CANCEL THE GERMAN-MANIA: JIMENEZ WILL STAY IN MEXICO RATHER THAN PITCH FOR BRAVES = 3E



SECTION

THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 1988

Roy S. Johnson

....

In one night, fantasy turns into nightmare

So Bobby Cremins was right. All along, the gray-haired basketball professor with the Brooklyn accent had poor-mouthed his charges, bemoaning this and crying about that. **Even as Georgia Tech's Yellow Jackets** were amid the clouds, soaring inexplicably into a conference race that was supposed to elude them from the starting gun, he seemed stunned. A disbeliever. And, we know now, with reason. It was all a mirage, a long-running fairy tale that would be transformed into a nightmare in just one night. "I was afraid the bubble was going to burst," Cremins said moments after the game. That the Yellow Jackets' cruel moment of reckoning was delivered so resoundingly by messengers donning Carolina blue should be no surprise. For 20 years, the route to the ACC championship has wound its way through Chapel Hill. On most occasions, the excursion ended there, too. Fourteen times the Tar Heels concluded their season with at least a share of the regular-season crown. Ten times, it was theirs alone. This year, Carolina needed a stopover in Atlanta to secure its jewel. And the Tar Heels snatched it with a vengeance, stomping the Jackets on their own turf, ending their fantasy with a statement-making 97-80 rout at The Omni that was - as, for once, can be truly be said — not even that close.

Abernethy verdict puts agents on defensive

Attention turns to Walters, Bloom, Page 6E By David Davidson and Chris Mortensen Staff Writers

While former Atlanta sports agent Jim Abernethy was lashing out at prosecutors, other prominent agents and college coaches Wednesday left no doubt that his conviction Tuesday will have a chilling effect on agents seeking to represent college athletes with eligibility remaining.

"We consider this one of the most highly political indictments possible," said Abernethy, who was sentenced to a year in jail and fined \$2,000 after his conviction in Opelika, Ala., Tuesday on a misdemeanor charge of tampering with a sports event. Abernethy was prosecuted for offering performance incentives to defensive back Kevin Porter of nearby Auburn University. Abenethy signed Porter to a contract before Porter's senior season.

Abernethy, acquitted on two other misdemeanor charges of commercial bribery and deceptive trade practices, is free after posting a \$1,000 bond. He intends to appeal.

"We feel totally victorious," Abernethy said. "We walked into a court in Lee County, Ala., where the jury was composed of 12 local residents, the judge (Robert M. Harper) lives there, it was a highly emotional issue and we win two of three counts. To win two of three in Auburn's backyard, that's a percentage you'll take in any sport."

Alabama assistant attorney general

Donald Valeska, who prosecuted Abernethy, said, "I don't think we'll see too much more of this kind of activity because now the law is involved."

Of Valeska, who characterized Abernethy as "a pimp" in his closing arguments, the defendant said, "He's a stumbling, bumbling, incompetent version of Columbo (the TV detective) who came into court and got spanked.

