

North Carolina High School Athletic Association  
Physical Address | 222 Finley Golf Course Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27517  
Mailing Address | P.O. Box 3216, Chapel Hill, NC 27515  
Phone 919-240-7401 Fax 919-240-7399

## NCHSAA HALL OF FAME NOMINATION FORM

(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE ALL INFORMATION)

### I. NOMINEE INFORMATION

NAME Absher Robert Michael Mike  
LAST FIRST MIDDLE NICKNAME  
ADDRESS 407 Planters Ridge Dr. Sunset Beach, NC 28468  
STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE  
AGE 61 DATE OF BIRTH 14-13-1942 PLACE OF BIRTH Mt. Airy, NC  
TELEPHONE: WORK ( ) HOME (336) 416-5704 DECEASED? YES NO  
NAME OF HIGH SCHOOL Wilkes Central High School YEAR GRADUATED 1980  
NAME OF COLLEGE Greensboro College YEAR GRADUATED 1984  
ADDITIONAL DEGREES (MASTERS, DOCTORATE, ETC.)  
\*\*\*IF NOMINEE IS DECEASED, GIVE DATE OF DEATH AND FILL IN SECTION II\*\*\*

### II. NEAREST RELATIVE

NAME Absher Denise Guilliams Spouse  
LAST FIRST MIDDLE RELATIONSHIP  
ADDRESS 407 Planters Ridge, Sunset Beach, NC 28468  
STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE  
TELEPHONE: WORK ( ) HOME (336) 416-5703

### III. SPONSOR INFORMATION (PERSON MAKING NOMINATION)

NAME Moree Lynne A.  
LAST FIRST MIDDLE  
ADDRESS 156 Fairwood Dr. Wilkesboro, NC 28697  
STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE  
TELEPHONE: WORK ( ) HOME (336) 957-0638  
TITLE/POSITION N/A  
SCHOOL SYSTEM N/A  
SIGNATURE Lynne Moree DATE 10-26-23

### HONORS

(PLEASE LIST HONORS EARNED IN COLLEGE, POST GRADUATE WORK, AWARDS FROM CIVIC CLUBS, ETC.)  
(EXAMPLE: PHI BETA KAPPA, MAGNA CUM LAUDE, JAYCEE PERSON OF THE YEAR, ETC.)

1. Led the 2019 team to first conference championship in 49 years
2. 2019 + 2004 Central Piedmont Conference Coach of the Year
3. 2014 Selected as Head Coach for NC/SC All Star Game
4. 2013 + 2014 District COY
5. 2009 Selected to be assistant coach in the East/West A
6. 2004-05 Season Led Davie Co. to 2nd round of State Star Ga
7. All-time Winningest coach in Davie Co. School's History Play-off
8. 2006 - Winner of the Homer Thompson Award

### V. PHOTOGRAPH

ATTACH A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE NOMINEE  
(preferably head and shoulder shot, wallet size)



### VI. SUPPORT OF CANDIDACY

Using whatever supportive data you may wish, please describe the activities and accomplishments of this candidate which make him/her a viable candidate for the North Carolina High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame. Please remember that only thorough and complete documentation will be considered. Two letters of recommendation (minimum) will be necessary, and newspaper articles, etc., in support may also be submitted.

The committee shall seek to honor those who have directly influenced the history and evolution of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association. Attachments are considered appropriate.

FOR OFFICE USE: DATE RECEIVED \_\_\_\_\_

#### IV. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

IN CHART BELOW, PLEASE LIST CHRONOLOGICALLY THE NOMINEE'S POSITION  
(COACH, PRINCIPAL, ETC.) AND OTHER APPROPRIATE DATA

POSITION	DATES	SCHOOL OR SYSTEM	HONORS	COACHING RECORDS
See	attached	forms.		

#### CIVIC/CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES (INCLUDE CHURCH, CIVIC OR CHARITABLE INVOLVEMENT)

1. Served as Sunday School teacher for Youth 2005-2012
2. Served on the Diaconate First Baptist Church Mocksville
3. Served on Personnel Committee First Baptist Ch. Mocksville
4. Served a 4 year term on the NCCA Board
5. Served on the NCBCA as the District II Chair for Boys BB
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_

#### IV. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

IN CHART BELOW, PLEASE LIST CHRONOLOGICALLY THE NOMINEE'S POSITION (COACH, PRINCIPAL, ETC.) AND OTHER APPROPRIATE DATA SCHOOL OR COACHING POSITION DATES SYSTEM HONORS RECORDS

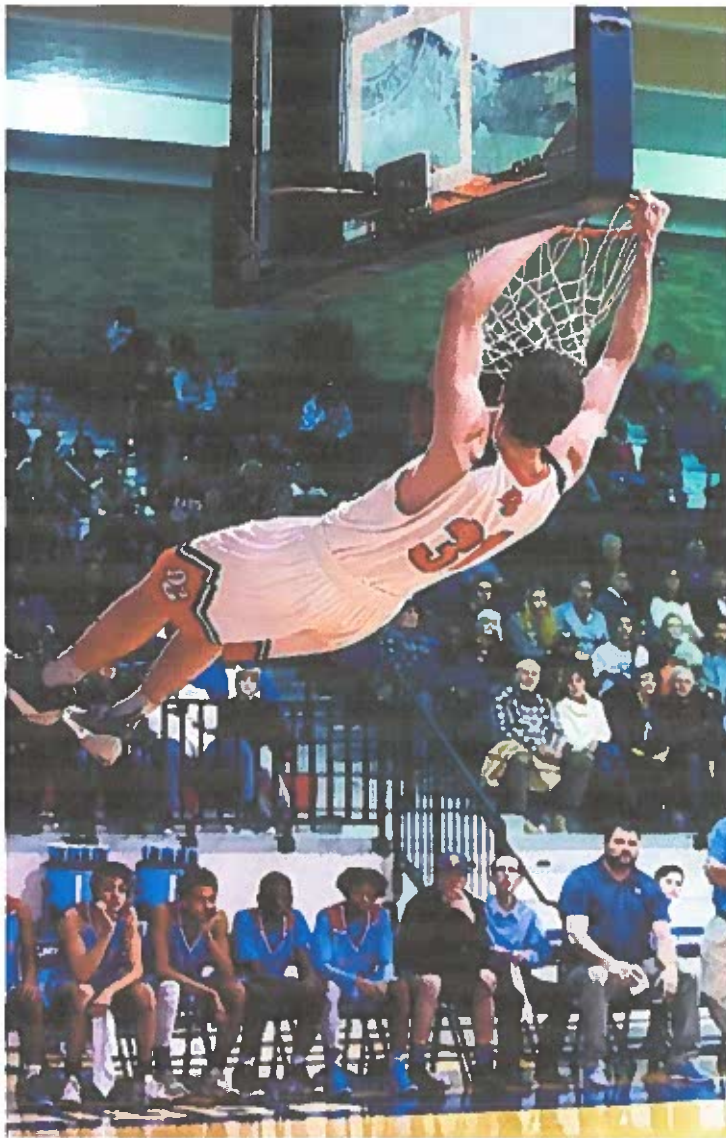
Position	Dates	School or System	Honors	Coaching Records
<b>Southeastern Christian Academy-Current Position</b>	<b>August 2021-Current</b>	Southeastern Christian Academy	Hired to start HS Athletic Program	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health/PE Teacher</li> <li>• Athletic Director</li> <li>• Head Men's Basketball Coach</li> </ul>	8/2023-current	Southeastern Christian Academy Shallotte, NC	Granted Membership into the independent Christian school league for next year	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health/PE Teacher</li> <li>• Biology Teacher</li> <li>• Assistant Men's Basketball Coach</li> </ul>		Southeastern Christian Academy Shallotte, NC	Applied for membership in an independent Christian school league Helping start/expand HS athletic program	
<b>Davie County Schools Career:</b>	<b>Aug 2002-Aug 2021</b>			
<b>County Athletic Director</b>	<b>Spring 2018-8/2021</b>	Davie County Schools		
<b>Health/Physical Education Teacher</b>	<b>8/2002-8/2021</b>	Davie County Schools/ Davie County High School	Named PE Department Chair 2006-2021	*retired for NC public education 8/21
Head Men's BB coach	8/2002-8/2021	11		245-226 over 19 years

## IV. Professional Activities -

Health & PE Men's BB	1993 - 2002	South Caldwell Hudson, NC		102 victories
1 year Head				over 10 years
Men's Golf Coach				
PE at Junction	1987 - 1993	Nease H.S. St. Augustine, Fla		
Creek Elem.				
Head JV & Coach	Varsity Asst.			7 consecutive winning seasons in JV B.B.
and Head Softball Coach				Played for Softball State Champions 1993

## **Davie wins The Moir** Published 9:13 am Thursday, January 3, 2019 By Brian Pitts

Read more at: <https://www.ourdavie.com/2019/01/03/davie-wins-the-moir/>



By Brian Pitts Davie Enterprise Record SALISBURY - Davie's boys basketball team passed its biggest test of the season in the Sam Moir Christmas Classic championship game at Catawba on Dec. 30, leading virtually all the way in a 59-47 victory over Salisbury. It was Davie's first Moir title since 2012 and Mike Absher's fourth in his 17 years as coach. Six years ago, the War Eagles of Caleb Martin (18.1 ppg), Cody Martin (14.8), Austin Hatfield (13.9), Taylor Hatfield (9.3) and Kenyon Tatum (8) whipped North Rowan 71-46. That was the springboard for a conference tournament championship and a 21-6 season. Maybe Saturday's triumph over No. 3 Salisbury, which knocked off No. 2 North Rowan 59-54 in the semifinals, will serve as the launching pad moment for these War Eagles, who are 9-0 for the first time in eight years. "We had to make sure we closed it out," senior Michael Walton told the Salisbury Post. "I started thinking back to when Davie won this six years ago when the (Martin) twins were here. I was a little kid, but I was so impressed. I knew I wanted to win this myself someday." "This is the culmination of a lot of hard work," Absher said. "Some of these guys will move on and play

