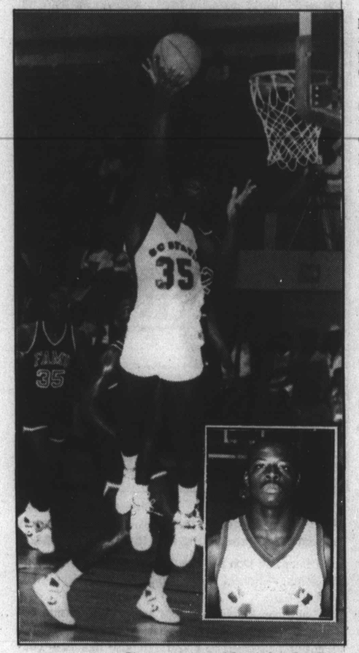
MEAC HOOPS

South Carolina State is the team to beat

Coach Cy Alexander has worked wonders for **SOUTH CAROLINA STATE** roundball fortunes. Last season the Bulldogs were 16-13, 10-6, their first winning campaign in nine years.

This season, conference observers are picking the Dogs to win it all. They return three of five starters from last year and have a 7-foot center who is steadily improving. All-



Photos courtesy of South Carolina State

Rodney Mack's ability to score and rebound makes South Carolina State a legitimate contender for the league title.

MEAC forward Rodney Mack is the top Dog who scores and rebounds consistently (16.2 ppg, 13.3 rpg). Mack, 6-8, finished second in 1-AA rebounding last season.

But Mack isn't the whole ball of wax. Steven Mazyck mans the other forward slot (10. 3 ppg, 5.9 rpg) and Darrell Gilmore will quarterback State's offense as the point guard. Gilmore was the MEAC's top assist man last season (6.9 per game). He also scored 15.3 points a contest.

How much better the Dogs get will depend a lot on how 7-0 George Paulk develops as a pivotman. In a reserve role last year, he led the league in blocked shots (27). He didn't score much, but did pull down five boards a game. The general feeling on Paulk is that as he gets betters, SC State will be that much tougher to handle.

The Bulldogs are loaded at the guard positions. Three transfers are expected to contribute and two of them may start. Eric Jeter, 6-1, and Arthur Caldwell, 6-5, can play both guard slots. Ricky Byrd can look to see some minutes at point guard.

The front line should be bolstered with the addition of rookies Travis Williams, Chris Felix, and Rodney Moore.

FLORIDA A & M is coming off of their best showing in seven years under the direction of coach Willie Booker. The Rattlers (22-8, 11-5) finished second in the league last season and has the nucleus back from a team that led the nation in steals last year (13.2 a game).

Terry Giles, a 5-9 junior guard who averaged 11.8 points and over five assists per game, returns at point guard. Also returning is 6-4 forward Derrick Byrd, who shot 57 percent from the field last year, a club high. Derrek Webster, 6-6 will see action at one forward spot and in the pivot.

FAMU is likely to soar to unexpected heights if redshirt swingman Leonard King can find the form he had before he was felled by a knee injury last season. Two years ago, the 6-4 King led the Rattlers in scoring and rebounding (17.9 ppg, 5.6 rpg).

The word around the Tallahassee campus is that Booker's current recruits have as much talent and size as any recruiting class at FAMU. They've landed ample help at the guard slot with Reggie Kinnion, Reginald Finney and Keith Herring. Yassef Shaw and Shane Wright should give the Rattlers depth at forward.

Coach Don Corbett and his **NORTH CAROLINA A & T** Aggies have ruled the conference with an iron hand, having appeared in seven straight NCAA post-season tournaments. The feeling around the conference is that the Aggies (26-3, 16-0) won't successfully defend their conference crown this time season.

A & T has lost three starters and a key reserve from last year's team. But they do have 6-6 forward Carlton Becton, 6-5 shooting guard Corvin Davis, and 6-0 lead guard Glenn Taggert to rely on.

Becton (14.5 ppg) is the sharpshooter who's very comfortable when he's shooting three-pointers. Last season he made 70 from long distance, for a shooting percentage of .467. Davis added 12.2 ppg and Taggert got a lot of valuable playing time at point guard behind the now departed Thomas "Ice" Griffis.

