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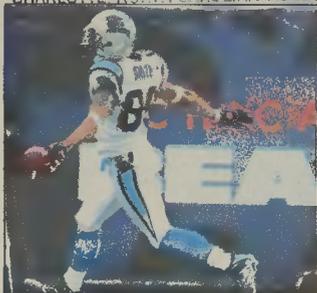
Receiver Steve Smith, who had a career season in 2005, will be paired with free agent signee Keyshawn Johnson.

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SPORTS



INSIDE
Dermatologist opts for more one-on-one treatment .6C



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Season of super possibilities

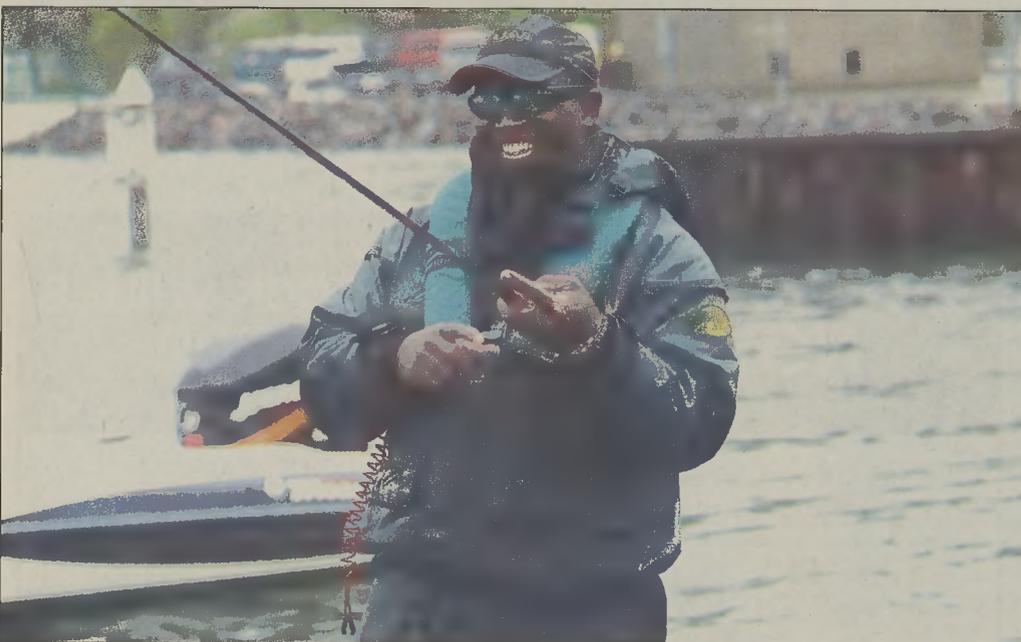
Expectations are high for Panthers as training camp gets underway

By Herbert L. White
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Every July when pro football training camp opens, the questions inevitably turn to how good the Carolina Panthers will be. It's as predictable as hot days in Spartanburg, but tougher to handle.
Expectations will be higher

this year than in 2004 when the Panthers were trying for a second straight Super Bowl trip. The cast has changed, but the mission hasn't. With that as a backdrop, let's get those pesky inquiries out of the way
Is this really a Super Bowl-caliber team?
Is 19 next to 20? Is grits gro-

ceries? Does Michael Jackson at least act a little strange? Carolina's primed to get to Miami if the key people stay healthy and hungry. The latter shouldn't be a problem after laying an egg in Seattle in the NFC championship game, the former is up to fate and medical science.
Is the hype good or bad?

For a less focused team, the expectations could be a trap, but Panthers head coach John Fox has historically been the master of understatement. Publicly, no one keeps more under his hat, but players confide the man keeps everybody on task.
Can Steve Smith and See PANTHERS/2C



ESPN OUTDOORS

Ishama "Ish" Monroe is the first African American to win on the BASS Elite Series, the top fishing league in the country.

Angling for the big one

Californian Ish Monroe makes his mark on America's premier fishing circuit

By Herbert L. White
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Ishama "Ish" Monroe has always been attracted to water.
As a boy growing up in California, Monroe learned the sport from his father and grandfather. Soon, it became his life's calling.
"My first job was at Hyde's Tackle-Box in San Francisco," he said. "Then I was a deckhand on a boat, but that doesn't give you much opportunity to fish."
Monroe has plenty of time to fish now. One of the country's top anglers, he'll compete in the Bassmaster American at Lake Wylie today. The final round will be broadcast Sunday at 7 p.m. on ESPN2.
A professional for 14 years, Monroe

is the only African American in the Bassmaster Elite Series, the major league of fishing. He made angling history in March when he won the Battle on the Border on Lake Amistad, Texas. Aside from the \$100,000 winner's purse, the victory put Monroe in rare company. He has earned more than \$334,879 with 10 career top 10 finishes and 17 top 20s.
"Winning that tournament changed my life," he said. "Once you win a tournament, it changes everything, from a career perspective, a sponsorship perspective."
Monroe, who lives in Hughson, Calif., hopes to parlay this season's success into a title at Lake Wylie, which pays \$250,000 to the winner as one of three major tournaments on the

tour. Monroe has been successful on Charlotte-area lakes before, with a sixth-place finish last year in the Carolina Bassmaster Tour Pro tournament at Lake Norman. He's not lacking for confidence.
"When you win once, you can win again," he said.
Anglers are competitive, but not necessarily against each other, Monroe said. Fish offer the biggest challenge, and anglers must study the water conditions to maximize their catch, which is weighed and returned to the water alive.
"Everybody is very competitive, but we're all friends," Monroe said. "We help each other. Overall, the competition is between the fisherman and the