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By the third day, fatigue is definitely a factor. You're playing on a bigger court and the start times are all over the place. I think, more than anything, it takes toughness." Notes: Davie hit 7 of 10 shots in the first quarter and 21-43 for the game. It was 6-15 from 3-point territory, including 5-7 in the second half. ... Absher's first two Moir titles came in '03 and '04. SALISBURY – Davie's boys basketball team passed its biggest test of the season in the Sam Moir Christmas Classic championship game at Catawba on Dec. 30, leading virtually all the way in a 59-47 victory over Salisbury. It was Davie's first Moir title since 2012 and Mike Absher's fourth in his 17 years as coach. Six years ago, the War Eagles of Caleb Martin (18.1 ppg), Cody Martin (14.8), Austin Hatfield (13.9), Taylor Hatfield (9.3) and Kenyon Tatum (8) whipped North Rowan 71-46. That was the springboard for a conference tournament championship and a 21-6 season. Maybe Saturday's triumph over No. 3 Salisbury, which knocked off No. 2 North Rowan 59-54 in the semifinals, will serve as the launching pad moment for these War Eagles, who are 9-0 for the first time in eight years. "We had to make sure we closed it out," senior Michael Walton told the Salisbury Post. "I started thinking back to when Davie won this six years ago when the (Martin) twins were here. I was a little kid, but I was so impressed. I knew I wanted to win this myself someday." "This is the culmination of a lot of hard work," Absher said. "Some of these guys will move on and play college basketball, and that'll be great. But I told them today, there's nothing more fun than winning something for your school and your community. And boy, they did it today." There was no 3-point monsoon like the one fans saw in the semifinals, when Davie drilled 10 of its 12 triples in the first half against North Stanly. The Hornets (7-3) hung around most of the game, but in the end, there was too much Davie experience, too much poise from seniors Owen McCormack, Walton, Jacob Hendrix and Troy Griggs. "They beat us with backdoor plays and all that little stuff they do," Salisbury coach Bryan Withers told the Post. "That comes with experience. That comes with playing together for a while and understanding each other." The War Eagles came out hot. Griggs opened the scoring with a drive to the basket. Hendrix blocked two shots in one defensive possession. McCormack posted up for two. Walton cut to the basket, received a dish from Griggs and finished with the left hand. When Hendrix drove for a bucket, Withers called timeout at the 3:31 mark of the first quarter, his young team down 8-0. The stoppage did not change the flow. Alex Ratledge and Walton executed a backdoor play beautifully, with Walton finishing. After reserve Zach Smith swatted a shot, Walton fed McCormack for a 3-ball. It was 13-2. Brooks Johnson's triple made it 18-0, but the Hornets showed grit, their 14-2 run vaulting them to a 24-20 lead. The final moments of the first half were symbolic of the way Davie handled Salisbury's runs. Walton passed to Johnson, who nailed a 3. McCormack flashed inside and Hendrix found him for a 27-24 halftime lead. "I was really proud of how we closed the half," Absher said. "That was big. From a confidence perspective, that helped going into the second half." In the second half, Salisbury would put together mini-runs to stay alive. Griggs blew by everybody on a fast break and scored, then assisted a McCormack 3 as Davie assumed a 32-24 lead. Salisbury fought back within 38-36, thanks largely to reserve guard Jacquez Smith, who made four of his six 3-pointers in the fourth and finished with a team-high 18 points. Davie responded with the knockout blow, a 12-5 run. McCormack scored inside; McCormack got a kick-out pass from Johnson and popped a 3; and Justice Redmon got a steal and passed to Johnson, who found Hendrix in the corner, the 3

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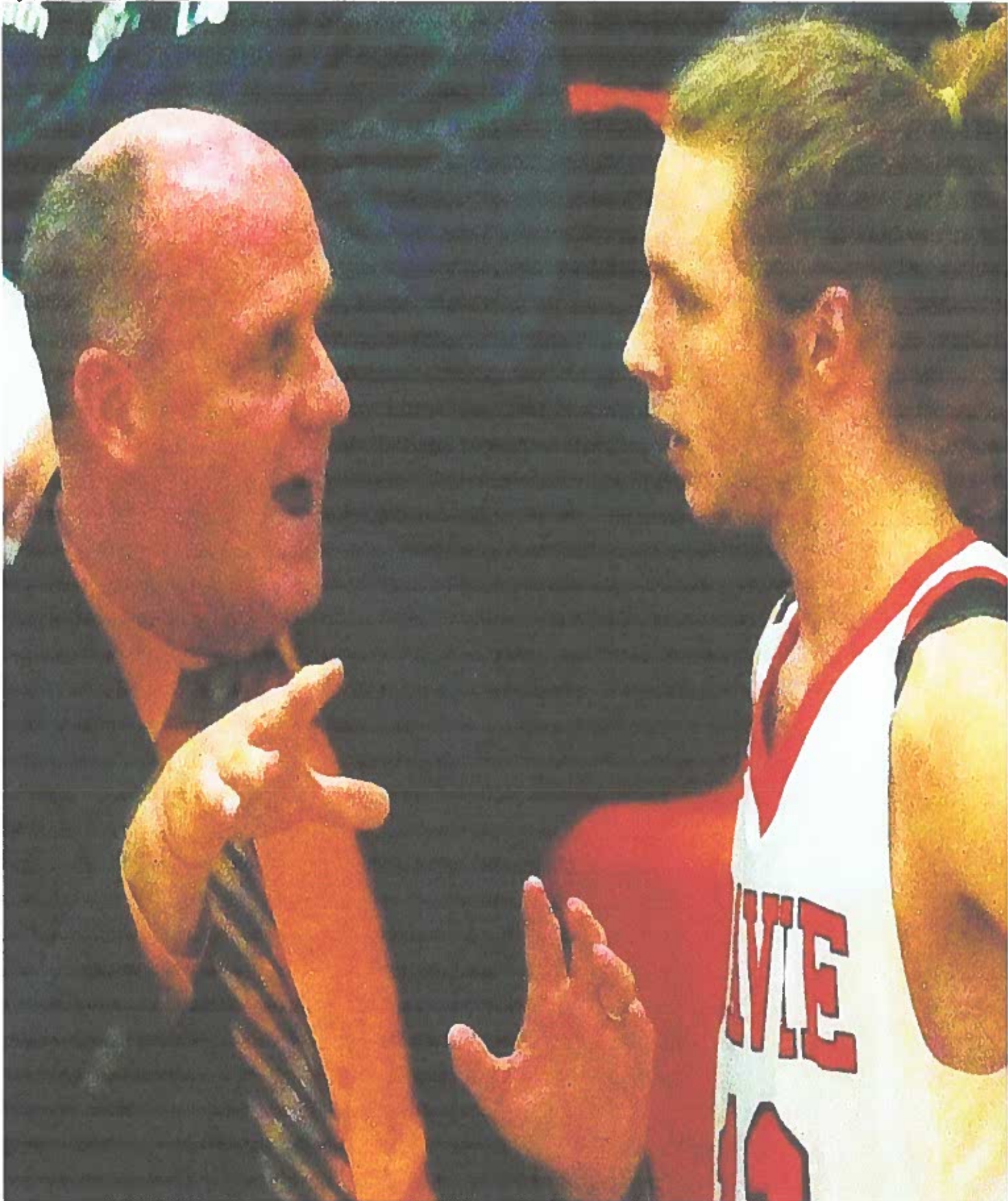
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## Davie's winningest basketball coach leaving after 19 years

Published 9:07 am Thursday, July 29, 2021

By **Mike Barnhardt**



By **Brian Pitts**  
Enterprise Record

Article published By Brian Pitts , Mike Barnhardt.

Davie's winningest basketball coach leaving after 19 years Published 9:07 am Thursday, July 29, 2021 By Mike Barnhardt By Brian Pitts Enterprise Record When Mike Absher announced on July 14 that he was leaving Davie High and moving to the coast, it brought an end to a long era and closed the book on the winningest coach in Davie boys basketball history. Last summer Mike's wife, Denise, took the principal's job at Brunswick County Early College High School. Mike remained at Davie for the 2020-21 school year. Mike and Denise were 188 miles apart for a year. Mike recently took a job at Southeastern Christian Academy, a private school in Shallotte, about 13 miles from their new home at Sunset Beach. SCA is a K-12 school with 348 students, including 80 high school students. "Our original plan was the spring of 2022," said Mike, who also served as Davie's athletic director for many years. His last day at Davie will be Aug. 1. "We wanted to go to Sunset Beach in 2022, but when she got the opportunity last year to go on down, we felt like that was a door that was opening and we probably should have faith and step through it. I committed to Davie County for at least one more year. We were able to hold firm to that. You know, timing is everything." Bob Henry went 134-105 in 11 years (1965-66 through 1975-76) as the Davie boys basketball coach. He was the program's top winner for decades until Absher arrived from South Caldwell and put together many memorable moments at the Davie helm. Absher finished 245-226 over 19 years, and he has 347 victories over 29 years between South Caldwell and Davie. Jim Young, who went 77-49 from 1997-98 through 2001-02, is No. 3 on the wins list. The War Eagles, who have been a member of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association for 44 years, won three state playoff games before Absher; they won eight under Absher. He guided Davie to 10 winning seasons, and he led Davie to seven winning seasons in the rugged Central Piedmont Conference. The War Eagles enjoyed four conference championships before Absher. They won three on Absher's watch – the CPC Tournament in 2012, when Davie edged Mt. Tabor 69-65; the CPC Tournament in 2013, when Peyton Sell's 3-pointer with four seconds remaining created 67-64 ecstasy; and the CPC regular season in 2019, when Davie went 10-0 in the league and celebrated the first regular-season crown since 1970. But Absher made a lasting mark as much, if not more, for who he was than for what he accomplished. He brought an affectionate personality. He was always graceful in defeat and humble in victory. He had 15 assistant coaches at Davie, counting the freshman and JV teams. The list includes Mike Dinkins, Lance Everette, Larry Habegger, Tim Kenney, Johnny Miller, Terry Mitchell, Shane Nixon, Cameron Phillips, Shannon Pulliam, Kevin Revels, Bruce Wallace, Jeff Walton, Bill Walwik, Terrell Wilson and Ty Woodring. "Absher has been a part of my life since I was in high school and has been a great influence on my life," Wilson said. "I appreciate him for showing me how a man is supposed to be as a friend, husband and a coach." "Absolutely one of the best," Woodring said. "I'm proud to have coached with him for the short time that I did. He taught me so much and was always interested in what goes on outside of basketball just as much as what goes on inside." "Coach Absher has poured his blood, sweat and tears into turning boys into successful young men," Wallace said. "Since I have been his assistant, I have learned so much from him." Absher, 59, grew up in North Wilkesboro and attended Wilkes Central, graduating in 1980. He was an all-around athlete, playing quarterback in football, point guard in basketball and catcher in baseball. "If I threw it seven or eight times a game, that was a lot," he said of his quarterbacking days, which came during the three-yards-and-a-cloud-of-dust era. Probably no one would have guessed Absher played catcher. "Baseball was a little bit boring to me. I wanted to be involved in every play. I couldn't pitch, so I figured catching was the right place to be," he said with a laugh. Absher attended Greensboro College. He ran cross country as a junior and senior. "They started a program and the coach said: 'Come out here and run,'" he said. "So that's what I did, and I loved it. My last meet I broke 30 minutes (in 5.2 miles). It was 28-something and I was

