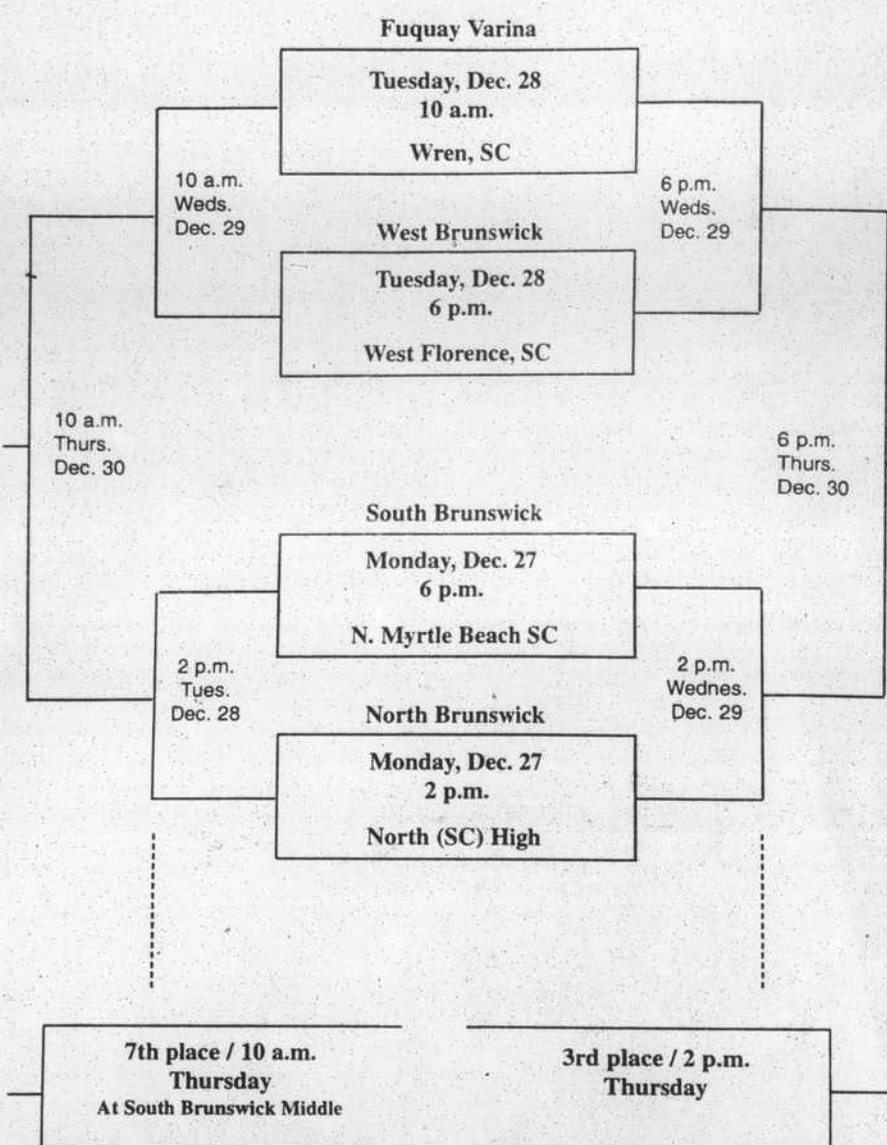


SPORTS

