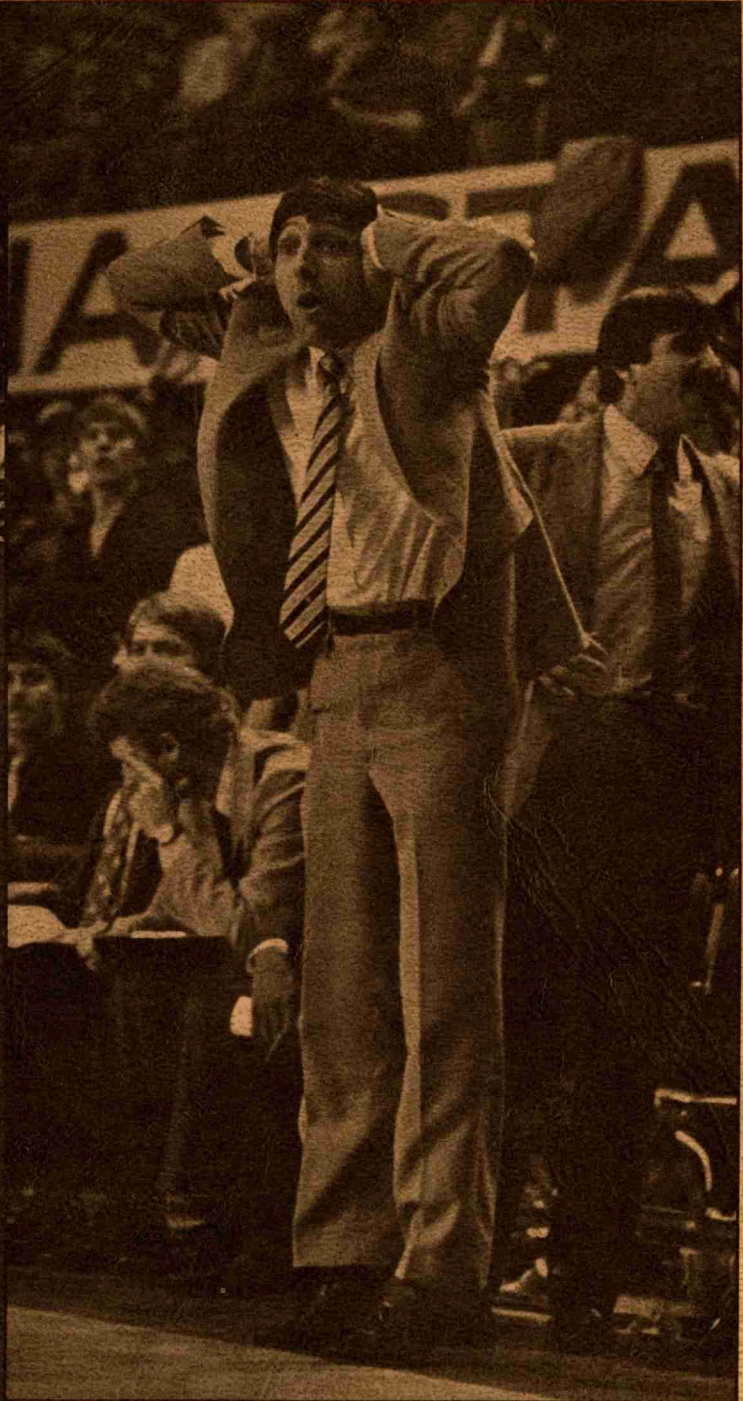
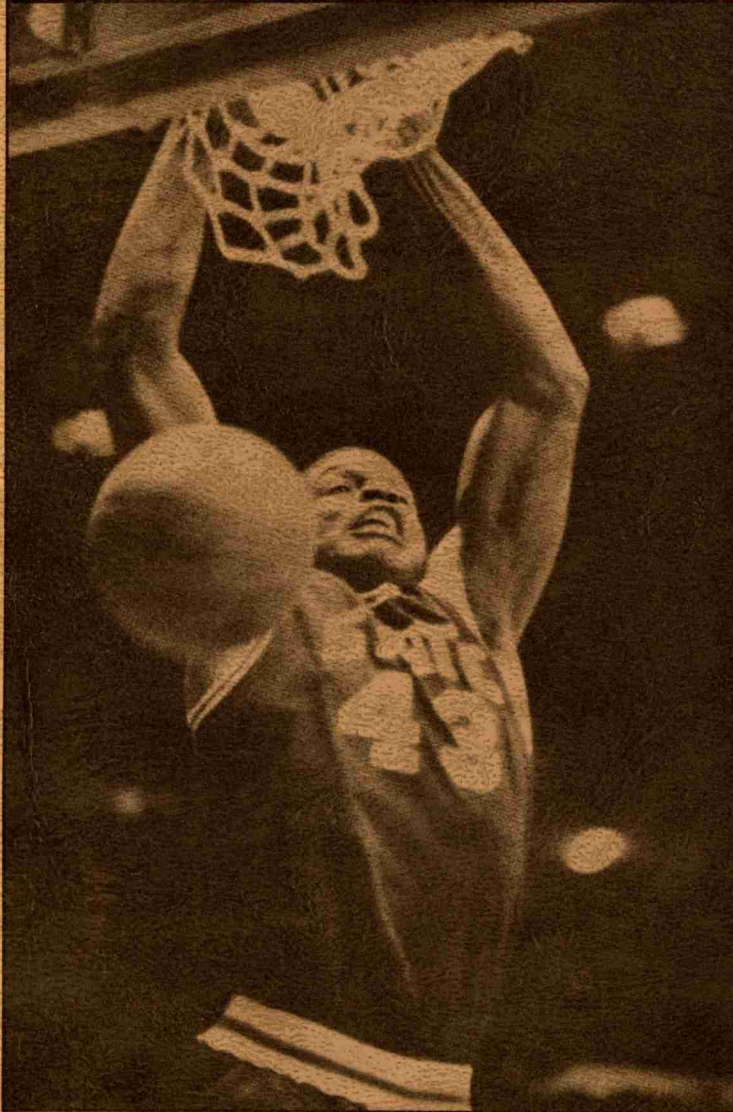




# A Wolfpack Fable

As told by the students of North Carolina State University



**N. C. State  
1983 National Basketball  
Championship Special**

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# A Wolfpack Fable



**W**nce upon a time along Tobacco Road there lived a kingdom of people called the Wolfpack. They resided on the west side of Raleigh at a place called North Carolina State University, or State for short.

Now these people had maintained this community for four score and a few more years. During that time they had acquired a great love for a game that was played during the wintertime. The State people took great pride in their ability to play this game called basketball — or hoops by some of its most avid followers.

The Wolfpack had accumulated one National Championship a few years before and yearned for another, although the years had been lean for almost a decade. After hiring a new leader for their hoop squad, the people of State took a new fervor in the way they supported their hoop team. Although the first year was mediocre at best, the Wolfpack was satisfied. Then when in the second year the team got to attend the NCAA Tournament, the natives grew even more excited.

This new leader, Coach Jim Valvano (some called him King Quipper), attracted wide attention with his quick wit and his humorous and easygoing approach to basketball. He soon became loved by most of the people of State and people flocked to Reynolds Coliseum, the home arena, to see the Wolfpack play.

In the third year of King Quipper's reign at State, the hoopsters all grew excited with the possibilities of a national contender. The powers that be in the national basketball polls saw fit to recognize the Wolfpack as being at least as good as the 17th best team in the pre-season polls. As the team bolted to a 7-1 start the possibilities grew endless. The fact that the Pack would have to wage battle on some fierce territory throughout the season had few of the Kingdom's subjects worried.


The Pack rolled along and appeared to be getting its forces aligned for many consecutive massacres, when tragedy struck the team of roundballers. As the Pack faced one of its stiffest conference foes, State's main long-range weapon fell victim to the blow of a Cavalier. Dereck Whittenburg, who had led the troops in long-range hits (three-point goals) was felled with a broken foot.

Shock rocked the Kingdom. Many of the scribes throughout the territory, with the stroke of a pen, wrote of the Wolfpack's demise. Sure enough, the Pack fell into a slump and much of the Kingdom was losing confidence in their heralded hoopsters.

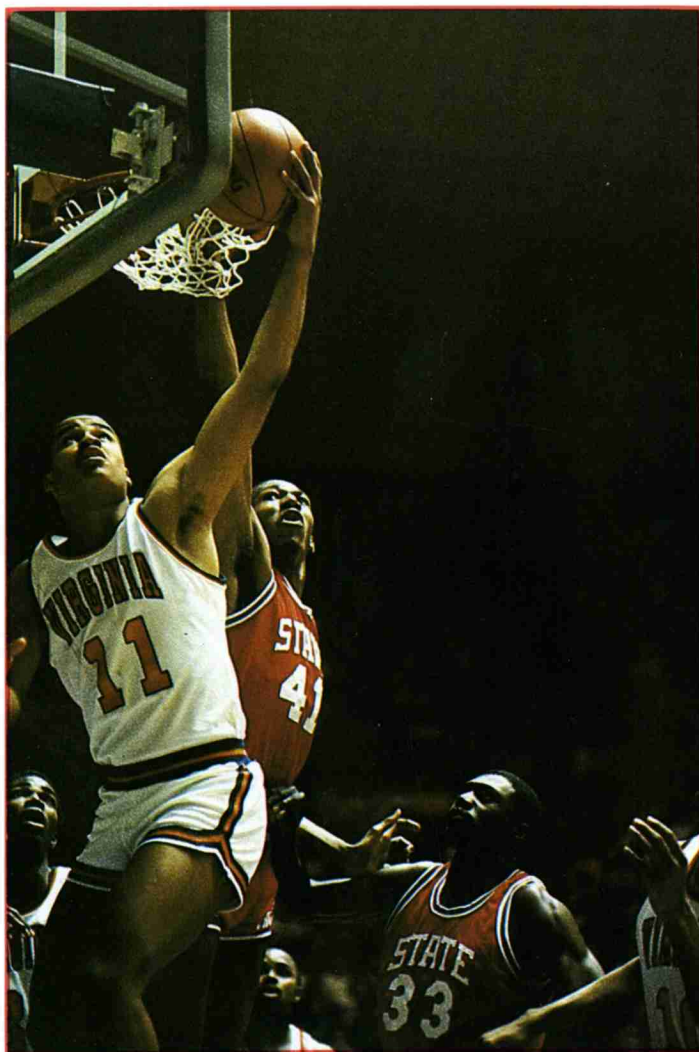
Had it not been for surprise efforts by some of the warriors, indeed the doom of State might once again have disappointed the Kingdom. However, as fate might have it, King Quipper had brought in a young soldier by the name of Ernie Myers. 'E' helped the Pack through these trying times with the help of another young lad in his second year. Terry Gannon, often called 'the Cannon' by the community added back that long-range threat that 'Whit' had possessed.

Meanwhile the determination of the other two veterans on the squad was an integral and key part of the revitalization of the team. Thurl Bailey ('T') and Sidney Lowe ('Prime Minister of Assists') each were enjoying their best campaigns.

