

# Showtime for the CIAA, tournament fans and host city

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Fayetteville State or Ronald Murray of Shaw, accomplished NBA players.

The field of contenders is at least six deep, including 2005 national champion and East Division power Virginia Union. The West is truly wild, with Johnson C. Smith, St. Augustines and Winston-Salem State capable of making a push to the title. And if there's a darkhorse, it's

Elizabeth City State, which is showing signs of a resurgence.

As you can tell, there'll be plenty to keep us busy. If you have tickets to the games, you'll see some intriguing basketball, especially as the field narrows. If not, you're covered there, too. There'll be plenty to see and do, from the Fan Fest to Showtime at the Apollo with Patti LaBelle.

We're ready. And welcome home.

# WSSU's Bighouse Gaines had larger than life influence on game

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Salem State will have to pick up that banner and carry it."

Monroe, who led WSSU to the 1966-67 championship, making it the first HBCU to take home an NCAA national championship, agreed that Gaines made the school what it is today.

"You can go almost any place in the state of North Carolina and say "Big House" Gaines and people will know who you're talking about. People heard about him before Winston-Salem State."

Gaines had many accolades affiliated with his name. He led the Rams to 18 20-win seasons; coached WSSU to eight CIAA titles; molded NBA players, published an autobiography and

he has been enshrined in several hall of fames (including one of the highest honors in sports, the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame), but most importantly, Earl "The Pearl" said Gaines was simply a great teacher of life.

"I think his legend will probably be more to all he taught and coached and how their lives turned out to be," Monroe said. "Now that's he's gone, his contributions will probably not even be seen for generations because of all the people he's touched."

Gaines is survived by his wife, Clara, of more than 50 years, as well as children Lisa and Clarence Jr. and his grandchildren.

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