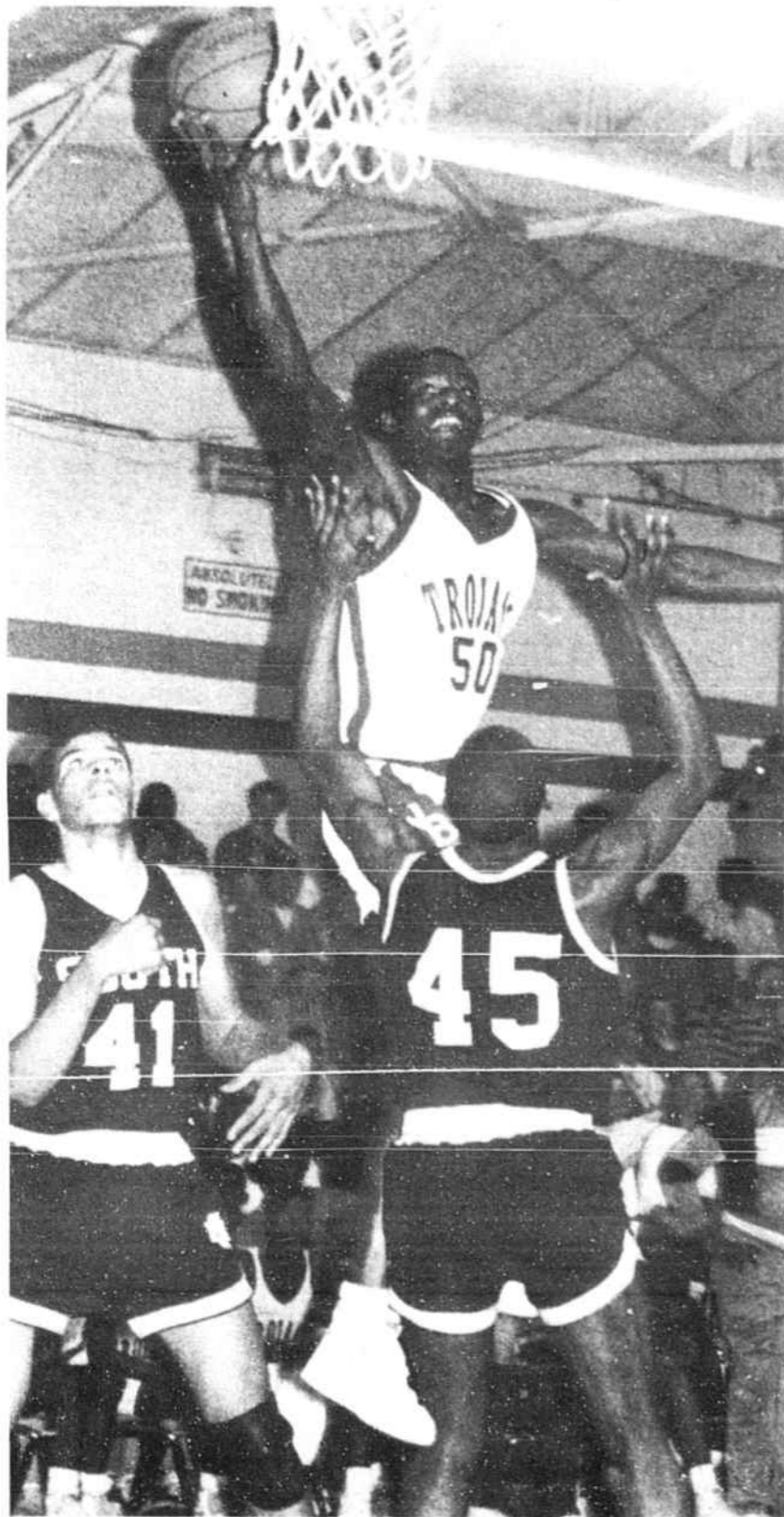


Creative Cougars Eliminate West In Sectional Semifinals



DANIELS LAYUP—West Brunswick's Ricky Daniels stretches over Konji Harrison (45) of South Brunswick for a basket during last Thursday's Sectional III semifinal tournament game. South advanced to the sectional finals with a 71-63 win over the host Trojans. Also on the play for the Cougars is Preston McGriff (41).

BY JOHNNY CRAIG

The creative South Brunswick Cougars worked up a defensive masterpiece last Thursday in eliminating host West Brunswick 71-63 in the boys' eastern 2-A Sectional III prep basketball semifinals.