Fish with Ish

Ish Monroe, who will compete in the Bassmaster American today at Lake Wylie, is one of the top anglers in the U.S. The Californian is the only African American to win a BASS Elite championship, the top level in professional fishing. Since turning pro at 18, Monroe has done pretty well for himself.

Career earnings	\$334,879
Top 10 finishes	10
Top 50 finishes	47

See ANGLING/2C

MEAC votes Winston-Salem State in as 12th member

By Herbert L. White
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The MEAC stands at a dozen.
Winston-Salem State was voted in as the 12th member last week in a vote of conference presidents and chancellors.
"We are elated to welcome Winston-Salem into the MEAC family," league Commissioner Dennis Thomas said. "Obviously we think that WSSU is an

outstanding academic institution with an excellent athletics program."
WSSU is in the second year of transition to NCAA Division I status. The Rams will participate in MEAC-sanctioned sports beginning in 2007, and will be eligible for championships in 2011.
"As we prepared for the years ahead and the move to Division I, one of the keys to the puzzle was membership in the Mid-Eastern Athletic

Conference," WSSU Athletics Director Percy Caldwell said. "We felt that the opportunity to be a member of the MEAC would afford us a way of rekindling several of our longstanding rivalries and establishing others."
Adding Winston-Salem is the first MEAC expansion since 1997 when Norfolk State was brought into the mix. The Rams become the third Carolinas
Please see MEAC/3C

Sting tries to regain balance

Two-game losing skid dents faint playoff hopes

By Erica Singleton
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST
Now the Charlotte Sting have to expect to win.
A two-game losing streak damaged Charlotte's playoff chances, but the Sting isn't dead. After Phoenix pulled out a 78-74 win Saturday to stop Charlotte's four-game win streak, the Sting continued to improve. They took a step back in a 70-62 loss to

Minnesota Tuesday.
"We were right there," said Guard Kelly Mazzante, who scored 13 points against Phoenix. "We had a lot of energy on the defensive end, but we made a couple of mistakes and they got a couple of shots off. We were right there. We fought back."
The Phoenix loss was "one of those games that can really boil you," said Sting coach

Muggsy Bogues. "We made adjustments at half-time, but we gave too many second opportunities to keep them down."
What truly stands out in the stats is that three of the Sting's five starters had less than five points combined. In the last four wins, each of the starters scored at least three points each.
See STING/2C



PHOTO: CURTIS WILSON

Making his pitch

Charlotte Knights pitcher Stephen Randolph fires a pitch in the Knights' 6-3 win over Scranton-Wilkes Barre Monday in an International League game. Charlotte is 63-39, 14.5 games ahead of Durham in the South Division
See MEDIA/2C

Give media some love

Ladies and gentlemen, we interrupt your regularly scheduled reading to bring you this late-breaking news.
Gathered outside the CIAA office in Hampton, Va., is a crowd of picketing members of the media. Standing behind me are photographers, broadcasters and reporters demanding to have their concerns addressed.
Let's move in closer to listen.
Reporter: What do we want?
Crowd: R-E-S-P-E-C-T!
Reporter: And when do we want it?
Crowd: NOW!
Announcer: So tell us, what is this about?
Reporter: It's about respect.
Announcer: Well, that's pretty obvious but respect for what?
Reporter: Every year around this time, preseason conference teams and polls start popping up all over the country. And do you know by whom?
Announcer: Who?
Reporter: Coaches, sports information directors and the media that's who. But in the CIAA, we - the media that is - have no say. Nobody asks us nuthin' about nuthin'. Do we look stupid to you?
Announcer: Well, uh...
Reporter: OK, forget that reporter over there in the plaid shirt and zebra pants, he IS stupid. But the rest of us aren't, dagnabbit.
Announcer: Well, uh...
Reporter: Nobody likes us - until they want something from us.
Announcer: Such as?
Reporter: Like trying to get us to kill a story, or asking us to dish out some dirt on another coach so they can turn him in to the NCAA, or using us for a bogus job interview "scoop" so they can blackmail their athletic director for a raise - you name it.
Well, no more. We want a vote on every preseason, post-season and any other kind of season team and poll. And we want it now!
Announcer: There are those who say...
Reporter: Yeah, yeah, we've heard the argument that some of us don't see every team so we can't be adequate judges, but neither do all the coaches, especially in football. We've also heard that argument that we may be biased. PUN-lease!
Rod Broadway led North Carolina Central to a 9-1 regular season record and the conference championship. Did he deserve coach of the year?
Please see MEDIA/2C



BONITA BEST