Still the Pack had yet to upset any opponent during the campaign. The days of the season grew late and while some talked of being satisfied with an National Invitational Tournament bid the Pack's rival foe in Chapel Hill was rolling right along. News of an accelerated recovery by 'Whit' sparked hopes throughout the Kingdom, however, when the Tar Heels moved into Raleigh for their second attack of the year, 'Whit' wasn't ready yet. Still the Pack played their best game of the year and waged a fierce battle against their

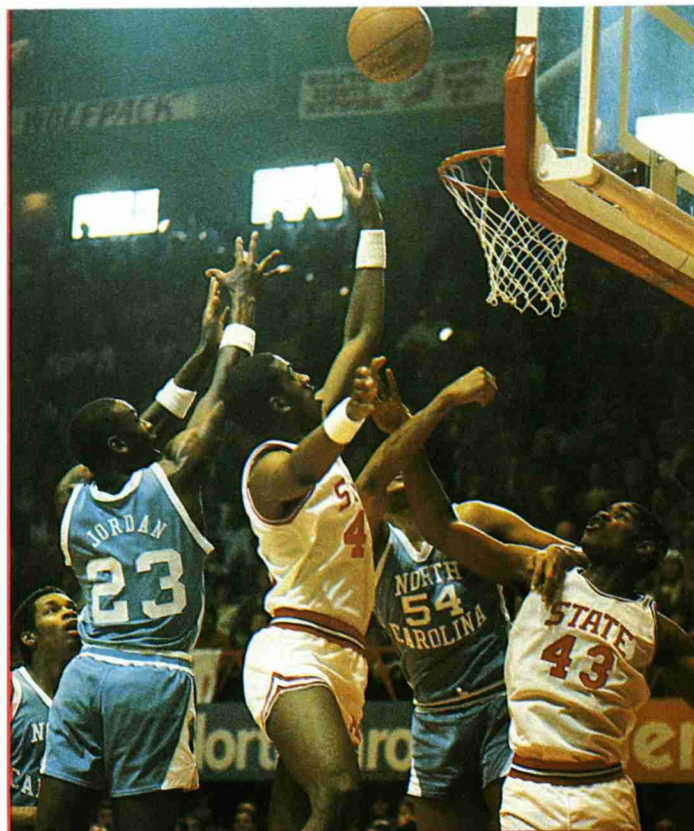




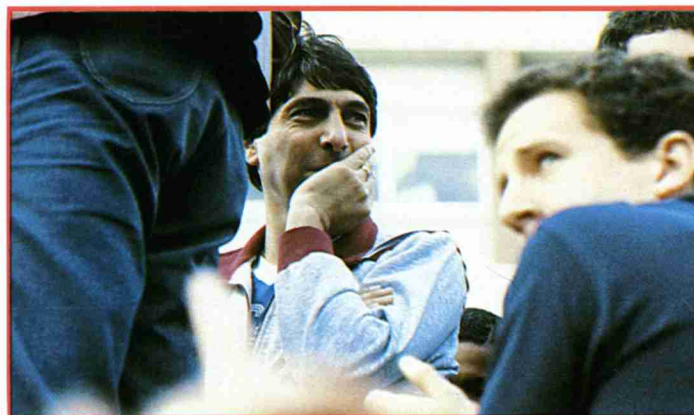


Griffiths

**After wins over both Virginia and Carolina in the ACC Tournament, Jim Valvano knew it was just going to get tougher.**



Winstead



Griffiths



foe in State's home arena. After the dust had cleared, the Pack celebrated the slaying of its rival in an upset. Little did the Kingdom know what lay ahead.

The season advanced and 'Whit' made his return to the arena, ironically on the court of the same Cavaliers that felled him. A pair of losses, one on their home turf, disheartened the Pack and the Kingdom. Finally, it was time for the last home battle. The veteran warriors, 'Prime Minister of Assist', 'T', and 'Whit' were to battle before the homefolks for the last time. Some of the Kingdom left for Spring Vacation, but those that stayed behind got to see the Pack's most devastating victory in years. The Wolfpack pummeled the neighboring Demon Deacs by a 130-89 score. The Pack would never fall again during this fine season.

The Kingdom readied for the annual conference clash. Always a social event for those lucky enough to secure seats, this year there was no question. The championship game would be between the Tar Heels and the Cavaliers. The other teams would just be there for the festivities. All the teams invaded Atlanta just as the March winds had started to blow. An excited band of Wolfpackers embarked on the city to prod on their Pack.

State's opponent in their first-round battle was to ironically be their latest victim, Wake Forest. Everyone knew the Demon Deacs

would not be in any mood to take another licking as they had a week earlier in Raleigh. Some smelled an upset and for awhile that odor was somewhat detectable.

With 4:20 left in the battle the Deacs had the ball with a 70-70 tie. Wake spread out their attack to apparently attempt holding for the last shot. Wake was able to do just that, hold the ball, until with 30 seconds left Lowe deflected a pass and called timeout with 10 seconds left. Lowe then directed a pass into his power teammate on the inside, Lorenzo Charles. 'Lorilla,' as Valvano had named him, drew the foul and went to the charity stripe to shoot two. He missed the first but came back to shake off the pressure and hit the second, earning the Pack a 71-70 win.

"If any good came out of the injury to Dereck Whittenburg, it was the emergence of Lorenzo Charles," Valvano said after the game. Had the Pack lost this battle it would surely have been the end of the NCAA road for them, however, as it turned out, Wake accepted the NIT bid.

The next game was a rematch with the Pack's ace nemesis, North Carolina. Equipped with a healthy cast and the confidence of the last win over the Heels, the Pack took the Ram by the horns. Lowe scored a career-high 26 points and staked State to a 41-39 halftime lead with 19 first-half points. State ended up out rebounding the



Hatem

Michael Jordan hit this free throw but missed his second attempt to give the Wolfpack the chance to take the lead for good. It was State's first win over Carolina during Jim Valvano's tenure.

## Freethrow defense aided Pack in victories

Everyone knows that you can't defend a freethrow. That's what the term implies. A free-throw is a shot that is uncontested. However, in State's climb to the national basketball title, there was a certain meaning to the imaginary term, 'freethrow defense'. You see, it seemed that every time the Pack fell behind in a post-season game, other teams started missing their foul shots when State had some catching-up to do.

It wasn't that Cozell McQueen or Lorenzo Charles or Thurl Bailey were standing at the end of the lane and making faces at the shooter or reaching out with an invisible arm to swat the ball away from the basket. Actually in basketball terms its generally known as choking.

State head coach Jim Valvano had a philosophy about come-from-behind ball (he was highly experienced in that type of game after the tournament). His theory was to foul the other team repeatedly as the second half wound down. If they hit the shots, then they widened the margin if his team didn't match baskets. If they missed the shots, his team could win the game if they hit on their end.

To this he had another gameplan. Find

the man that couldn't hit the shot. Valvano would say, "We foul one guy and if he knocks them in we say, 'no not you,' then the next time down we foul a different guy. If he knocks them in, then, we try another guy. Then if we find a guy that misses we say, 'Ah hah. You better watch out.' Then we foul him as long as he misses."

It wasn't necessarily a poor percentage shooter that always choked either. Take in the ACC Tournament, for instance. North Carolina's Jimmy Braddock, a near 90-percent shooter missed his shot, and in the West Regional Finals against Virginia, Othell Wilson was the man that missed the biggie.

Hitting freethrows late in the game is something a championship team must do. The Wolfpack managed to connect on most of theirs, but their opponents had a hard time at it. Pepperdine and Nevada-Las Vegas both blew big leads by not connecting and Virginia and Houston both missed crucial foul shots in the waning moments. Pepperdine had a six-point overtime lead while the Runnin' Rebels led by 12 with 10 minutes to go.

On the other hand, Lorenzo Charles

twice in post-season play plugged the hoop from the charity stripe to give State its winning points.

No, there is no such thing as a defense against free throws. You can't do anything but watch and hope the ball doesn't drop. But a little choking by the opponent never hurt anybody's championship bid. The Wolfpack's was no different.

— William Terry Kelley



Raleigh and the nation saw the Cardiac Kids' trek toward stardom on regional and coast-to-coast television, reproductions courtesy CBS Sports and Jefferson Productions.

# Campus damages considered minimal

When a mass of humanity gets together, damages are expected, but when that crowd is a bunch of drunk, happy, celebrating Wolfpack fans one would think that the entire town of Raleigh might burn. But surprisingly, Raleigh survived the Wolfpack's run to the NCAA Championship.

The final damage figure for the post-game parties amounted to \$25,000 to State property, according to Lt. Terry Abney of Public Services. That figure is only for damages that occurred on campus. A figure for the stores along Hillsborough Street would be considerably lower because the post-game celebrations were moved from Hillsborough Street to the brickyard after the Nevada-Las Vegas game, but returned to Hillsborough Street after the championship game when the brickyard couldn't hold all of the crazed students.

Hillsborough Street did suffer its damages, though. Before the celebrations were moved, each victory party had a bonfire which did damage to the streets, and two local businesses had their doors broken.

For the size and circumstances of the parties, D.R. Lane of the Raleigh Police Department said that the crowd was rather well-behaved and that most of the arrests that occurred were of non-students. Lane said that on the average 15-20 arrests were made each celebration with the majority being property damage or drunk and disorderly conduct.

Non-students were the major concern of both the police department and State officials. In an attempt to alleviate damage to Hillsborough Street and keep non-students from destroying property, the celebrations were moved to the brickyard with the support of State officials and law enforcement officials.

The plan worked perfectly. Students flocked to the brickyard after each win where an already lit bonfire awaited them. With the winning of the national championship, the brickyard became a place of national fame. Tee-shirts reigned that said "I was on the brickyard, April 4th 1983."

Hillsborough Street and campus survived the wild and crazy Wolfpack run for gold, but the reminders still remain. Those slight dips in Hillsborough Street aren't poor construction by the North Carolina Department of Transportation, but a reminder that for one month the Wolfpack stood the basketball world on its ear and the students had a great time.

— Tom DeSchriver



Cerniglia

Dear Dad,  
Well, we finally did it. We won the NCAA Tournament, and I was here. What a party. I burnt my best pair of shoes standing in a bonfire, missed an exam in my Political Science class and woke up in a bed next to a girl I didn't know. But it was fun. Can you send me some money for a pair of new shoes? The ones that got burnt were pretty old anyways.  
You should have seen the campus the day after we won. Beer cans covering the streets, sidewalks, walkways, strings of toilet paper hanging from the trees, scorched patches of asphalt from hastily started bonfires, glass, paper, burnt shopping carts. What a mess.  
Our school newspaper reported that 8,000 people showed up for the celebration. I thought it looked more like a million.  
I arrived at the center of the celebration at about 11 p.m., a little late because I had to work that night. I met a guy from Carolina, who came to join in the celebration, and told me Chapel Hill was celebrating hardily.  
The brickyard was unbelievable. It was like I stepped into an ocean of people, wavering and screaming under the guidance of beer.  
Everyone had a beer. I had two twelve packs I'd picked up from the store on my way to campus and a couple of packs of bottle rockets which I shot off into the air until I met someone I knew. I almost hit someone in the back of the head with a rocket that delayed its takeoff, but luckily was able to duck behind a wave of people cheering. 'N.C. STATE! N.C. STATE!' I joined in with the cheer so as not to look conspicuous.  
I ducked down again when I noticed the guy was looking in my direction and that's when I first noticed the constant hum of voices, the incessant crunch of glass and the never-ending scraping of tin against brick. It was great. It sounded like some big recycling machine was digging its way across the campus.  
Somehow, I managed to make my way to the outside of the ocean, after I had been sucked into its center, and started toward Hillsborough Street.  
What a sight. The city said they would not close the street down for the party, but there was no stopping the throng of revelers who poured out of the brickyard and streets and bars onto Hillsborough.  
The traffic on the street when I got there was worse than traffic on Friday at 5 p.m., but it was all people.  
I walked on the right side and was getting my fifth beer into my stomach when I heard a yell. "MIKE!"  
It was Jesse, a friend of mine. I gave he and his friends a beer and we headed toward a small sea of drinking, stomping, yelling, jumping, hell-raising fans, their faces lit by the light of a small bonfire.  
We found a place on the perimeter of the crowd and watched as people stepped over the fire in an effort to show their enthusiasm for the win.  
We caught wind of the enthusiasm and edged up to the bonfire, ready to sacrifice our lives for our team's fantastic win.  
That's when I burnt my shoes.  
I was stepping across the burning embers of the fire when I met Shane, a friend of Jesse's, in the middle of the flames. We exchanged a few words and, realizing our stupidity, ran to the edge of the crowd.  
I looked at the bottom of my shoes and saw that the only resemblance to the bottom of my shoes was that they were on my feet. They were deep black, charred, ruined.  
In the bottom of my right shoe a beer cap had embedded itself and for every other step I took it made a scraping noise.  
Please send me \$30 for a new pair of shoes. My toes are cold.