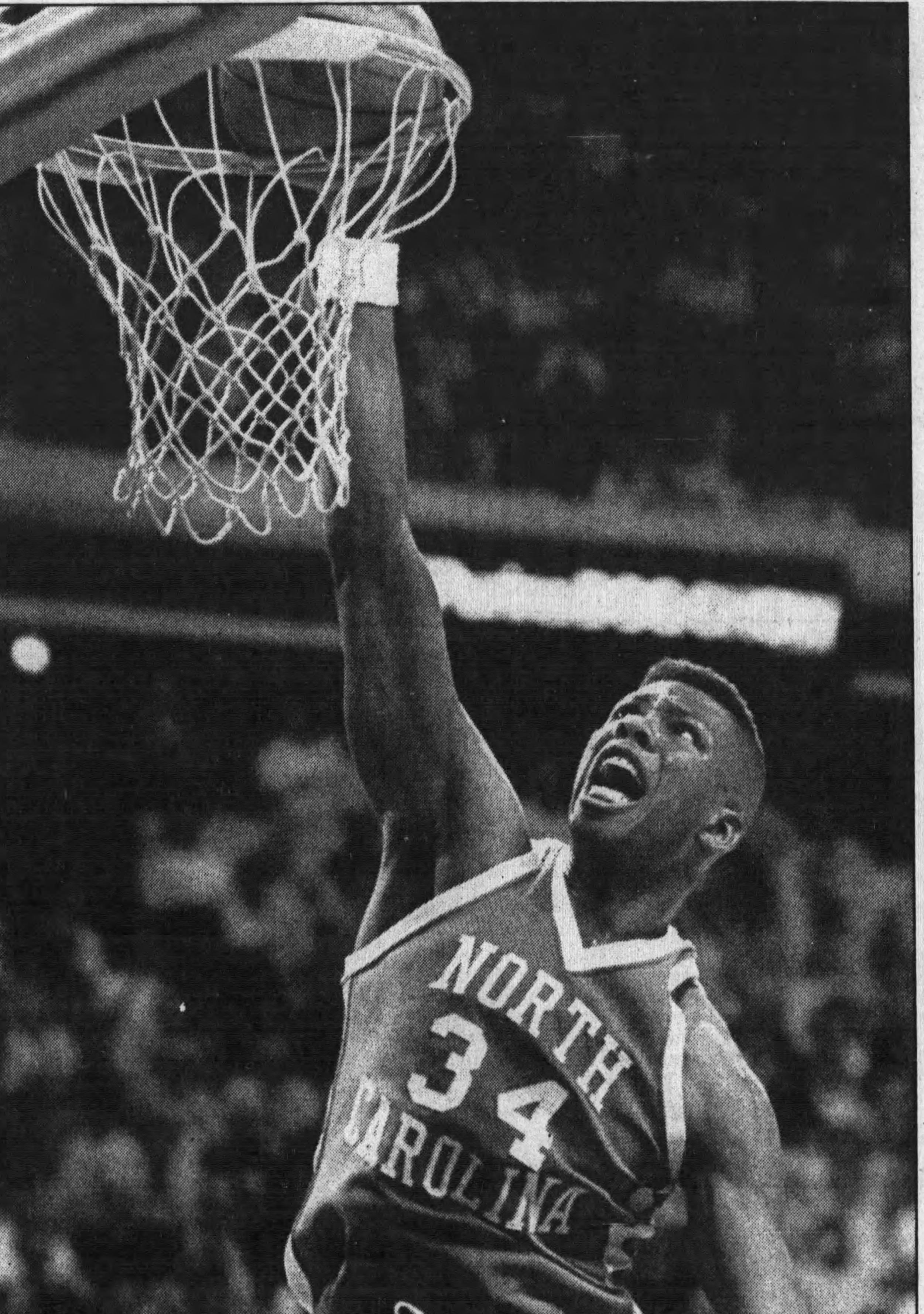
See ABERNETHY, Page 6E

11 minutes, 24 seconds of perfection

Dean Smith himself seemed unable to appreciate the triumph. "I'm sure Georgia Tech had a letdown," he said. "They were sky high and we were lucky to be playing them now."

Right. To comprehend the magnitude of Carolina's effort, consider only this one span of time: a breathtaking 11 minutes and 24 seconds during the second half in which the Tar Heels did not miss one shot from the floor, not one of the 16 orbitals they guided toward the nets. And these weren't just prayers, either, but rather a procession of layups and dunks that seemed to imply that Tech was more than beaten. It were demoralized. It began when freshman forward Pete Chilcutt did a J.R. Reid hook-alike number to give Carolina a 58-50 advantage, and it ended when the real Reid spun, faked and banked the Tar Heels home with 4:10 left. By then, Carolina led by an astonishing 25 points. Chapel Hill bound, again. If there was anything more for Tech to mourn it was the future. Dean Smith, the strand of success that runs through all of Carolina's championship years, also showed he was well-stocked for future triumphs.

Heels stomp Tech 97-80



North Carolina clinches first, halts Jackets' 7-game streak

By I.J. Rosenberg Staff Writer

The bubble has finally burst.

