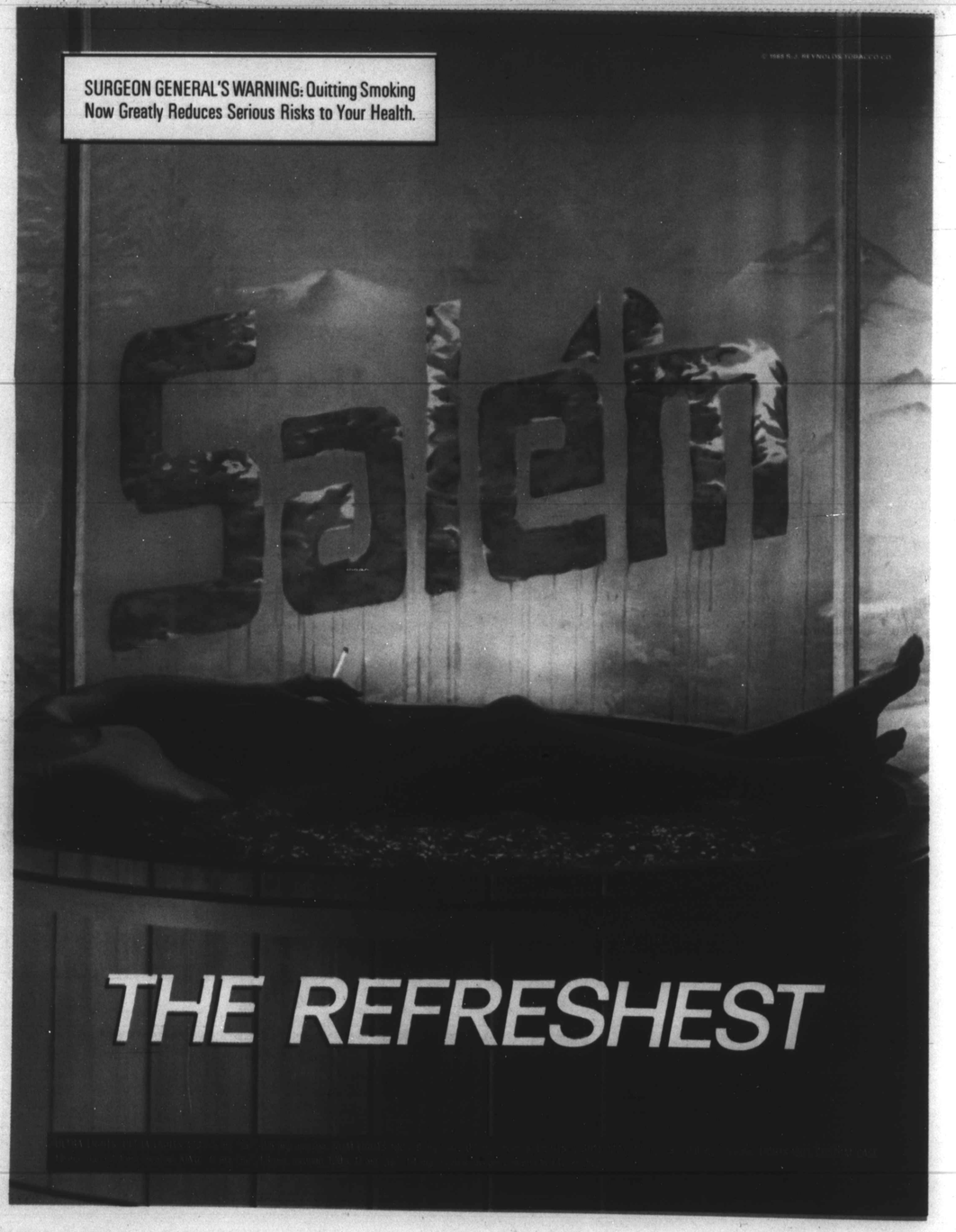

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Misguided thinking

The NCAA Division I-AA football committee is up to its old tricks as the 1988 college football season hits full stride.

Last year, that august body was thrust into the spotlight when it jobbed Howard University out of a berth in the 16-team playoff field even though the Bison was 9-1 and led the division in several offensive categories. Howard filed a suit which is still pending.

Now it seems to be Jackson State's turn in the barrel.

The Tigers were No. 10 in last year's final poll and No. 11 in this year's pre-season poll. They opened the season with a tie against Tennessee State and then defeated Prairie View 33-7.

