



Sentinel Sports Photo by Tom Rogers

UP AND OVER — Winston-Salem State high jumper Charles Mack, the 1980 state high school champion at North Forsyth, clears the bar easily in the recent All-Comers meet at Wake Forest June 16.

Going Bigtime: Rams' Mack Improves By Leaps and Bounds

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F- June 25, 82

When high jumper Charles Mack does things, he does them in a big way.

Mack was a good, but not spectacular jumper as a high school junior at North Forsyth, who had a lifetime best of 6-feet, six inches. But in the second meet of his senior year he soared 6-10 and suddenly he was more than just simply good.

Mack won the state championship in 1980 with a record jump of 6-feet-10 $\frac{1}{4}$ and colleges by the score beckoned. Winston-Salem State University won out and he completed his freshman year in a Ram uniform this past spring — but with no jaw-dropping launches into the stratosphere.

"I was doing the long jump, the triple jump and sometimes running on the two-mile relay, as well as high jumping," he said Thursday.

His freshman year may have been undistinguished, but since school has let out, Mack has been taking quantum leaps. Wednesday night, at the Wake Forest University All-Comers meet, Mack jumped 7-feet-2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches — the second consecutive week that he has done over 7-2 at the informal meet.

By comparison, the winning jump at the Atlantic Coast Conference championship meet this past spring was 7-feet even.

"All it took was a little rest," Mack said. "I haven't

changed my style or anything. Everything's the same."

Mack admitted the less competitive atmosphere at the summer meets helps take the strain off performing. And the fact that he has only the high jump to concentrate on is another plus.

"Since I've been on my own, I don't feel as much pressure," Mack said. "I just go out there and have a good time."

"The summer meets are just something to keep me going. To keep my skills in tune over the summer," he said.

Despite liking the more easy-going surroundings of the summer meets, Mack feels that more opportunities to jump in meets at WSSU might've helped his spring performance.

"I think if I'd had a couple of more meets at Winston-Salem State I'd have done better," he said. "I didn't have time to get going."

Mack stands 6-1 and uses the Western roll technique. Most jumpers today use the flop, the back-first style which was perfected by Dick Fosbury in the late '60's.

His off-season workouts have consisted of shooting basketball, lifting weights and running cross-country. After the summer he plans to continue running and lifting. Seven-feet, two isn't bad but there is no ceiling on a jumper's imagination and Mack would love to go even higher.

"I was shocked myself, when I got over seven feet," he said. "I really didn't know what was going on. When I go, I guess I go big."