After winning seven straight games and placing itself among the nation's elite, Georgia Tech came crashing to Earth with a resounding thud Wednesday night, losing to frequent nemesis North Carolina 97-80 before a capacity crowd of 16,400 at The Omni.

The win gives the No. 6 Tar Heels (22-4 overall, 11-2 ACC) their second straight ACC regular-season title while the 13th-ranked Yellow Jackets (21-7, 8-5) dropped to third in the league with Duke (20-6, 8-5), a half-game behind North Carolina State (21-6, 8-4).

"They just came to play and we never could get into the flow in the second half," said Tech coach Bobby Cremins, who has lost 12 of 15 meetings with UNC. "They played a great team game."

On this night, the Jackets were simply no match for Carolina. They were able to stay with the Tar Heels for the first 20 minutes but no further.

In the second half Carolina outscored Tech 56-41 and led 60-50 at 13:47, then 77-61 six minutes later and 90-65 with just more than four minutes to play.

The Tar Heels went one stretch of 11 minutes, 24 seconds with 16 shots, no misses. For the half, the Tar Heels shot 72.7 percent compared to the Jackets' 45.7 percent and outrebounded Tech 20-10. Said Carolina coach Dean Smith, "I don't think we can play any better than that."

North Carolina will only get better

His team is led, it seems now, by more than Reid, still a sophomore and planning to stay for two more years. Add to their weapons the name Scott Williams, an energetic second-year center who had a near-career night with 21 points and nine boards. And while Tech came in flexing its muscles behind a string of admirable rebounding performances, Williams set the tone early by playing Windex on the offensive glass. He finished the night with only two fewer offensive rebounds (4) than all of Tech. And there was more, a swelling of youth that emerged even as the game hung in the balance.

It was difficult to discern anything from the initial 20 minutes. It's too often that way with kid jocks. They tantalize you in one moment, then torture you the next. In last evening's saga, Tech was tortured. Craig Neal, the Noodle, as if his entire body was double-jointed, was too loose, slinging the basketball this way and that. And Dennis Scott, the kid with no conscience, seemed suddenly aware of the magnitude of his position. **Conversely, the Carolinians were** swatting the Jackets with a glimpse of their future. During one stretch, the Heels were anchored by an incredibly effective yet precocious five: three freshmen (guard King Rice and forwards Rick Fox and Chilcutt) a sophomore named J.R. and junior Steve Bucknall, a forward. And this was with Williams, the sophomore, catching a blow on the bench. **Together this young cast finished the** night with 77 points and 29 rebounds, enough to make up for an invisible Jeff Lebo (1-for-7, 4 points) and any other shortcomings that might have been. It was a group that Smith couldn't believe had come this far. "I never thought we would win the regular season this year," said Smith. It was as if the Carolina coach, in all his longevity, was warning his gray-haired counterpart at the other end of The Omni: Get it now because in future years, you can all but forget about it. And just like Cremins, he just might also be right.

See TECH, Page 8E

Kentucky runs past Dogs 80-72

By Thomas O'Toole Staff Writer

LEXINGTON, Ky. — Georgia, still trying to salvage its season, at least made No. 8-ranked Kentucky work for a share of its 37th Southeastern Conference championship Wednesday night.

The Bulldogs fought through foul trouble and a scoreless stretch of 4:03 midway through the second half before succumbing to the Wildcats 80-72 at sold-out Rupp Arena.

Kentucky, 21-5 overall and 12-5 in the SEC, can claim the title outright by winning at Ole Miss on Saturday. Florida is the only team with a chance to catch the Wildcats.

"Tonight I tried to do a little extra because it was my last game here," said guard Ed Davender, who became the first player in school history to score 1,500 points and make 400 assists. "I can't call it a fairy tale because it's real."

See GEORGIA, Page 4E

North Carolina's J.R. Reid slams home two of his game-high 24 points in Wednesday night's game.

Time for a new set of heroes RA/V

Baldwin girls only team with a chance to repeat

AAA tournament preview, Page 9E By Darryl Maxie Staff Writer

Last year's state high school basketball tournament resulted in the discovery of a new American hero and a pending made-for-TV movie. What will the 1988 tournament turn up?

At the very least, mostly new champions.

