Kevin Besecker

West Forsyth High School



Lettered: Soccer, Basketball, & Track

Kevin Besecker's multi-sport career at West Forsyth High School was impressive. He was a standout athlete in soccer, basketball, and track, earning all-conference recognition in all three. In 1986 he was named Central Piedmont Conference Player of the Year for both soccer and basketball. These two outstanding awards parlayed into Kevin being named the 1986 Male Athlete of the Year at West Forsyth. The W-S Chronicle reported in 1986, "Besecker is probably the first player in the history of the NCHSAA to be named Most Valuable Player in his conference for both soccer and basketball."

Achievements:

Soccer:

- 1986 Central Piedmont Player of the Year
- 2 time Central Piedmont All Conference
- 1986 W-S Chronicle All County
- 1986 SIDLINE's All Piedmont
- 1986 Team MVP
- 1985 Preseason Spectacular All Tournament
- 1985 Team Defensive Player of the Year

Basketball:

- 1986 Central Piedmont Player of the Year
- 1985-1986 Central Piedmont All Conference
- 1986 W-S Journal All Northwest
- 1986 SIDLINE's All Piedmont
- 1986 Team MVP
- 1985 Frank Spencer Tournament Hustle and Team Award
- 1985 Pepsi NC Prep Athlete of the Week

Track:

- 1986 Central Piedmont All Conference

Ailene Griffith Carmichael

Glenn High School



Lettered: Basketball, Softball, & Volleyball

Ailene Griffith Carmichael was named All-Conference her junior and senior years in softball and volleyball. She earned 11 varsity letters in softball, volleyball, and basketball. Ailene was a starting member of all 11 of those teams. She was the epitome of a scholarship athlete. As a senior, she won the female U.S. Army Reserve Scholar Athlete of the year award for Glenn High School. She was voted by the senior class as the top female athlete in her class in 1995. In her senior year, she was a team captain in softball, volleyball, and basketball. She was a North Carolina scholar athlete in 1993, 1994, and 1995.

Achievements:

Softball:

Ailene was a four-year varsity starter. Upon graduation, she held the Glenn record for RBIs and single game record of 9 RBIs. Ailene was named All-Conference during her junior and senior years. She was named MVP of the Forsyth County Tournament in 1995.

Volleyball:

Ailene was a three-year varsity starter and a full rotational player her junior and senior years. She was named All-Conference during her junior and senior years.

Basketball:

Ailene was a four-year varsity starter. Her senior year team won the 1994 Mary Garber Tournament, had a 14-game winning streak, and lost only two regular season games. She finished her Glenn basketball career as the school leader in blocked shots and was in the top 10 in rebounds. assists, and steals. Her coach, Marty Stanley, called her the “glue” that held the team together.



Derick Debnam Sr.

Carver High School

Lettered: Football & Track

At Carver High School, Derick Debnam Sr. was a key player on two undefeated City/ County championship football teams in 1982 and 1983. In 1985 Derick managed 68 solo tackles, 75 assist, 8 sacks, and recovered three fumbles on defense. He also scored three touchdowns as a fullback on offense. His exceptional skills earned him multiple All-City/ County honors, a spot on the Forsyth County's Fabulous Forty, and recognition as one of North Carolina's Top 100 players by the Greensboro News & Record in 1985. Derrick, played on one of the most talented defensive lines in Carver High School history. Three out of four defensive lineman received scholarships to a Division 1 colleges. Additionally, he excelled in track, winning the Forsyth County championship and placing first in the discus event in 1986.

Accomplishments:

Football:

1982 9th/10th Grade Undefeated City/County Champions

1983 9th/10th Grade Undefeated City/County Champions

1984 All City/County Defensive Team - WS Chronicle

1985 NC Top 100 Players - Greensboro New & Record

1985 All City/County Defensive Team - WS Chronicle

1985 Forsyth's Fabulous Forty - WS Chronicle

1986 Accepts Full Scholarship to NC State

Track:

1986 Forsyth County Champions – Carver

1986 Forsyth County 1st Place Discus - 140 feet

1986 Metro 4A All Conference

Andre Gould

Winston-Salem Prep Academy



Coach: Basketball

Andre Gould coached Winston-Salem Preparatory Academy's boys varsity basketball team for 16 seasons. Gould transformed the Phoenix into one of North Carolina's most dominant programs, winning six state championships (2008, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2018, 2020) and achieving 13 seasons with 20+ wins. Gould was also a part of three state championships (2000, 2001, 2002) while coaching as an assistant at R.J. Reynolds High School.