second on our team. So I did make some good strides.” Absher’s coaching road is one heck of a journey. Mike and Denise started dating during his junior year at Greensboro College, and he landed his first job at Tarboro Edgecombe Academy, a private school in Tarboro. For two years, he was the AD and the varsity head coach in soccer, basketball and baseball. He left Tarboro and headed two hours down the road to Person County High in Roxboro. He spent one year there – assistant coach in football, freshman boys basketball coach and junior high baseball coach. Mike and Denise got engaged that year and they got married in the summer of 1987. Denise got a job in Florida, so off they went. “I moved to Florida without a job,” he said. “Denise had a job and a place to live.” Mike found a teaching/coaching job at Nease High, a 7-12 school in Ponte Vedra Beach. He was there for seven years. He coached basketball as an assistant and softball as the head man the entire time. He was head JV football coach for a while. He led his 1992 softball team to state runner-up. “(In basketball) I worked under Bud Beech, who won over 600 games and won a state championship,” he said. “I was his assistant for three or four years.” Mike and Denise grew tired of the extremely long drives to visit family, so they decided to leave Florida. “Denise is from New York and my family was here in North Carolina,” he said. “We wanted to get closer to families and I wanted to be a head varsity basketball coach. So I started applying for jobs in North Carolina.” In 1992, the door opened at South Caldwell. He was South’s varsity boys basketball coach from 1992-93 through 2001-02. In the spring of 2002, Young stepped down as the Davie boys coach and Absher came knocking. He was hired by then-principal Linda Bost. All these years later, he authored seven of the program’s 15 15-win seasons. There were two 20-win seasons pre-Absher (20-3 in 1969 and 21-6 in 2000). There were three under Absher (23-7 in 2012, 21-6 in 2013 and 24-3 in 2019). The 2018-19 War Eagles achieved the most wins ever without a superstar. Owen McCormack (13.6 points per game), Michael Walton (13), Jacob Hendrix (12.5), Troy Griggs (10.5) and Brooks Johnson (8) worked together like spokes inside a wheel and won seemingly every close game. The 2011-12 team that won 23 games was a magical season that saw Davie reach the West Regional final, the deepest run in program annals. The lineup featured Nate Jones (23.7 scoring average), Shannon Dillard (16), Cody Martin (14.6) and Caleb Martin (12). They made an epic run in the playoffs, winning 88-77 over Smith, 91-67 over Northwest Guilford and 66-65 over Richmond County in front of a sold-out crowd in Davie’s gym. In the West Regional semifinals, Davie outlasted Page 72-67 to set up a meeting against Kennedy Meeks and West Charlotte. Davie’s run ended 73-59, one step from the state championship game. Absher’s two sons made their marks on the program. Drew was a shooting star, ranking third all-time with 1,460 career points and draining the most career 3s (267 from 2005-09). The only two guys to outscore Drew during a career were Dwayne Grant and Duane Phillips. Davis was the point guard on arguably the finest team ever in 2011-12, a team that boasted two current NBA players, the Martin twins. Absher actually coached three guys who are professional athletes. The third? Whit Merrifield of the Kansas City Royals. Absher is going out with a bang. Davie has posted four straight winning seasons. It’s only the third time that has ever happened. “One of the things I’m extremely proud of is we went 4-21 (in 2013-14) after everybody left. But to rebuild it back to where it is today is a highlight,” he said. “Our record the last four years is really good (65-26). I mean, since we’ve stepped foot in this building, it’s been amazing. Where we are right now makes me feel really good, building it and putting it back together.” Absher’s 39th year as a teacher/coach will be at Southeastern Christian Academy. He will assist Tommy Johnson in basketball; he just happens to be from Wilkes County. “I’m going back to the classroom and I’m going to be an assistant varsity basketball coach,” he said. “Those were my goals. I wanted to walk out of the AD world and teach again and stay involved in basketball because I still have a passion to coach. “I’ve known Tommy for 30-plus years. He was the coach at Wilkes Central for 16 or 17

years and has over 500 career wins. He's a friend of mine, but I did not know he was there until my interview. It's a very small world. "I don't know that I'll ever be a head coach again. I just want to be involved with basketball. I wanted Davie to be the last program that was something I built." Absher is walking away with lots of Davie boys basketball records, but he will be remembered as more than a coach. "People call him 'old school' but he is anything but that," Wallace said. "He has adapted and brought modern basketball to Davie. He has turned Davie County into one of the better programs in the area/state. His relationship with his players has been something special. "He is more than just a basketball coach. He is a father figure, teacher and a mentor to many young men, including myself. He is a God-fearing man with a heart of gold. His relationship with his wife has taught me and so many others how to be a good partner. He has been a great father and that is evident with how his two sons turned out to be great men. He has taught so many people so many valuable life lessons."

Read more at: <https://www.ourdavie.com/2021/07/29/davies-winningest-basektball-coach-leaving-after-19-years/>

NCHSAA Hall of Fame selection Committee:

I believe that Mike Absher is a great nominee for induction into the NCHSAA HOF. I worked with Mike in the Physical Education Department at Davie County High School for 19 years. Mike was also the Athletic Director there for 12 years where I worked closely with him when I was the wrestling coach.

Mike graduated from Wilkes Central High in 1980 where he played basketball and was most valuable as a Senior. He graduated from Greensboro College in 1984. Mike's record at Davie was 245-226 and was 72-126 in the CPC in his years at Davie. He had 8 playoff berths and reached the regional finals in the 2011-2012 season. Mike also won 3 conference championships (2 tournaments and 1 regular season).

Mike had a very positive impact on his players and other kids in the community. He regularly attended First Baptist Church in Mocksville. He was always there for my family and me and my son who played for him.

Mike was a successful basketball coach at Davie in the tough CPC 4A conference. His dedication to his basketball players and his church was second to none. I feel sure that others will agree with me in inducting Mike into the NCHSAA HOF.

Buddy Lowery  
Former Football and  
Wrestling Coach  
Athletic Director  
Masters Degree in  
Physical Education  
buddylowery52@  
[gmail.com](mailto:buddylowery52@gmail.com)  
(336)705-3396



To the Selection Committee,

I hope everyone is well, I would just like to take a moment of your time to talk to you about Coach Mike Absher. I attended Davie County High School, and played basketball throughout my entire time there. Coach Absher was the Varsity Men's basketball head coach, and he exemplifies what excellence and professionalism is in the world of high school athletics. During my time at Davie, I played on every team imaginable at Davie, the Freshman, JV, and Varsity teams, and Coach Absher treated me the same as he did any star player that he was coaching at that time. He loves the game of basketball and winning as any great coach does, but he truly cares about his players as young men, and that care doesn't end past graduation. He regularly reaches out to me to check on me and my family, there is no incentive for him to do this, but it is just who he is as a person. Coach Absher was an awesome role model for me as an impressionable young man, I grew up in a single parent home, and he was always a great example of how a husband and father should handle himself at all times. He was dedicated to helping us become better in basketball and in life, he was always there when I needed him, and I am eternally grateful for all he has done for me over the years.

I can't think of anyone more fitting to be selected to the NCHSAA Hall of Fame, he was a great coach and a better person. As you can see, I still call him Coach Absher, I am well out of my playing days and currently a collegiate basketball coach myself, but I will always call him Coach, because that is who he is to me and that is how much I respect and admire him. The impact he had on our basketball program was tremendous but the impact on the lives of the young men he coached is even greater.

Thank you,

Raheem Martin.

# LENOIR~RHYNE UNIVERSITY

NCHSAA Selection Committee

To Whom it May Concern:

It is a pleasure and an honor for me to recommend Mike Absher for consideration for membership for the NCHSAA Hall of Fame. He is truly deserving.

I have been in the field of education for 40 plus years, 17 of which were in the high school principalship. During this time, I encountered many high school basketball coaches. I was a high school basketball coach myself. Both my brother and son are NCHSAA basketball coaches. Mike has the personal qualities as well as on the court success to compare favorably with any other candidates for this recognition. Mike currently has 2 players in the NBA.

Mike's teams compete passionately but also demonstrate the highest degree of sportsmanship and dignity. Most importantly, he is a committed family man and respected member of his community.

I recommend him without reservation.

