

JCSU interested in Division I scrimmage if anyone's interested

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for us," WSSU Athletics Director Percy Caldwell told the Winston-Salem Journal of the UNC game. "The contract was sent to us (May 28), and this is something that we are excited about."

Caldwell wouldn't comment about the game against Wake Forest.

The WSSU-UNC game also includes plans for a pre-game ceremony to honor former WSSU coach and basketball hall of fame inductee Bighouse Gaines.

North Carolina coach Roy Williams has often tried to schedule preseason games against nearby Division II schools. He did it for several years at Kansas, and UNC played N.C. Central last season in his first season at UNC.

Smith wouldn't have to look far to find potential opponents. Charlotte and Davidson are Mecklenburg's Division I schools;

Winthrop is in nearby Rock Hill, S.C. The Golden Bulls and Charlotte have played twice in regular season games, with the 49ers winning both.

Joyner said no one has expressed an interest in playing Smith, but the door's always open to games against non-traditional opponents. He admits JCSU would likely have to inquire about possibilities.

"If somebody called us, we'd certainly be willing to listen, but we'll probably have to push the button on that one," he said.

Although Division I programs have an advantage in scholarships and depth, Division II programs would benefit from scrimmages, Joyner said. The experience also helps programs small and large prepare for their regular season.

"We certainly don't mind doing it because you want to play someone who'll help you learn about your team," he said.

Mailman just four wins away

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Lakers, going from big-time scorer with a career average of over 25 points to all-around player who concentrates on defense and rebounding.

With Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant among his teammates, that was clearly the wise move. And Malone did so without complaining.

So while others get the glory, Malone does the dirty work. He's averaging 13 points, 9.2 rebounds, 3.7 assists and nearly 40 minutes during the playoffs.

"He's such a great example. Here's a guy who's 40 years old and he's not going to let anyone out hustle him. The players see that," assistant coach Tex Winter said. "He's good for them because he's been around, he's had a lot of experience. In Kobe and Shaq's mind, he's got a

lot of credibility. He's earned that."

In the conference semifinals, Malone guarded two-time MVP Tim Duncan of the San Antonio Spurs. In the conference finals, the assignment was 2004 MVP Kevin Garnett. They're both 28 and in the prime of their careers. But Malone more than held his own despite a sore knee.

"I will do whatever it takes to be out there on the floor

every day, and if it's meant to happen, it will happen," he said. "I will not walk off the floor. Someone will have to drag me off the floor."

Malone, a two-time MVP and the NBA's second-leading scorer behind Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, missed 10 games in his 18 seasons with the Jazz - four due to suspension. He was sidelined for 40 games this season after tearing a ligament in his right knee in December.

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