

Showtime in Charlotte

Tournament
puts league
and city on
center stage

By Herbert L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Nothing gets our hearts pumping like college basketball.

And for the first time, this city bears witness to its grandest conference tournament.

Make no mistake, the CIAA is all that. It has pageantry. It draws celebrities. The basketball is competitive and intriguing.

And it's here.

Final Four weekend has big-time drama, but it's hardly a must-do for James and Florida Sixpack. The NBA All-Star game has big names from sports and entertainment, but the game is an exhibition. The CIAA combines those attributes with homecoming, a family reunion and blue-light house party thrown in for good measure.

No wonder the host city gets to spend a week at the center of black America's sports and social calendar.

And for the next three years, it's Charlotte.

Even if you don't know the difference between Curly Neal and curly fries, you've no doubt heard of someone with CIAA links. There are the legendary players: Earl Monroe, Cleo Hill, Bobby Dandridge, Charles Oakley. Coaches like Bighouse Gaines and John McLendon. But don't overlook more recent heroes, like Virginia Union's Ben Wallace, Darrell Armstrong of

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From the games to the cheerleaders, CIAA basketball brings out passion in athletes and fans. It goes up exponentially at the annual tournament.

LIVINGSTONE GUARD BRENT COWLES, N.C. CENTRAL
CHEERLEADERS PHOTOS BY WADE NASH



Elizabeth City State sophomore
CELESTE TRAHAN takes care of
business on and off court/**Page 5**

Maryland Eastern Shore football legend
ART SHELL leads class of 2006 into CIAA
McLendon Hall of Fame/**Page 14**

Remembering Winston-Salem State's
hall of fame coach **CLARENCE**
GAINES and his legacy/**Page 7**

