CIAA

Will the power structure change in '88?

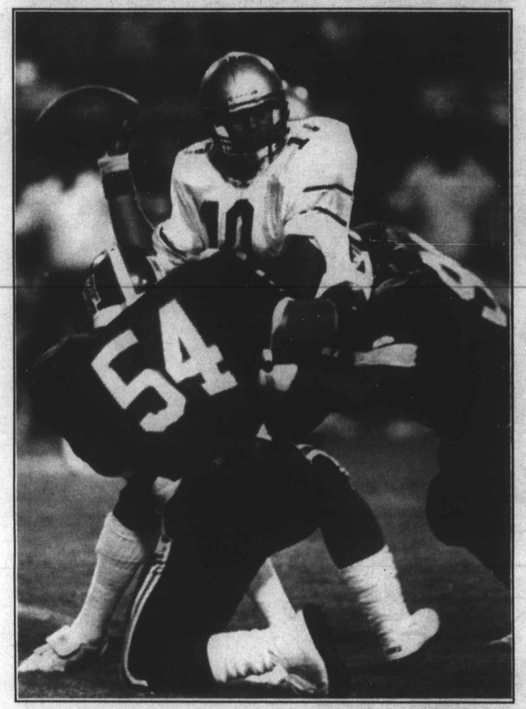

Photo by J.D. Schwalm

In spite of having inexperienced receivers to work with in '87, North Carolina Central QB Earl "Air" Harvey still threw for more than 2,300 yards and 18TDs. Barring injury, the senior should finish his career as Division II's most prolific passer.

This is supposed to be the year of parity in the CIAA, according to sources around the league. However, the general feeling is that Winston-Salem State and Hampton will wind up in the conference championship finale by the time all the smoke has cleared from the '88 season. There will be one missing link though. St. Paul's has dropped football. At presstime, it was not known when and if they will restart their grid program.

In the Northern Division, Hampton is viewed as the likely survivor, but one can never count out Virginia Union, a team that is always somewhere in the thick of things. Virginia State could be the dark horse and make things very difficult for the top two contenders.

The CIAA South, may also be in for a changing of the guard, so to speak. Pete Richardson is now the Rams head coach, taking over for Bill Hayes who became the head guy at North Carolina A & T. It will be interesting to see how the WSSU team responds to the transition. North Carolina Central will be knocking on the door as long as they have rifleman quarterback Earl Harvey. Johnson C. Smith has designs on the league crown based on a stellar defensive unit and Fayetteville State has a habit of being a thorn in everybody's side. They could be the team to sneak up on everyone this year.

Northern Division

Carl Painter graduated and is no longer around, but **Hampton University** (9-3) feels they can reload and successfully defend their '87 division title. Painter accounted for 981 rushing yards and 14 TDs last year, so Pirates coach Fred Freeman hopes to find an adequate replacement or devise a method to compensate for Painter's absence.

Freeman will also have to fill vacancies at nose guard and defensive back with the graduation of Thomas Gosier and Tony Holden.

In addition, the team will be without Demetrius Hall (724 yards rushing) and Anthony Kearney (75 tackles, seven QB sacks). For disciplinary reasons, those two sophomores will not play this season.

The Pirates have some transfers that figure to make a positive impact immediately. Greg Harris, a junior outside linebacker from North Carolina State, sat out last year, but had a very productive spring. Tim Dudley, who comes from Virginia Tech, demonstrated during spring drills that he could be the guy to take over for Painter.

Frankie Smith, formerly the offensive line coach at Tuskegee, has joined the Hampton fold. Smith had a lot success in developing solid offensive linemen at Tuskegee, which was one of the prime reasons why they did so well last year. Another plus for Smith is that he'll be working with an experienced group, which in many observer's eyes is a major strength for HU.

In all, the Pirates have 26 returning lettermen and all of the quarterbacks return. They were first year players in '87, so they should be more polished this time around.

"Dee-fense" is the battle cry for **Virginia Union** (7-3) and the reason why they should pose as a serious threat to Hampton. They were No. 2 in overall defense in Division II last season. Coach Joseph Taylor's team is very likely to continue their defensive dominance.

Linebacker Leroy Gause is the ring leader as the conference Co-Defensive Player Of The Year in '87. Gause (6-2, 220) also made the Sheridan All-America team and totaled 89 tackles, and had 9 1/2 sacks. Clarence Key (6-0, 220) is another key linebacker. Nose guard Michael Cruse (6-0, 240) is a key in the middle and Kevin McGregor (6-3, 245) terrorizes at defensive end. McGregor had seven sacks last year.

