



Sports



Basketball In the Black Colleges

A Historical Chronology

1891 - 1980

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Part III Period IV, 1950-1960

1950-1954

Time has brought changes. On occasion it has been painfully slow, at other times surprising and almost breathtaking.

It was not until 1950 that black athletes were signed and admitted to the playing court of the NBA. The first two, Harold Hunter of North Carolina College and Earl Lloyd of West Virginia State, were from the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association. Both signed April 6, 1950.

A week later, the Boston Celtics signed Charles "Chuck" Cooper of Duquesne University who previously attended West Virginia State. Shortly after, Bob Wilson, also of West Virginia State, was signed by the then Milwaukee Hawks. Nathaniel "Sweetwater" Clifton of Xavier University of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, followed suit when he inked a contract with the New York Knicks.

Through professional sports, not in educational institutions, black basketball players received recognition that eventually changed the makeup of most teams in this country.

Despite the significant break-through, the question of the 40's had not been answered. Then it was, when white athletes from black colleges and universities in basketball be given an opportunity to play for a national championship which is not segregated?

This is the inside story of how this question was finally resolved, from personal knowledge.

"In 1950, three coaches from the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association who had attended many basketball clinics and conferences, went to New York City for the Annual Convention of the National Association of Basketball Coaches of the USA.

The coaches were Eddie Jackson, Howard University; Harry R. "Big Jeff" Jefferson, Virginia State College; and this writer, then a coach at North Carolina College, Durham.

It was during the convention that the trio decided to ask John Lawther of Penn. State, 1950 president of NABC, to place this question before the Executive Committee:

"Will the Executive Committee of NABC go on record to support the petition from black colleges that they be given an opportunity to play for the Collegiate National Championship?" John Lawther agreed eagerly to take our request to his committee.

He returned soon from the executive group's meeting to our small group waiting in the upper lobby of the Hotel New Yorker. He told us, "Our committee has approved your petition unanimously. We feel that such a step is long overdue and your schools must be included if basketball in America is to be truly American."

The next step was to advise the black colleges of this very significant support attitude, then make an official request to the two National Collegiate Championship-sponsoring organizations, the National Collegiate Athletic Association and the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.

With this in mind, a supporting organization was needed to create a National Black College solidarity on objectives and methods. Quickly, the powerful, then unpublished, National Steering Committee was officially formed, with Harry Jefferson, president, and Mack Greene of Central State of Ohio, executive secretary. A most able, aggressive, articulate combination.

Mack Greene took the message of "WE WANT IN!" to innumerable meetings of both NAIA and NCAA for two years, reporting regularly to NASC meetings during that time.

Finally, two answers were returned, NCAA said "NO". They declared that they had no championship apparatus which would accommodate Negro Colleges. In fact, they argued that they had no way to include any "small" colleges at all. They arbitrarily relegated all black schools to "small college" status.

Furthermore, in the statements answering the request, NCAA voiced the fear that "fans may not accept or appreciate the kind of game you play" and "your coaches may not be competent enough."

NAIA under the leadership and guidance of A.O. Duer, said YES! "We will admit one team to our 32-team bracket in 1953 if you can determine which team that will be."

We were elated, despite the "reservation clause." NASC continued its policy of organizing black colleges into a large unified group determined to achieve equality. This had to be done since, practically speaking, one district of the NAIA's 32-team bracket was all black and contained all NASC schools, along with others who were not members.

Although the NASC was conceived and organized to "create opportunities in athletics for the student-athletes in black colleges, the primary goal was to get a black team into the NAIA national championships.

All black colleges were placed into District 29. The writer and others had the responsibility of organizing District 29 for the purpose of finding the one team to go to Kansas City, the perennial site of the tournament since its inception in 1937.

What was equal to a National Negro College Basketball Championship was agreed upon as the structure for filling the NAIA berth.

The District 29 Tournament was designed to include the champion and/or runner-up of the four major black conferences depending on availability, economics, conference size and team record:

- THE BRACKET**
1. 2. Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA teams are split into two divisions)
 3. Southern Inter-Collegiate Athletic Association
 4. Southwestern Athletic Conference
 5. Midwest Athletic Conference (which at that time included Jackson State, Grambling, Lincoln University, Central State, Kentucky State, Tennessee State and Texas Southern University)
 6. Eastern Inter-Collegiate Athletic Conference
 7. Gulf Coast Athletic Conference
 8. Independents rated best by the Dickinson Rating System.