In order for A & T to repeat as champs, they'll need quality minutes from their front line where they have decent size. Tyrone Brown (6-8) and Kevin Mumford (6-6) could prove to be extremely valuable while 6-8 freshman center Thinel Bishop adjusts to the college game early in the season. Senior Lloyd King and Travis McRae provide leadership with their experience. Rookies Winston Williams and Bobby Moore are being counted on to help out in the backcourt.

The perimeter game is the lifeline for **COPPIN STATE.** They have six people who are better than average three-point marksmen. Guard-forward Phil Booth was the league's top scorer last season (20 ppg).

Booth, a junior, was the sixth man in 87-88 and will likely be cast in that same role this time around, primarily because of his explosive scoring off the bench. Head coach Ron Mitchell has a solid group coming back besides Booth. Larry McColloum, a burly 6-7, 260 lbs. pivotman and Derrick Orr, a sophomore swingman, both made the league's all-rookie team last year. McColloum pulled down nearly six boards a game and Orr scored at a 16.7 ppg clip.

The Eagles (13-14, 8-7) are relatively young this year. Forward Dwayne Nelson is the only starting senior. Coppin expects to get additional help from freshman point guard Larry Yarbray, JUCO transfer Reggie Isaac, and newcomer Larry Stewart. Otto Borbour (11.5 ppg) will share time with Orr at the shooting guard spot.

Coppin loves to run and gun. But how well they do will depend on their rebounding and how much their inside offensive game improves. It's difficult for a team to run the break when they don't get the rebounds.

With just one starter coming back, it looks like a rebuilding year for coach A.B. Williamson and his **HOWARD UNIVERSITY** Bison.

Tyrone Powell, a 6-8 senior pivotman is the lone starter coming back from last year's 16-13, 9-7 squad. He'll need help on the frontline to replace forwards John and Howard Spencer. Coach Williamson will also have to fill the lead guard slot due to the departure of George Hamilton. Mike Rollins and Charles Smalley appear to be the two that will handle the guard duties.

Other key players for Howard include Milton Bynum, Guy Owens, Jack Smith, and Jeff Holloman. Freshmen Nykee McCoy and Kelsey Sturdivant are expected to help the Bison solidify their frontcourt.

If **MORGAN STATE** can find able replacements at both guard positions, they could be the surprise team of the conference this season.

Troy Brown and Randy Hampton are gone. Brown averaged 17.3 ppg a game for the Bears and was the league's top three-point shooter. James McCoy and Ural Hogans are the likely choices to replace last season's guard tandem. McCoy averaged 10.7 points and 4.1 assists per game and Hogans scored 10.7 ppg before being injured.

Doing the work on the boards will be a key to success for coach Nathaniel Frazier's team (13-17, 7-8). The threesome of Raylon Adams, 6-8 center, Damone Williams, 6-7 small forward, and Marcus Sheffield, 6-8 power forward, should provide the Bears with more than adequate play inside the paint. Williams averaged 9.2 points and 5.3 boards an outing, while Sheffield averaged 8.2 ppg, 7 rpg.

Top newcomers include forward Charles Soloman and guards Jason Rhodes and Travis McCoy.

If Morgan State is to make a move into the conference's upper echelon, they will have do tighten up defensively. Last season they gave up nearly as many points as they scored.

Steve Williams is hoping that his **MARYLAND-EASTERN SHORE** team is ready to begin a winning tradition in his third year as head coach. The Hawks had a rough season last year, finishing at 7-21, 5-11. In the league stats, they allowed the most points per game (84.5) and were last in team field goal percentage (42.8 percent).

There is reason for optimism, however. Three starters are back and there appears to be enough experience around to finally enable this team to reach respectability.

The top player is 6-3 sophomore guard Keith Williams, a 16.7 points a game scorer. In addition, Williams was named to the league's All-Rookie team and was ranked among the league leaders in several offensive categories. Terance Barge and Harold Lane are the other two players joining Williams in the starting lineup. Barge averaged 9.2 ppg and Lane pulled down a little over five boards per contest.

Mike Kirkland, a 6-7 forward/center adds experience at the four and five spots. As a reserve last season, he averaged nearly six rebounds per contest. Kirkland will be pushed by Lawrence Stokes for the starting job in the pivot. Sean Salisbury is the leading candidate for the point guard slot, while Sherwin Turner, Leroy Crippen and Demetrius Jones are being counted on add stability to the frontcourt.