Only one 1987 champion out of eight has returned to the final fours, which begin today at Macon Coliseum and Georgia Tech's Alexander Memorial Coliseum.

Eight defending champions became seven when Class AAA's Rockdale County boys were stripped of their title two months after winning it. The title was declared vacant because Rockdale used an ineligible player, but Rockdale coach CleveHigh school state tournaments Where: Class AAAA/AAA at Georgia Tech; Class AA/A at Macon Coliseum. When: Today through Sat. When: Today through Sat. Schedule/times: Today AAAA/AA. Saturday — All titie games. Girls at 4 p.m.

and 7 p.m.; Boys at 5:30

p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

land Stroud became famous for turning his team in. His honesty earned him a place in the movies, a story which still lacks a happy ending.

Baldwin's girls, 23-1 and ranked second in the Journal-Constitution poll, are going strong for their third straight Class AAAA state championship in a tournament where: They are one of nine teams remaining ranked either first or second in their classification. Last year, no top two teams in any classification made the final four.

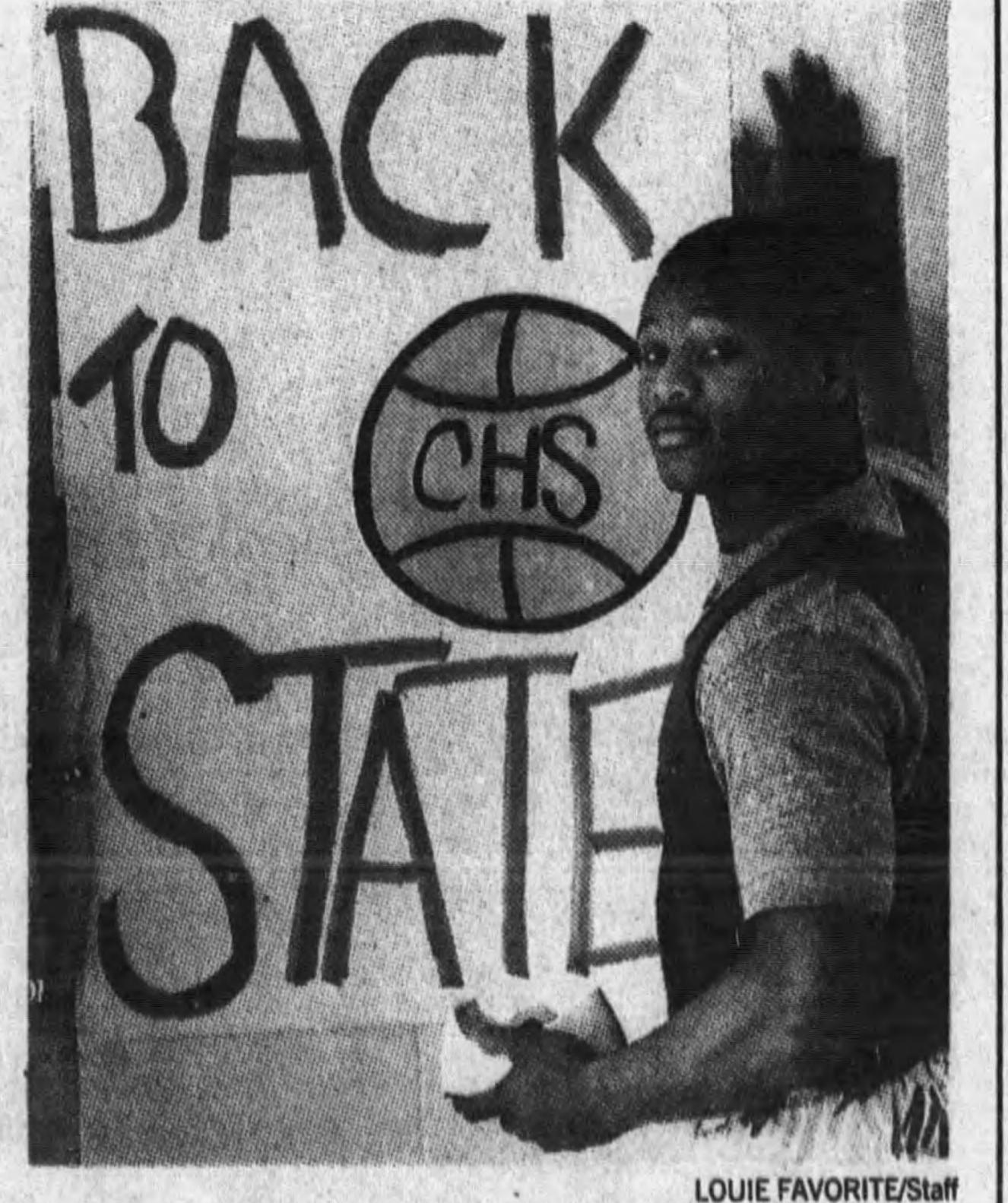
RICH ADDICKS/Staff

There really is no favorite," Griffin coach James Martin said. "There's three other teams that could win it just as quickly as we could. It's going to come down to who can put it together for two games."

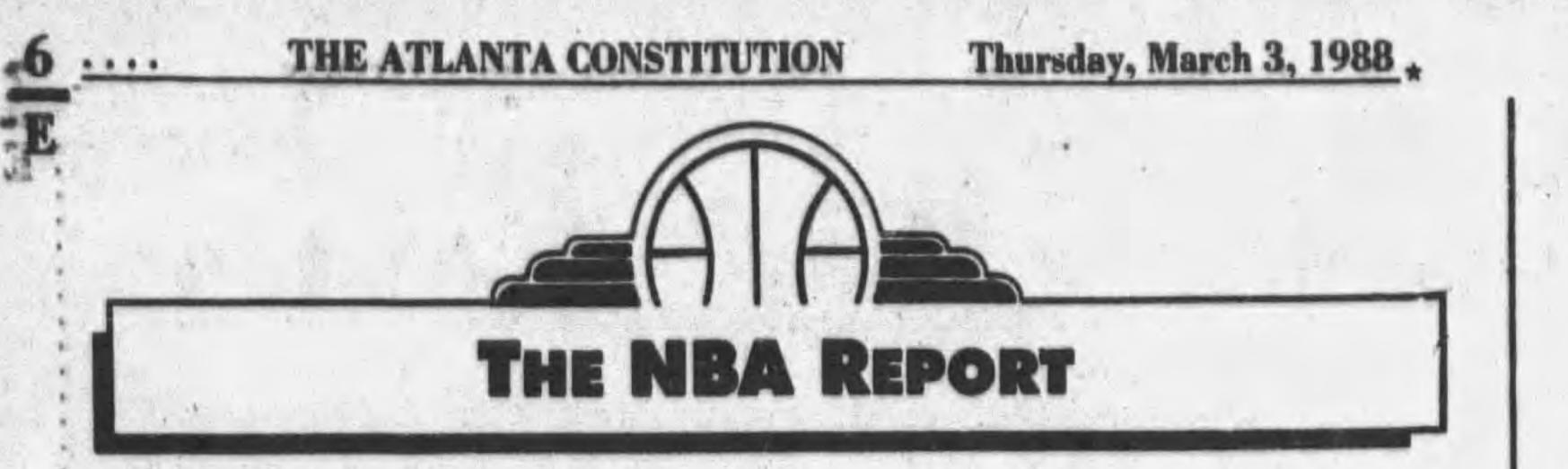
"There's nothing left for us to do but win it," said Northeast Macon coach Walter Johnson, whose Raiders lost 75-72 in the boys AAAA final last year. "We know there's no consolation in finishing second, and though second's not too bad, we've already finished second."

Two schools have teams that still must share their gyms. Usually by this point in the season, one team or both have been eliminated. Not so at Madison County and Tay-

See CHAMPIONS, Page 9E



Central of Carrollton player Walt Crowder checks out one of the posters up around the school.