Your Son,  
Mike



Dorsch



inside-strong Heels and the Kingdom sensed an upset which would throw a kink in the expected rematch of last season's ACC Championship between the Heels and the Cavs.

The Pack held off a Heel rally late but still had to settle for a 70-70 tie in regulation. State then fell behind 82-76 with two minutes left in OT. Many believed the end was near for this upset bid. The Wolfpack didn't die and beat the Tar Heel ruler, Dean Smith, at his own comeback game, a miracle finish, and win 91-84. The dreams of the Kingdom were becoming a realization.

Many thought that State's win merely gave Virginia an easy finish to the ACC Tournament Championship. It was not to be. After having lost to the Cavs twice in the regular season, the Pack's Bailey matched the 24 points of the Cavaliers' top knight, Ralph Sampson. With that the Pack was able to build a nine-point advantage late in the game and stave off a Virginia comeback to win 81-78.

"When you've beaten Ralph, you've done it all," said the Wolfpack's pivotman Cozell McQueen ('Corilla').

That win gave State an automatic berth into the NCAAs and its first ACC title since 1974. The Kingdom was ecstatic. Celebrations roared back home in the community and the subjects were almost afraid they might wake up to find it wasn't true.

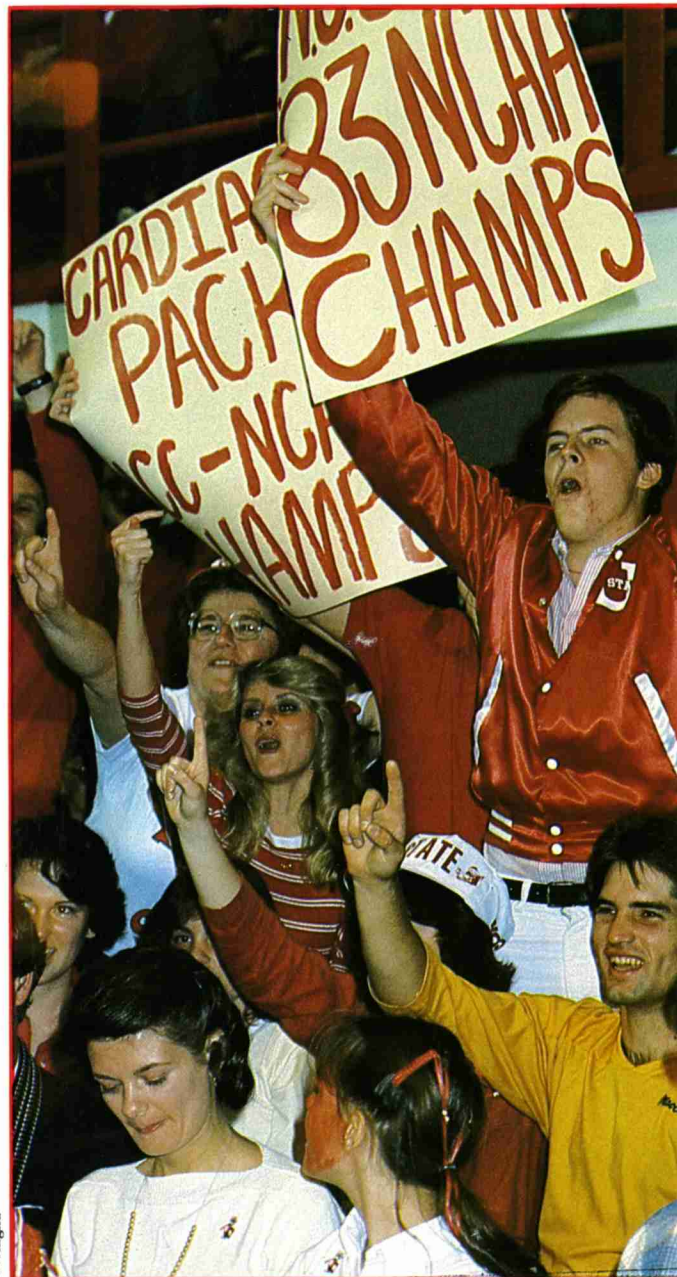
The first-round of the NCAAs took our storybook team to lands yet unseen. Corvallis, Ore., home of Oregon State's Beavers, was the battleground and Gill Coliseum was a place that most of the Kingdom would only see on television, but come to appreciate in a very special way.

The Kingdom sent the Pack off with a rousing pep rally held on the steps of the communities' literary center. The hoopsters went off to the Far West to face an unknown but worthy opponent, Pepperdine.

The Wave was an unranked group of soldiers who had won their conference crown to advance to the playoffs as had State. The Pack played a slow-paced game against Pepperdine as a national television audience viewed the proceedings in a late-night broadcast seen after 11:30 p.m. on the East Coast.



Griffiths



Cerniglia



**Pep rallies were common during March and attracted up to 20,000 people at a time.**



Cerniglia

# Trail of stars left behind in Title trek

Every time there is a winner, there inevitably must be a loser. The defeated opponent is not always a loser, just a non-winner. However, there seemed to be a trail of these non-winners left behind as State advanced its way through the NCAA playoffs to the National Championship.

After the ACC Tournament, the Wolfpack ended the season for six teams. In the ACC Tournament, the Pack played and beat three teams that would go on to post-season play and lose. One of those teams lost to State, another to a team that lost to State in the semi-finals.

Regardless of who finally beat the ACC victims — Wake Forest, North Carolina and Virginia — the Pack's wins over these teams in the ACC Tournament had a great bearing on the Pack's trek. Eventually Alvis Rogers, Michael Jordan and Ralph Sampson all bowed out to watch the Wolfpack.

As the NCAAs got underway, however, there were plenty of teams left with a look of astonishment on their faces after being left in the Pack's cloud of dust.

The first to go was Pepperdine and although they were one of only two underdogs the Pack faced in the tourney, they battled State into two overtimes. The first real trail of tears was left in Corvallis, Ore. after the second game. Sidney Greene, an all-America selection from UNLV was left to eat the words he had said about Thurl Bailey. Greene had stated that he was "unimpressed" with Bailey, but Thurl's 25 points surely changed that.

A date with Utah in Ogden, Utah looked menacing, but State staved off the home crowd to attack another group of stars as they played Virginia the following Sunday in Ogden. Ralph Sampson and his band of traveling stars could hardly be called losers, but for the second straight time they had lost to the Pack. Sampson was left in a clinch of disappointment as he committed the foul that set up the winning points.

Georgia was a cast of underrated players after having lost Dominique Wilkins to the

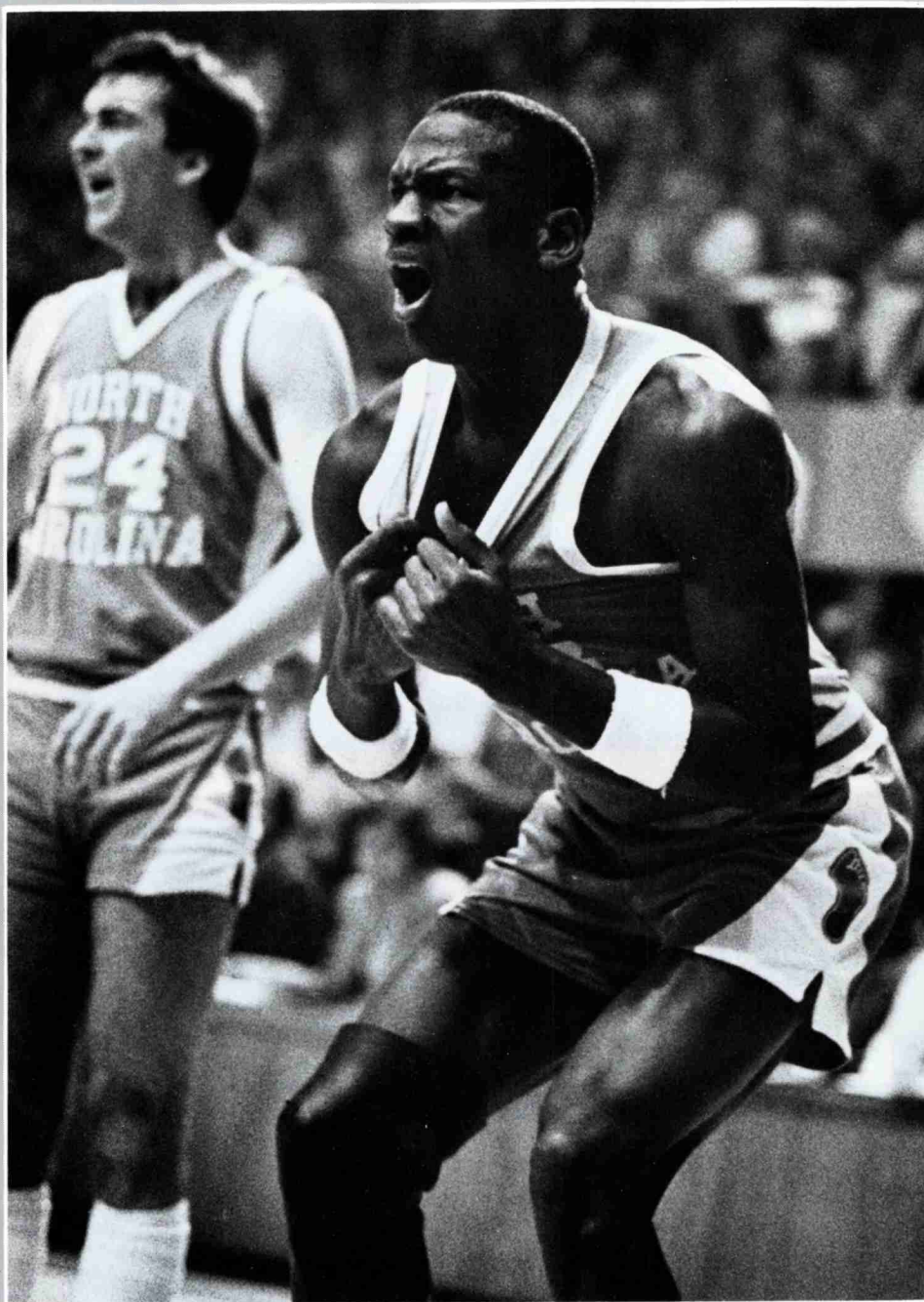
pros the year before. The Bulldogs' first trip to the NCAAs had resulted in a Final Four appearance, but the Pack ended those hopes, too.

Finally, Houston was all that remained for the Pack to dump aside to join all the rest of the NCAA field that would go home having lost their final games.

The Cougars soon found out that Cinderella didn't turn back into a pumpkin in this version. As Lorenzo Charles slammed home the final points a group of

Houston players melted onto the floor, crying and searching for a reason as to their loss. Don't cry Houston, you're not alone. There were many like you. A trail of injured warriors was left behind. None of them were losers, but none of them wrapped up their season with a win. There could only be one team that did that and this season it was the Pack. Wipe away the tears and re-arm for the challenge next year.