The win was the Cougars' 20th of the season, which sets a school record for most games won in a single season.

It was the third time the two county rivals had met this season in front of a standing-room-only crowd. But this time, the stakes were a berth in the sectional finals, which would keep the winner's state title hopes alive.

"Our defense can create a lot of things, only we didn't do as good a job tonight as we can," said South Brunswick head coach Gene Doane. "When we get our hands in the passing lanes, it throws the other team's offense off."

Ricky Daniels, West Brunswick's 6-foot-5 junior point guard who entered the contest with a 25-point-per-game average, was limited to a season-low 11.

Working to make up the scoring loss was Trojan senior forward Timmy Farmer who equaled a career-high 27 points.

"We just got beat by a better team," said West Brunswick head coach Billy Mims. "We're still working on developing a program here and Gene Doane has done an excellent job at South in his four years there."

The Cougars overcame the use of a make-shift lineup throughout most of the first half, as several South players got into early foul trouble.

Among the first to hit the South bench was 6-foot-9 sophomore center Preston McGriff, who was whistled for two early fouls and did not

return to action until the start of the second half.

"We knew we would get them into early foul trouble," Mims said. "We just didn't take advantage of it by hitting our free throws. We missed six free throws in the first half alone, along with some other easy shots that could have really helped us out."

The Trojans led throughout the first quarter, holding an 11-8 lead at the end of the period.

However, South tied the game 15-15 on Vernon Battles' three-point goal with 4:21 to play in the half and the Cougars took the lead for good, at 18-15, on another Battles three-pointer just 30 seconds later.

The Cougar lead swelled to six points, 26-20 on Robert Flythe's three-point goal with 1:40 left in the half.

Farmer's layup and Jimmy Johnson's free throws in the final minute kept the Trojans within 28-24 at halftime.

Farmer scored nine of the Trojans' 19 third-quarter points as the Cougars flirted with blowing the game open midway in the period.

South broke from a 33-30 lead with 5:37 left in the third quarter and outscored West 8-2 in the next minute-and-a-half to grab a 41-32 advantage.

West used a 5-0 run over the final 1:34 of the quarter to cut the deficit to three, 46-43.

South quickly took control of the fourth quarter, outscoring the Trojans 9-2 in the first three minutes for a 10-point, 55-45, lead.

Battles, one of four Cougars scoring in double figures with 16 points, was called for his fifth foul with 4:36 to play.

The foul sent Daniels to the free throw line, where he connected on both shots for his first points since the 5:05 mark of the second quarter.

The Trojans managed to cut the South lead to four, 67-63, with 37 seconds remaining on a pair of baskets by Daniels and Jarrett Godwin.

McGriff led the Cougars (20-7) with 18 points, followed by Battles with 16 points, Robert Flythe with 14 and Konji Harrison with 11.

Jeff Bernard scored 11 points to add to the Trojans' scoring attack.

The loss ended the season for the Trojans (16-9), who finished the regular season as co-champions of the Waccamaw 2-A Conference.



STAFF PHOTOS BY JOHNNY CRAIG

BATTLE UNDER THE BASKET—West Brunswick's Jarrett Godwin (right) and Preston McGriff of South Brunswick go head-to-head under the basket during Sectional III playoff action last week. The Cougars took a 71-63 win over the Trojans and advanced to the sectional finals at Union Pines.

The Cougars lost to Graham Saturday night in the Sectional II finals at Union Pines, 45-40.

Score By Quarters

S. Brunswick	8	20	18	25	71
W. Brunswick	11	13	19	20	63
South Brunswick Scoring:	Johnson 8, Flythe 14, Battles 16, Nichols 6, McGriff 18, Harrison 11				
West Brunswick Scoring:	Farmer 27, Godwin 6, Bernard 11, Mitchell 3, Lance 4, Daniels 11, Johnson				

SPORTING SCENE

South Cagers Conclude First 20-Win Season

BY JOHNNY CRAIG

The record-setting prep basketball season ended for the South Brunswick boys last Saturday night at Union Pines (Carthage) as the Cougars fell to Graham 45-40 in the Eastern 2-A Sectional III finals.

A number of milestones were reached on the South hardwood this winter with several more achievements upcoming still with the possible college signing of a number of Cougar players.

South (20-8) compiled its first 20-win season in the history of the school, not to mention its finest cage year ever.