Eastern Conference

ATLANTIC	W	L	Pct	GB	Streak	Home	Away	Conf	
Boston	39	19	.672		Lost 3	22-4	17-15	25-13	
New York	23	32	.418	141/2	Won 1	20-8	3-24	16-22	
Philadelphia	23	32	.418	141/2	Won 1	18-7	5-25	14-20	
Washington	23	32	.418	141/2	Won 4	15-11	8-21	14-21	
New Jersey	14	42	.250	24	Won 2	12-17	2-25	7-30	
CENTRAL	·W	L	Pct	GB	Streak	Home	Away	Conf	
Detroit	37	18	.673	-	Won 6	23-4	14-14	26-11	
Atlanta	35	21	.625	21/2	Lost 2	21-6	14-15	22-12	
Milwaukee	.30	24	.556	61/2	Won 2	20-8	10-16	21-15	
Chicago	31	25	.554	61/2	Lost 3	20-9	11-16	20-18	
Indiana	29	27	.518	71/2	Lost 2	19-8	10-19	16-18	
Cleveland	28	30	.483	101/2	Lost 5	20-8	8-22	17-18	
Western C	onf	ere	nce						
MIDWEST	W	L	Pct	GB	Streak	Home	Away	Con	
Dallas	39	17	.696	-	Won 10	24-5	15-12	28-11	
Denver	34	21	.618	41/2	Won 1	24-4	10-17	20-15	
Houston	33	22	.600	51/2	Won 1	21-6	12-16	22-16	
Utah	29	26	.527	91/2	Won 2	23-6	6-20	22-16	
San Antonio	22	31	.415	151/2	Won 1	18-11	4-20	17-21	
Sacramento	16	40	.286	23	Lost 8	13-17	3-23	11-26	
PACIFIC	W	L	Pct	GB	Streak	Home	Away	Con	
x-LA Lakers	45	10	.818	-	Lost 1	26-3	19-7	32-5	
Portland	34	21	.618	11	Won 3	23-6	11-15	20-14	
Seattle	30	27	.526	16	Won 3	22-4	8-23	19-18	
Phoenix	17	38	.309	28	Lost 3	12-15	5-23	11-28	
Golden State	14	40	.259	301/2	Lost 5	11-16	3-24	10-23	
LA Clippers	12	42	.222	321/2	Lost 2	10-18	2.24	9-28	
x-Clinched playoff	berth								
WEDNESDAY'S	SCOR	ES	1	1 = 14	N. US				
New Jersey 117, Boston 107				Dallas 115, Sacramento 90					
Washington 111, Indiana 102				Denver 99, Cleveland 81					
Detroit 103, LA Clip	pers 90) .		Hous	ton 108, Go	Iden State	101	,	
TUESDAY'S SCO	ORES				· · · · · ·				
New Jersey 104, LA	Clippe	ers 75		San Antonio 114, Phoenix 109					
New York 98, Indian	na 96			Utah 113, Houston 112					
Detroit 117, Atlanta	104		- 1 - 1	Seattle 114, LA Lakers 100					
Milwaukee 117, Bos	ston 11	6			× 1				
THURSDAY'S G	AMES								
Philadelphia at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.				Portland at Phoenix, 9:30 p.m.					

Prosecutors take aim at Walters, Bloom

By Chris Mortensen Staff Writer

Alabama Assistant Attorney General Donald Valeska, having won a conviction in the case of former Atlanta sports agent Jim Abernethy, says his office should have "a better case for prosecuting" agents Norby Walters and Lloyd Bl for their dealings with former Alabama basketball player Derrick McKey.

Valeska, who made an emotional closing argument at the trial Tuesday that led to Abernethy's conviction, will be present in Tuscaloosa County when Walters and Bloom are arraigned March 16.

Walters and Bloom have been indicted on the same criminal misdemeanor charges Aber-

nethy faced this week in Lee County, Ala. - tampering with a sports event, commercial bribery and deceptive trade practice.

A 12-member jury found Abernethy guilty and gave him the maximum sentence of one year in jail and a \$2,000 fine for his dealings last year with Auburn defensive back Kevin Porter. Abernethy was found innocent on the charges of commercial bribery and deceptive trade practice.

"He may be the first (agent prosecuted), but he won't be the last," Valeska told the jury Tuesday. "From now on, it's forever."