— William Terry Kelley



Griffiths

Michael Jordan showed anxiety as he was called for a foul during Coach Valvano's first win over Carolina.







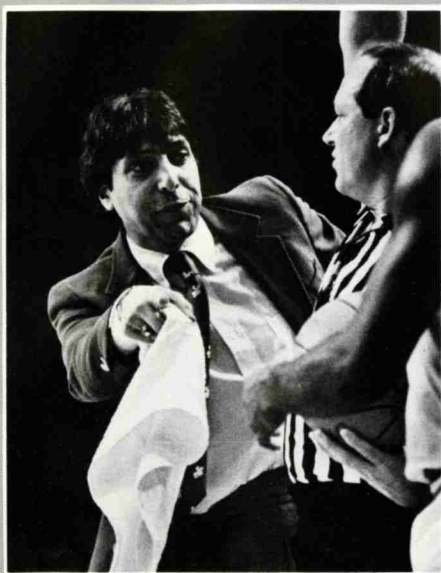
The Wave and the Pack played even-up ball for the entire 40 minutes with State recovering from a minor late deficit to tie the score at 47. The Pack fell behind by six points, 57-51, with 1:10 left in the first OT. Had it not been for 'Co's' rebounding a missed shot and putting it back up with six seconds left it would have all been over, but his basket knotted the score again. "My first instinct was to pass the ball out," 'Co' said of his crucial rebound. "But then I thought about how much time was left and I just put it up." With 'Whit' hitting eight of 10 overtime freethrows and tallying 27 points, State managed to thwart the Pepperdine throng and move into the second battle against a more highly touted team.

After defeating the Wave the Pack heard rumblings of a saying

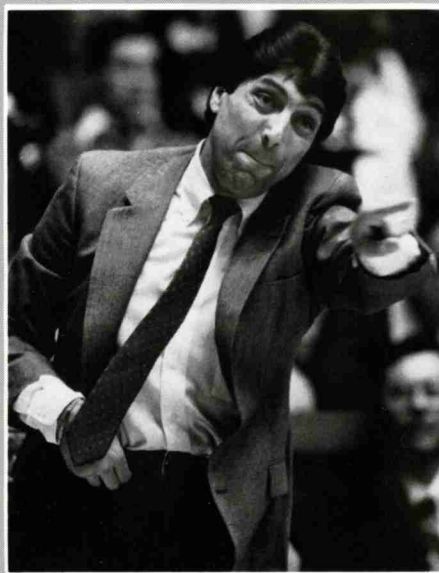
that would come to stick a little more after the next game. The "Team of Destiny" was the name attached to the Wolfpack. A name given to the Pack more-or-less by itself and its mentor. King Quipper had kept telling his team through the adverse regular season that something good was destined to happen to his team.

After having escaped the opening battle of the post-season campaign, State went up against a band of desert Rebels that had been rated No. 1 earlier in the season. Led by the sinister-looking Jerry 'The Tark' Tarkanian, the Runnin' Rebels entered the NCAA event determined to prove they were no fluke. State vaulted to a 12-4 lead before falling behind 33-27 at halftime.

One of the Pack's leaders, 'The Duke of 'T', (Bailey) had been the



Winstead



Griffiths



Griffiths

**Valvano's tactics on the court were aggressive, but his strategy earned him the respect of all the sports world.**

## Valvano won battle of whit, wits

Probably more so in the Wolfpack's assault on the basketball world this season than in any other run for an NCAA Championship the coaching played a major role in winning the gold. Coach Jim Valvano and his staff seemed to have the right answers at the right time. Whether down by 10 points or up by 10, Valvano employed a strategy that would have fans believing that he had been coaching for 37 years and not been alive for only 37 years.

Valvano's famed strategy was his fouling tactic when the Pack was behind and time was running out. This tactic is not new, but it never has worked like it did for the Pack. The opposition knew it was coming, but it couldn't do a thing about it.

Two men who had to be most frustrated and most disbelieving of the Valvano's fouling tactics were Nevada-Las Vegas coach Jerry Tarkanian and Houston coach

Guy Lewis. Tarkanian's Runnin' Rebels were up by 12 in the second half of the second round Western Regional only to see the lead evaporate as they couldn't hit free throws. As Tarkanian chomped on his ever-present towel, his players threw up brick-after-brick at the charity stripe and all of a sudden the Pack was back in the game.

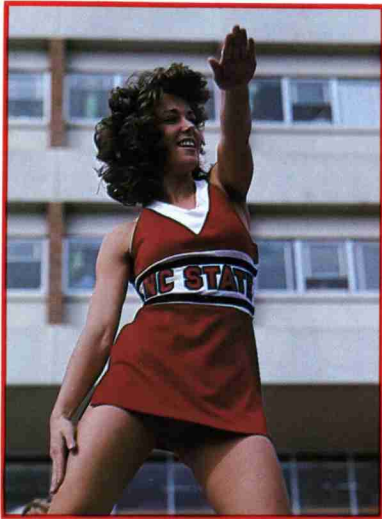
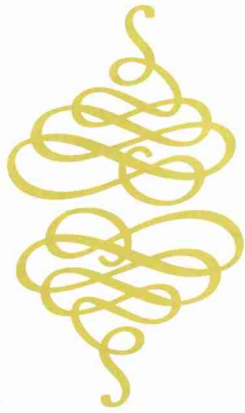
But the frustration award for 1983 may have to go to Lewis. The Houston coach paced the sidelines as he saw his team blow a seven-point lead down the stretch of the championship game. Every time a Houston player got the ball in the final minutes a Wolfpack player would foul him. The Cougars sensed that their dream was slipping away from them.

But don't be fooled by Valvano's fouling tactic. That's not all the joking New Yorker had on the blackboard. Valvano pulled off

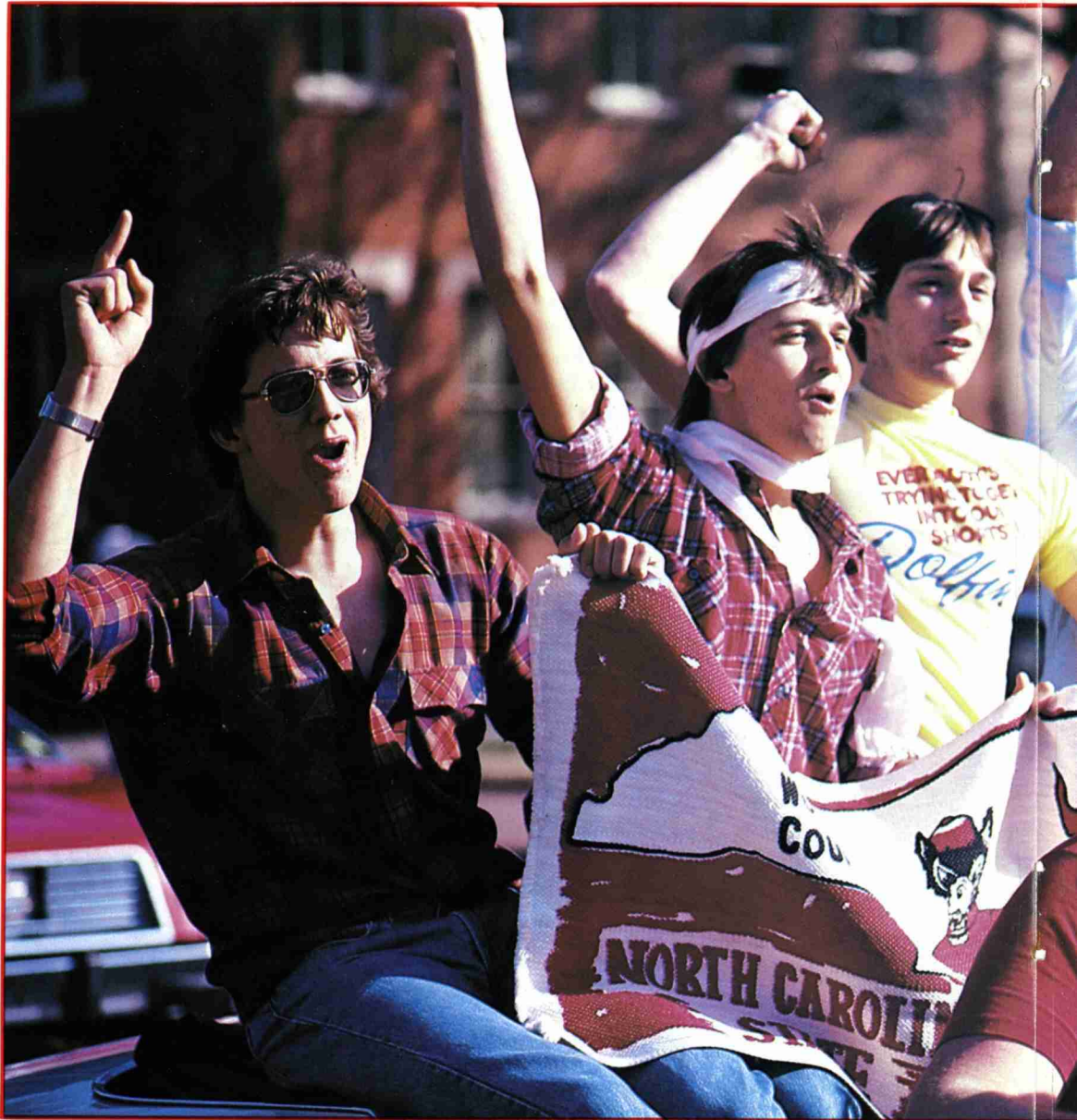
one of the coaching coups of the season when he decided not to front Houston center Akeem "The Dream" Olajuwon, but instead play behind him and not allow the big Nigerian to get any dunks. Olajuwon got his points, but only two were on a dunk and the Phi Slama Jama express never got rolling. The other reason that the mad dunking machine stayed grounded was that Valvano would not allow his players to get into a run-and-gun game with the Cougars. Valvano told his team to slow the tempo and take the good shots.

The only thing about Valvano's strategy which still baffles the basketball world was how he had Lorenzo Charles in the right place for Dereck Whittenburg's now famous "pass" at the buzzer in the championship game.

