

SECTION **B**

# Sports

WEDNESDAY • MARCH 8, 2017

**Inside:**  
 ■ BHS falls  
 ■ Rec signups  
 ■ Church Briefs

**Fourth and Long**



David Friedman

**Endorsements help with recruitment**

"The ceiling is the roof."

Don't worry, I'm not here to try and explain what Michael Jordan meant when he said that during halftime of Carolina's senior night victory over Duke on Saturday.

Truth be told, I have no clue what that man was talking about.

While Jordan's trip over his wagging tongue has been the focus of his appearance in Chapel Hill this weekend, not being discussed was his primary purpose for being there.

No, it was not just to see the Tar Heels celebrate their ACC Championship.

His Airness announced that the Jordan brand will now be official partners with UNC Football.

The football team has had access to Jordan cleats for as long as Jordan has been making cleats so this announcement may not seem like a big deal, but I think it is. What sneaker company college basketball teams are contracted with and the influence it has on the 16, 17 and 18-year-old high school players they recruit has been well documented.

A high school basketball player that loves Nike is less likely to go play at Indiana because of their affiliation with Adidas. Maryland is recruiting better than they have in a few years and not just because it is easier to play in the Big Ten then it is in the ACC. It has more to do with Steph Curry's rise in popularity and his and the Terps affiliation with Under Armour.

I do not mean to imply that a school's affiliation with a sneaker company is the primary factor in a kid's decision on where to play college ball. I do mean to imply that it is a factor in the decision.

Another example of the importance

See **FOURTH, B6**

## Bethel JV girls repeat

**NEW BERN** — State opener, BACA led 16-13 at halftime and then outscored Gramercy 24-15 in the second half to secure the win.

The 40 points were the most the Eagles scored in their three games. Freshman Kayley Minton led the Eagles with 13 points, while Sarah Conner, an eighth-grader, added 12 points.

Haley Northcott paced BACA on the boards with 11 rebounds, while Conner and Eliana Bazemore grabbed seven

In the tournament See **EAGLES, B6**



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Bethel Assembly Christian Academy junior varsity girls basketball team repeated as Class 1-A champions in the North Carolina Christian Athletics Association State Tournament.



JIM GREEN / Bertie Ledger-Advance

Bear Grass Charter baserunner Kristen Hardison dives back to first base as Bertie's Cydney Johnson applies the tag Monday.

## Bertie High School softball is off to a promising start

Lady Falcons hold off Bear Grass, move to 2-0

BY **JIM GREEN**  
 Bertie Ledger-Advance

**WINDSOR** — The Bertie High School softball team is off to a promising start this season.

The Falcons improved to 2-0 on Monday, holding off a rally by Bear Grass Charter School to win 5-4 at home.

A pair of two-run frames was enough for Bertie, which survived a Bears rally in the top of the seventh inning.

Bri Forehand was the winning pitcher for the Falcons. She worked all seven innings, allowed eight hits and four runs while striking out three and walking one.

Bertie's defense was stout early, as the Falcons kept Bear Grass off the board in the top of the first with a double play.

Cydney Johnson snagged Morgan Lee's liner at first and then doubled Kaley Silverthorne (single) off the bag.

Bertie took a 1-0 lead in the bottom of the second when Jessie Mizelle reached on an error and scored on a groundout by Johnson.

Bear Grass (1-1 overall) put its leadoff batter (Kristen Hardison) on first base with a single, and she moved to second on Morgan Bonds' sacrifice bunt. The frame ended when Silverthorne grounded to Johnson at first, and Johnson threw across the diamond to Mizelle at third to retire Hardison.

The Bears tied it at 1-all in the top of the

See **SOFTBALL, B6**



JIM GREEN / Bertie Ledger-Advance

Lady Falcons baserunner Alyssa Byrum scores a run as the throw arrives high to Bear Grass catcher Rachel Hardison.

## Lady Falcons season ends

Buccaneers oust Bertie in playoffs

BY **TRAVIS JACKSON**  
 Bertie Ledger-Advance

**WINDSOR** — A great season has come to an end.

The Bertie High School Lady Falcons fell to the Bartlett Yancey Buccaneers by a score of 48-39 in the fourth round of the NCHSAA 2A playoffs on Feb. 28.

The Lady Falcons (26-2), the Northeastern Coastal 2A Conference regular season and tournament champions, entered the contest on a 12-game winning streak, with their last loss dating back to Jan. 21.

Bartlett Yancey came out of the gate looking to gain the upper hand early on in the contest by dialing up full court pressure. Bertie, not to be outdone, was able to gain a few easy baskets by beating the Buccaneer's full court press. Bartlett Yancey held a 12-10 advantage at the end of the first quarter.

As second quarter play ensued, the Buccaneers' shots began to fall.

The Falcons continued to fight, despite not being able to buy a basket, and were able to keep the game within arms' reach.

Bartlett Yancey led by a tally of 26-19 at half-

See **FALCONS, B6**



Duck Thru Food Stores congratulates this week's Athlete of the Week.

**JERNIGAN**  
 OIL & PROPANE

**Athlete of the week**

BHS  
 Cydney Johnson  
 Softball