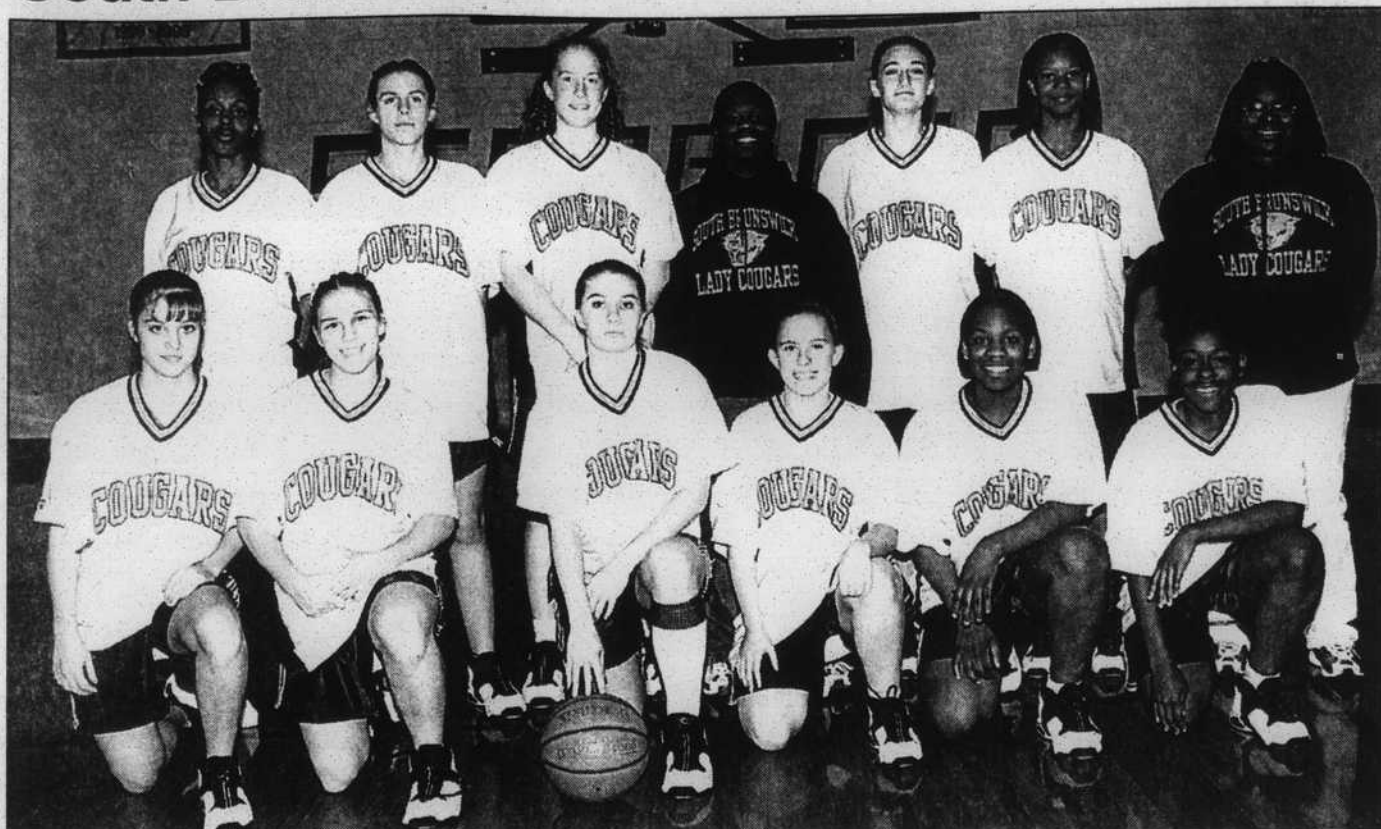
County girls teams open against same opponents