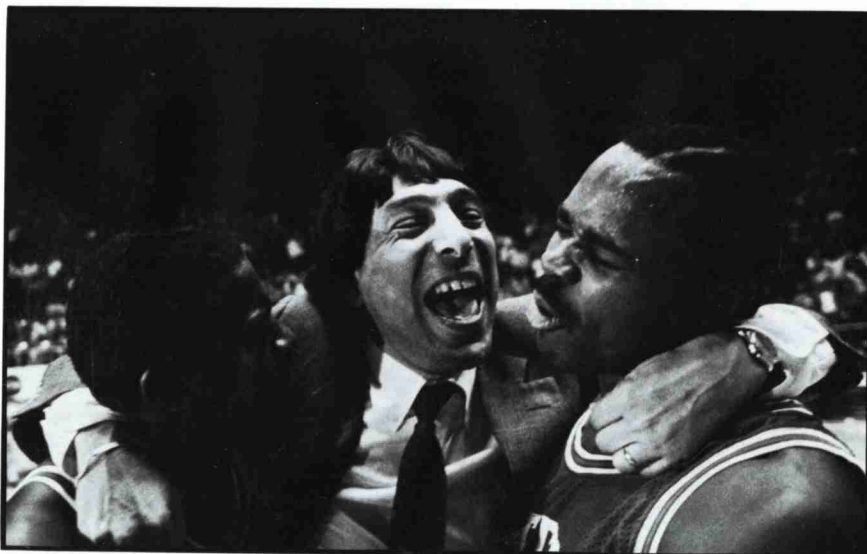
— Tom DeSchriver



Griffiths

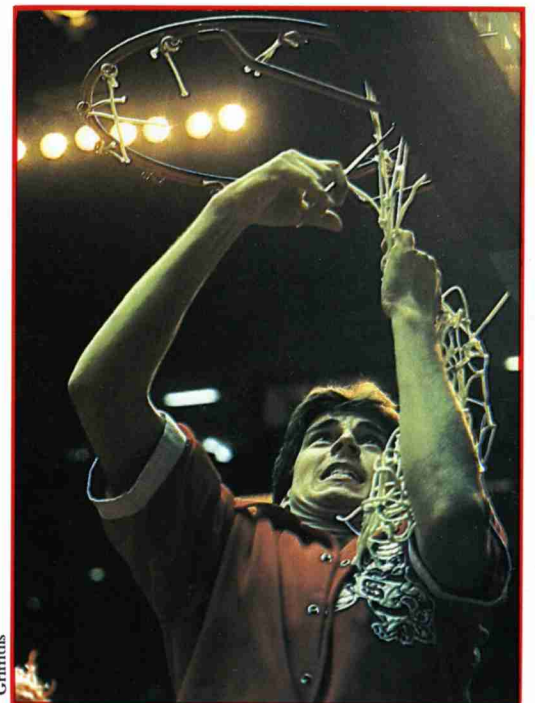


Cerniglia

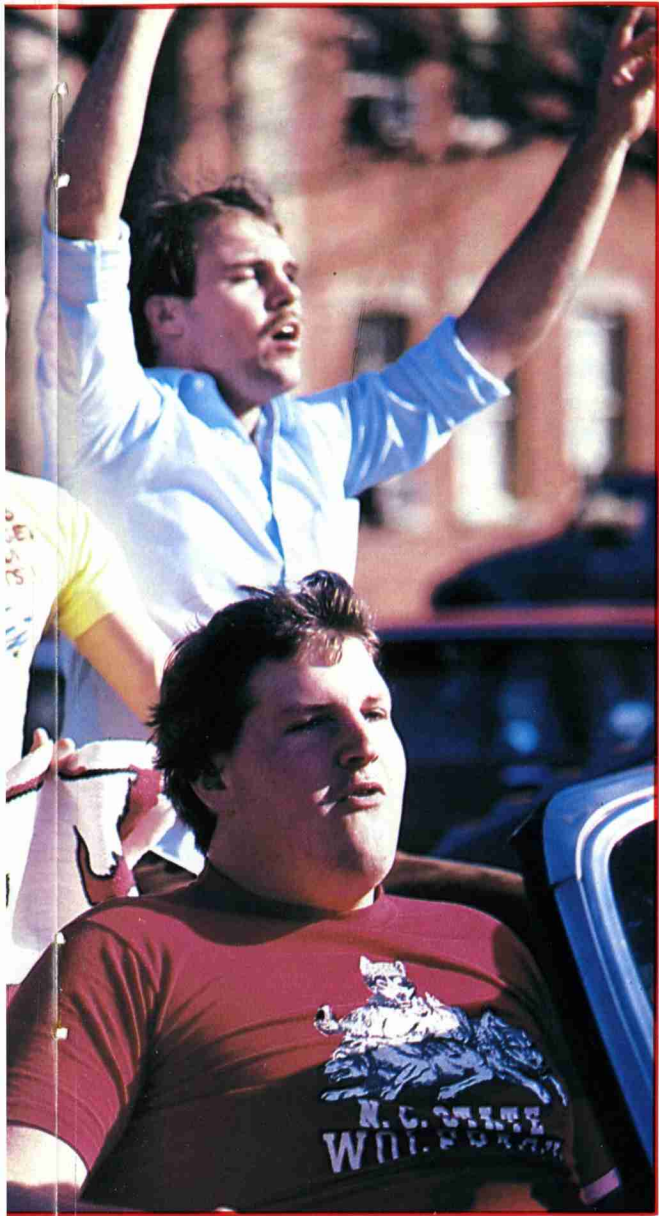


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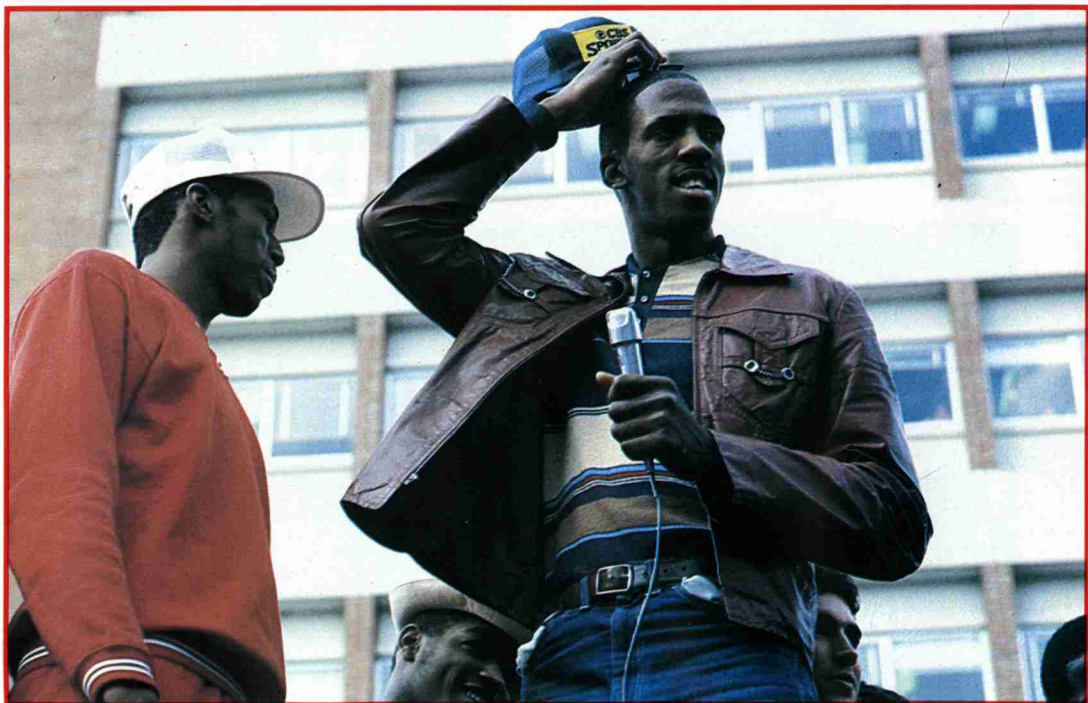
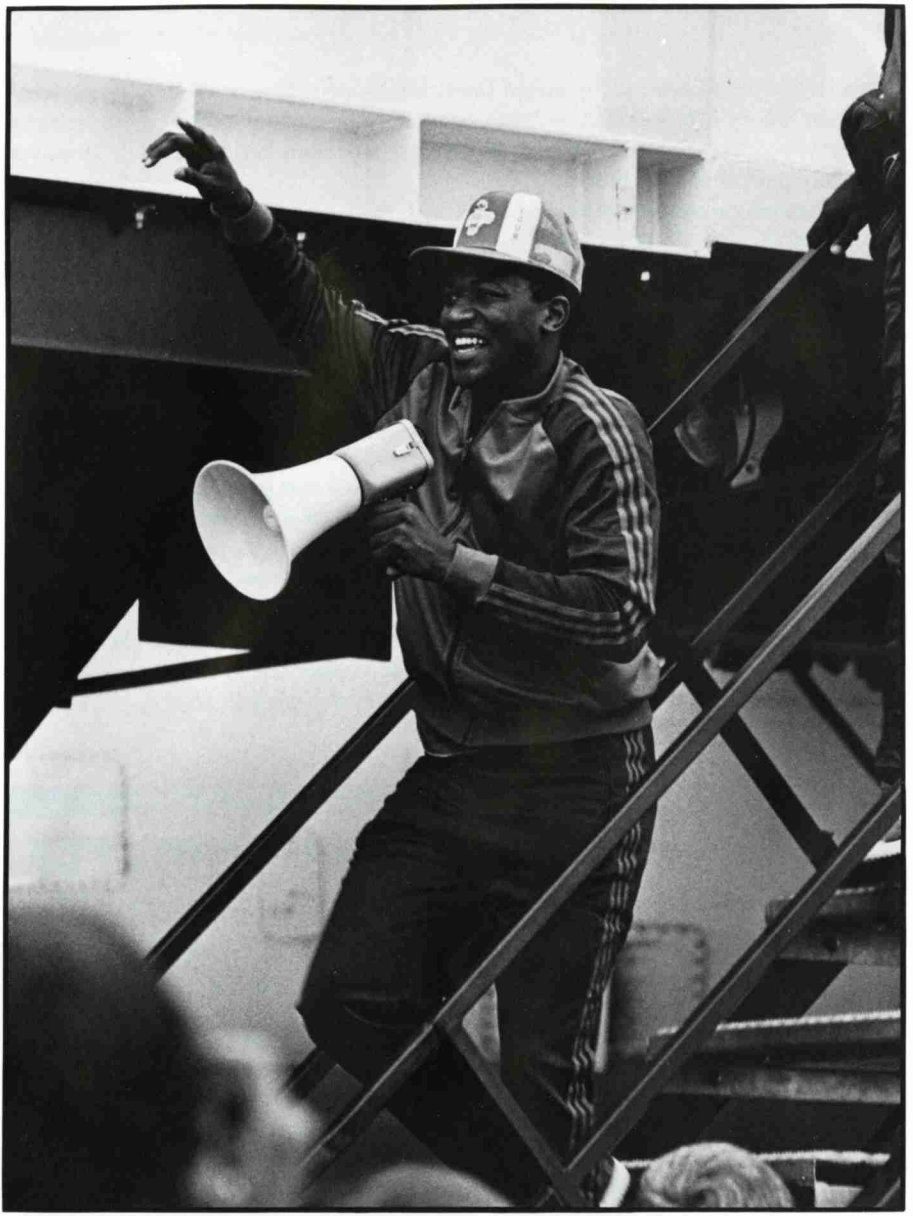
Without knowing it, the "destiny team" gave the people of the nation hope and a chance to believe in themselves and their dreams. It also gave students a chance to forget about the English paper that was due the next day.



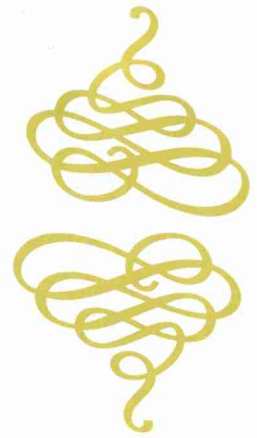
Griffiths



Yoder



Griffiths





brunt of some garbage talk by one of the Rebel fighters. Senior all-America Sidney Green had stated that he was "unimpressed" with Bailey's play. Bailey responded with 25 points to lead State but that was only part of the conflict.

After staying close part of the second period, the pack fell behind by 12 points with 10 minutes left in the game. Even many of the Pack's faithful thought that it was time to fold the tents and head back for the Kingdom. Alas and alack for the Rebels though, as UNLV choked down the stretch on their foul shots Bailey threw in a bucket with three seconds left to give the upstart Wolfpack a 71-70 win.

The Pack left the friendly confines of the small but cozy province of Corvallis for the somewhat larger boundaries of Ogden, Utah. Snow greeted the Wolfpack in Ogden, and although it was generally white outside the Dee Events Center, home of Weber State University, the interior decor was a warm shade of purple. Whatever the colors inside or out, the contingent from the Wolfpack Kingdom painted this town red.

