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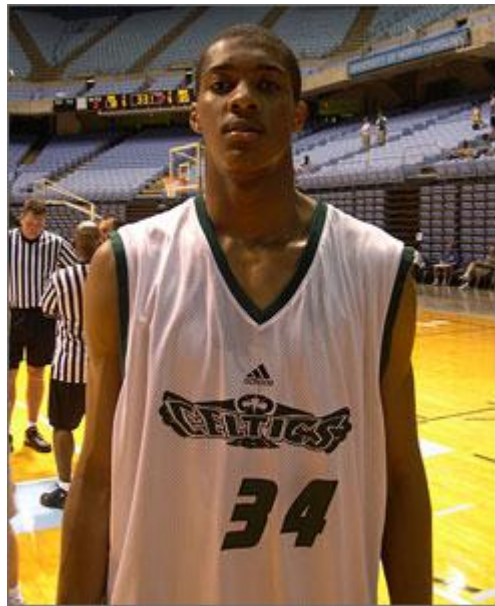
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Favors shows off hoops skills with Atlanta Celtics

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Derrick Favors lead the Atlanta Celtics to a first round win at the Adidas Super 64 event and is considering offers from many of the top collegiate basketball teams.

By Victoria Sun, Special for USA TODAY

LAS VEGAS — It doesn't take long to figure out why Georgia Tech coach Paul Hewitt and Georgia coach Dennis Felton are hoping and perhaps praying that 6-9 forward Derrick Favors will decide to attend their universities.

Favors, who will be a senior at South Atlanta, had 28 points and 12 rebounds while leading the Atlanta Celtics past Team Texas 99-80 in the first round of bracket play of the Adidas Super 64 event Thursday.

He has a combination of skills that make him the third-best player in his class, according to Rivals.com. Favors is a tenacious rebounder and effective shot blocker, runs well, has great hands and can score in a variety of ways.

"The kid is the total package," Atlanta Celtics coach Jamar Stegall says. "That's why we call him Derrick, 'The Package,' Favors or 'D-Nice.' "

Favors is considering Georgia, Georgia Tech, Florida, Florida State, Kentucky, Texas, Connecticut, UCLA, Southern California, Duke and North Carolina. He is the latest high-profile player who has excelled in the Celtics program, started in 1990.

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former Kentucky center Randolph Morris are former Celtics.

Though Favors didn't start following the Celtics until he was about 13, he learned about their legacy through former players.

"I know Javaris Crittenton and Josh Smith really good, so I am just trying to carry on the tradition that they started," he said.

Stegall, who has coached the Celtics for 12 years and is in his second season coaching the 17s team, is proud of the way the program changed the perception that Georgia was just a football power.

"What we did was put Georgia basketball on the map," Stegall said. "We figured out if we take our kids around the country and play the best of the best, they can't deny us. Ever since we've been doing that, we've been very successful."

Stock rising:

After performing well at the LeBron James Skills Academy in Akron, Ohio, this month, guard Dotson Aaron has received a lot more interest from major Division I programs.

Miami (Fla.) coach Frank Haith, Kansas assistant Kurt Townsend and Louisville coach Rick Pitino were among the coaches watching Aaron, who is playing for the Friends of Hoop Seattle team in the Main Event in Las Vegas that wraps up Saturday.

"I've been one of the biggest surprises in the country," Aaron said.

"I've got new coaches calling me, so the summer is going really good."

Aaron said Miami, LSU, UCLA Washington and Indiana have offered him scholarships and he is also considering Southern California, Kansas and Louisville.

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