

C

SPORTS



**IN BUSINESS**  
Choreographer's dance studio turns 15.7C

Section



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTO/RUSTY BURROUGHS  
Carolina Panthers receiver Keary Colbert (83) talks with rookie cornerback Richard Marshall during a coaching session last week at Bank of America Stadium.

Catch and Keary

Colbert fighting to stay in Panthers' WR plans

By Jenna Fryer  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Keyshawn Johnson arrived in minicamp Friday, drawing a swarm of attention as he left the practice field. Few even noticed Keary Colbert as he quietly walked on by.

Since Johnson was brought in to be the No. 2 receiver the Carolina Panthers so desperately needed last season, Colbert's role has become unclear.

He's now third on the depth chart, fighting with Drew Carter for playing time. Since the bulk of the catches in Carolina go to All-Pro receiver Steve Smith, it leaves very few balls to go around.

Colbert, who like Johnson played at Southern California, isn't concerned.

"I'm honored to play with Keyshawn. I grew up watching him and feel like I can learn a lot from him," Colbert said. "I think you've got to take the positives in this situation. There are no negatives in this situation. I'm going to learn from a veteran guy."

"He brings another dimension to our team. He's going to make our football team better, which will increase our chances of going and winning the Super Bowl, which is always the goal."

The Panthers advanced to the NFC championship last season, but lost to Seattle in large part because Smith was their only offensive threat. Running back DeShaun Foster was injured, so the Seahawks only had to key on Smith because they knew Colbert couldn't pick up the slack.

It was Colbert's second season, first as a starter, and it was by all accounts horrific. He went from 47 catches for 754 yards and five touchdowns as a rookie, to 25 catches, 282 yards and two TDs.

The Panthers have since revealed that Colbert had an ankle injury all season.  
Please see COLBERT/2C

After 26 years, Mavs finally break through to NBA Finals

By Jaime Aron  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

They were once the model franchise. Then they were the Mav-wracks. Now they're headed to the NBA finals for the first time.

In their 26th season, the Dallas Mavericks are finally headed to the championship round, thanks to an impressive 102-93 comeback victory over the Phoenix Suns on Saturday night that ended the Western Conference finals in six games.

Dirk Nowitzki and Jason Terry struggled as Dallas went down by 18 early, then the duo powered a 20-4 run that put the Mavs ahead early in the fourth quarter. They never trailed again, ensuring that the most important victory in franchise history would be a memorable one, too.

"When I first got to Dallas, nobody really knew us," Nowitzki said. "Nobody was paying attention to the Mavericks really. Then Mark (Cuban) took over and we got better."  
Please see FOR FIRST/3C



PHOTO/CURTIS WILSON  
At 6-foot tall, Charlotte Sting forward Sheri Sam leads the team in rebounding with 5.6 a game. The Sting is next to last in WNBA rebounding with an average of 29.6 per game.

Board stiffs

Sting hasn't resolved longstanding rebounding issues

By Erica Singleton  
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

The Charlotte Sting can't find any glass cleaner.

Charlotte's rebounding struggles continue, which has led in part to a 1-4 start. The latest setback was consecutive losses to two-time Eastern Conference champions Connecticut. Although the

rematch was not "the flat out butt whipping" coach Muggsy Bogues described last Thursday's loss to the Sun, Charlotte is struggling.

"We just didn't compete for 40 minutes," he said.

Charlotte's 42 percent shooting percentage against the Sun Saturday was an improvement over the 38 percent on

Thursday, but rebounding and sluggish inside play are still major concerns.

In the back-to-back losses, Sun forward Taj McWilliams-Franklin and center Margo Dydek tied Connecticut's franchise record with 15 rebounds Thursday, while McWilliams-

See STING/2C

Activists urged to stand by Title IX

By Leilana McKendra  
THE NCAA NEWS

CLEVELAND - Noted sportswriter, author and USA Today columnist Christine Brennan called Title IX the most significant law passed in the last three decades for women and girls overall, and not just in terms of sports.

Speaking during last

month's NCAA Gender Equity and Issues Forum, Brennan told a crowd of athletics administrators, coaches, student-athletes and legal experts that the nation has just begun to see the emergence of girls and women who have benefited from Title IX.

"As far as what Title IX means for empowering

girls and women in this country, we haven't even seen the benefits yet," Brennan said. "The United States of America is a stronger nation by giving the other 51 percent of our population - girls and women - the opportunities we have been affording our sons for generations."  
Please see ACTIVISTS/2C

"It becomes even more important to make sure they don't touch this."

USA Today columnist Christine Brennan

Jewels advance to national AAU

11-under team is 2-time N.C. champ

By Herber L. White  
herb.white@thecharlottepost.com

The Queen City Jewels are off to the AAU national basketball championships again.

The Charlotte 11-under girls' team won their second straight N.C. championship in High Point May 21 with a 46-29 win over Asheville. The Jewels, who were ranked 13th in the nation prior to the state tournament, earned the fourth seed at the National Tournament in Springfield, Missouri.  
See JEWELS/3C



QUEEN CITY JEWELS  
The Queen City Jewels will play in the national AAU 11-under girls basketball tournament this month in Springfield, Missouri.

They'd rather fight than switch

CIAA convinced realignment based on basketball success

The fat lady hasn't sung. That's the feeling of CIAA Commissioner Leon Kerry in the conference's latest - and probably last - battle with the NCAA.

The CIAA, which now resides in the South Atlantic Region, will switch places with the Carolinas-Virginia Athletic Association from the Atlantic Region, by 2008. The conference has been fighting off the proposal for years.



BONITA BEST

Kerry said the conference isn't ready to wave the white flag just yet.

"There may be another stage, but I'm not at liberty to say at this point," he said. "We (the CIAA board) are in discussions."

But another hinge could put a crimp into the plan of action.

Lincoln (Pa.) University, one of the original founders of the CIAA, announced recently that it plans to move up to Division II and seek reinstatement into the league. If voted in, that would put four conference schools in the north and further solidify the argument that the conference should be moved.



Kerry

"If I bring Lincoln in, and they're in Pennsylvania, that's a moot subject," Kerry said.

The issue, however, goes far beyond relocating from one region to another.

The NCAA awards eight playoff bids per region. The South Atlantic has 31 teams vying for those spots. The place to be is in the West, where only 21 schools compete.

However, the Atlantic has 44 teams - 13 more than the CIAA currently competes against.

More teams, more competition, less chance for survival.

"Why do 21 teams get eight spots?" Shaw women's coach Jacques Curtis asked Sharon K. Cessna, NCAA director of championships and staff liaison to the regional task force, at a recent meeting. "The bigger regions should get more spots."

See CIAA/3C

Morgan State coach grateful for second opportunity

By Austin Hards  
and Jessica Hamis  
BLACK COLLEGE WIRE

BALTIMORE - Asked his time-frame in turning around the Morgan State men's basketball program, newly-hired coach Todd Bozeman said: "Be patient, be patient, be patient, but I'll have to say three years. You can expect a tough, hard-nosed team that can compete with an up tempo exciting style of basketball. We're going to press the issue offensively, and we're going to press the issue defensively."



Bozeman

Bozeman, who was banned from coaching for eight years over illegal recruitment practices, was named Morgan State's 15th men's basketball coach. It is his first coaching position since the infraction. He succeeds Alfred Beard, who resigned March 28.

"With the recent improvements to MSU's infrastructure and the development of a marketing platform in

See BOZEMAN/3C