## Move adds to CIAA rivalry

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punch and all heck broke loose. (You had to

punch and an neck proke loose. (You'had to be there.)

The next year, Shaw defeated the Falcons 19-12 to give the school its best start (3-0) in 45 years. The Bears again finished 7-3 but St. Aug's improved to a respectable 5-5 which earned coach Michael Costa the coach of the year award.

Unfortunately, President Dianne Boardley Suber isn't interested in any R-ES-P-E-C-T. (Just ask Antonio Davis.) She wants her coaches to just win baby.

In 2004, word had it that Costa had gotten the word that 5-5 again wasn't going to cut the mustard. So when the Falcons met Shaw with a bosing record, Costa had one foot out the door. But the one-legged coach turned out to be good enough to kick some Bear behind. behind

behind.

St. Aug's took advantage of seven turnovers and, behind the arm of second-stang quarterback Matthew Perry, defeated the Bears 346. The Falcons finished the season 4-6 but that win saved Costa's job.

Bears fans, on the other hand, consoled themselves with an 8-2 finish, the university's first football championship since 1947

and a Moneer Bowl win over the heavily favored Tuskegee Tigers.

In 2005, Costa's job wasn't on the line but history was. The Falcons won their first eight games (a school record); had the No. 1 defense in Division II (school record); and were ranked No. 1 in the South Atlantic Region (first time in school and CIAA histo-

ry.)
Oh yeah, they spanked Shaw again, 33-0.
Last season will go down as the year that
wasn't. Clark left for Ft. Valley State in the
Southern Intercollegiate Athletic
Conference; NCCU offensive coordinator
Darrell Asberry left for Shaw; and the two
teams left their fans' hearts on the gridiron.
Somebody in Raleigh should still be
slamped.

settle for a good old-fashioned, knock 'em, sock 'em grudge match come Nov. 3 the last weekend of the regular season.

You know what's going to happen don't ou? The winner will advance to the championship game on a last-second touchdown. And the **b**est rivalry in Division II truly will

BONITTA BEST is sports editor at The

## Versatility is rookie's calling card

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Continued from page 1C a tight end in school history, for 426 yards and a score.

"My strengths are my receiving skills, but what I look to improve on most is my blocking skills, especially my line of scrimmage blocking," he said.

All that, however, is a distant memory upon graduation to the NFL Rosario, like all rookies, is learning everyone is faster, stronger and bigger. and bigger

"As a tig**ht end,** I'm blocking against bigger defensive ends, playing against faster

linebackers, safeties and defenses as a whole," he said. "But that's part of the game and I think every time I step out on the field, I'm working hard and it gets a little bit slower for me. I'm catching up with it."

Carolina's holdover tight ends, Michael Gaines and Jeff King, combined for 16 catches last year - 15 of them by Gaines. Rosario is grateful for an opportunity to show the Panthers what he's capable of doing.

"My attitude is whatever I

"My attitude is whatever I can do to help," he said.

"Whether it's catching passes, special teams, whatever, I'm here to do it."

As the first of Carolina's eight drafted rookies to sign a contract, Rosario, a fifthround pick, is concentrating on learning all he can.

"Corning in as a rookie there's a lot of stuff you've got to learn," he said. "The signing part of it, I try not to make a big issue of it. The most important thing for me was getting in the playbook, was getting in the playbook learning the offense, learn ing how things are around here."

# Leap toward U.S. nationals



berth in the World Championships later in the summer.
"I'll probably have to go 46 feet to win," Lewis said of the triple jump, her strongest event. "I think I can get to the top three,

Lewis is weighing her post-college options Lewis is weigning her post-college options, which include turning professional and training for a spot on the U.S. Olympic team. Her performance in Indianapolis could have a bearing on which way she'll go.

"I'm going to wait until after next week," she said. "(The Olympics is) a goal, but I've got to train real hard for that."

#### Noah shows skills in workouts

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90-minute workout and new Bobcats coach
Sam Vincent had him shooting plenty of
mid-range jump shots.