Valeska said the state's case against Walters and **Bloom** is stronger because the University of Alabama had to forfeit almost \$250,000 in NCAA basketball tournament money as a result of McKey signing a contract with the agents during

his junior season. McKey lost his final year of eligibility and was drafted by Seattle in the NBA.

"On the surface alone, the evidence is obvious for tampering," said Valeska.

For Walters and Bloom, the case in Alabama becomes a legal distraction to far more serious. charges under consideration by a federal grand jury in Chicago. The grand jury, which has met weekly since last May 19 to hear testimony and weigh evidence on the agents' dealings with about 60 college athletes, is considering charges of fraud, mail fraud, wire fraud, tax fraud, racketeering and extortion against Walters and Bloom, sources said.

The arraignment in Alabama will take place at about the same time indictments would be announced in Chicago.



From Page 1E

"If Valeska thinks he won such a big victory, why did they bring three indictments and why did they lose two in their own backyard?"

The mood of coaches and other agents

"Hopefully this will be the first of many convictions. It's the only way we'll get this problem under control."

"It's obviously the most dramatic action in the history of agent regulation," said Leigh Steinberg, an agent based on the west coast. "It obviously is a stunning breakthrough in creative approaches to cracking down on early signings.

"Whether or not practical law or criminal sanctions are appropriate is something that is mildly troubling. On one hand, it's good they did something, but was it the right something? "I have mixed feelings. It strikes me that there are a variety of sanctions regulatory agencies can employ to effectively deter agent misconduct, short of jail - anything from a fine to a short-term suspension of agency license to a warning, which is then followed by a suspension and inability to represent athletes." Agent/attorney Ralph Cindrich of Pittsburgh, another respected veteran in the field, also expressed concern over the conviction. "I' don't want see a lynch mob mentality," Cindrich said. "That mentality is as grave as that of agents who proceed in an unscrupulous manner. "Something has to be done. Maybe, and arguably, criminal laws should apply, but I still wonder if due process was served in the Abernethy case. The whole trial perked agents up, and

more attention is now being focused upon results.

"Perhaps we are still all missing the real problem, which comes long before a guy becomes a professional football prospect. Particularly, I know of recruiting violations far more serious than this, in which the athlete was introduced to unethical activity long before an agent entered onto the scene."

Chicago agent Steve Zucker, who repre-

ranged from ecstatic to cautious.

"My initial reaction is I don't like for anybody to go to jail," said Pittsburgh football coach Mike Gottfried, who has had four prominent players linked with agents. "But I believe this practice has to stop. I'm glad a message has been sent out.

"Some people out there are so despicable, they don't care what rules are or what laws are. I hope other states follow. Colleges need to declare war on unscrupulous agents. I'm hoping this will lead to the conviction of another agent, then another and another."

Said TCU coach Jim Wacker, who had three players involved with Abernethy, "There are a lot of happy coaches in the country today. Obviously, I'm delighted to see the courts taking action. What we're talking about is bribery and accepting bribes contrary to the rules we're supposed to play by.

sents Chicago Bears quarterback Jim McMahon, said the impact of publicity surrounding early signings by agents such as Abernethy, Norby **Walters** and **Lloyd Bloom** was having an effect even before Abernethy's conviction Tuesday.

"This year I have found that a lot more guys have not signed and are available," Zucker said. "Not only that, the top players are taking more time and having advisers and/or family interview agents. A lot of guys still haven't made up their minds.

"The publicity on the Abernethy trial, articles, grand jury ... it tells me that next year less and less guys will be offering money.

"(The Abernethy prosecution) was very creative without an agent law in effect. The days of the 'hot box' — where you get the kid in a room and say, 'Sign here, and here's 10 grand for your mother' - are nearing an end. It's going to stop."



NBA regular-season loss at home to an Eastern Conference team in 67 games.

From Wire Reports

The Nets, winning for the second consecutive night under new coach Willis Reed, led 99-78 with 7:35 to play.

But the Celtics, with Danny Ainge hitting two straight 3-pointers to start an 18-4 run, cut the deficit to 103-96 with 4:35 to play.