THE STATE PORT
PILOT

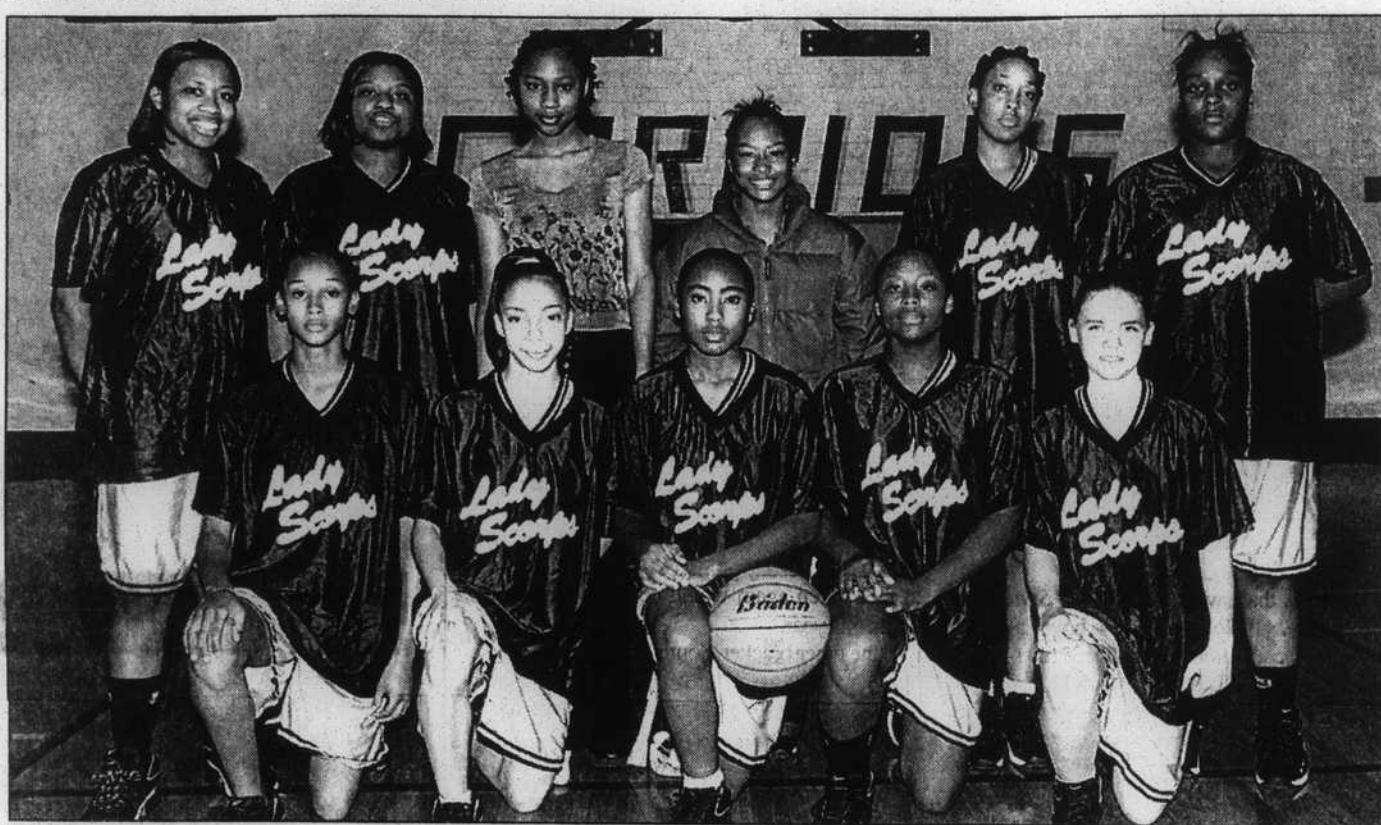
Seashell Holiday Classic
Girls Tournament
December 27-30