The Panthers' cornerback Ramon Hounshell missed most of the '87 season due to injury. But he's back at full strength and the pro scouts like what they see. An excellent man-to-man cover guy, he's also a ball hawk. In '86, he had six interceptions.

Union has long been known as a running team, but that has changed a bit with quarterback Kenny Jones in the lineup. During the last two seasons, Jones has thrown for 2,200 yards and 25 TDs and he is 18-4 as a starter.

Junior Wigfall should be a primary pass and catch mate for Jones. The sophomore tight end made all-CIAA as a freshman, catching 21 passes for 438 yards and four TDs. Wigfall didn't start until the fifth game of the season.

Fullback Orlando Hawkins (6-2, 210) will keep defenses honest with his combination of power and speed as a rushing force. Last season, Hawkins gained 491 yards and scored nine TDs in only six games.

Union is currently ranked eighth on the Division II all-time victory list in football. Going into this season, the school is 391-237. They would be elated to get win No. 400 in the conference championship on Nov. 12.

Virginia State (9-2) had a banner season last year with running back Dan Boynton being named the conference Offensive Player Of The Year. Boynton has graduated, and so have Mike Davis and Calvin DeShazzo, two of the team's top receivers.

But coach George Moody hopes that Clifton Cooper can step in for Boynton. Darryl Brown (6-5, 290) and Deandrea Neal (6-3, 310) are the chief forces on the offensive line and should be able to pave a few paths for the Trojans running game.

Rudy Elliot is the likely starter at quarterback. Elliot hurried a lot of his throws last year, putting up 19 interceptions, but he accumulated 1,279 passing yards and threw for six scores.

The defense is headed by all-conference defensive back Vernest Beale. Last year, Beale made 87 tackles and intercepted seven passes. Freshman James Brown (6-7, 295) should help tremendously on the defensive line.

Norfolk State (4-7) and coach Williard Bailey are looking to re-establish themselves as a grid force. They are talented and experienced at running back with Adrian Miles and Kenny Gallop being the top returnees. Eric Still averaged 19.2 yards a catch in '87 at wide receiver and should be more productive with the continued development of quarterbacks Maurice Lawrence and Jessie Chavis III.

All-CIAA offensive tackle Robert Roberson (6-6, 310) will be the guy who makes things happen for the running and passing attack. Along with Calvin Thompson, the front line should get a lot of support from Shawn Lindsey, Roderick Daniels and Wilford Samia.

Bruce Cinibulk returns as the punter. He was the conference's third ranked, averaging 39.2 yards a kick.

The defense is young, but aggressive with David Moore (6-5, 302) blossoming into a prime time force. Larry Bryant heads the secondary, which has the most experienced players on the defense coming back.

Coach Thurlis J. Little will be quite satisfied if his **Elizabeth City State** team (3-8) can improve their ground game. They do have an effective short yardage specialist in Rodney McNeil, who had five TDs last year.

Bill Wilde is the returning quarterback. He averaged close to 170 passing yards per game last year. Robert Tiller is tricky at wide receiver and was second team all-conference in '87.

Landon Miales (6-3, 260) leads an experienced offensive line.

Southern Division

This should be an interesting year for **Winston-Salem State** (9-3). Bill Hayes is gone after 12 years and now Pete Richardson assumes the mantle of head coach. The major question surrounding the Rams at this point is whether or not they will be able to adopt to Richardson and still maintain their standard of excellence. The common assumption is that it always takes time for a team to make the transition even if the new head coach has been a staff assistant for several years.

The usual ace for WSSU is defense and this year is no different. They were ranked among the top defensive units in Division II last fall. Nose guard Roy Phillips (6-2, 250) and defensive end Willie Jones (6-4, 250) anchor the line.

The secondary is very solid with three of the four starters returning. Cornerback Raymond Puryear had eight pass break-ups and 57 tackles last season, while free safety Donald Franks covered sideline to sideline. Franks intercepted five passes, and recorded 73 hits in '87. Darryl Hall is the other returnee at strong safety (six interceptions).

The offense is a question mark right now. Sophomore quarterback Cornell Maynor recently informed Richardson that he was transferring to North Carolina A &T. Maynor started as a freshman, completed 52 percent of his passes, threw 11 TD passes and ran for three more himself.

With no Maynor, the Rams are hurting because they don't have any experienced backups. At presstime, coach Richardson and his staff were attempting to persuade Maynor to change his mind about leaving.