A wild pack of Utes was sent up against the Wolfpack warriors in the first game of the weekend. The home folks of Ogden looked for a bloody battle to ensue with their Cinderella Utes emerging in an

upset win. After all they had reason to brag since this band of mercenaries had upset highly-ranked UCLA in the previous round.

It was not to be a dream come true for the Utes, however, as State wrapped up the season for the home team with a 75-56 win on the shoulders of 'Whit's' 27 points.

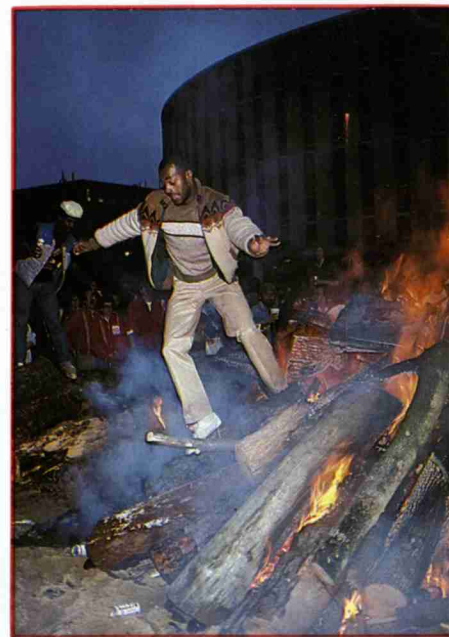
Thanks to the fine people that ruled the NCAA selection committee and sent State out West, the Pack was faced with the task of having to war against those damnable pesky Cavaliers again. Most felt that there was no way that the team from the heart of Dixie could whip those Charlottesville boys from North Dixie again. It looked as if Virginia would make it to the Final Four after having to beat a good Boston College squad — or so the Wahoo backers thought. Not so, however.

The Cavaliers' version of Goliath the Giant, Ralph Sampson, was playing for his second trip to the Final Four. After the Pack had opened a six-point margin, Virginia scored 10 straight points and by halftime led by five points. This time around, the Pack and Cavs were playing without the three-point goal, but that didn't stop the hot outside bombing of Whittenburg as the jump shooter canned 24 points to lead all scorers.

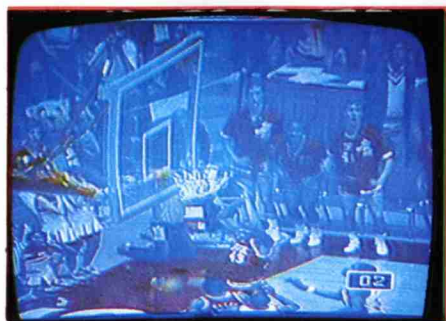
The Pack had trailed the Cavs by seven with seven and a half



Griffiths



Cerniglia



The bonfires and parties that ensued lasted well into the night — and even into the early hours of the morning.



Griffiths

# Pep rallies alive in '83

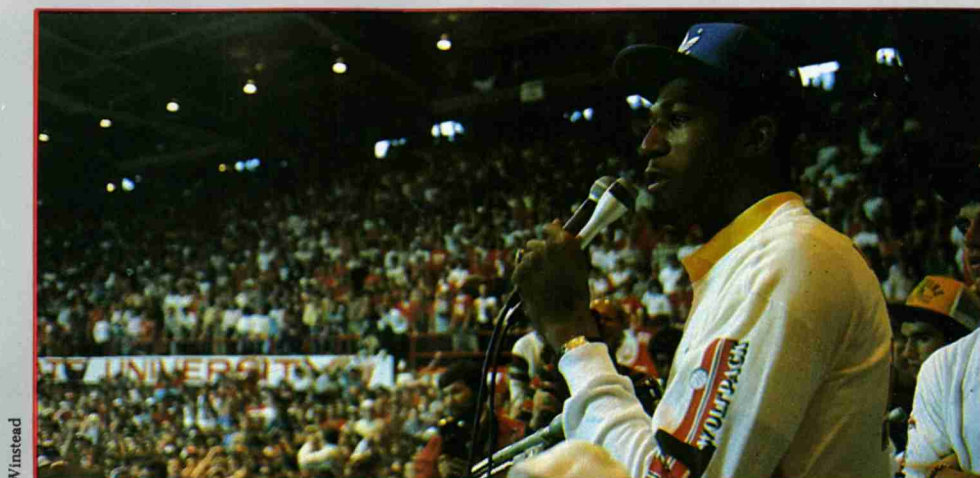
As the Wolfpack marched to the NCAA title, the campus became alive and a part of the team. Pep rallies became as much a part of the University as 7:50 classes. Coach Jim Valvano joked that he could give clinics on the running of pep rallies and he delighted the student body with his one liners at each gathering.

In all, three pep rallies were held, one after State won the ACC championship, one after the team returned from Ogden, Utah with the Western Regional title and the biggest of all after the team returned with the NCAA crown.

The first two were held in the brickyard and the last one was at Reynolds Coliseum where 20,000 jovial fans clad in red and white greeted the 1983 National Champions.

The first two pep rallies were highlighted by Valvano, who clowned and jived with the fans.

At the gathering following the teams return from Utah, Valvano greeted the crowd by stripping his warmup jacket and revealing a Western Regional tee-shirt



Winstead

**Thurl Bailey choked back tears as he talked to 20,000 fans who turned out to greet the team in Reynolds Coliseum the afternoon following the national championship victory.**

which brought a wild response. With the crowd in his hand, Valvano quipped, "We've got to stop meeting like this."

But suffering from the flu and a long, tiresome journey to the NCAA gold, Valvano gave up the microphone to his team at the championship rally in Reynolds.

One by one the State players made their remarks and told the crowd thank you, until the three senior leaders of the team stepped to the microphone to say good-bye to

the State fans for the final time.

Thurl Bailey, Dereck Whittenburg and Sidney Lowe all introduced their parents and thanked the crowd. They said that they were sorry their four years at State were ending, and then just as suddenly as Lorenzo Charles' championship winning dunk, it was over, and the crowd was filing out of Reynolds with only its memories of the cheering and the winning and the winning . . .

— Tom DeSchriver

## Nation's scribes learned to like crow

During the month of March and on into early April, there are two things that dominate the sports world. One is the beginning of the Major League Baseball season and the other is the NCAA Basketball Tournament. Since opening day of the baseball season usually doesn't come until around April 6, the NCAA takes precedence during the early days of April.

In 1983, the sportswriters from all over the nation had their priorities set on the NCAA Tournament. To begin with it was a race to see how many people picked what teams to win it. Houston, Virginia, Louisville, North Carolina — they all got votes.

Then as some of those teams fell victim to the upset there was a parade toward the Cougars and the Cardinals. As those two teams met in the Final Four semifinal round it was common knowledge among those scribes of great knowledge that the winner of that game would win the championship.

At the conclusion of that game, Houston backers were ready to take out an insurance policy on the national trophy to make sure nothing happened to it before it

got put in their trophy case. There was no contradiction in the papers. "Say Good-night Wolfpack" one headline read in the *Denver Post*. Alluding to Gracie Allen's directions to George Burns in vaudeville, *Post* writer Buddy Martin had put the Wolfpack out of its misery already, especially after Houston had beaten Louisville 94-81 with 14 dunks.

Some had called the State-Georgia game in the semis a "Jayvee game." Martin had this to say about the "NBA" game between Houston and the Cards: "Impressive? Let me put it this way: I was a guy who picked Georgia as a sleeper with a possibility to win this thing. Pass the crow, please. If that was a junior varsity game that N.C. State won, then compared to the Houston team I saw Saturday, Georgia is junior high, not junior varsity. Sorry. I know that hurts Hugh Durham (Georgia Coach), but crow ain't steak, either." Well Buddy, I'll bet you never thought there'd be enough crow for seconds, huh? With statements like that crow could become an integral part of his diet.

D.G. FitzMaurice of the *Lexington Herald-Leader* didn't have anything better

to say, but he did eat his crow and apologized to the readers afterward — a pretty humorous piece he wrote while eating his take out dinner from "Kentucky Fried Crow."

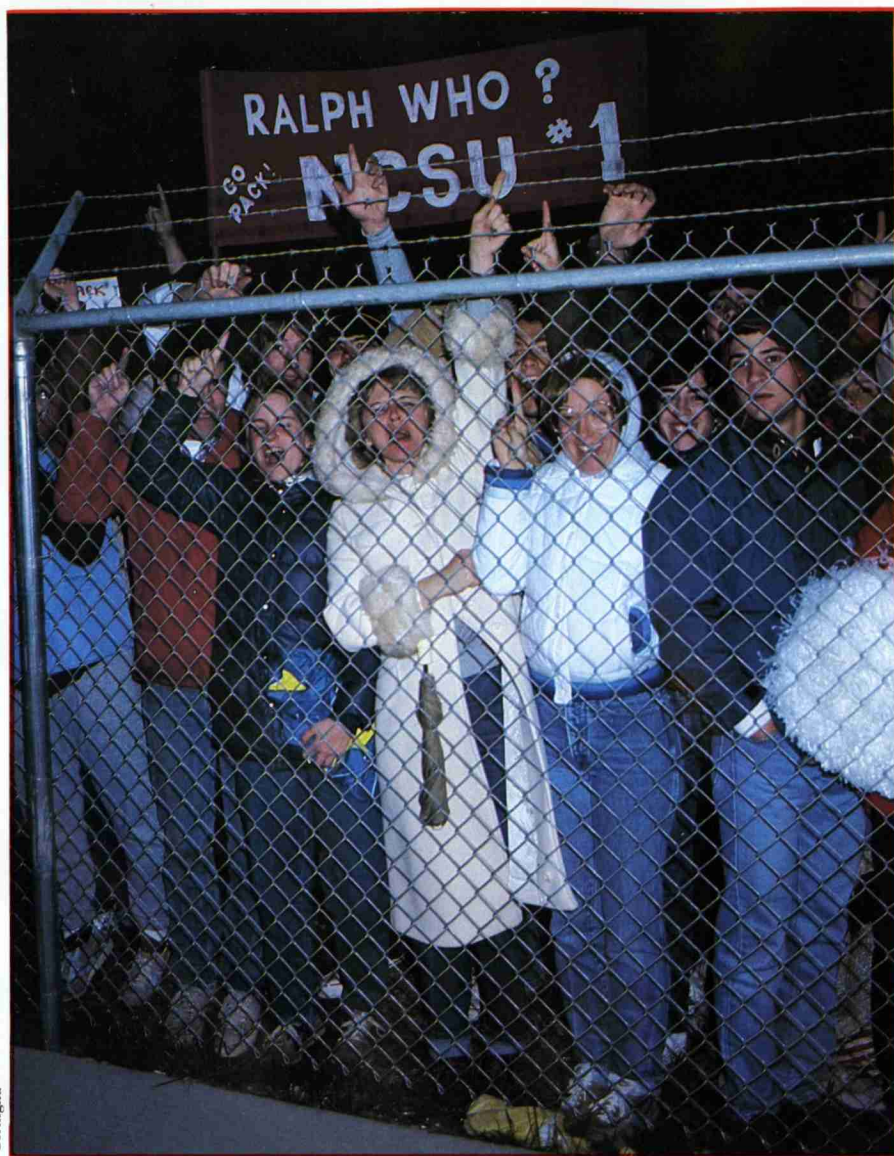
Many of the articles written following the Pack's championship seemed to be offering apologies on behalf of State for having taken away Houston's prize. Credit was scattered sparsely throughout these stories just to add a little flavor, but the general consensus seemed to be that State lucked its way into the title instead of earning it.