"What we want to see is his offensive
skills," Vincent said. "We want to see him in
the post scoring. We want to see his shot
from that mid-range area. That is what we're
trying to get a feel for."

Vincent called Noah a player who is "fundamentally sound," but added he'd like to
see him work on the release of his jump
shot, which tends to be awkward.

"The mechanics of his shot probably need
a little adjusting and I'm sure that is something the kid is working on," Vincent said.

Noah said there wasn't a lot you can take
from a short workout, but he wanted the
team to know that if they draft him they'll be

taking a player with a great work ethic.
"I just want to show them that I am somebody who takes basketball very seriously
and not somebody who is just all about
going out and partying and doing all kinds
of things like that. That's not me," Noah
said. "I'm somebody who takes basketball
very seriously."
Despite what has been a hectic and tiring
whirlwind tour - he worked out for the
Chicago Bulls on Friday and planned to do
the same for the Boston Celtics on SundayNoah said he's enjoying the experience.
"This is a dream come true," he said. "It's
not easy at all. But what a great feeling to be
able to say I'm going to play basketball as
my profession. To get paid and be able to
pay for your own hamburgers ... that's pretty cool."

#### Lexus sets the pace with debut LS460

In less than 20 years Lexus has become the benchmark that many car manufacturers use to measure their products.

Critics agree the cars work well, but think the syling is bland and the autos work like appliances - reliable but unexciting.

Some of



that may be true, but I'll take reliability with my \$50,000-plus automobile any day. I'd also take

WINFRED B. CROSS the jewel in Lexus' crown, but the company has found new ways to polish this gem until its bling quotient is nearly blinding.

linding. The LS460's exterior has seen totally revamped from stem to stern, not to men-tion the car's name. There is no more LS430. The new car's body is more streamIne, more muscular. Yes, there is a dollop of BMW (especially in the tail), but the car's grill is unmistable. In fact, all Lexus vehicles finally have a family resemblance.

The interior is something to behold. Generous portions of wood and leather are everywhere. The wood is cut from a single piece so

cut from a single piece so the grain is matched per-fectly. There's plenty of room for five with copious amounts of leg- and head-

amounts of leg- and headroom.

The LS is powered by a brand new 4.6-liter V8, which is matched to an industry first eight-speed transmission. How is this combo? Like butter. This tandem is nearly flawless in execution. Shifts are barely perceptible and the 380 horses run like thoroughbreds.

The old LS was no athlete in handling and neither is the new one. But I doubt buyers of this car will care because its handling is waaaaaay better than before. You can get aggressive and not get embar-rassed. Zero to 60 can be had in 5.4 seconds and the car's grip has been improved greatly. Anyway, there's no need

improved greatly.
Anyway, there's no need
to drive this car fast. Why
would you want to rush the
experience? Driving the LS is
a pleasurable experience.
Occupants are whisked
about in hushed silence at
speed which could
approach 155 mph, were
that leval.

speed which could approach 155 mph, were that legal.

The new LS460 clocks in at \$61,000. My test car was heavily optioned, including that little feature that allows the car to park itself. Yes, it works, but it takes time to learn the system. The Mark Levinson 19-speaker sound system is better than anything you can put in your house. Climate-controlled seats, power rear sunshade, navigation system, reclining rear seats with power operated headrests, a total of 11 airbags and a bunch of safety oriented electronic gizmos brought the price to around \$69,000. around \$69.000.

NBA FINALS



Cleveland Cavaliers forward LeBron James shoots over guard David Wesley during practice Monday in Cleveland. Four years after a bouncing Ping Pong ball gave the team the right to draft James, the Cavaliers are playing in the NBA Finals against San Antonio.

### Spurs, Cavs lucky before good

Good fortune included landing franchise players

By Brian Mahoney

By BIOD MORDOMEY PRESS SAN ANTONIO - Fearing he had been jinxed, Spurs general manager R.C. Buford tapped the door behind hirm in the arena hallway. He had been asked a question that presumed a fourth NBA title was on the way, and this was no time to mess with karma.