NEW JERSEY (117)

Hinson 8-14 5-6 21, Williams 1-2 2-2 4, McCormick 10-14 3-4 23, Bagley 9-17 1-3 19, Birdsong 5-7 2-6 12, Bradley 5-6 2-2 14, Engler 0-0 0-0 0, McKenna 3-6 8-8 16, Washington 4-7 0-0 8, Comegys 0-0 0-0 0, Wilson 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 45-74 23-31 117.

BOSTON (107)

Bird 11-28 11-13 34, Lohaus 2-4 0-0 4, Parish 7-10 1-2 15, Johnson 4-9 2-4 10, Ainge 7-13 4-4 20, Roberts 1-2 0-0 2, Gilmore 2-2 0-2 4, Paxson 4-7 4-4 12, Minniefield 0-1 0-0 0, Acres 1-2 4-5 6. Totals 39-78 26-34 107.

New Jersey	1	1
Boston		

3-Point goals-Bradley 2, McKenna 2, Ainge 2, Bird. Fouled out-None. Rebounds-New Jersey 40 (Hinson 15), Boston 44 (Bird 16), Assists-New Jersey 26 (Bagley 11), Boston 23 (Ainge 9). Total fouls-New Jersey 32, Boston 24. Technical-Bird. A-14,890.

Bullets beat Pacers 111-102 as Malones combine for 53

LANDOVER, Md. - Moses Malone scored 28 points and Jeff Malone added 25 night as the shorthanded Washington Bullets posted their fourth straight victory, 111-102 over the Indiana Pacers.

INDIANA (102)

Person 9-15 0-0 18, Tisdale 4-11 4-7 12, Stipanovich 9-13 2-6 20, Fleming 2-10 0-0 4, Long 4-7 5-6



13, Wheeler 3-4 3-4 9, Miller 4-6 2-2 11, H.Williams 1-6 2-2 4, Gray 0-0 0-0 0, Skiles 1-4 0-0 2, Anderson 4-7 1-2 9. Totals 41-83 19-29 102.

WASHINGTON (111)

Jones 1-3 0-0 2, J.Williams 7-17 2-2 16, M.Malone 11-18 5-10 28, Colter 4-10 2-2 10, J.Malone 9-19 7-7 25, Catledge 7-15 2-4 16, Bogues 6-10 0-0 12, Bol 0-0 0-0 0, Alarie 1-3 0-0 2.Totals 46-95 18-25

Indiana Washington

3-Point goals-Miller, M.Malone. Fouled out-None. Rebounds-Indiana 50 (Tisdale 7), Washington 58 (M.Malone 14). Assists-Indiana 31 (Per-Washington 32 (J.Williams, J.Malone, Bo-7). Total fouls-Indiana 19, Washington 27. gues 7). A-6,129.

Pistons win sixth straight, dispose of Clippers 103-90

PONTIAC, Mich. - Joe Dumars scored 21 points and Isiah Thomas had 14 of his 19 points as Detroit outscored the Los Angeles Clippers 38-19 in the third quarter, and the Pistons went on win 103-90 for their sixth straight victory.

L.A. CLIPPERS (90)

Norman 5-9 1-1 11, Cureton 5-14 1-1 11, Benjamin 5-14 5-7 15, Woodson 5-11 4-4 14, Drew 3-9 0-0 6, Fields 3-5 4-4 10, Valentine 6-9 1-1 13, Williams 1-11 0-0 2, Kite 3-6 2-2 8. Totals 36-88 18-20 90.

DETROIT (103)

Mahorn 4-8 1-1 9, Rodman 9-12 2-5 20, Laimbeer 2-7 3-3 7, Dumars 6-9 9-11 21, Thomas 9-14 1-2 19. Salley 2-5 3-4 7, Johnson 3-9 0-0 6, Dantley 3 6 4-6 10, Edwards 1-3 0-2 2, Lewis 0-0 1-1 1, Bedford 0-3 1-2 1, Nevitt 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 39-76 25-37

ouston	36 22 30 20-10
olden State	22 22 20 37-10
ouled out-None.	Rebounds-Houston 6