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# SPORTS

Section

## Better by leaps and bounds

### 49ers' Johnson aims to regain winning form

By Eric Bozeman  
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Sharonnda Johnson is making her presence known in the triple jump. Again.

The Charlotte 49ers senior rebounded from two knee surgeries to triple jump 41 feet, 7 inches at the Charlotte Invitational on April 1. Johnson finished second in the competition, improved on her season's best by 3.25 inches, and qualified her for the NCAA Regionals (improving on her qualifying leap of 41-3.5 at the 49er Classic on March 18).

"I had one knee surgery last April and another last July, they went in and cleared up some stuff," Johnson said. "I feel good that I was able to come back from knee surgery and qualify for regionals at the first meet, I'm pretty happy so far, but I think I still have a long way to go."

Charlotte coach Robert Olsen believes Johnson has used her passion for competition to bring her back from rehab a lot sooner than many expected.

"Her quest for excellence makes her successful in track and field, being that driven made me know that she would blaze through her rehab," Olsen said. "She looks great, she looks as good or better than she did a year ago."

Johnson said rehabilitation was not an easy part of training, but she was able to make the best of the situation until she could return to competition.

"Rehab was very important," she said. "I was in rehab for almost a year getting the ligaments around my knees strong and taking (pain relievers) every day to keep the inflammation down."

"There were times when I was down on myself, but I

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PHOTO/WADE NASH

Charlotte 49ers triple jumper Sharonnda Johnson is looking to return to all-America form after two knee surgeries.

### PITCHING FOR 30-WIN SEASON



PHOTOS/WADE NASH

J.C. Smith freshman pitcher Teresa Vorwerk is the Golden Bulls' top hurler and a major part of their softball resurgence.

## Diamond gems

### After 4 year absence, J.C. Smith back in softball rankings

By Herbert L. White  
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Johnson C Smith softball is moving into rare territory.

The Golden Bulls (25-11, 13-2 CIAA) and fourth in the Mid-Atlantic Region for the second time in school history and on pace for their best season ever. After years of struggling, their success is due in part to a boost of confidence.

"I think a lot of it has to do

with coaching and our attitude, instilling in us a drive and intensity," said senior third baseman and co-captain Brandi Young. "Our team has changed a lot this year. I think our attitude has changed, knowing we can go out there and win."

Second-year coach Rod Robinson implemented a sense of discipline that included cleaning house in favor of a

younger, defense-oriented team. Freshman Teresa Vorwerk (Concord J.M. Robinson High) is the ace pitcher and the Bulls are prolific enough on offense to get in front and stay there.

"Defense wins games, offense sells tickets," Young said. "We work mostly on defense in practice. We hit every now and then, but we figure if we keep

See GOLDEN/2C

## Marlins looking for prospective home

By Kristie Rieken  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON - Florida Marlins owner Jeffrey Loria said Sunday that discussions with San Antonio officials about the possibility of relocating the team to the Texas city are serious.

San Antonio has been trying to lure the team and county officials have offered to put up \$200 million toward an estimated \$300 million ballpark if voters approve extending a tax on hotel and car rentals.

The Marlins slashed their payroll to about \$15 million in the offseason because of poor attendance and no progress in Loria's bid for a baseball-specific stadium.

Florida plays at Dolphins Stadium, home of Miami's NFL team.

"We're still looking at all our options, but our talks in San Antonio are serious," Loria said Sunday at Minute Maid Park before addressing his team.

Loria said several officials

See MARLINS/2C

## Top prep players at All-Star Classic

By Herbert L. White  
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The 14th annual Charlotte All-Star Classic will put some of the best high school basketball players on one floor.

The classic at Providence Day School start at 1:30 p.m. with the girls game, followed by the boys at 3 p.m. Both rosters are stacked with Division I and II signees, including prospects heading to the SEC and Big Ten.

Among girls, South Mecklenburg's Erica Williamson (Notre Dame), Vance's Wendy

Stywalt (Charlotte) and Victory Christian's Kendria Holmes (Providence or Rhode Island) will play. The boys' game will include Davidson signee Stephen Curry (Charlotte Christian), South Carolina signee Brandis Raley (Statesville Christian).

## Felton finds his groove in time

### As minutes go up, East rookie of month benefits

By Herbert L. White  
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Time is turning Raymond Felton into a dependable NBA point guard.

The Charlotte Bobcats guard was named Eastern Conference rookie of the month for February, his second straight honor. Felton, the fifth pick in the NBA Draft, averaged 15.6 points, 6.5 assists, 4.5 rebounds and 1.45 steals in 11 games. He connected on 45.7 percent of his three-point attempts and 85.7 percent from the free throw line.

"I'm in the situation now where I'm comfortable with the offense, comfortable with everybody out there and comfortable with what I can bring to the team," he said. "I'm definitely much better than my first game of the season."

While New Orleans' Chris Paul has been all but given the rookie of the year award, Felton has grown in his understanding of the pro game, and the Bobcats are responding as a result. Coach Bernie Bickerstaff switched to the point full-time, with incumbent Brevin Knight moving to off-guard.

"It's a learning process. I'm getting a lot of minutes now and getting the opportunity to be out there and do a lot of things. You're going to get better."



PHOTO/COURTIS WILSON

Charlotte Bobcats guard Raymond Felton is benefiting from increased time at point guard. He earned a second straight Eastern Conference rookie of the month award.

### MCNAIR'S DAYS NUMBERED?

## Titans owner says he's looking to draft new QB

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NASHVILLE, Tenn. - The last time the Titans had a No. 3 pick in the NFL Draft was 1995 when they selected Alcorn State's Steve McNair to take over as quarterback.

The Titans again have the No. 3 pick in the April 29-30 draft, and owner Bud Adams is ready to draft another quarterback.

"We ought to get a pretty good quarterback out of this draft," Adams said Wednesday at the NFL owners meetings in Orlando, Fla. "Drafting No. 3, we ought to get a pretty good quarterback in that spot right there. I hope we get a guy who can be our leader for about 10 years. It's time for that, I think."

McNair wants to remain the starter for several seasons and isn't interested in grooming a potential successor with only a one-year contract.



McNair

See TITANS/3C