If Maynor stays with his plans to go to A & T, WSSU will be a ball control, three yards and a cloud of dust type of offense. The burden will be placed squarely on the offensive line and running backs.

All-league guard Vernard Dillard (6-3, 265) and tackle Darren Peebles (6-5, 275) are the main cogs along the offensive line.

Running back Broderick Graves will handle the running chores and will be the man to stop if the Rams go strictly to a ground attack. Graves gained 823 yards and rushed for 11 TDs last season.

With coach Henry Lattimore's offensive philosophy, **North Carolina Central** (6-5) can be counted on to fly the friendly skies with Earl Harvey at quarterback. "The Duke Of Air" comes into his final collegiate season threatening to break a host of Division II passing and total offense records by the time the season ends in November.

Last year was supposedly a down season for Harvey. Working with inexperienced receivers and going to a more controlled passing attack, the Duke accounted for over 2,400 total yards, including 18 TD passes. But the pass rush also got to Harvey who had 15 interceptions.

All of the Eagles receivers are back and that's bad news for DBs facing NCCU in '88. Gary Lee, a running back, is the top returnee, and there's also wide receivers Reese Hargroves and John Vanhook.

Central lost three starters from the offensive line, but still have Willie Buckley (6-1, 290), Kenneth Guidry (6-1, 280) and Luther Bethea (6-1, 293) to protect Harvey and open holes for Lee and David Burt.

While Harvey and the offense are very noticeable, the Eagles defense has its share of top-flight people. The secondary is the strength of the defense. Cornerback Robert Massey is one of the nation's hottest NFL prospects. In '87, Massey was all-CIAA, intercepted six passes (one returned for a touchdown), blocked four punts, broke up 10 passes, and made 57 tackles. Gerald Mack is solid at the other corner and free safety Tony Lindsey covers a lot of ground in the middle.

Eric Greene (6-3, 215) and Darius Robinson (6-3, 220) reak havoc as outside linebackers, while Fred Dunston (6-1, 260) and Guidry fortify the defensive line.

If **Johnson C. Smith** (4-5-2) can get some offensive consistency to go along with their stiff defense, coach Horace Small can rest a little easier.

The Golden Bulls have a strong-armed passer in Maurice Flowers, who as a freshman last year, threw for 802 yards and five TDs. Marvin Bartee, an all-conference wide-out, was a favorite target, catching 45 balls for 614 yards and four TDs. Bartee averaged 4.1 receptions a game, ranking him in the top 15 among Division II receivers. Joachim Weinberg and Rodney Martin should compliment Bartee in the pass catching department while all-CIAA center William Wyatt (6-4, 270) leads the offensive line.

The Bulls really excel on defense and are deep at linebacker and defensive back. Ronald Capers (6-2, 220) was the conference's leading tackler last year with 140. Strangely enough, he didn't make all-CIAA. Michael Ballen (6-3, 240) was a second team all-conference pick as a defensive end. He had 70 tackles and recovered four fumbles last season.

Beware of **Fayetteville State** (6-2-2). The Broncos are ripe for a CIAA stampede after suffering their only conference loss to WSSU. They also beat Central for the first time in the school's history.

Coach Robert Pulliam had a sophomore dominated squad last year and now that crew is a year wiser, a year better. However, they are thin in many positions. A couple of injuries to key people could doom the Broncos' chances to change the pecking order in the CIAA South.

Quarterback Paul Stevens will operate the run and shoot offense. Last year, he had 1,311 yards in total offense and is more comfortable with coach Pulliam's system.

Glenn McFadden, missed three games last year, but is ready now to become a primary receiver for Stevens. Richard Jewell, James Branch, and Rickey Barnes will vie for positions in the starting backfield.

On the defensive end, the Broncos believe in putting pressure on quarterbacks. Last year they registered a team total of 46 sacks. They have three-all conference performers returning.Tackle Andre Bowden (6-2, 212) was the top sacksman with 9 1/2. He also made the all-conference team as the placekicker (made five of nine field goals and 21 of 24 PATs). Russell Rahames (6-1, 250) is the other tackle and linebacker Willie Hopkins (6-2, 205) has the instincts of a defensive back. Hopkins had seven interceptions last season.

Bowie State (4-6-1) continues the climb back to respectability. The Bulldogs are relying on junior college talent to help stabilize the team. Coach David Dolch is entering his third year and has the Bulldogs believing in themselves.They ended a 32-game losing streak last season and won a conference game for the first time in many moons.