Sincerely,

Andy Anderson  
Special Adviser to the President and  
Director of Principal Gifts  
Lenoir-Rhyne University



## **Robert Michael Absher**

167 W Kinderton Way Apt 302  
Bermuda Run, NC 27006  
Cell Phone Number 336-416-5704

### **Health and Physical Education Teacher 2002-Present**

#### **Health and PE Department Chair**

I teach health and a variety of physical education classes at Davie County High School. I lead and organize our Health and PE PLC. We collaborate and build lessons that are aligned to the state curriculum and focus on health and wellness for our students. We research and use student centered strategies that help bring relevance and increase engagement with our students.

#### **Head Men's Basketball Coach**

I run the day-to-day operation of our basketball program. These duties include: on the court instruction, implementation of our offensive and defensive schemes, player development, conditioning, academic progress of our players, eligibility, scheduling, transportation, organization of our coaching staff, budgeting, inventory, and director of basketball camps ranging from grades K-12.

#### **Athletic Director, Davie County High School**

#### **Athletic Director, Davie County Schools**

My Athletic Director responsibilities include: scheduling, facility scheduling, budget, coaches evaluations, NC Scholar/Athlete Program, Booking Agents, eligibility, game day supervision, and transportation. As County Athletic Director my duties include supervising our three middle schools and working directly with their Athletic Directors. We work with booster clubs to support and fund raise for athletics.

### ***Accomplishments:***

#### **Health and Physical Education Teacher**

- Named Department Chair for Physical Education Department in 2006
- Certified CPR Instructor
- Served on County wide committee that was looking for ways to make Davie County students healthier
- Serve on County Wide committee that is working on ways for schools to be safe and secure
- Served on the five- year strategic planning committee for our school district

#### **Other Teaching Assignments:**

- Taught Bible History for three years

#### **Head Men's Varsity Basketball Coach**

- Led the 2019 team to the first conference championship in 49 years and a spot in the "Sweet 16"
- 2019 & 2004-Central Piedmont Conference Coach of the year
- 2014-Selected as the Head coach for the NC/SC All Star game played in Myrtle Beach, SC
- 2013& 2014- District Coach of the year

- Led the 2012 team to the Sectional Championship and a trip to the Final Four
- 2009-Selected to be an assistant coach in the East/West All Star game
- 2006-NCHSAA-Homer Thompson Award Winner-“Eight Who Make A Difference”
- 2004-05 Season led Davie County to the second round of the State Playoffs. This was their first play-off win in 4 years
- All-time winningest coach in Davie County School’s History
- Served as the North Carolina Coaching Association chair for District 11 for five years

### **South Caldwell High School Hudson, NC 1993-2002**

Duties included serving as a Health and Physical Education teacher and was also the Head Men’s Basketball coach and served one year as the Head Men’s Golf coach.

### **Nease High School St. Augustine, Florida 1987-1993**

Duties included teaching Physical Education at Julington Creek Elementary School. Served as the Head JV Basketball coach and Varsity assistant coach at Nease High School. I was also the head JV Football coach and served as the Head Varsity Softball coach for my time there. Our Softball team reached the State Championship game in 1993.

### **Woodland Elementary School Roxboro, NC 1986-1987**

Duties included teaching elementary Physical Education while serving as a varsity football assistant at Person County High School and serving as the head basketball and baseball coach at Southern Junior High School.

### **Tarboro Edgecombe Academy Tarboro, NC 1984-1986**

Duties included teaching all health and physical education to grades K-9. I also served as the Athletic Director and the head varsity coach in soccer, basketball and baseball.

### **Education**

Graduated from Wilkes Central High School 1980

Graduated from Greensboro College with a BS degree in Physical Education 1984

### **Hobbies**

Reading, playing golf, involvement with youth, teaching Sunday School and served as Deacon at my church.

### **References**

Available upon request

## **Former Players of Coach Absher that played at the College Level:**

Matt Short- Lees-McRae Basketball/Professional Golfer

Jonathan Bentley-UNCP

Matt Smith - Wake Forest (walk-on)

Cliff Burns - Catawba College

Rashon McNeil - Notre Dame Football

Kenny Rivers - Gardner-Webb Football

Whit Merrifield - South Carolina baseball - 3x MLB Allstar

Matt Vanhoy - UNC JV

Drew Absher - VMI

Landon Harris - High Point

Davis Absher - Averett University

Caleb Martin - NC State/Nevada/Miami Heat

Cody Martin - NC State/Nevada/Charlotte Hornets

Own McCormick - Presbyterian/Lipscomb University Graduate Student\*(2023-2024)

Raheem Martin - Greensboro College

Cade Carney-Wake Forest Football

Tate Carney - Wake Forest Football

## **\*Coach Absher helped establish a connection for the following players/students that become managers in Division I basketball:**

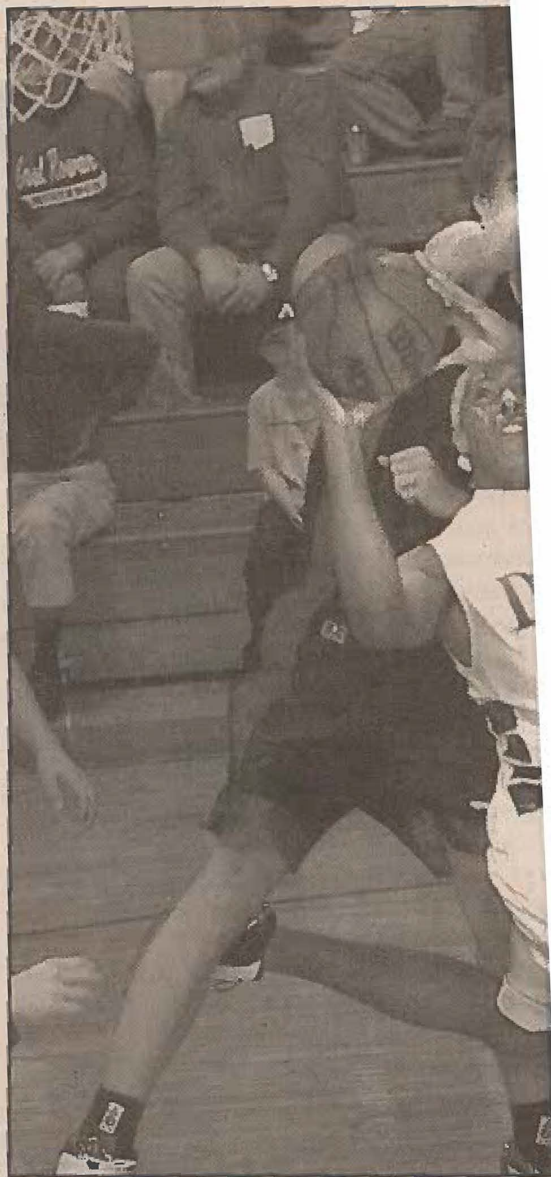
South Caldwell player: Manager at UNC Chapel Hill Men's Basketball

Gabe Gonella: Manager NC State Men's Basketball

Jack Nixon: Manager NC State Men's Basketball

Nathan Hines: Manager Liberty University Men's Basketball





Josh Aiken twists and turns toward the bas

nd-year boys coach Mike Absher has Davie off to a fast start for the second year in a row.

## Burns, Smith Take Turns Dominating

ued From Page B1

y complemented one an-  
eautifully against East  
too, with Burns hitting  
shots for 19 points to go  
with eight rebounds, six  
and four assists. Ryan  
three-pointers sent Davie  
manding lead in the first  
but Smith showed amaz-  
gress from his varsity  
pre campaign again with  
ts, seven rebounds and  
sts. He hit 7-of-8 field  
d 5-of-6 foul shots.

is is a great player, and  
a nice team," Brunelli  
e really focussed on  
ut I don't know in our  
pe (Rocky River 2-A Lif  
a center as strong as  
e's fundamentally

h the War Eagles never  
er Price's 3 provided a  
bey had a fight on their  
ughout. With the mar-  
p 52-49 with 1:47 left,  
k a charge, Burns re-  
missed 3 that would  
it, and Smith, Travis

Howell and Price sank eight  
straight free throws to withstand  
North's persistent rallies and  
overcome 31 points from junior  
Dieza Blue. Price hit 4-of-4 free  
throws for 10 points and How-  
ell canned all four of his free  
throws.

Possibly a sign of good things  
to come was the fact Davie shot  
36 percent and still maintained  
a lead over the final 27 minutes.  
The cold night didn't matter be-  
cause Davie's defense held  
North scoreless over a span of  
13 possessions in the first half,  
Davie made 13-of-15 fourth-  
quarter free throws and it  
crushed North on the boards 50-  
29.

"If you play defense and re-  
bound, you're always going to  
have a chance," Absher said. "A  
lot of times we tell Burns to just  
stay at the goal, almost like a free  
safety. He's running the floor,  
finishing, rebounding and play-  
ing defense."

Notes: Burns had two thun-  
derous dunks, one off a sweet  
pass from Smith and the other

when Howell got a steal and  
looked ahead. ... Josh Aiken, a  
6-4 junior with raw athletic abil-  
ity, debuted off the bench with  
three points and seven rebounds.  
Davie 79, E. Rowan 63

Price gave Davie just what it  
needed, another bullet in the  
chamber. The junior found his  
long-range marksmanship in the  
first half and sent Davie to a 23-  
11 lead against Jim Young, who  
guided Davie to 77 wins from  
1997-98 to 2001-02.

"We've been getting plenty of  
points in the paint, so we needed  
an outside threat, and Ryan can  
be one," Absher said.

Price rained three three-point-  
ers on the Mustangs in the first  
half, went 4-of-6 from down-  
town overall and finished with  
16 points. Burns and Smith led  
with 19 and 17 points respec-  
tively, and Michael Mashore  
added eight points and 14 re-  
bounds as Davie pushed its lead  
to 25 in the third quarter.

"Coach told me just to let  
loose," Price said. "Either I was  
open or I had a smaller guy.

Their guards were a whole lot  
smaller than me and Fu."