Gould, originally from New York and a graduate of North Forsyth, started building the program from scratch with only ninth-graders in its first year. By 2008, that same group led the team to its first championship. His leadership guided the team to eight championship appearances, including a three-peat from 2012 to 2014.

More than the on-court success, Gould prides himself on academic achievement: every player under his tenure graduated, and all but two went on to college. His focus is on developing young Black males into successful individuals, not just athletes. He emphasizes patience, leadership, and community responsibility in his coaching philosophy.

Though often overlooked in conversations about top coaches, Gould remains humble, letting his work and players' success speak for itself. His ultimate joy lies in watching his students graduate and succeed in life.

Accomplishments:

Winston-Salem Prep Head Coach

NCHSAA State Titles (6): 2008, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2018, 2020
Runner Up (2): 2015, 2016

R. J. Reynolds Assistant Coach

NCHSAA State Titles (3): 2000, 2001, 2002
Runner Up (1): 2004

Thirteen straight conference regular season championships
Fourteen straight conference tournament championships
Three times conference Coach of the Year
All Northwest Coach of the Year
Coaching record at Winston-Salem Prep: 410—121 (77.2%)



Johnny Hill

East Forsyth High School

Lettered: Football, Track & Field

Hill showcased his athletic versatility by excelling in multiple sports including varsity football - where he played as a fullback - junior varsity basketball, and track and field, particularly excelling in relay events during the 1980 and 1981 seasons under the guidance of coaches Perry Pearson, Eugene Moore, and Richard Gizinski.

Throughout his high school tenure, he amassed a series of accolades that underscore his athletic prowess; he earned All City/County recognition in football for two consecutive seasons—rushing for 800 yards in 1979 and 706 yards in 1980—as well as in track, with his 4 x 100 and 4 x 200 relay teams frequently securing first place finishes, while also achieving All-State honors in the 4 x 100 relay, placing 2nd in 1980 and 3rd in 1981, thus cementing his reputation as a top-tier track athlete. Additionally, his talents did not go unnoticed by the local press, as he received numerous features and mentions by the *Winston-Salem Journal* and the *Sentinel*, where he was honored as Offensive Player of the Week and listed on the Super 25 All City-County Team in both 1979 and 1980, culminating in being named the East Forsyth Football MVP in 1980.

Achievements:

All City/County

- Football 1979 and 1980
- Track 1980 and 1981 (4 x 100 relay) – 1st place
- Track 1980 (4 x 200 relay) – 1st place

All Conference

- Track 1980 and 1981 (4 x 100 relay)

All State

- Track 1980 (4 x 100 relay) - 2nd place finish (41.83)
- Track 1981 (4 x 100 relay) - 3rd place finish (41.76)

East Forsyth High School Hall of Fame (Class of 2024)

Earned 4-year Football Scholarship to Duke University

Reginald Johnson

Winston-Salem Prep Academy



Lettered: Basketball

Reggie Johnson established himself as a dominant force on the court during his high school career from 2004 to 2008, He led Winston-Salem Prep to a state championship in 2008, earning State Championship MVP honors and setting the record for most rebounds in the title game. Recognized for his outstanding performance, he was named Forsyth County Player of the Year in 2008 and was selected an All State Player in both 2007 and 2008. Johnson was ranked as one of the top three centers in North Carolina during his junior and senior years. Over his high school career, he scored more than 1,200 points and collected over 1,000 rebounds. He was also named team MVP for three consecutive years from 2006 to 2008, highlighting his consistent impact and leadership on the team.