BETHUNE-COOKMAN (6-21, 4-12) will depend on its controlled offense and clawing defense to derail opponents this season. Coach Cy McClairen's team did a credible job defensively last season, but they were the conference's least productive squad when it came to scoring points (64.3 ppg).

Timothy Jones, 6-6 forward, is expected to handle the scoring load for the Wildcats. He averaged nine points and

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CIAA HOOPS

It's Union in the North, Central in the South

Perhaps there won't much change in the conference pecking order this basketball season. In the CIAA North, Virginia Union is expected to reign supreme, while North Carolina Central is the favorite in the Southern Division.

In the North, **VIRGINIA UNION** enters the season with four starters returning. The Panthers, 25-6, 17-2, have Terry Davis, the conference player of the year, along with A.J. English who starred on the U.S. Jones Cup team in China this past summer.

VIRGINIA STATE, can't be counted out though. The Trojans won the conference tournament last spring and upset Union in the semis. VSU finished at 23-10, 12-7 and played their best ball at the right time of year. Chris Holloway, CIAA tournament MVP, is back, so the Trojans should be right in the middle of the chase for the crown.

Losing to Virginia State in the tournament finals was nothing to be ashamed of. That's why **NORFOLK STATE** (23-8, 15-4) could loom as the darkhorse of the North. The Spartans lost Lee Johnson, a 6-9 center drafted by the Detroit Pistons. However, they have all-tournament performer James Walker plus Jerome Coles and Anthony Reid.

HAMPTON should finish somewhere in the middle of the pack. The Pirates were 13-13, 10-9 last season. Stacy Clark and Peltre Williams are being counted on to help HU weave its way to the top of the standings.

The rest of the division appears to be going through rebuilding stages. **ELIZABETH CITY STATE** (10-17, 8-11) looks for Ernie Griffin to have a productive season. He will need help from Melvin Satchell, James Eaton, Reginald Joe, and Darryl Riddick.

The Bulldogs of **BOWIE STATE** would like to duplicate the success that their football teams has had. But it's not likely to happen this season after they ended last season at 4-24, 3-16. Mike Sinclair, an all-conference guard, will do his part. Brian Forbes, a tight end on the football team, will bring a winning attitude with him and perhaps it will rub off on the school's roundball program. Kevin Thejeto is expected to be a major contributor.

ST. PAUL'S (11-17, 5-14) will face an uphill climb this time around. They have no starters coming back. Cletus Dalton is the only experienced player on the roster. So new head coach Harry Bradley may be in for some rough going in his first season. Bradley, however, is no stranger to winning. He as an assistant at Virginia State last year.

In the South, it's very difficult not to pick **NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL.** Last season, the Eagles were one of the best teams in Division II at 26-3,18-1. But they were ousted from the conference tournament early by Norfolk State. NCCU has four starters back. Derrick Leak and Fred Bennett made the all-tourney team and they'll get ample help from Eric Jackson and Antoine Sifford.

WINSTON-SALEM STATE (16-12, 11-8) will be looking for a new starting lineup. If the Rams are to contend, Mike Lesane will have to be the man get WSSU over the hump. **JOHNSON C. SMITH** is pretty much in the same situation. Walter Hurd is the lone starter returning. The Golden Bulls were 14-14, 9-10 last season.

ST. AUGUSTINE'S gave Virginia State a run for the money during the conference tournament, losing 89-86 in the quarterfinals to the eventual champs. The Falcons (14-10, 17-2) have Lashun McDaniel,Lantham Alleyne and Chuan Shell returning. **SHAW UNIVERSITY** (5-19, 4-15) will consistent productivity from pre-season all-conference pick Anthony King if they are to make a dent in the standings. Titus Allen, Michael Thompson, Derrick McCarter and Dexter Price are expected to compliment King.

FAYETTEVILLE STATE has a new coach this season -- Raymond McDougald. Darrell Harris, Tyrone Boger, and Kenneth Sumblin are the guys that McDougald will have to rely on. The Broncos were 8-18, 7-12 last season.

LIVINGSTONE COLLEGE also has a new coach -- Ottis Felds. Felds will have his work cut out for him. The Bears finished the season at 3-22, 2-17. Sylvester Bowen is the top returnee along with Liberians Abu Williams and Robert Walker.