It's too bad so many of these scribes were so bold as to fire their guns at the crows, but not bold enough to eat them when they struck down the flying fowl.

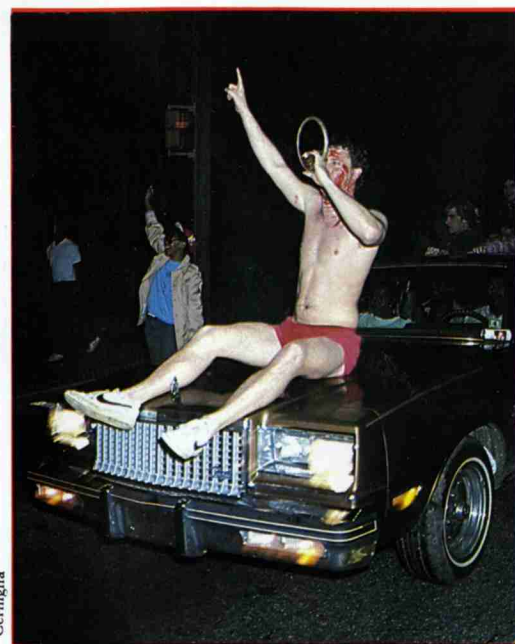
*Sports Illustrated* of course, featured the Pack on the cover the next week, however, the story by Curry Kirkpatrick inside left much to be desired. He more or less made excuses for Houston's losing and undermined State's miracle as a fluke and something they didn't deserve.

This mecca of objectivity we call the print media sometimes loses their cool when they are wrong, don't they?

— William Terry Kelley



Cerniglia



Griffiths



**It was a time when all emotions could be released, and all State basketball players be adored.**

minutes to play, but four minutes later had gained a tie. After swapping baskets, Virginia's Othell Wilson missed the second of a one-and-one situation and Virginia held a 62-61 lead. Whittenburg had the ball in the waning seconds and started his drive but spotted 'Lo' open underneath and rifled the ball to him. He was fouled by Sampson and the big man fell to the floor in agony, knowing the outcome was in the hands of the Pack. 'Lo' knocked in both freethrows as he said he would coming off the bench during a timeout. "I'm gonna hit deese," Charles had told Whittenburg. A last second shot by Wilson was short and Sampson's rebound basket was too late. Goliath had fallen again and the Pack was on its way to its last battlefield — Albuquerque.

By virtue of Georgia's upset of State rival North Carolina, the Wolfpack contingent was forced to pull against the killer of the Tar Heels. That was no great task for Pack lovers, though. The Kingdom was well represented in the Southwest city of Albuquerque. Wolfpack officials airlifted five loads of cheering red-clad Wolfpack troops to the site of the final showdown.

State sizzled the nets in the pre-championship game as they grabbed as much as an 18-point lead in the second half before calling off the 'Dawgs' and settling for a 67-60 win, although Georgia made an honest charge. 'Whit' and 'Duke T' led the Pack with 20 points apiece.

That match, or mismatch as it was, supposedly was to be the con-

solation game. It was a foregone conclusion by all the scribes throughout the known world that the winner of the other game, Houston-Louisville, would be the NCAA Champion. Dreams, however, don't end that way, and State's dream hadn't come to a close just yet. Although Houston had played what some called "an NBA" caliber game in the semis, collecting 14 dunks and eliminating Louisville by 13 points, the "best team in the nation" may not have been as cut-and-dried as some would have thought.

Bonfires and celebrations back home on Hillsborough Street were commonplace after all the victories, starting with the win against North Carolina way back on Feb. 19. The intensity increased as the Pack won and by the night of the Championship game as many as 25,000 people would crowd the brickyard and Hillsborough to celebrate. A popular song on the rock charts had a line that said "Hungry Like the Wolf". The Wolf was about to get its fill.

By this time the Wolfpack had picked up a variable throng of fans. All four teams in Albuquerque sported red and white and a fair amount of the losing fans that hung around were pulling for the Wolfpack. The Pit was the name of the arena that the Pack was to complete its war in. It may have been ironic or just more destiny that the University of New Mexico, whose homecourt The Pit was, had a Lobo for its mascot. A Lobo is a wolf and two of them graced the hardwood in The Pit.

Not much was said about State leading up to the final game. All

# Developing team depth paid off

As a season marked by the introduction of two new rules came around, all ACC coaches knew that their benches would be a key factor in their 1983 basketball campaigns. With the 30-second clock added to the game, players would obviously need a breather more often, ergo, depth was a must.

State began the season with a few questions in that category. There was no doubting the guard positions, but how good was State in the frontcourt coming off the bench?

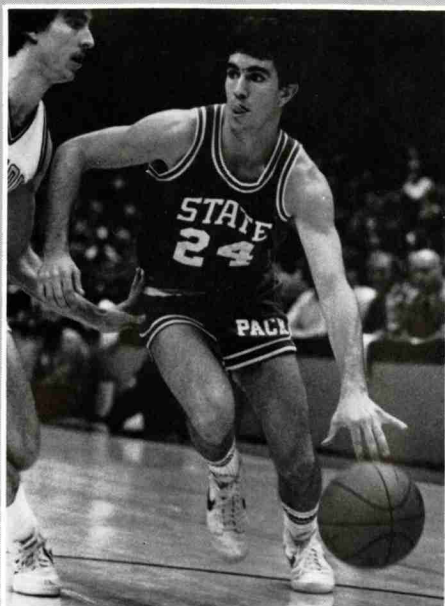
By the time NCAA Tournament play rolled around, those questions had been answered. Players like Terry Gannon and Alvin Battle were making their marks on the Wolfpack's climb to basketball fame. Gannon had drawn wide attention with his long-range jumpers, taken from in excess of 20 feet most of the time.

There were plenty of others who contributed from off the sidelines, too. Players like freshmen Ernie Myers and George McClain had a lot to do with the deepest backcourt in the nation. Battle, a junior college transfer, and junior Harold Thompson saw time with Battle being a key against Virginia especially.

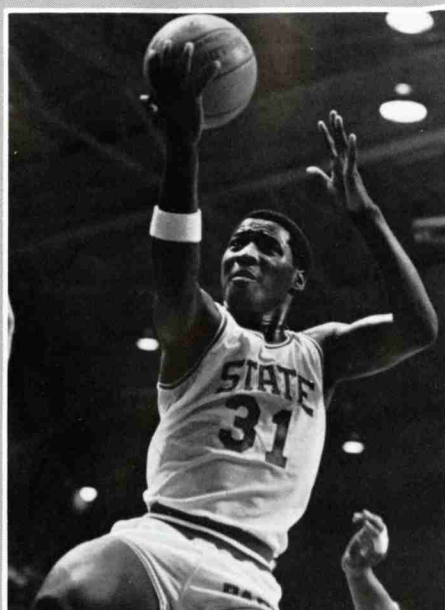
Alvin was the man that State head coach Jim Valvano called on to give his lumbering power forward, Lorenzo Charles, a rest. Battle saw considerable time throughout the season, but Valvano had a special assignment for him against Virginia. In both the ACC Tournament and the NCAA West Regional Finals when the Pack faced the Cavs, Battle had a job to do. He was to take the ball inside against Ralph Sampson and try to draw the foul. In the ACC Tournament finals, Battle had one of his best games and played well throughout the NAAs although not in a starring role. Battle was pleased with his performance against the Cavs in the ACC Tournament Finals and suggested with continued progress he could be the ACC Tournament MVP in a year.

"I think I've been playing well," he said. "If I improve next year like I have this year, maybe I'll be in the running for that Everett Case Award next year."

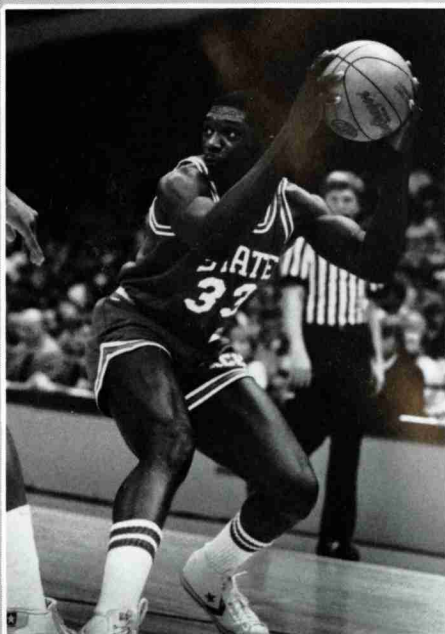
McClain and Myers were another pair that got a piece of the action in most games. After battling spinal meningitis



Griffiths



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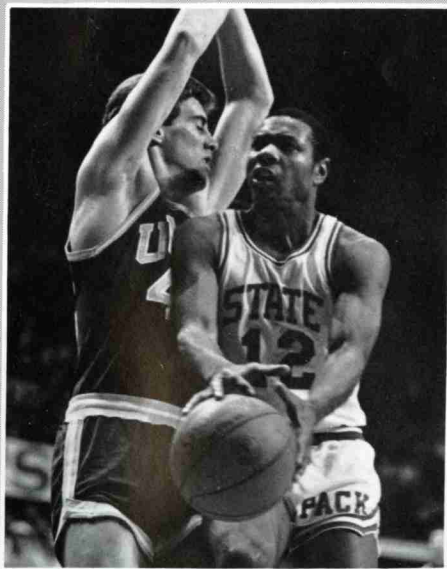
Griffiths

and an ankle injury earlier in the season, McClain bounced back and was more than ready by tournament time. He was called on more than once when Sidney Lowe got into foul trouble in the first two games of the tournament.

Myers had played a key role for the team in the absence of Dereck Whittenburg during his foot injury. He had scored 35 points in one game but by the time the Wolfpack was in the NCAA Tournament he was rarely seen coming off the bench. Some wondered what had happened. Whittenburg's play was the main thing keeping Ernie out of the game, but when he did get his one or two minutes of play he made them count, usually using some individual fantastic effort to put a couple of points up. In one game he came in for all of two minutes and scored four quick points to put State back into the game.

Gannon's role was so prominent that his mention was normally with the starters. However, his play was a crucial part of the bench. Others such as Thompson, Mike Warren, Walt Densmore, Quinton Leonard and Tommy DiNardo didn't contribute as much in minutes played, but did play vital roles as sideline leaders. State's championship would not have been possible without this fearless play from the bench.

— William Terry Kelley



Griffiths

**Key players that contributed throughout the season were (counter-clockwise from top left) Terry Gannon, Ernie Myers, Alvin Battle and George McClain. Not shown is Dinky Proctor, who injured his knee during the ACC Tournament and was unable to compete during the remainder of post-season play.**

# Whittenburg's injury Pack's biggest break of season

*January 12* — Downtown bomber Dereck Whittenburg scores 27 points in the first half as State roars to a six-point halftime edge over Virginia. Early in the second half, however, Whittenburg falls on Othell Wilson's foot and breaks his own as the Cavaliers come back for an 88-80 victory in Reynolds Coliseum.

*April 4* — The Wolfpack wins the National Title, 54-52, when Lorenzo Charles slams home Whittenburg's missed 30-footer with two seconds left.

These dates stick out in Wolfpackers' memories of State's long and storied trek to the National Title.

Both mark the emotionally lowest and highest points of the Pack's miracle season. Evenings of a disaster and a destiny, of a tragedy and a title.

As it turns out, however, State may not have been playing on April 4 had it not been for the January 12 incident. Whittenburg's foot injury had an enormous effect on the team, but the yields from it did, too.