Achievements:

Basketball

- State Championship MVP
.
- Most Rebounds in State Championship Game
.
- Forsyth County Player of the Year (2008)
.
- Top 3 Ranked Center in North Carolina (2007 & 2008)
.
- Winston-Salem Prep MVP (2006–2008)
.
- Selected All State (2007 & 2008)
.
- 2008 State Championship Winner
.
- Scored over 1,200 career points and Collected over 1,000 career rebounds

Earned 4-year Basketball Scholarship to the University of Miami

Bradley Morton

Mount Tabor High School



Lettered: Football, Basketball, Baseball

Bradley Morton, a standout athlete from Mt. Tabor High School (2007–2011), excelled in football, basketball, and baseball, maintaining a 4.4 GPA and earning National Honor Society recognition. As a quarterback, he led his teams to multiple playoff runs and conference championships, earning numerous honors including All-County, All-Conference, and All-Northwest selections. In basketball, he contributed significantly to a state championship team and earned individual accolades like the Tim Duncan Character Award. In baseball, Morton was a consistent starter and high performer, winning MVPs and All-Tournament honors, and hitting as high as .486. He received multiple college offers for baseball and football, ultimately committing to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and finishing his college career at Appalachian State University.

Achievements:

Football

- Triad Sports Weekly All-County Team
- CPC 4A All-Conference Team
- All-Northwest Team
- Senior stats: 2,186 passing yards, 12 TDs; 643 rushing yards, 7 TDs

Basketball

- Part of the 2008–09 team that won the NC 4A State Championship
- Tim Duncan Character Award
- Triad Sports Weekly All-County 2nd Team

Baseball

- Won the Spartan Award (3 times)
- Triad Sports Weekly All-County Team (3 times)
- CPC 4A All-Conference Team (3 times)
- All-County Tournament MVP
- North Carolina Futures Games MVP
- Junior year: .414 average, 7 HRs | Senior year: .486 average, 5 HRs
- NC East vs West State Games Team, earned gold medal & MVP recognition

Awards

Triad Sports Weekly Male Athlete of the Year (Senior year)

Nathan Newsome

West Forsyth High School



Coach: : Cross Country, Indoor & Outdoor Track-and-Field

Nathan Newsome has dedicated over three decades to high school athletics and education, leaving an indelible mark on West Forsyth High School as both a coach and mentor. A 1989 graduate of West Forsyth, Newsome returned to his alma mater in 2006, eventually becoming the head coach for both boys and girls cross country and track and field programs in 2019. His tenure is marked by competitive excellence, athlete development, and a deep-rooted commitment to student success both on and off the field.

His multiple Coach of the Year titles, state championship, and the development of over 50 college-level athletes speak to his high-level success and long-term influence. Newsome's coaching philosophy emphasized not only championships but character. Beyond athletics, he enriched the school community as a teacher and role model. His legacy is marked not just by wins, but by the lives he shaped, fostering leadership and discipline in countless others. He is also a respected art educator, known for guiding hundreds of award-winning students, and served as an assistant principal before returning to full-time teaching and coaching.

Coaching Honors:

Coached for 31 years - Seven different sports
Outdoor Track & Field (Men's and Women's), Indoor Track and Field (Men's and Women's), Cross Country (Men's and Women's), Football, Baseball, Wrestling, Basketball.

- 9× Central Piedmont Conference Coach of the Year
- *Girls Track:* 2016, 2017, 2018, 2021
- *Girls Cross Country:* 2017, 2018, 2019
- *Boys Cross Country:* 2019, 2020
- 3× NCHSAA 4A Runner-Up Coach of the Year
- *Girls Cross Country:* 2018, 2019
- *Girls Indoor Track:* 2019

Team Championships:

- NCHSAA 4-A State Champion (Boys Outdoor Track): 2017
- 4× Girls Track Conference Champions: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2021
- 3× Girls Cross Country Conference Champions: 2017, 2018, 2019
- 2× Boys Track Conference Champions: 2019, 2020
- State Runner-Up Finishes:
- Girls Cross Country: 2018, 2019
- Girls Indoor Track: 2019
- Boys Indoor Track: 2017, 2020