Pure, simple luck is no small thing in sports. And the Spurs and Cavaliers well know it takes a healthy dose

of it to build a contender. "There's a lot of luck, a lot of luck involved in it," Cleveland coach Mike Brown

said.

It's said that sometimes it's better to be lucky than good. But there was a slight twist on that in these NBA finals, which the Spurs lead

3-0.

For the Spurs and Cavaliers, they couldn't be good until they were lucky.

Those teams walked away with three of the biggest prizes the NBA lottery has offered, with the Spurs wmoffered, with the Spurs winning the right to take David Robinson with the No. 1 pick in 1987 and beating the

pick in 1987 and beating the odds to move up and grab Tim Duncan 10 years later. Cleveland was finally rewarded for all its losing in 2003 when it won the LeBron James sweepstakes and immediately injected some life into the franchise by drafting the high school superstar from down the road in Akron. Sure, things like scouting and salary cap management help. But don't discount help. But don't discount basic luck of the draw because Brown and Spurs coach Gregg Popovich certainly don't.

"Without LeBron it's obvious we wouldn't be where
we are," Brown said. "And
Pop's said time and time
again, without Tim or David
he wouldn't be where he is."
So if Greg Oden or Kevin
Durant is as good as advertised, figure on seeing
Portland in the NBA finals in
a few years. Getting lucky at
the right time, as the Trail
Blazers did in winning this
year's lottery, is the easiest
way to go from basement to
penthouse.

"Everything is luck," Buford said. "If we don't have the lottery in '87 or '97, we're not the same franchise.

chise."

The Spurs had gone four years without a winning record when they landed Robinson, the star center from Navy. They went 31-51 and 21-61 in the two seasons while Robinson was serving his military requirement, then made what at the time was the biggest one-season turnaround in NBA history, gong 56-26 once the Admiral arrived.

They broke that record eight years later. San Antonio had fallen to 20-62 during the 1996-97 season, when Robinson was limited to six games by injury. Popovich took over as coach early in that season and had no idea he'd soon be diagramming plays for a star forward from Wake Forest because the Grizzlies and Celtics both had better odds of getting him.

"He wasn't even on our radar screen. We didn't even talk about him," Popovich said. "I don't remember all the guys that were there, but 1 think Keith Van Hom was in that same draft and there was somebody else. There

were two or three people we thought might have a

chance.
"We were like third or

fourth by winning percentage or record. We thought we were going to pick third or fourth, something like that. And we talked about all that. And we talked about all those guys and how they would fit with our team and what we had. I don't think we ever mentioned Tim Duncan's name until the lot-

tery came."
And when it did?
"A whole lot of things changed for a whole lot of people," Popovich said. "I'm one of them."

The Spurs bounced back with 56 wins the next season, won their first NBA title

with 56 wins the next season, won their first NBA title the following one and added two more in 2003 and '05. Duncan was the NBA finals MVP in all of them.

Meanwhile, the Cavaliers had become one of the NBA's worst franchises. During a stretch when 30 wins was a good season, Cleveland bottomed out in 2002-03 with a 17-65 record, matching Deniver for the worst in the league.

But the Cavs knew all about the high school stud who used to come to their arena. And when they won the right to draft him, it was one of the biggest victories ever for a city that had become accustomed to nothing but painful losses.

ever for a city that had become accustomed to nothing but painful losses. "I knew that we had a good chance of getting him," center Zydrunas Ilgauskas said. "But, really, just like this year's lottery shows, you have no guarantees. And with LeBron being a local kid, it was a big deal in Cleveland. At that point, I kind of thought maybe we're not cursed."

James needed only four years to get Cleveland to their first NBA finals. And even if they fall short against Duncan's Spurs, the Cavaliers have reason to believe they'll win one at some point.



BLESSED TO RECEIVE: Bless Spencer of New Era pulls in a touch-down pass in the championship game of the Mecklenburg Park and Recreation Division A flag football league Saturday at Revolution Park. Defending is Ron Latta of Quiet Storm. New Era won 6-3