Next week: Activation"

Miller Awards Player of Game

MILWAUKEE, WIS.—Miller High Life has announced it will sponsor the "Player of the Game Award" for nationally televised (CBS) National Basketball Association games during the 1981 season.

At present, 40 games are scheduled to be televised. After each of these contests, a \$1,000 check will be given by Miller High Life to the Special Olympics organization in the name of the player selected. The Special Olympics in the NBA Players Association charity for 1981.

"We are extremely pleased to join with the

NBA and CBS in presenting the "Miller High Life Player of the Game Award" said Doug Rogers, Brand Manager for Miller High Life. "In presenting the award, we will be able to help the Special Olympics organization and also recognize some of the best basketball players in the world."

Two special awards will also be made at on-air presentations during halftime on the first four championship games. The awards winners for "Coach of the Year" and "Player of the Year" will be selected by the NBA prior to the Championship series.

Eagles Fall For Second Time To St. Augustines

St. Augustine's had five players in double figures as the Falcons raced by North Carolina Central 96-84 in a CIAA contest in McDougald Gym. The Falcons are now 6-3 in the CIAA, 10-5 overall. Central, losing its second straight CIAA contest, fell to 5-4, 7-7.

The Eagles jumped out and took a short-lived 8-4 lead on two baskets each by freshmen Duane Griffin and Charles Murphy. However, the Falcons rallied to tie the count at 12-all at 14:30 on a basket by Gary Taylor.

John Bailey broke the tie with an offensive rebound and the Falcons were off to the races building up a 39-22 lead with nearly five minutes left in the half. The Falcons upped the count to 53-34 at halftime behind 15 first half points by Taylor and 11 by Bailey. Warren Brown added 10 for the Falcons. John Bishop and Charles Murphy added 10 apiece for the Eagles.

The Falcons built an 88-66 lead with six minutes left in the game.

Taylor and Bailey paced the Falcons with 22 and 21 points respectively. Brown had 17, Reggie McFarland, 14 and Donald Carroll, 12. Bailey also led the Falcons with 12 rebounds.

Donald Sinclair took game scoring honors with 29 points, 21 in the second half. Bishop added 26 and Murphy 11 and 10 rebounds. Junior David B-



Eyes On Goal

Driving to the basket is Boston's guard Gerald Henderson (No. 43) as Detroit's guard Larry Drew (No. 22) tries to say in the play.

nion led the Eagles with 12 rebounds. He was also guilty of eight turnovers.

Hazel Plummer Bowling Scores

The Hazel B. Plummer Bowling League scores for January 26:
Ladies high game: 223-Bonnie Edwards, 216-Claudia Prince, 189-Roz Leslie.
Ladies high series: 561-Flo Robertson, 514-Del, 511-Roz Leslie and Phyllis Hainley.
Men's high game: 221, 210-Guster Lewis, 218, 213, 214-June Winston, 211, 206-Jimmy L. Harrington.
Men's high series: 624-June Winston, 585-Jimmy L. Harrington, 581-Guster Lewis.
Others: 500-Nancy Rowland, 548-Clyff Parker, 530-Howard Fitts, 516-Joseph Parker, 515-George Thorne, 511-Adolph Caviness, 510-T-Bird Robertson, 508-David Bue, 502-Jamin Paddy, 501-Jim Dyer.
Split Conversions: 3-7-10, George Thorne.
Team Scores: High Game-847 and High Series-2406, Lots of Luck Express. Four-game winners: Lots of Luck Express, J's & N.

NCCU Basketball

At McDougald Gym

Women

Jan. 30 UNC-Asheville
Jan. 31 Fay. State
Feb. 16 Eliz. City
Game time is 5:30 p.m.

Men

Jan. 31 Fay. State
(Doubleheader)
Feb. 10 Va. Union
Feb. 16 Eliz. City
(Doubleheader)
Game time is 7:30 p.m.

ADMISSION FOR DOUBLEHEADERS AND MEN'S GAME (At The Door)

Adults—\$4.00 (Non-Central) Students—\$2.00



Player Of The Year

Lester Hayes of the Oakland Raiders was named UPI's AFC Defensive Player of the Year. Hayes intercepted a league-high 13 passes in the regular season and added five more in the playoffs to help propel the Raiders into Super Bowl XV again.

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