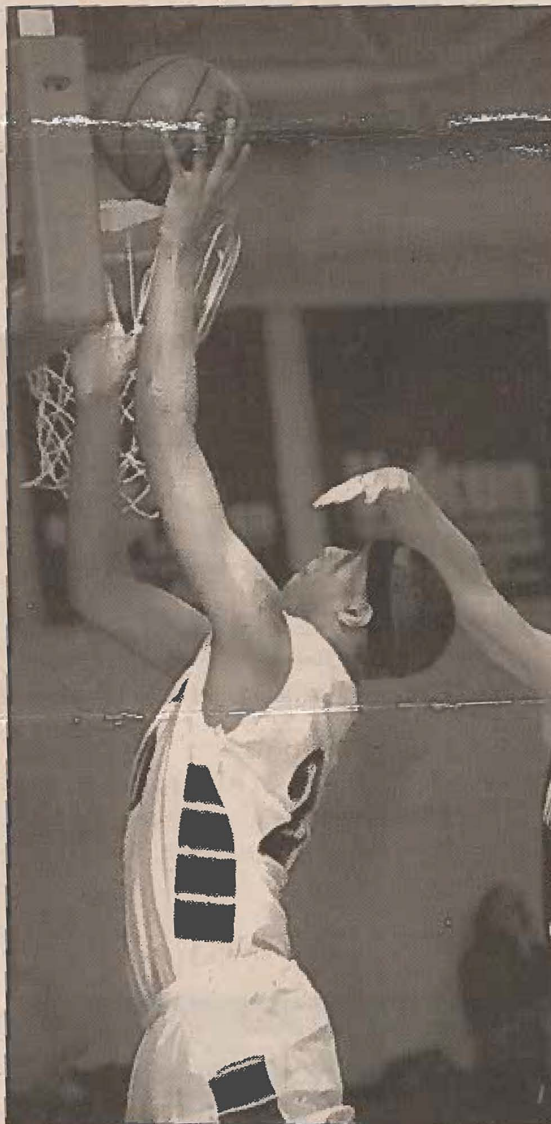
"They've got a good inside-  
out combination," Young said,  
"and we couldn't stop them."

Aiken had seven points, five  
rebounds and three steals. Bran-  
don Capwell had six points and  
five assists. And for the second  
game in a row, Howell went 4-  
of-4 from the line.

Notes: In the decisive first  
quarter, Price had six points,  
Burns five and Aiken and  
Mashore four each. ... Absher had  
to hurt some feelings Monday,  
when he auditioned football  
players for the last time and made  
final cuts. ... Davie plays noncon-  
ference games against North Ire-  
dell at home on Dec. 4 and at  
North on Dec. 9.

Davie 60, North Stanly 56 -  
Cliff Burns 18, Matt Smith 15,  
Ryan Price 10, Travis Howell 6,  
Michael Mashore 6, Josh Aiken  
3, David Schweit 2.

Davie 79, East Rowan 63 -  
Burns 19, Smith 17, Price 16,  
Mashore 8, Aiken 7, Brandon  
Capwell 6, Howell 4, Schweit 2.



Cliff Burns is soaring at 19.6 points and 10.3 r

## Davie Boys Basketball Statistics

Record: 3-0, 0-0 CPC

Gms	Pts	Rebs	Avg	Assists	Avg	PPG
3	59	31	10.3	4	1.3	19.6
3	51	18	6.0	13	4.3	17.0
3	32	12	4.0	2	0.3	10.6
3	25	35	11.6	6	2.0	8.3
3	17	7	2.3	8	2.6	5.6
2	10	12	6.0	0	0.0	5.0
3	12	8	2.6	9	3.0	4.0
3	8	4	1.3	3	1.0	2.6
2	4	1	0.5	2	1.0	2.0
2	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0
						72.6
						62.6

3-Pointers: Price 6, Smith 2





# Boys clinch first title since '70

By Brian Pitts  
Davie Enterprise Record

This is really happening.

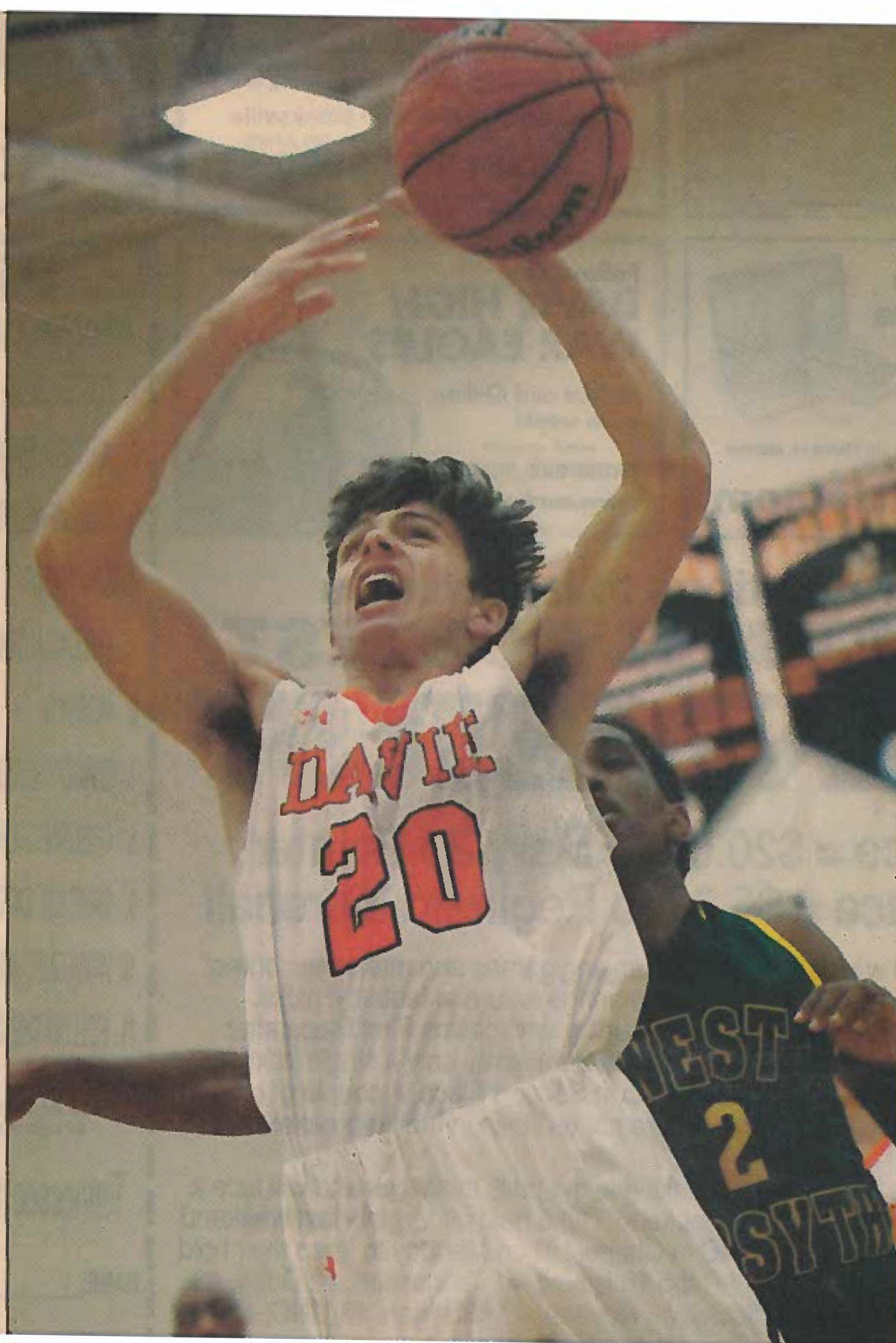
Davie's boys basketball team has won the regular-season championship for the first time in 49 years. Davie has reached 20 Ws for the fifth time in its 63-year history. At 20-1, Davie has equaled the greatest 21-game record in history. Davie has locked up first place in the Central Piedmont Conference with two games to spare.

"It's hard to express what this means," 17th-year coach Mike Absher said. "After (Friday's game at Glenn), I usually don't have a problem finding words and what to say, but that was special. They really played together."

The War Eagles toppled West Forsyth and Glenn last week without leading scorer/rebounder Owen McCormack, who left early in the West game with a sprained ankle. Against West, Michael Walton played hero with 31 career-high points. At Glenn on Feb. 8, it was Jacob Hendrix's turn to do the honors. He poured in a career-high 26.

At the end of the third quarter, McCormack had zero points, of course, because he was in street clothes. The No. 2 scorer, Walton, had one point. Yet Davie held a six-point lead. That's perseverance. That's a team with a lot of answers.

"If you'd told me going into the fourth quarter that your top two



# Walton picks up slack with 31

By Brian Pitts  
Davie Enterprise Record

The Davie varsity boys basketball team beat visiting West Forsyth 67-52 on Feb. 5, pushing its winning streak to nine, protecting its two-game lead over second-place Reynolds and sustaining its best overall and league records since the 1968-69 and 1969-70 seasons.

But it wasn't all roses. Davie's swagger was tempered by an injury to 6-9 senior Owen McCormack, who leads the team in scoring and rebounding.

McCormack, who scored a team-high 17 points in a 57-44 win at West on Jan. 18 and entered this one with 908 career points, suffered a sprained ankle four minutes into the game, was helped off the court and did not return. He was averaging 14.9 points. Before this unfortunate development, he would have joined teammate Michael Walton in the 1,000-point club if Davie played the minimum number of games going forward and McCormack averaged 15.

"The good news is nothing was broken," coach Mike Absher said.

Should McCormack miss extended time, it's the kind of blow that can wreck a first-place team. With Davie getting zero points from its big man, Michael Walton carried the War Eagles to 19-1 overall and 7-0 in the Central Piedmont Conference with a career high of 31 points.



# Sports

## Boys End Tabor Jinx

By Brian Pitts  
Davie Enterprise Record

When Mt. Tabor's varsity boys basketball team carved Davie's 17-point lead to 52-51 at the end of the third quarter on Feb. 1, a little voice was whispering to Davie, "Not again."

