

# It's Time To Put Money Into Football Program

Staff Report

Congratulations to Coach Kenny Phillips and the Fayetteville State University football team. They finished with the school's first winning season and years and brought respectability back to a program that was going nowhere fast. They finished with a 6-4 record and for the first time in years, FSU was a legitimate contender for the Central Intercollegiate Athletic title.

After weeks on the gridiron Phillips and his warriors deserve a much needed break. They have proven to the rest of the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association that they are a force to be reckoned with in the future. Looking at this year's roster of young players, it's clear that this is no flash-in-the-pan team. Phillips has the team moving forward and that's great.

Phillips has done what he has been charged to do, now it's time for the university to join Phillips in his program-building efforts.

First and foremost, the university should do whatever it takes to keep Phillips on the job. It's a known fact that coaches at FSU come and go like game show contestants, so to ensure the future of FSU football, it is imperative that there is some stability.

Players like playing for coaches and programs that are proven winners. Phillips has proven himself in just two years on the job. Although last season's record was not indicative of Phillips' capabilities, he did something no other football coach has been able to do for a long, long time — instill confidence in his young players. He did that by hiring a supporting staff who

## Intramural Sports A Hit

By Cordny Gilchrist  
Staff Writer

Intramural sports are designed for FSU students to display their talent and good sportsmanship in flag football, basketball, volleyball, soccer, and softball. Flag Football, which consisted of a group of tough, dedicated males, had about seven teams that competed against each other from October 1 through November 12. Out of all of the teams, the Heavy Hitters were the champs of the overall season with a score of 6-0. Volleyball games are held every Wednesday at 6:00 pm in the Lilly Gymnasium. The season is not over, so it isn't too late to attend. Men and women basketball is having registration through Friday December 14. The registration forms can be picked up from dorm RA's, the student center, or Room 206 in the Lilly Gym. The confirmation of the teams will be made on Monday, December 17, 2001. The first game will begin January 14, 2002. For more information Contact Tim Heath, Director of Intramural Sports, Room 206 Lilly Gym or call 672-1188.



The FSU Football Team had one of its best seasons ever.

Photo by Kantrell Shelton

believed in his philosophy or hard work, and he let his players know from the first day of practice that he would not settle for mediocrity.

Prior to Phillips' arrival, FSU's football players' moral was almost shattered beyond repair. Double digit losses were as predictable as fried chicken on Sundays in the university cafeteria. Students went to the game to socialize and watch the marching bands instead of rooting on their team.

This year was completely different. For the first time in a long time, students, alumni, faculty and staff game out in big numbers to cheer on their gridiron gladiators.

Credit, without a doubt, goes to Phillips. Now it's time for the university to pay up. Not only should they reward him for what he has done, but his players need a pat-on-the-back as well.

At one point coaches at FSU operated on a year-to-year basis. It's not know if that practice is still in operation, but if it is, it

should be tossed out the window, especially when it comes to Phillips. Other than actually bringing a CIAA title to FSU, what more proof does FSU need in order to determine if Phillips is the right man for the job or not?

Let's be realistic, Phillips is making himself a commodity in coaching. Just like Ricky Duckett who left FSU for Winston-Salem State and eventually the University of South Carolina. Phillips will soon be courted by other high-profile football teams to rebuild their programs. FSU doesn't need to wait until someone comes knocking on Phillips' door to realize the caliber of coach they have. That may be too late. They need to realize it now and reward him for what he has done.

Here is what the Broncos' Voice proposes to Athletic Director William Carver. If the university still offers one-year contracts to its coaches, it's time to rethink that issue. Give Phillips what he rightfully deserves. Give

the man a contract that not only guarantees job security, but will keep vultures from other schools hovering overhead for his services. Give him the opportunity to build the football program into one similar to rival Winston-Salem State. It will be money well-spent.

Secondly, it's time to reward Phillips' players with facilities of which they can be proud. Luther "Nick" Jeralds Stadium is an eyesore. Recruiting is seriously hindered by the lack of a quality playing field. Phillips and his players have to be embarrassed when recruits visit and take a tour. They can only show recruits the weight room for so long before they eventually will want to see the football stadium.

Yes, renovating Jeralds Stadium is a big task, but it's one that must be undertaken to ensure the longevity of the football program. Unfortunately, Fayetteville doesn't enjoy the luxury of other metro cities. It doesn't have a municipal or

county stadium in which to play big football games. Winston-Salem has Bowman-Gray. NCCU has it's own stadium in addition to Durham County Stadium. Johnson C. Smith has Memorial Stadium and recently played a game against NCCU in Panther Stadium. FSU has nothing except Jeralds. Big games with rival WSSU and homecoming make attending almost unbearable. Crowds are huge. People are walking shoulder-to-shoulder. Finding a place to sit is almost impossible. Cheerleaders find themselves having to fight off crowds just to do a routine.

It's time for a change, and what better time than now.

The football team is on the rise. We have a quality coach who knows what it takes to win, but most importantly, we have a team whose confidence is riding high.

The talk about rebuilding is over. It's time to create a dynasty.

## Men's, Women's Teams Predicted To Fare Well

Don't think because the Fayetteville State women's basketball team lost key players from its 2001 CIAA title team it is not thinking about repeating or getting another title in a year or two.

The Broncos lost their top defensive player and scorer in Shaunici Morgan. Morgan was the MVP of the CIAA tournament as well. They also lost versatile forward Marion Moore, reserve center Stephanie Barksdale and 3-point shooter Michelle Dent.

It's a lot to replace, so coach Eric Tucker went and found replacements. CIAA coaches believe that, too, because they picked the Broncos to finish second in

the West at the CIAA media luncheon in Raleigh on Thursday. N.C. Central is the favorite in the West. Virginia State was selected to win the East.

"Talent-wise, I think we're OK," Tucker said. "I don't see any glaring weaknesses except our post play. We don't have that much depth in the post position. Last year nobody was tall, but we had enough of them. But we've got some new talent. We're just going to have to stay healthy at the end because we are not as deep."

Winston-Salem State men's team returns five starters and three key reserves from a team that went 25-5 last season, yet the CIAA coaches picked the

Fayetteville State men's basketball team to win the West Division.

The Rams (13-3 CIAA, 8-2 West) also advanced to the second round of the NCAA tournament and could be one of the best Division II schools in the country.

But the Broncos' late-season surge, including its runner-up finish in the CIAA tournament, left a more lasting impression on the voters. The Broncos edged out the Rams as the No. 1 team in the West, while Shaw University was picked to win the East Division at the CIAA media day in Raleigh on Thursday.

"It's surprising on one hand and then on the other hand it's not surprising," said FSU

basketball coach Mike Bernard about his team's first-place selection. "We had a great showing in the tournament. Because of the way we played in that tournament and with a lot of people back, some people assumed we would be on the top. I welcome the opportunity and the challenge."

Urban Sports & Entertainment Group also released its TV schedule. The FSU-WSSU game will be televised Saturday, Feb. 16 at Capel Arena.

The Broncos beat WSSU in the CIAA semifinals in February.

Story courtesy of The Fayetteville Observer