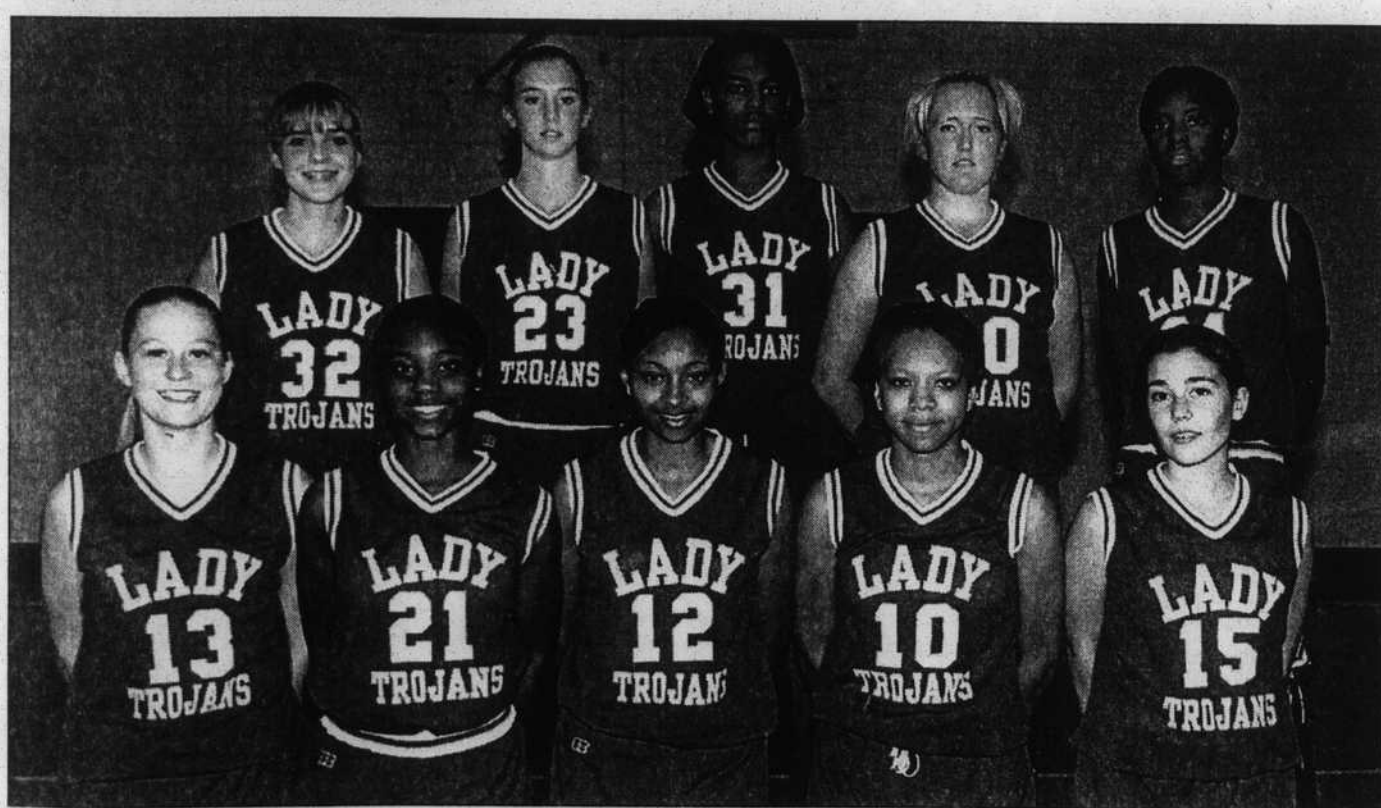
South Brunswick



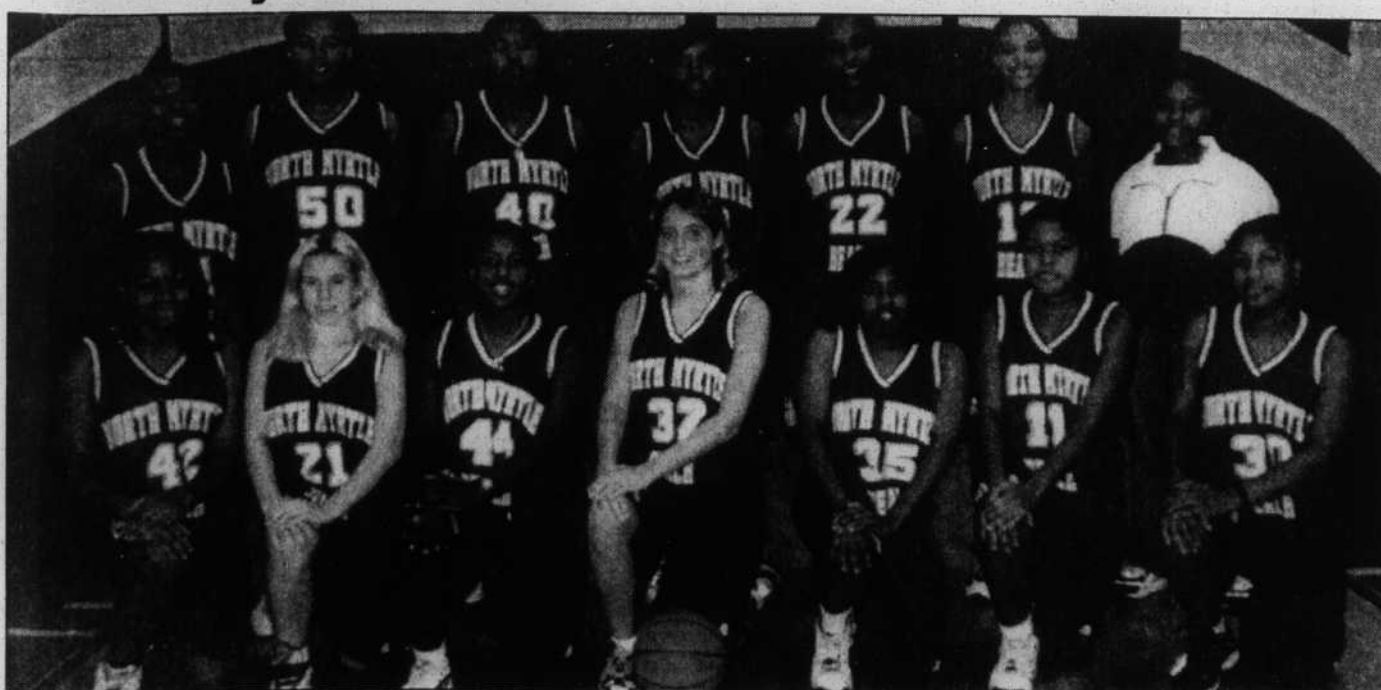
North Brunswick



West Brunswick



North Myrtle Beach



Girls action

Wren defends title

The Lady Hurricanes from Wren High (S.C.) will return to the *State Port Pilot* Seashell Holiday Classic basketball tournament next week in hopes of defending their 1998 title.