The War Eagles were supposed to crack against a team that had defeated

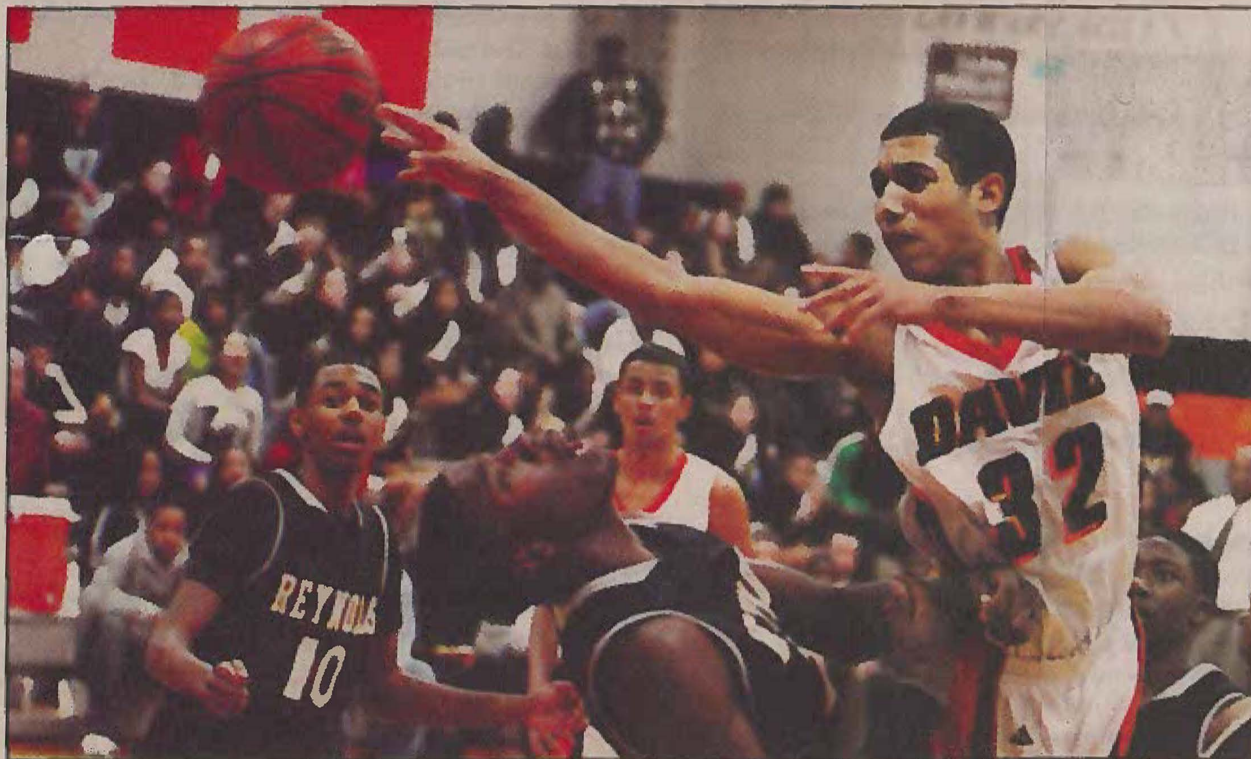
them 16 consecutive times. But they refused. Everyone was anxious to learn if Davie was a pretender or a contender, and Davie became the latter, slaying an 8,000-pound Gorilla by the score of 80-70.

The win gave Davie (16-3, 5-2) a share of second in the Central Piedmont Conference. How good was this for Davie? It felt too-good-to-be-true good.

Tabor (18-3, 5-2) came in ranked ninth in the state, and its only CPC loss was to undefeated Reagan.

"It was just amazing to me," Davie coach Mike Absher said the next day. "I didn't sleep at all last night, and it wasn't from stress, I can promise you that. I don't use this word very often,

Please See Jinx - Page B5



Junior guard Nate Jones dishes off as Reynolds tries to take a charge. At right, Raheem Martin soars for a scoop shot.

- Photos by James Barringer

## Cody Comes To Rescue, Davie Wins In OT

By Brian Pitts  
Davie Enterprise Record

Beating Mt. Tabor on the road and then losing to Reynolds at home would have been a real letdown. Davie's mental sun would not have come up Saturday morning if the War Eagles' varsity boys would have lost here Friday.

The War Eagles had to work very hard, but they managed to check another foe off the list with a wild and woolly 75-67 overtime decision that thrilled

their standing-room-only crowd.

The win, coupled with Tabor's two-point loss to undefeated Reagan, put Davie (17-3, 6-2 Central Piedmont Conference) in sole possession of second with one week left in the regular season.

Cody Martin rescued Davie at the end of regulation, and Nate Jones got Davie rolling in OT.

"We talked about this being the ultimate trap game, and Reynolds played really good," coach Mike Absher said.

"They made some big-time shots, and we missed a bunch of easy ones. Reagan hit a shot at the buzzer to beat Reynolds 69-67. Then Reynolds beat North Davidson by 12. They're young and they're coming on right now. I still say (the CPC) is one of the best leagues in the state. Gosh, Reynolds is tough."

The outcome was a testament to the foul shooting of Jones and Cody. Jones hit 14 of 15 free throws and Cody six of six. Jones finished with 30 points. What

else is new? It was his third straight 30-point game.

Cody came through with 18 points and eight rebounds. Shannon Dillard contributed 11 points, nine rebounds and three blocks. Raheem Martin chipped in nine points, seven rebounds and three assists. Caleb, passing first and shooting second since moving to point guard, had three points and five assists.

In the first quarter, Davie went from 7-0 down to an 18-17 lead.

Davie appeared to put Reynolds down for the count when Cody hit three free throws for a 54-48 lead. But Reynolds capped a 7-0 run with a 3-point shot that gave the Demons a 55-54 lead.

This game was flat-out fun to watch. Both teams hit shots that kill the opponent's spirit, but both teams showed the same resilience.

Jones drove for a 56-55 Davie lead. Reynolds hit from the perimeter, putting Davie in a 57-56 hole with 1:10 left.

Please See Cody - Page B5



# Davie dunks Hornets

By STEVE HANF  
Salisbury Post

For the most part, 28-2 runs in the fourth quarter speak volumes all on their own.

Davie County's surge against Salisbury in the championship game of the Sam Moir Christmas Classic came with an exclamation point.

The War Eagles overcame a 19-point fourth-quarter deficit to win their third Christmas tournament, getting a rousing 67-58 victory over the Hornets on Tuesday night at Catawba College's Goodman Gym. Top-seeded Davie forced 11 turnovers and scored 35 points in the period, but one sequence stole the show.

Salisbury still led 55-49 when Davie's Clifford Burns picked up a loose ball in the lane. He sent a long pass up to Josh Aiken, who soared for a one-handed dunk over Kenny Abel. When the ensuing free throw dropped, the War Eagles trailed by just three points and exuded an air of confidence that their rally would not come up short.

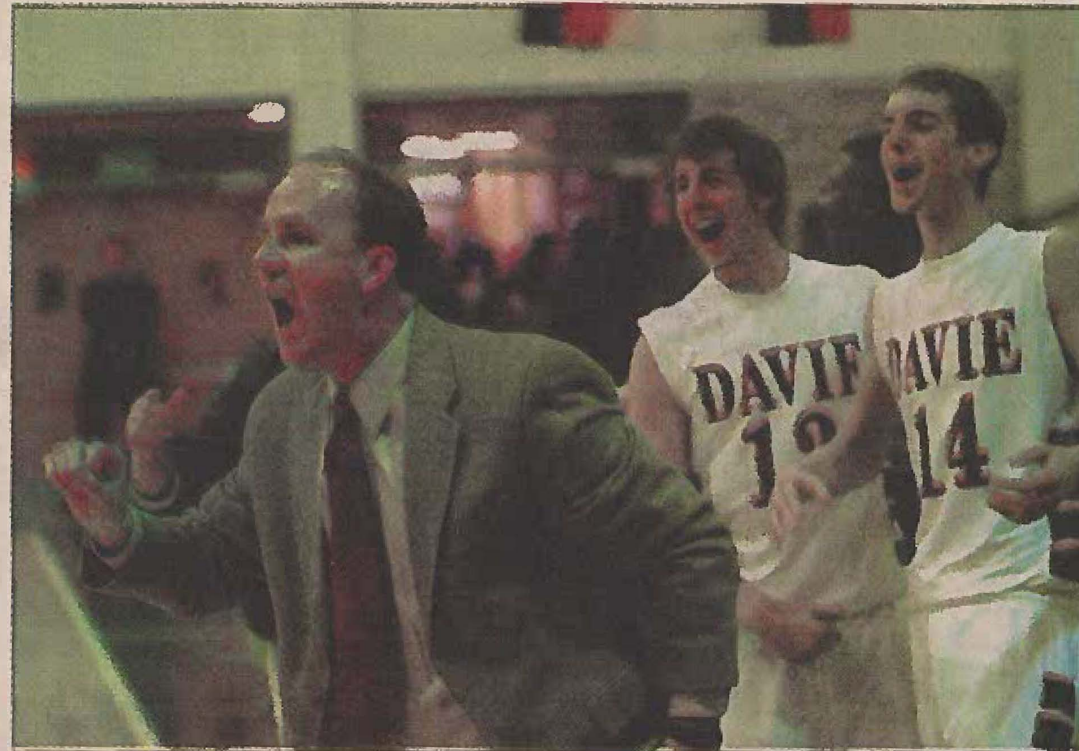
"That dunk was awesome. I practice dunks and that one right there was really exciting, I got up high," said Aiken, who scored 10 of his 17 points in the final period. "I've got height, so why not dunk it? Plus we were down and I was mad about losing, so I got up."

And the Hornets got down. "That's what hyped them up," Abel said. "We couldn't come back from that."