Joshua Pittman

East Forsyth High School

Lettered: Basketball

Joshua Pittman had an outstanding high school basketball career at East Forsyth High School from 1990 to 1994. He was a two-time Metro 4A Conference First Team All-Conference selection in both 1993 and 1994 and earned All-Northwest Team honors those same years. In 1994, Pittman was named Metro 4A Conference Player of the Year and received All-State Honorable Mention recognition. During his senior season (1993–1994), he showcased his scoring prowess by averaging 24.7 points per game along with 7 rebounds, 2 assists, and 3.5 steals, while hitting 53 three-pointers. As a junior (1992–1993), he averaged 18.6 points, 8 rebounds, 3 steals, and 3 assists per game. Over the course of his high school career, he amassed 1,105 total points. Known for his versatile offensive skill set, Pittman was described by Coach Donnie Holt as a "three-dimensional" player with the ability to shoot from deep, drive effectively, and post up, making him a dynamic scoring threat at all levels of the court.

Achievements:

Conference & Regional Honors:

- Metro 4A Conference First Team All-Conference – *1993 and 1994*
- All Northwest Team – *1993 and 1994*
- Metro 4A Conference Player of the Year – *1994*
- All-State Honorable Mention – *1994*

Senior Year (1993–1994) Stats:

- Averaged 24.7 points, 7 rebounds, 2 assists, and 3.5 steals per game
- Hit 53 three-pointers during the season

Junior Year (1992–1993) Stats:

- Averaged 18.6 points, 8 rebounds, 3 assists, and 3 steals per game

Career Total Points:

- Scored 1,105 total points in high school

Player Characteristics (as noted by coach Donnie Holt):

- Exceptional offensive talent with a three-dimensional scoring ability:
  - Three-point shooting with unlimited range
  - Driving to the basket
  - Posting up thanks to his size and versatility
  - Known for making uncanny shots and being a constant scoring threat

Earned 4-year Basketball Scholarship to the University of North Carolina at Ashville

Ken Winfrey

Media: Newspaper - Radio



Ken Winfrey: The Golden Voice Behind Forsyth County Athletics

Ken Winfrey has devoted over 50 years to the advancement of athletics in Winston-Salem and the greater Forsyth County region through journalism, broadcasting, coaching, and community service. His legacy spans every facet of sports — from media to mentorship.

Winfrey played a foundational role in shaping the **Frank Spencer Holiday Classic**, he was named First Tournament Director when the Winston-Salem Journal assumed sponsorship in 1976. Winfrey served as the **"Voice of the Frank Spencer"** for 23 years, providing dynamic commentary and increasing community engagement. He was honored at the 2015 Spencer Championship with a plaque recognizing his *"lifetime of service by providing a voice for North Carolina high school athletics."* His leadership and voice elevated the Spencer into a premier event, giving generations of young athletes a platform for recognition and competition.

Winfrey's impact on high school sports in Forsyth County is both broad and deep, he Began announcing North Forsyth games in 1972; still serves as the “Voice of North Forsyth,” covering all Viking athletic events.

Over a 50-year career with the *Winston-Salem Journal*, Winfrey covered over 100 high schools in northwest North Carolina and founded the Journal’s annual All-Northwest football and basketball teams.

Winfrey’s influence extends beyond local borders, he served as Assistant Executive Director for the AAU and U.S. Olympic Development Program, coordinating five Olympic Games and over 240 national/world championships. Winfrey was instrumental in bringing the 1981 Junior Olympic Games to Wake Forest, involving over 2,000 athletes and local students.

Beyond media, Winfrey served as president of the North Forsyth Athletics Booster Club, leading efforts that provided meals, equipment, and facilities improvements. His leadership even extended into disaster relief, rallying local schools to raise $29,000 for tornado-stricken Bertie County in 2011.

Winfrey has called more than 1,500 games for WSSU and pioneered live streaming in CIAA Championships. He created *Triad Sports Break* on WTOB, featuring over 500 local athletes and coaches — many experiencing radio for the first time.

Achievements:

- Ultimate Ram Award (2015) – Winston-Salem State University
- Modern Automotive Citizen of the Month
- North Forsyth Athletics Hall of Fame Inductee

Revered as the “Golden Voice of Triad Athletics”