Wren defeated North Myrtle Beach (S.C.), 59-51, in the championship game last year behind outstanding senior guard Heather Crowe's 28 points. Crowe signed to play for Clemson University after the 1998-99 season.

She scored 82 points in three games and won the most valuable player award for the tournament. That is an average of 27.3 points per game for three games, a tournament record that other players will try to break in the future.

This season, Wren opens on Tuesday against Fuquay Varina High School at 10 a.m. Other first-round girls match-ups include South Brunswick vs. North Myrtle Beach (S.C.) at 6 p.m., on Monday; North Brunswick vs. North High (S.C.) at 2 p.m. on Monday; and West Brunswick vs. West Florence (S.C.) at 6 p.m. on Tuesday.

Last year, Wren's biggest challenge came from South Brunswick, which lost in the second round to the Lady Hurricanes, 44-42. The Lady Cougars bounced back to win third place with a 51-41 win over North Brunswick in the consolation bracket.

Last year, senior center Keishonna Hewett of South Brunswick was named to the all-tournament team after scoring 48 points, grabbing 23 rebounds and shooting 20-of-23 from the free throw line in the three days of play.

In addition to Crowe and Hewett, other girls on the all-tournament team were Tara Limbaugh and Latonya Sanders of Wren, and Jennifer Sprinkle and Shameka Montgomery of North Myrtle Beach.

This year, although the tournament has been spread out over four days instead of three, all teams will play three games. Consolation games are played for third, fifth and seventh place.

Last year, Wren opened with an 86-52 win over Wilmington Christian Academy and followed that strong showing with their closest game, 44-42, over South Brunswick. The Lady Cougars battled back from a 13-point deficit to

put a scare in the Lady Hurricanes. South trailed, 25-12, in the second quarter and patiently chipped away at that lead. The Lady Cougars trailed by just ten points, 37-27, at the start of the fourth quarter when Nadine Tooley scored six of her eight points to help the rally.

This season, Tooley is out for medical reasons. South pulled to within two points with 11.4 seconds to go when Keishonna Hewett scored to make it 44-42. Wren's Tara Limbaugh then missed two free throws to give South a chance to tie with seven seconds to go. South got the ball into the frontcourt, but a pass inside to Hewett was deflected by the Hurricanes to secure the win.

This season, leading the Lady Cougars are Karmen Johnson, Josey Prince, Kimberly Yates, Deborah Porterfield, Annie Shaffer and Tammi Batson. Lindsay Downing and Leslie Elwood are also contributing.

For West Brunswick, the Lady Trojans have just one senior on their young roster this season, Lindsay Yates. They are led by guard Tamara Stanley, a junior who scored 30 points in one game this season against East Bladen. Other juniors are forward Stephanie Butz and guard Elisha Gause. Sophomores are forward Heather Shaw, center Christine Pahl and forward Megan Harris. Freshmen are guards Portia Gause, Latoya Hill and center Sasha Vann.

Fuquay Varina makes its first trip to the tournament this year. The Bengals, coached by Rob Morrison, are led by Hardricka Mays, a 6'1" junior forward, and Jenny Bowles, a 5'8" junior guard. The Bengals were the 1997 and 1998 sectional 3A state champions but finished 1998-99 with a 9-15 record. The team returns eight players off of last year's team, including two starters.

North Myrtle Beach advanced last year to fourth place in the Region 5AAA tournament with a 15-8 record. The Lady Chiefs are led by Kim Hemingway, a 5'10" senior forward; Amanda Cooper, a 5'2" senior guard; Jennifer Sprinkle, a 5'8" senior guard, who was also an all-tournament selection last year; and by Martha Livingston, a 5'9" senior forward.

1998 tournament scores, highlights

First round

Wren 86, Wilmington Christian Academy 52
South Brunswick 45, West Florence 36
North Brunswick 40, Carolina Forest 25
North Myrtle Beach 43, West Brunswick 32

Second round

Wren 44, South Brunswick 42
North Myrtle Beach 61, North Brunswick 29
West Florence 54, Wilmington Christian 53
Carolina Forest 51, West Brunswick 48 (OT)

Final round

South Brunswick 51, North Brunswick 41 (3rd)
West Florence 44, Carolina Forest 18 (5th)
Wilmington Christian 53, West Brunswick 36 (7th)
Wren 59, North Myrtle Beach 51 (1st)

All-Tournament Team

Wren
Heather Crowe - MVP
Tara Limbaugh
Latonya Sanders

North Myrtle Beach
Jennifer Sprinkle
Shameka Montgomery

South Brunswick
Keishonna Hewett