In early January, Cougar head coach Gene Doane, a veteran of 30 years of high school basketball, won his 500th career game as South defeated North Brunswick 57-34.

Perhaps the best is yet to come as five of the six Cougar seniors will likely be playing on the collegiate level next year.

Headlining the group is senior Robert Flythe. The 6-foot-5 sharpshooter is being courted by Colonial Athletic Association members East Carolina and George Mason as well as Shippensburg State, Pa.; St. Marys, Md.; Pembroke State, Coastal Carolina, Mount Olive, Methodist and N.C. Wesleyan.

Forward Vernon Battles is being recruited by Livingstone College while Konji Harrison and Jeff Johnson's services are wanted by Pembroke State, Methodist, Coastal Carolina, Mount Olive and N.C. Wesleyan.

Also, Sakou Spaulding is a strong junior college prospect. The Graham Red Devils, one of the stronger teams of the Central Tarheel Conference that defeated the Cougars, are in their first year of 2-A competition after dropping from the Mid-State 3-A Conference last season.

The Cougar boys' team was the only winning Waccamaw 2-A Conference team that saw action in the first round of last week's Sectional III basketball playoffs.

While both West Brunswick and East Bladen boys' teams along with Fairmont and Whiteville girls received first-round byes, the Whiteville boys and East Bladen and South Robeson girls were all eliminated in their openings.

South Brunswick rode Preston McGriff's 25 points to a big 71-58 win over N. C. Science and Math.

However, Whiteville ended its season at 14-10 with a 76-66 playoff loss to host West Montgomery.

In girls' play, West Montgomery ousted visiting East Bladen 47-44 and host Clayton downed South Robeson 45-39.

All-County Team Upcoming

The annual all-Brunswick County boys' and girls' basketball teams will be announced next week. The teams will feature players and coaches of the year in both boys' and girls' play along with the top cagers in Brunswick.

The team is selected each year by *The Brunswick Beacon* and *State Port Pilot* newspapers.

Graham Edges South Brunswick In Sectional Finals

Central Tarheel Conference foe Graham eliminated South Brunswick from the state 2-A championship race last Saturday, edging the Cougars, 45-40 in the Eastern 2-A Sectional III finals at Union Pines (Carthage).

Rod Carter scored 15 points and Sean Hope 11 to lead the Red Devils to the sectional title and a berth in this week's 2-A eastern regional tournament in Fayetteville.

"It was a great defensive game," said South Brunswick coach Gene Doane. "We just couldn't put the ball in the basket. We shot the ball like we were tired, plus our legs just weren't there."

"We went to the free throw line only seven times, while Graham

went to the line 17 times. To win at this level in the state playoffs, you've got to get to the free throw line." The Cougars were playing their third road playoff game in five days after having opened against N.C. Science and Math (Durham) and visited West Brunswick last Thursday (see related stories this section).

The two teams battled to a 9-9 deadlock in the first quarter before Graham managed to take an 18-13 halftime lead.

After the Cougars used a 17-point third quarter to pull even 30-30, the Red Devils (20-6) outscored South 15-10 in the final period for the win.

Preston McGriff, despite early

foul trouble, led the Cougars (20-8) with 12 points, while Vernon Battles and Konji Harrison added 10 each.

Score By Quarters

S. Brunswick	9	4	17	10	40
Graham	9	9	12	15	45
South Brunswick scoring:	Johnson 2, Flythe 4, Battles 10, Nichols 2, McGriff 12, Harrison 10				
Graham scoring:	Moore 3, Ward 9, Hester 1, Christ 2, Carter 15, Winstead 2, Hunter 2, Hope 11				

N.C. Science and Math McGriff scored 25 points and Battles added 24 to lead South Brunswick past N.C. Science and Math 71-58 last Tuesday in the first round of sectional play. Robert Flythe added 16 for the Cougars.

South Brunswick led 18-14 in the first quarter and extended its lead to 11 points, 39-28, at halftime.

Science and Math, the third-seeded team from the Capital Area Conference, cut the Cougar lead to seven, 50-43, at the end of the quarter but South outscored the Unicorns 21-15 in the final period.

Score By Quarters

South Brunswick	18	21	11	21	71
N.C. Science & Math	14	14	15	15	58
South Brunswick scoring:	White 2, Flythe 16, Battles 24, Nichols 4, McGriff 25				
N.C. Math & Science scoring:	Taylor 2, Pattillo 4, Barnes 14, Lowry 4, Williford 18, Gray 1, Armstrong 2, Helms 13				

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