Marcus Williams (6-6, 275) and Winston Lattiboudere (6-2, 260) are a massive pair of offensive tackles who control the line of scrimmage. Tony Atwater will handle the inside running duties while Tim Styles will give the Bulldogs an outside threat on pitches and quick tosses. Also back is all-conference punt returner Don Janey.

Defensively, linebackers Chaun Gunter (6-3, 238) and Jim Working (6-2, 228) give opposing offenses headaches -- literally. Gunter missed two games last season, but still managed 11 1/2 sacks. Working was active with 98 tackles.

In the secondary, Rodney Belfield and Sam Muse are the best. Belfield was a all-CIAA South free safety. He was in on 110 tackles (75 solo jobs), picked off eight passes, and returned one for a score. Belfield's interception total placed him No. 5 in Division II. Muse, the left cornerback, is the team's spiritual leader. But he also leads by deed -- 89 tackles, nine passes broken up, seven interceptions.

Livingstone College (2-8) will need some ammunition on offense if they are to make a dent in the division. Defensively, they are improving with Greg Bocoats (6-2, 200) Iran Clark (6-7, 270), Dante White (6-2, 245) plus the Cunningham twins-- James (6-0, 220) and John (6-0, 220) forming the nucleus of that unit.

Coach Fletcher Jones and his squad could be in for a very long season.

-- BCSR Staff

SIAC alley fight

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who will keep defenders from always concentrating on Parham. He had four TDs last season.

When the Rams get around opponents' 35- yard line, they are a threat to put points on the board. Placekicker Clay Perkins made 11 of 16 field goal attempts last season, the longest being 43 yards.

Center Billy Ray Neves (6-1, 265) is a two-year starter on the offensive line. His experience will come in handy in the trenches.

On the other side of the ball, Wilbur "The Beast" Cooper (6-3, 280) will be the centerpiece at defensive end. Jonathan Warren (6-2, 265) should also be a prime figure. In the secondary, free safety Jefferey Gordon excels at reading offenses and reacting to make the big play and Kenneth Grant is a steady performer at strong safety.

There will be a lot of new faces in the **Savannah State** lineup this fall. The Tigers were 5-5 last year and are looking for help from the junior college ranks.

The immediate key for coach Bill Davis and his team is how well the linebackers can hold the team together until folks in the other positions become cohesive. Wesley McGriff (5-ll, 200) and Norman McGeathy (6-1, 230) were the leading tacklers on the team in '87. McGriff recorded 10 sacks and McGeathy is a highly skilled, impact kind of player. Savannah's coaching staff is also very high on sophomore Eugene Brantley (6-0, 205), who made the team as a walk-on. Brantley can dominate a game and makes life miserable for offenses with his 4.5 speed in the 40.

The secondary has a pair of top notch corners in Mike Wallace and Eric Brown. Wallace likes contact (62 tackles) and covers receivers like a blanket. Teams tend to stay away from him. Brown, on the other hand, was extremely busy last season -- seven interceptions, three blocked kicks, and 21 passes broken up.

A major area of concern on defense is being able to put pressure on opposing passers. Damon Johnson, a 6-6, 275 lb. tackle, has very little game experience, but has awesome potential.

Offensively, the Tigers are looking diversify. Opposing defenses ganged up on wide receiver Shannon Sharpe, a bona fide game breaker. Sharpe caught 60 passes for 1,078 yards and 10 TDs last year. He had seven consecutive games where he caught at least one TD pass. He also had five straight games where he had 100 or more receiving yards. Incidentally, Shannon's brother is Sterling Sharpre, who just signed a lucrative contract with the Green Bay Packers.

To take the pressure off of Sharpe, Davis hopes his JUCO recruits are able to open some holes to develop a credible running game. Allen Williams (6-3, 260), Jonathan Sherlock (6-1, 260), and Darryl McCormick (6-2, 250) have the task of making the ground attack workable.

Wesley Benyard, Edwin Ford, and Frederick Hawkins are competing for the running back positions, and they should get help from option quarterback Johnny Jefferey in that phase of the game.

Coach Maurice Hunt is also working to improve **Morehouse's** running attack.

The Maroon Tigers (4-6) put on some offensive shows last year utilizing a controlled passing game commandeered by QB Jimmie Davis.

Davis had a bevy of receivers to look to, throwing for 1,772 yards and 15 TDs. Morehouse had six of the SIAC's top receivers last year so it was no secret was their strength was.

Three of those pass catchers are back, including rushing leader Eddie Burt (641 yards, six

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