Yet, when the first regular season poll was released, they were not ranked.

Somehow, that doesn't jibe.

When you look at what happened to Northern Iowa, Jackson State's plight is even more unbelievable.

Northern Iowa, No. 8 in the pre-season, opened with a 59-10 loss to Pittsburgh -- a Division I-A member. Then they defeated Morgan State. The Panthers only dropped two spots to No. 10 in the first poll.

The implication is that losing badly to a Division I-A school carries more clout than defeating a I-AA school.

The selection committee is big on strength of schedule. That was the main reason it said Howard was excluded from last year's playoffs -- the Bison's schedule was too weak. But why should incompetence be rewarded?

Had Northern Iowa played Pittsburgh competitively, there could be no argument for the Panthers being ranked so highly. But a 49-point loss? Eleven guys off the street couldn't have done much worse.

As for Jackson State being dropped from the rankings, it's a virtual certainty that the selection committee will say they looked at who the Tigers played. OK, Prairie View isn't a power, and hasn't been since the '60s, and last year, Tennessee State didn't have the squad everyone is accustomed to seeing.

But, didn't Jackson State dominate Prairie View the same as Northern Iowa dominated Morgan State? At last check, Morgan State wasn't knocking 'em dead either, and hasn't for quite a while.

Isn't a 1-0-1 record better than 1-1?

Even to a person of average intelligence, it would seem so. Perhaps what we're dealing with on the I-AA selection committee is a group of people who don't possess average intelligence.

That's what their track record indicates.

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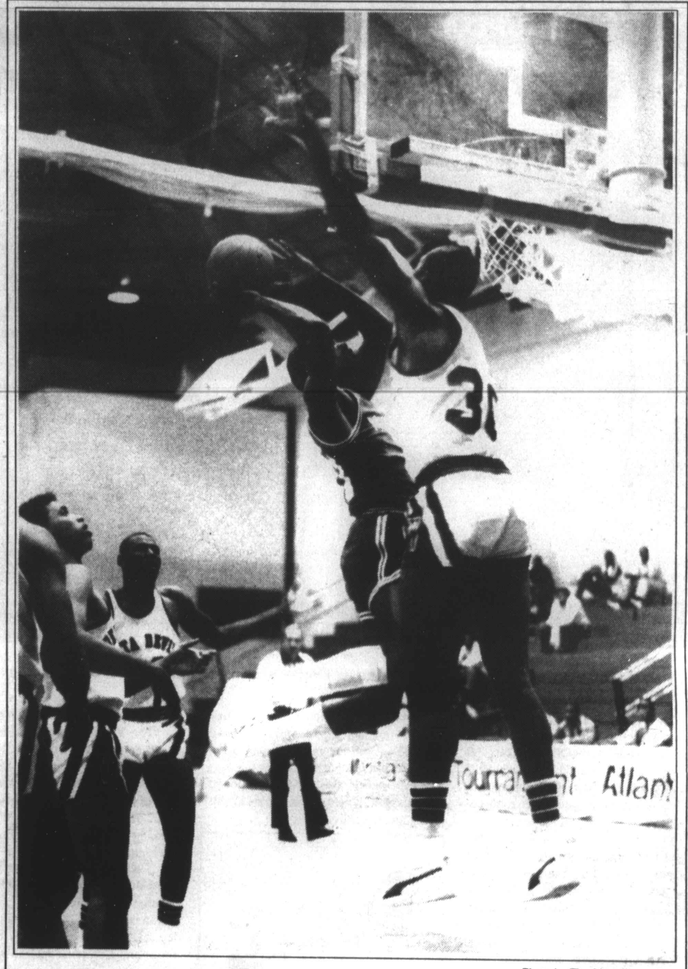

Photo by The Magnificent Eye

Get Ready for Hoops

Roundball action is just around the corner. Next month, BCSR's basketball issue comes out with the latest reports on what the upcoming black college basketball season is likely to produce.

Reader's Write

The sole sports connection

Dear Sir:

I thoroughly enjoyed reading your newspaper (especially the August issue).

I am a black college graduate from Norfolk State. This paper is my only black college sports connection other than BET Sports. I liked the football edition with the team write-ups, college football schedules and live BET game schedule.

I would like to see the same done for basketball and even some information on each team's newest recruits.

Keep up the good work and thanks a lot.

John S. Niblett Jr.
Martinsville, Va.