Salisbury kept throwing away the ball and Davie kept capitalizing. Matt "Foo" Smith, who scored 11 of his 13 in the fourth quarter, converted a fastbreak layup and two free throws to finally put Davie ahead 56-55 at the 1:49 mark.

Two more Hornet turnovers and two missed shots followed as the lead ballooned all the way to 62-55 before Patrick Doleman's 3-pointer with 13 seconds remaining.

His shot ended a drought of



JAMES BARRINGER/SALISBURY POST

**WE LOVE IT:** Davie coach Mike Absher and his War Eagles enjoy the final moments.

*"I've got height, so why not dunk it? Plus, we were down and I was mad about losing, so I got up."*

**DAVIE'S JOSH AIKEN**  
on slam dunk that turned the tide



the final quarter, and the 11 turnovers led to easy buckets for the War Eagles: 11-for-18 in the quarter after a woeful shooting night early.

"It just went away from us," Hornets head coach Bill Lee said. "We were searching for an answer to take control of the game and we just didn't have it."

Aiken, Smith, Michael Mashore (13 points) and Burns (10) led the way for Davie (8-2), which scored 49 points in the second half. Second-seeded Salisbury (5-4) got 20 points from Scotty Robinson and 13 from Abel, most coming in the dominating first half.

The Hornets led 8-0 immediately and 16-9 after the first

quarter was to cut the lead in half. Instead, the margin reached 18 at half-time as the War Eagles had just two more points (18) than turnovers.

"The first three quarters was pretty bad," said Smith, Davie's point guard. "We weren't playing our normal game, not hustling, not getting back on D, and they were getting easy shots while we were taking bad shots."

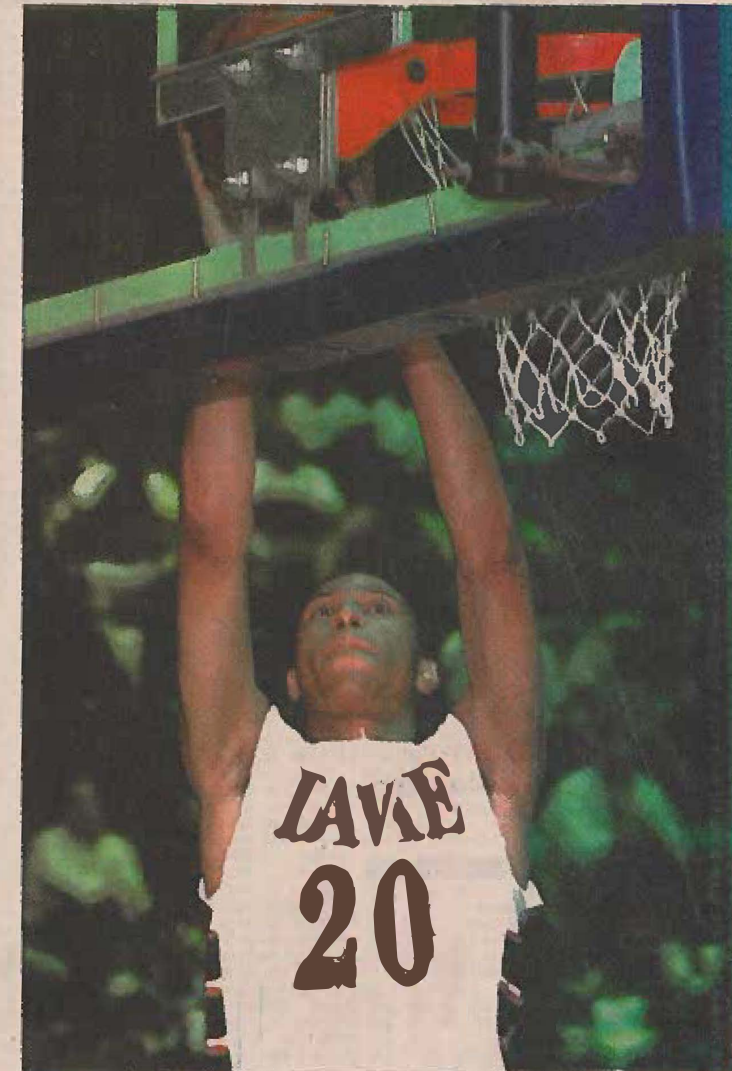
Davie's goal for the third quarter was to cut the lead in half. Instead, the margin climbed as high as 20 and stood at 16 entering the fourth quarter after Robinson tallied eight more points.

Two quick jumpers from Greene left Salisbury leading 53-34, but the cracks started to

Hornet point guard Jarmal Davis, saddled with four fouls, couldn't play his aggressive full-court defense. The Hornets tried to ease the pressure ever so slightly, but Davis still fouled out with 3:13 to play.

"We've been asking them to play one style the whole season. The pace was much to our liking," Lee said. "We asked them to back off a little because of foul trouble with Jarmal and a bit of fatigue with some of the other kids. Once we made that shift in gears, we weren't able to shift back into high mode. Davie County smelled blood and did a terrific job."

The very next possession following Davis' departure, he



JAMES BARRINGER/SALISBURY POST

**BOYS MVP:** War Eagle Cliff Burns soars above the rim for an easy layup.

Aiken's thunderous dunk.

"Obviously the momentum had shifted, but I think that play got us over the hump," War Eagles head coach Mike Absher said. "So much of the time you make runs like that, but you don't ever get the lead or tie it, and then they'll make one basket and stop that run pretty quick. It was a big play."

**NOTES:** Salisbury won't have long to dwell on last night's loss. The Hornets start a stretch of four conference games in seven days Friday at home against East Davidson. "We just have to remind them of the good things we did, show them how we got into the finals and put out of our minds what

his team's mindset. "We're doing a lot of good things, we just have to finish games. We have to get a little more leadership when things aren't going well." ... Aiken's 10 boards helped Davie rebound Salisbury 32-24. ... The turnover battle evened out late, with Davie holding a 25-24 edge.

**SALISBURY (58)** — S. Robinson 20, Abel 13, Doleman 9, Greene 7, Hamilton 4, Powell 3, Wilkerson 2, Holsey, Davis, Kerr.  
**DAVIE COUNTY (67)** — Aiken 17, Mashore 13, Smith 13, Burns 10, Howell 6, Price 4, Morgan 2, McNeil 2, Capwell, Collins

Salisbury	16	20	12	10	—	58
Davie County	9	9	14	35	—	67

Contact Steve Hanf at 704-797-4256 or shanf@salisbury-post.com



# Davie Reaches Rare Heights With 17th Win

By Brian Pitts  
Davie Enterprise Record

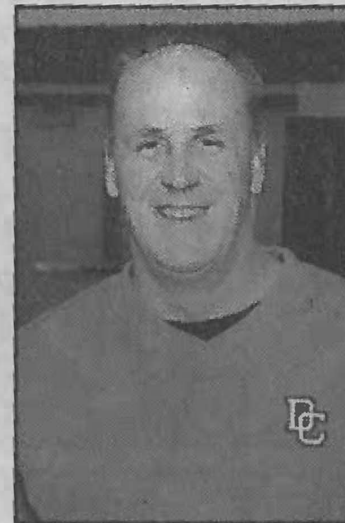
• After years of being irrelevant as a VCR, happy days are really, truly here at long last for Davie boys basketball.

The War Eagles entered Wednesday's home showdown with undefeated Reagan at 17-3 overall and 6-2 in the Central Piedmont Conference.

This season has brought a remarkable change of fortunes. Coach Mike Absher was 81-119 in his first eight years here. Davie went 17-63 in the CPC during that time. Three of the past five teams finished with six wins. Only two of Absher's previous eight teams finished above .500. Absher is the same coach he was during a 12-38 slide from 2005-06 through 2006-07. As a matter of fact, Davie was a long-time punching bag before Absher. The difference is simple: Absher's got some dudes on this team. In the past he had a bunch of guys. You've got to have some dudes.

No one could deserve this revival more than Absher. No one deserves to direct his team before a packed gym more than Absher, who has long labored with insufficient talent but has long been a member of the Good Guys Hall of Fame. Even during the lean years, he always greeted you with a friendly smile.

"If any coach deserves a season like this, it's Mike," assistant coach Tim Kenney said. "He hasn't changed one bit from

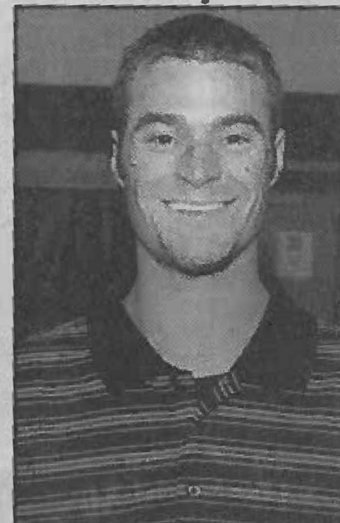


Absher

winning six or seven games to having this kind of year. He's doing great floor coaching and making great adjustments. He's motivating the guys and making great gameplans. It's a lot of fun to coach with Mike."

Davie's run has multiplied the fan base. The crowds haven't been this large since 1999-00, when Duane Phillips led Davie to a record 21 wins. A different generation will tell you this is how the crowds were for every home game in the '60s and '70s.

"I don't recall a crowd like this," Kenney said after Friday's overtime win over Reynolds. "Maybe the last time we had a crowd like this was when we beat Reynolds (in 2000). The crowd support was phenomenal tonight. I've never seen this kind of support in Davie County before. It's really good to see. And the Davie Crazies are awesome.



Everette

I would encourage them to keep coming out and tell their friends and cousins and relatives and grandma and grandpa and pack that gym."

• The War Eagles have soared to rare heights. With their 17th win, they became just the seventh Davie team to reach that plateau in the school's 55-year history. Davie went 17-5 under coach Jack Ward in 1962, 20-3 under Bob Henry in 1969, 17-7 under Henry in 1970, 18-7 under Denny Key in 1988, 21-6 under Jim Young in 2000 and 17-8 under Absher in 2005.

