

# Winning football a habit Livingstone Bears really like

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where we are is a compliment," Abrams said. "I'm sure, given a little time, he'll have that program where he wants it to be."

Smith (2-3, 1-1 CIAA) can take a huge step forward by beating Livingstone. To do that, the Bulls will have to do what no one else has this season: contain the Bears' top-ranked offense, which has scored 248 points, almost 2 1/2 times the output of anyone else in the CIAA. Although Livingstone has dominated every opponent this season, Davis is excited about taking on one of the nation's top teams.

"We have nothing to lose," Davis said. "We're going all out. If we were to win Saturday, we would have a step toward the conference race. Our goal is to win the football game Saturday."

Livingstone's offense is led by running backs Wilmont Perry (112 carries, 1,081 yards and 11 touchdowns) and Chris Williams

(58 carries, 494 yards, three scores). Quarterback Pernel Wilder doesn't complete a lot of passes (33-of-84 for 649 yards), but strikes when it counts, with 10 touchdowns.

"We won't change a whole lot," Abrams said. "We'll do the things we've always done since we've been here."

Smith counters with the CIAA's third-best defense (243.5 yards allowed per game), but the Bears' balance will provide a difficult test. If defenses try to crowd the line to stop Perry and Williams, Wilder likes to go long, as his 19.6 yards per completion average attests.

"We're going to do what we've been doing best - playing tough, hard-nosed defense and try to keep as many fresh people in the football game as we can," Davis said. "You just can't go in there looking to stop the run and forget about the pass, because they can throw the football, too."

The Bulls have a solid running attack led by Lee Scott, who has 437 yards and three touchdowns on 82 carries. For Smith to be successful, though, the passing attack will need some success against the league's top-ranked defense. That job falls to freshman quarterback Desmond Brown, who'll have to throw against a Bears defense that has allowed just 69 completions in 182 attempts.

"We're not as experienced a football team as I would like to have, so we're going to do whatever we can do best," Davis said. "We've got a young quarterback, we have some young receivers...What we're going to try to do is get them to do the things they can do well."

Smith showed off some big-play abilities in a 44-15 win last week over Benedict, something the Bears will have to limit in order to extend its three-game streak in black college football's oldest

rivalry.

"We're concerned about their total game," Abrams said. "They have quick-strike capability."

Although Livingstone is the odds-on favorite to win its first league championship, Smith has incentive as well. It's homecoming, and Davis, a 1965 JCSU graduate, wants his team to break Livingstone's recent dominance.

"I guess it's pressure because we want to win," he said. "I know Smith has had some horrible records when it comes to homecoming, because we have never been one to play a team that'll lay down on us. We always want to play the best. We want to give our alumni the best game, regardless of the outcome."

That's why the Bears aren't taking Smith lightly. As with any

rivalry, statistics can't measure passion. There'll be plenty of it on both sidelines Saturday.

"We've told our kids that records don't mean anything when Livingstone and Johnson C. Smith play," Abrams said.

"There's a whole lot of history and rivalry involved. There's no such thing as a mismatch between Johnson C. Smith and Livingstone."

## Wesley gives Hornets a presence

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have good perimeter defense."

Wesley also brings a blue-collar type work ethic to the Hornets. He comes from humble roots, having had to prove himself in the CBA after not being drafted, the same as Mason. Wesley says the experience helps him appreciate his accomplishments.

"I think it's a different kind of player that comes out of the CBA because he knows where he's been," he said. "It keeps him hungry, keeps him wanting to play hard."

"To know that he always has someone over his shoulder, looking in and trying to take his job. With that kind of effort just put out there on the floor, knowing that we have to play every night, that's a common bond that we have that's going to filter into the rest of the team."

Coming from a bad Celtics team, Wesley is hungry for success, not only in the regular season, but the playoffs.

"Just to win a few games would probably just make the average person happy," Mason said, "but because he's the type of player that nobody's ever given anything to, and always wants to stay hungry, it'll definitely work to our advantage."

Wesley and newcomers Bobby Phills and J.R. Reid are expected to bring a physical style to Charlotte. The Hornets' "Hard Ball" motto was a success last year, and the new players are expected to make them tougher.

"I definitely think so," Wesley said. "I've watched Mason play, I've watched J.R. play and I've played one-on-one with Bobby Phills."

"That's a lot of banging going on. We're physical players. It's really going to be tough for people to come in here and do what they want to do, we're going to make it difficult for baskets."

At 6-0, 198 pounds, Wesley who graduated from Baylor University in 1992, is more of a defensive force than the 5-3, 141-pound Bogues. Wesley may not have Bogues' quickness or pass-

## Stackhouse

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think it's a lot easier division than what we have in the East," the 6-6 shooting guard said. "But I think I bring the same kind of things to this team. He's a 7-foot guy who gives them 17 points and 8 rebounds. I'm giving this team 20 points and 4 or 5 rebounds."

Sixers head coach Larry Brown doesn't believe what Wallace or Garnett are paid should have any effect on Stackhouse's future negotiations.

"We would like to get these things done early, but we've lost 60 games a year for five years," Brown said. "If Jerry plays well and helps us win, he'll be in a great position."

In April, Stackhouse said he was looking for a six- or seven-year contract from the Sixers.

But the Sixers want to see what he does this season before paying big bucks. They also would like to see Stackhouse upgrade his ballhandling skills, perimeter shooting and defense.

ing ability, but for the first time in Hornets history, they have a strong defensive presence at point.

"We want to be in that class with the Knicks and Heat

because they've been in the playoffs and they're winning," Wesley said. "If physical wins, then we want to win physical. If that's not what wins, then we just want to win."

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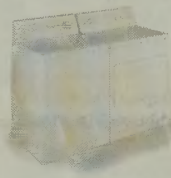
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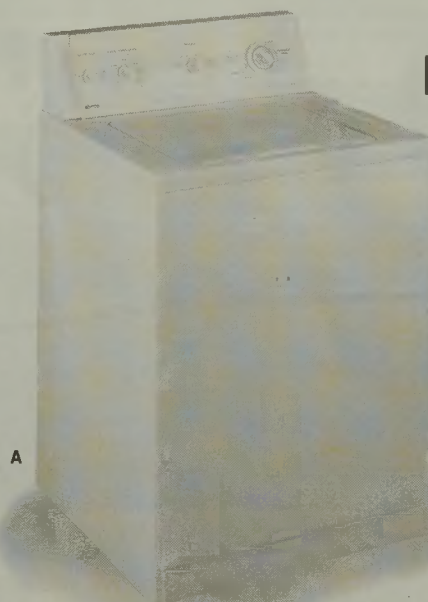
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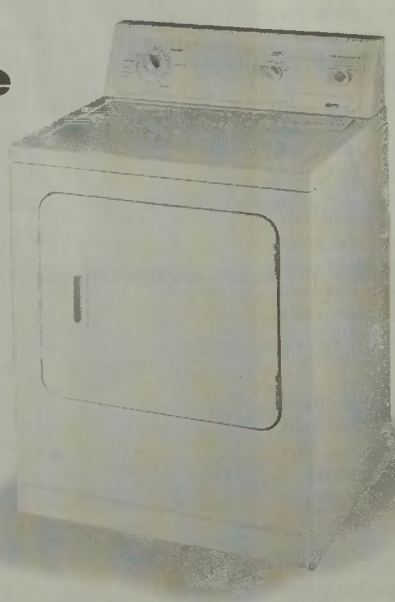
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