The senior guard missed 14 games, and the Wolfpack's season went through its darkest moments. State went out of the polls, losing four of its next six games, and the Pack was down for the count. Such severe adversity seemed to spell doom for the Wolfpack, but it didn't claim the upper hand.

The Pack realized it had to do without Whittenburg and got back on its feet, winning eight of the next 10 games without him.

Without Whittenburg's offense and leadership for awhile helped develop those qualities in other players. This accounted for the sudden turnaround.

State started to find substitute means for his 16-point per game average. A predominantly guard-oriented team before, State became a more balanced team offensively with the sudden metamorphosis of Lorenzo Charles inside.

The bulky power forward, averaging 6.3 points and 4.4 rebounds through 22 games, doubled that output in the Pack's next 12 games.



Griffiths

**Dereck Whittenburg broke his foot early in the season, but his presence on the bench was an inspiration to everyone.**

"We were missing 16, 17 points a game without Dereck," forward Thurl Bailey later said. "We told Lorenzo the ball was coming to him inside whether he liked it or not. As he started gaining more confidence in himself, he developed his game tremendously."

Center Cozell McQueen also began to mature ahead of schedule inside. Averaging only three rebounds a game before Whittenburg went out, he lifted his average to 7.1 to take some of the slack of Bailey's and Charles' shoulders.

Freshman Ernie Myers, Whittenburg's replacement, kept State's offense intact from the No. 2 slot as he averaged 15.1 points during Whittenburg's absence.

Number six man Terry Gannon saw considerable time while substituting for Myers and was another scoring threat from the outside, dazzling crowds with his downtown range.

The Wolfpack was on the rise, and there was only one thing that could give State a greater high — the return of Whittenburg. He returned to the hardwood on February 27, ironically against Virginia. State lost that game, but it was on the rise. It would lose only once more.

Whittenburg's injury, yielding such positive byproducts, turned fate into destiny.

— Devin Steele



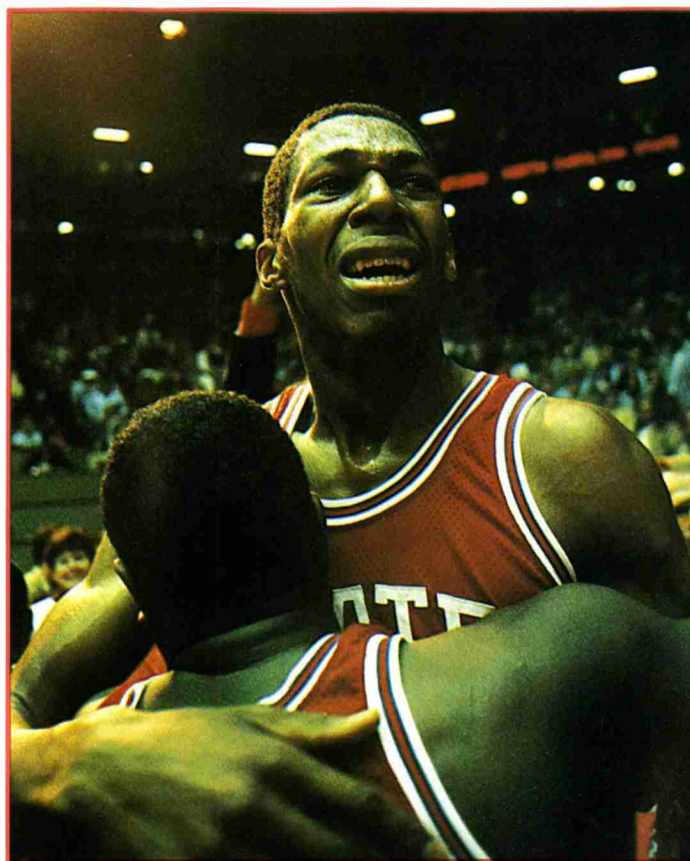


Griffiths



Griffiths

**Only when the final buzzer sounded did the fairy tale come true and the tears of happiness begin to fall.**



Griffiths

the talk from the sports authorities that crowded into Albuquerque centered around the "awesome" play of Houston against Louisville. Valvano quipped about being interviewed in front of the Houston section. "I was sitting there talking to (CBS Sportscaster) Brent Musburger and the Houston fans were yelling at me, 'you, you, you.' I thought I had just fouled out." Valvano never conceded that the "awesome" Cougars would win. He just calmly said it would be important to control the tempo. Others thought maybe he should just enjoy the trip and settle for second place.

The self-named fraternity of Houston leader Guy Lewis was called Phi Slatma Jamma. His team of dunkers led by seven-foot Nigerian Akeem Olajuwon and forward Clyde Drexler were the leaders of the cocky crew of warriors that wore their fraternity's name on their warmup suits.

The Pack had nothing to lose and opened the championship game with a dunk by 'T'. State scored four more unanswered points to take a 6-0 lead. Drexler got his fourth foul before the first half ended and the Cougars trailed by a 33-25 margin at the half.

The Pack lost its touch in the second half and Houston took advantage to take a 42-35 lead midway through the second period. State began to nibble at the margin and had fought to within four at 46-44 at 5:08 on a 23-footer by "The Cannon". State began to foul and a pair of 22-footers by Whittenburg knotted the score at 52 with 1:59 left. Benny Anders missed the front of a one-and-one and State got the ball with 1:05 left.

The Pack shuffled the ball around and Whittenburg got his hands on the ball with five seconds to go after a near steal by Drexler. 'Whit' fired up a 35-footer that was short. The dream was about to climax though as 'Lo' grabbed the missed shot and jammed it through as the clock ticked away. State had outdunked the Cougars 2-1 and outscored them 54-52.

Bedlam ensued. Whittenburg later commented: "I really didn't know how far away I was. When I looked up, I saw Lorenzo grabbing it and putting it back in. At first, I didn't know what had happened." Soon everyone knew, however. The court was filled with well-wishers and Packsters whose dreams had just come true. Shouts rang throughout the Kingdom, from coast to coast. The Cougars sank onto the floor in disbelief, their prize taken away. Olajuwon had led all scorers with 20 points but Bailey had scored 15, Whit 14, Lowe 10, McQueen eight, Charles five and Gannon four for a team effort.

The miracle workers from the small basketball-rich Kingdom had done it. Pack fans had seen the fall and rise of an empire. A new fraternity called Phi Packa Attacka was born. As a scribe once penned "Life's battles don't always get to the strongest or fastest: sooner or later those who win are those that think they can," a fitting description of the miracle warriors. Olajuwon garnered MVP honors while Bailey, Lowe and Whit made the all-Tournament team just as they had in the ACC Tournament.

The basketball world and especially the Kingdom back in Raleigh might never be the same. Disbelief turned into reality and destiny came to be truth, but fairy tales are supposed to end this way. The Pack returned home to an unprecedented welcome.

Songs were recorded and books were hitting the presses within days telling of the "Cardiac Pack." With the exception of a much publicized hernia that King Quipper had to have taken care of, everyone was in paradise back in the Kingdom. The King soon recovered from surgery and he and the seniors got to meet with President Reagan at the White House. The entire team had met with the President via satellite earlier. The Kingdom settled into a long period of celebration and enjoyment. And they all lived happily ever after.

— William Terry Kelley

*The End*

# 1983 NCAA Basketball Tournament



"All this week I've been saying 'North Carolina State, North Carolina State' to myself. And I liked the way it rolled off my lips. I liked the image, the great tradition, the program at N.C. State, and I figured I was ready for that kind of challenge. There was just no way I thought I couldn't get it done."

— Jim Valvano at his hiring press conference (March 28, 1980)

"I'm going after my own utopia, which is to win the National Championship. I have that goal. I believe in dreaming."

— Jim Valvano (October 7, 1980)

"I didn't realize I was hurt until I crossed halfcourt and I couldn't run anymore. I was hoping it wasn't serious, but I thought it was. With a sprain you can hobble, and I couldn't run at all."

"I'm not concerned with what happened or what won't happen now. I'm not going to go back to ifs. I'm going to think about the future, and what I'm going to do after my foot is healed."

— Dereck Whittenburg after loss to Virginia (January 12, 1983)

"It's a feeling we've been looking for for a long, long time. It's finally here. When we lost Dereck Whittenburg, we started going downhill. We thought he was the main part of our program, and he was, but that wasn't the end of us. Coach V told us if we hung together, something really big was going to happen. And it happened today. We are sky high."

— Thurl Bailey after win over Carolina (February 19, 1983)

"The party is for North Carolina and Virginia, the ACC's socially acceptable element. The other six teams have been invited as a formality, a concession to their past standing. By Sunday afternoon, the riff-raff will be gone, and the banquet hall — the Omni — will belong to the upright, sophisticated ones from Chapel Hill and Charlottesville."

— Kevin Quirk, *The Charlotte Observer* (March 10, 1983)

"I feel like I've coached three different basketball teams this season. But because of that we're a very versatile and very good team right now."

"I don't know what it was, but I felt we were destined to be in the finals of this thing, and now we've won it. I guess it was in the cards."

— Jim Valvano after ACC Championship win (March 13, 1983)

"When we were down 12 with 12 minutes to go, I saw their fans laughing and celebrating. But heck, down 12 points with 12 minutes left is a lot of time for us."

— Dereck Whittenburg after Nevada-Las Vegas win (March 20, 1983)

"Call them Destiny's Darlings."

"N.C. State has found that a six-point deficit is money in the bank of late. Put the Wolfpack in a hole and it's sure to climb out before someone can throw dirt on top. Knock State down and give it a nine-count and the Wolfpack is sure to be saved by the bell."

"... The conventional win is simply not part of the Wolfpack's style."

— Ron Morris, *Durham Morning Herald* (March 21, 1983)

"But State this season has come so far afield and has accomplished so much in such dramatic fashion that we may be witnessing a series of events which comes only once in a single lifetime."

— Wilt Browning, *Greensboro News-Record* (March 27, 1983)

"... Listen, why not believe in miracles? State was lucky to beat Carolina in the ACC Tournament. It was lucky to survive against Pepperdine and Nevada-Las Vegas and Virginia in the tournament. Maybe the Wolfpack is the US Olympic hockey team of this college basketball season. Maybe that magic will count for something tonight."

— Mike Lupica, *New York Daily News* (April 4, 1983)

"Blindfold? Cigarette? Last Words? Sayonara, N.C. State."

"State will probably be escorted by armed guards and priests mumbling the 23rd Psalm as it comes out for tonight's National Championship game against the Houston High Phis. There'll be no reprieve. The noose drops at 9:12 p.m."

"Rain would make it perfect. It always rains at an execution."

— Joe Henderson, *The Tampa Tribune* (April 4, 1983)

"North Carolina State's best chance is a bus wreck."

— Charlie Smith, *Tulsa World* (April 4, 1983)

"To be National Champions is wonderful. This morning the whole team picked up the papers and saw where everyone gave us no chance. How wrong they were! It made us play a little harder. Finally we can take off the Cinderella pumps and be Champs."

— Dereck Whittenburg after win over Houston (April 4, 1983)

"I'm on top of the world. When everybody counted us out, we hung together even stronger. We've worked hard, and we've been through a lot. Some people say we're a team of destiny and some say God is on our side. I'd like to thank God for us being here, because without him, none of us would."

— Thurl Bailey (April 4, 1983)

"No one mentioned Houston without using adjectives like awesome and phenomenal. Few mentioned N.C. State at all."

"Now they will. The Wolfpack won 54-52 on a final-second dunk by sophomore Lorenzo Charles, and none who saw it and what happened afterward will ever forget."

— Frank Vehorn, *The Norfolk Ledger-Star* (April 5, 1983)