What's more, Davie has six CPC wins for the first time in 16 years (1995).

• The War Eagles have the inside track to second and a remote shot at a share of first. Reagan is 8-0, Davie 6-2 and Tabor 5-3. Davie needs a lot of things to go right, but it has a shot at a split title. It needs to



Kenney

beat Reagan and North Davidson this week and get help from Reynolds against Reagan.

If everything works out perfectly, Davie will have a conference title for the first time since 1970. But second in this league would be an accomplishment.

• Junior shooting guard Nate Jones put up an incredible three-game string, scoring 36, 38 and 30 points in consecutive games. It was the first time a War Eagles scored 30-plus in three straight since Sean Stevens scored 33, 43 and 33 in 2001-02.

• Davie made a huge statement when it went to Tabor and ended an 0-16 streak against the Spartans, 80-70. It was the first win over Tabor since 1999-00, and Davie did it against a team that was ranked ninth in 4-A and started five seniors.

Davie left the Spartans bewildered by shooting 55 percent overall and 62 percent on two-

pointers. It committed just 11 turnovers.

"(Tabor coach Andy Muse) said: 'Y'all are good enough to play with anybody in the state,'" Absher said proudly.

• Absher liked the War Eagles' reaction to the breakthrough. They didn't act like they deserved a parade. They celebrated maturely. They acted like they're hungry for more.

"The buzz on the way home wasn't just crazy yelling and that kind of stuff," Absher said. "They were very calm. That's a great sign. They realize there's still more work to be done."

• The freshman twins (Caleb and Cody Martin) are destined for Division I careers. They're exceptionally focussed for 14-year-olds, and they bring maximum energy and effort all day, every day.

An Xavier coach was on hand at Tabor. Wake Forest assistant coach Jeff Battle observed Davie's practice Feb. 2. Absher handed the twins letters from Wake after the Reynolds game. The twins are hardly the only recruits. Juniors Shannon Dillard and Jones are serious prospects.

"There were three college coaches in attendance (at Tabor), so the word is getting out," Absher said. "It's really, really good stuff to watch."

• Absher deflected credit to his assistants. Davie's 1-3-1 fullcourt trap worked beautifully at Tabor, thanks in part to Lance Everette's tweaking.

"We switched around the way we rotated in it, and it's a huge reason we got up 34-17," Absher said. "The coaching staff said if we're going to continue to press, then we're going to have to make some kind of adjustment because everybody in the league is good. I give coach Everette a lot of credit. He worked on the rotation. He's really spent a lot of time with them in practice. He's got them believing they can do it, and the last two games (West Forsyth, Tabor) it's been very effective."

Absher heaped praise upon Kenney for Davie's gimmick defense on Tabor's Trey Ervin. Kenney introduced the Rocket.

"It was a box-and-one on Ervin, but we didn't do it the old-school way," Absher said. "I was like: 'I can't watch Ervin do this again.' He was the CPC Player of the Year a year ago, and he can single-handedly keep them in the game. Kenney said: 'Well, coach, here is what we used to do.' After I saw how Kenney taught it, I was like: 'Wow.'"

Johnny Miller's gift is motivating. He learned from Catawba Hall of Famer Sam Moir, playing for Catawba's greatest team in 1982.

"You can't put a value on the types of things that coach Miller does," Absher said. "He's constantly evaluating and saying things to those guys that they just need to hear. He's been tremendous."





Coach Mike Absher has guided the Davie boys to 17 wins for the second straight year. At right, Cody Martin battles for a rebound. - Photos by James Barringer

# Rout Gives Davie Boys Share Of Second

By Brian Pitts  
Davie Enterprise Record

The Davie boys basketball team's 80-78 loss at Reagan in the first game of last week evoked memories of other painful defeats. Davie has five losses by a combined 10 points.

Not to worry. It all ended well.

North Davidson represented gravy to Davie's hungry wolves, and the War Eagles destroyed visiting North 90-63 in the final regular-season game.

The win put Davie and Reagan in a tie for second behind Mt. Tabor. But Davie's win over Tabor (the Spartans swept Reagan) gave Davie the No. 2 seed and a first-round bye in this week's conference tournament at Reagan. The semifinals were Feb. 15 and the finals

The War Eagles tied for second for the second year in a row. That's an accomplishment - especially when you consider Caleb Martin has been out since December - for a program that sputtered to 10-44 in the league from 2005-06 through 2009-10.

Much to home side's delight, the War Eagles avenged a fluky 59-56 loss to North in Welcome, and they did it on Senior Night for Adam Smith, Kevin Miller, Davis Absher, Shannon Dillard and Nate Jones.

"The biggest thing was we forced a tempo and they played at a speed they weren't comfortable with," coach Mike Absher said. "We could never make them do that over there. In the second half we went back to our fullcourt zone press, which we hadn't done much of

there. We thought if we could get them down, then we could bury them."

Earlier in the week at Reagan, it was a lost opportunity for Davie. After belting Reagan 73-55 in the first meeting, when Davie led 44-29 at the half and coasted to its first series win in seven tries, the War Eagles saw their three-game winning streak go up in smoke.

Offense was hardly the problem; Davie hit 55 percent of its shots. Defense was a major problem. Braeshaun Dozier scored a routine 26, but two Raiders who did little in Mocksville rose to the occasion. Caleb Anthony scored 17 after scoring six in the first meeting. Rashaad Roberts scored 14 after going scoreless in Mocksville.

Davie trailed 22-21 after one, 45-42

hitting eight of nine free throws.

Davie got solid production from Cody Martin (25 points, six rebounds, three blocks), Jones (19 points, 11 rebounds, nine assists) and Shannon Dillard (11 points, 10 rebounds). Peyton Sell sparked Davie in the first half by hitting three straight 3-pointers for his biggest output in 11 games.

Jones flirted with a rare triple-double, but his game was a mixed bag because he couldn't buy a long-distance shot.

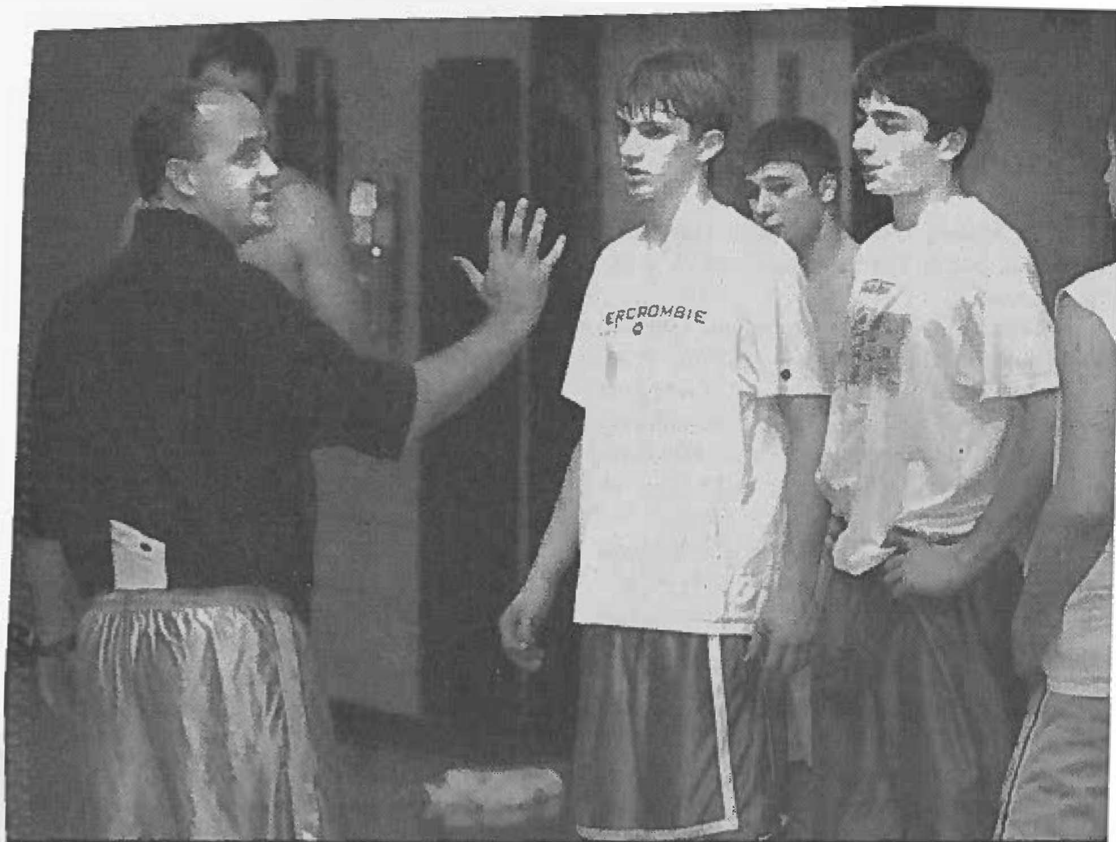
Absher started five seniors against North Davidson, and Kevin Miller took full advantage of the opportunity. He buried a trey eight seconds into the game, then hit another 90 seconds in for a 6-2 lead. Casual fans were asking: Who is this Miller guy? The lefty

"He came over to the bench and told coach (Tim) Kenney that he was absolutely making everything he shot in pregame," Absher said. "Kevin is a good shooter, and that was awesome. I know that made him feel good."

Another reserve senior, Adam Smith, made his presence felt in the early going, sinking a 15-foot pull-up jumper for a 16-6 advantage. Smith played until the 2:57 mark of the first, and Miller played a shade over six minutes before taking a seat.

The rest of the show belonged to a battle-scarred senior - Dillard. After getting limited to eight points in Welcome, Dillard redeemed himself with 25 points and eight rebounds. He converted eight of 11 field goals and seven of nine foul shots while posting his eighth 20-point game.





Davie's new varsity boys basketball coach, Mike Absher, gives instructions.