you got a full staff, the general manager wants you here, it definitely makes you want to come to the team."



Wesley

Why wouldn't the Hornets want

Wesley? In his four-year pro career, Wesley's best games have come against the Hornets, including Nov. 22, 1995 when he tied a Boston franchise record for three-point field goals made in a game. He hit 7-of-10 on his way to a career-best 37 points, as the Celtics routed the Hornets.

Wesley also scored a season-high 34 points last December against the Hornets. He brings not only scoring (16.8 points per game last season) but play-making ability (7.3 assists) and some rebounding (3.6 per game). His perimeter defense adds a dimension the Hornets have rarely had

at point guard. He's also very quick, as exhibited by his 2.21 steals per game last season, fifth in the NBA. Hornets head coach Dave Cowens likes Wesley's strong defensive game.

"We didn't have it against the Knicks," in last season's playoffs," Cowens said. "We didn't have it against anybody, so now we get David to give it to us.

"We got a better chance now of keeping people from penetrating and driving the lane which gets your big guys out of position...and affects so much, that you've got to

See WESLEY on page 3B



PHOTO/CALVIN FERGUSON

It's fundamental: Charlotte Hornets Anthony Mason, Matt Geiger and Glen Rice get into some light reading during a photo session last Thursday in Fort Mill, S.C.

Lewis wants more

By John Curran
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Lennox Lewis says it's just as well that Riddick Bowe is retired because Bowe couldn't handle him anyway.

Minutes after he retained his WBC heavyweight title with a surprisingly easy first-round victory over Andrew Golota, someone asked Lewis if he wanted Bowe. After all, Golota had overpowered the former heavyweight champ in both fights before being disqualified for low blows.

Lewis thought about it. Then he said: "I've got too much meanness built up for Riddick Bowe. It doesn't make sense for him to come back (for a Lewis fight)."

If their performances against the street-fighting Pole are any indication, Lewis is far more dangerous in the ring.

On Saturday, Lewis knocked Golota down twice before stopping him 1:35 into the first round of their scheduled 12-rounder before 13,889 people at Convention Hall.

He swarmed over the jittery Golota and knocked him down with 55 seconds elapsed after connecting on four rights to the head. After referee Joe Cortez gave the go-ahead to resume fighting, Lewis attacked again and landed three hard rights that dropped Golota to the seat of his pants.

Lewis, the 32-year-old WBC heavyweight champion from Britain, had complained that he didn't get the respect he deserved from the U.S. media and boxing public.

At 32-1, he may now. "Basically, I wanted to go out and make my statement to the world and prove I'm the best heavyweight champion on the planet," Lewis said.

He also wants to unify the championship by winning the WBA and IBF titles. It looks as if he will get the chance.

Promoter Dino Duva said he believes Lewis will fight the winner of a Nov. 8 match at Las Vegas between WBA champion Evander Holyfield and IBF champion Michael Moorer.

Lewis and Moorer are tied to Duva's Main Events while Holyfield has a deal with promoter Don King, but Duva doesn't think that will be a stumbling block. However, there is an obstacle. The IBF champion is due to make a mandatory defense against No. 1-ranked Vaughn Bean, even though Moorer has successfully defended against Bean, and the WBA champion owes a mandatory defense against Orlin Norris.



Lewis



PHOTO/HERBERT L. WHITE

Johnson C. Smith defenders like cornerback Micheal Brown (10) will try to keep Livingstone's offense in check when the teams meet Saturday at Memorial Stadium. Livingstone is ranked 14th in Division II and is 6-0.

Bear essentials

Livingstone offers example for Johnson C. Smith to emulate

By Herbert L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Livingstone football coach Rudy Abrams has what Johnson C. Smith's Bill Davis wants.

Livingstone's Blue Bears, who play Smith Saturday at 1:30 p.m., are unbeaten, ranked No. 14 in Division II and first in the CIAA under Abrams. Davis, who is in his

first season at JCSU, hopes to get the Golden Bulls in that position some day.

"They've got a program that's talked about all over the country,"



Davis

Davis said. "A few years ago, Livingstone was the doormat of the CIAA. They made that commitment to having a good program and I hope we'll



Abrams

do likewise."

The Bears (6-0, 3-0 CIAA) are a power because of Abrams, who turned Livingstone around with a mix of bruising offense and suffocating defense. To be a model of winning consistency, especially to a rival, is high praise.

"For someone to say they want their program to be

See WINNING on page 3B

Booster club's mission is fund raising

By Herbert L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Johnson C. Smith's athletic department has a simple goal this year:

Raise \$200,000 to support the school's sports programs. Operation Bull's-Eye, JCSU's

athletic booster program, is trying to reach the figure by getting 2,000 alumni and friends of the school to contribute \$100 each. In an era of spiraling budgets, the cost of education and sports requires a community commitment.

"Our goal is to get at least 2,000 alumni, friends and supporters of Johnson C. Smith University to invest — not give — \$100 or more into our athletic program," athletics director and football coach Bill Davis said. "That would help our

scholarships, our travel, our recruitment. That would just help our program all the way around."

For more information on Operation Bull's-Eye, call the JCSU athletics department at 378-1205.



PHOTO/WADE NASH

Carolina Panthers linebacker Micheal Barrow needs to step up on defense, where Carolina has been uncharacteristically inept.

Questions for the Panthers

By Herbert L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

The Carolina Panthers are a troubled team.

So, naturally, there are questions about how they got into this 2-3 predicament, and more important, how to get out of it starting Sunday in Minnesota.

1. Can this team be as good as last season's?

First, forget last season. It was special, but there's been too much turnover to match last year's squad. Carolina got younger, but it lost chemistry, that elusive

ingredient for winners.

2. Will they pull it together?

That's the most difficult question. The warning signs of trouble were apparent during a 0-4 pre-season, but they were downplayed. Now they're obvious. The next four weeks will be a real test for coach Dom Capers, who is facing his first crisis after two successful seasons. If the Panthers sweep or go 3-1, they're in the thick of the playoff hunt. Anything less, and it's going to be a long wait 'til next summer.

3. Should Steve Beurlein be the

starting quarterback?

At this point, it probably won't hurt, not after the putrid performances Kerry Collins has put together in the last two games. Although Capers has said he probably rushed Collins back into action from a broken jaw too soon, the third-year pro's troubles go beyond busted chops. He's hanging onto the ball too long, missing receivers and just having a bad time in general. There's still lingering tension in the locker room about Collins' commitment to

See PANTHERS on page 3B