-Zack Mullins

MEAC Roundball

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eight rebounds a game. James Turner (12.3 ppg) will man the other forward position. Julious Grant and James McKinney will most likely be the starting guards. Eric Dooling, an all-rookie guard along with freshman Chris Carter will push for playing time in the backcourt.

The Hornets of **DELAWARE STATE** will have to determine which way is up after going through a disastrous campaign last season when they finished 3-25, 1-15.

Jeff Jones, formerly of Fayetteville State, is the new head coach. He's known as a top notch recruiter and he'll need all of that ability to turn Del State's program around.

Heading the list of returnees this season is Paul Newman, 6-4 forward (17.5 ppg, 7.2 rpg), a conference all-rookie selection last season. Tom Davis, 6-5, is the other forward (18.1 ppg, 10.7 rpg) and James Clarke, 6-4 guard (12.2 ppg, 8.4 rpg), will man one of the guard positions.

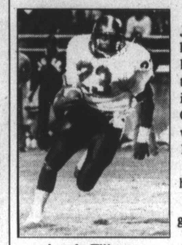
The Hornets expect a lot of good things from transfer Darren Logan, 6-6 forward, who transferred from Alvin Community College (Tex.). Logan scored 16 points and pulled down 11 rebounds per game last year.

-Frank Sumpter

NOTES ... QUOTES ... AND TALES OF WOE

By

ROSCOE NANCE



Lewis Tillman

Senior running back Lewis Tillman has broken the **JACKSON STATE** single season rushing record formerly held by Walter Payton. Tillman erased the NFL's all- time leading rusher in grand style, gaining 224 yards and scoring the winning touchdown in a 24-17 victory against Grambling in a show-down for first place in the Southwestern Athletic Conference. That performance gave Tillman 3,597 yards with three games remaining. Payton gained 3,563 from 1971-74. .....

Trinity College (Ill.) made **LESLIE FRAZIER** an offer he couldn't refuse.

That's why the former Chicago Bear cornerback - a graduate of Alcorn State - is a head football coach at age 28.

Trinity, a Division III school, is starting football for the first time in its 90-year history. Frazier - one who loves challenges - liked the idea of building a program from the ground up.

"I'm not picking up some body else's pieces," said Frazier, whose career ended prematurely because of a knee injury in Super Bowl XX. "I'm orchestrating everything myself."

The Trojans, members of the Northern Illinois Intercollegiate Conference, won't play their first game until next season. But Frazier has 30 athletes on campus practicing every day this fall. He expects the Trojans to be competitive in four years.

"Anytime you start from scratch, you take your time," said Frazier. "The advantage we'll have (next season) is we'll have some leadership. We won't be all freshman like people think."

Frazier acknowledges that football at the Division III level is different from what he was accustomed to in the NFL and at Alcorn State. There is not as much pressure to win and football is a game, not a big money business.

Frazier says the difference is not necessarily bad.

"The guys who play here will play for a different reason," he said. "They have the desire to be the best they can be every time they walk on the field.

"That makes my job easier. It gives you the opportunity to coach coachable young men. We're talking two different kinds of football players." .....

MORRIS BROWN is the latest school to lose an athlete to ineligibility.

The Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference declared quarterback Alij Tapp ineligible and ruled that the Wolverines, 5-1 after six games, would have to forfeit their five victories. The Wolverines had been tied with Albany State for first place in the SIAC.

Before this incident Tapp was No. 1 in passing and total offense. He had 1,765 total yards and 1,659 passing yards and threw eight TD passes. He had averaged over 207 passing yards per game.

School officials would not say why Tapp was ineligible. The *Atlanta Constitution* reported Tapp failed to meet NCAA residency requirements. He transferred to Morris Brown from Southern University this school term.

According to a statement released by the SIAC, Tapp was ruled ineligible because he failed to sit out one academic year, two semesters, or three quarters as mandated by conference and NCAA requirements. .....

Four of eight **ALCORN STATE** football players declared academically ineligible a day before the Braves' season opener have regained their eligibility. Coach Theo Danzy said the school reevaluated the transcripts of defensive backs Michael Andrews and Calvin Green, defensive tackle Roy Coleman and fullback Lee Harrison. The NCAA is now in agreement that the athletes were making satisfactory progress toward their degrees. .....