

Black College Sports

Time passes faster for ex-Grambling star

By BARRY COOPER
Syndicated Columnist

The days pass more quickly now for Doug Williams. Less than two years ago, he was the starting quarterback for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers of the National Football League and in a most visible position.

The spotlight was on Williams not just because he played quarterback, but because he is black. Williams, who took Tampa Bay to the playoffs three out of the five years he played for the Bucs, was told to go take a hike when it was time to renew his contract.

Williams, who was grossly underpaid at \$150,000, asked for a raise to \$800,000, which was comparable to what other starting quarterbacks were making.

Tampa Bay said no way, and Williams wound up signing with the Oklahoma Outlaws of the United States Football League. He signed with the Outlaws for about \$600,000, which was Tam-

pa Bay's final offer.

Williams, however, had had enough. The bitter contract talks with the Bucs had frustrated him, and he decided that Tampa Bay was no longer in his future.

Recently, this column contacted Williams at his home in Baker, La., to ask him if he had any regrets about the move, and to inquire about his reaction to the resignation of Tampa Bay Coach John McKay.

It is clear that Williams feels little compassion for McKay.

"I can't tell you I am sitting here with tears in my eyes," Williams said when told of McKay's resignation. "I always felt that if Coach McKay had gone in to (owner) Hugh Culverhouse and said, 'Doug deserves it,' then my contract wouldn't have been any problem. Coach McKay and I were supposed to have been real tight, but it didn't work out that way."

Tampa Bay has not been to the playoffs since Williams departed.

Williams says that is no coincidence.

"They say right now that Tampa Bay has the best team in Tampa Bay history, talent-wise," Williams said. "So that means Doug Williams went to the playoffs three years out of five with less talent than they have right now. If I were still the quarterback there, I couldn't tell you they would not have been 2-14 last year or 3-7 right now. But it would have been a different ballgame."

It certainly is a different game for Williams right now. His USFL experience was almost brutal. Playing for a club that had a mediocre offensive line, Williams was pounded frequently. Things are looking up, though. The Outlaws have been merged with the Arizona Wranglers, who made it to the USFL championship game last summer.

"It's a good situation with the people Arizona has to play

with," Williams said. "It would be the best team I've been with."

Still, the future is not clear for Williams. Some people in the USFL say that Arizona, which already has established quarterbacks in Greg Landry and Alan Risher, will deal Williams to another USFL club. Williams, who played at Grambling, says he is not worried about that, though.

"I learned a long time ago," he said, "that if you are going to be in this business for any length of time, you are going to become a gypsy."



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Inside Stuff

Clemson, Virginia and Lefty

By DICK DEVENZIO
Syndicated Columnist

Clemson will be lucky to win two ACC games this year, Virginia will surprise people again, and I have no desire to say anything about Maryland -- I'll let Lefty Driesell speak for himself.

Rounding out my ACC previews, as the season begins, I don't think there is too much to say about Clemson. The Tigers lost to Marathon Oil, a team N.C. State beat by 40. So, for Clemson, the task for new Coach Cliff Ellis is to try to keep things fun and upbeat as he struggles through the year and tries to get some recruits he can win with in the future.

At Virginia, things are different. The Cavaliers are coming off a Final Four appearance, and they have a good starting lineup, featuring seniors Jim Miller and Tim Mullen, proven sophomores Tom Sheehy and Olden Polynice, and freshman point guard John Johnson. That's a talented lineup with plenty of experience and pretty fair speed and size. They won't be easy to beat at home.

Terry Holland claims the Cavaliers have a lot of question marks and, of course, he will

need to get some consistent bench help. But, generally, this is a tough team which should win most of its ACC home games.

I have a special respect for Terry Holland. I got to know him when he was recruiting me a long time ago for Davidson College. Several years ago, I wrote an article criticizing him for permitting slowdown games when he had Ralph Sampson and was in a position to force the action. We corresponded and talked at that time -- we never did agree -- but we have remained friends despite the philosophical differences.

I cannot say the same for Lefty Driesell, who was the head coach recruiting me at the same Davidson College where Terry Holland was assistant.

Last year I wrote a column about some things I saw at a Maryland practice, and I received an angry letter in return which did not respond to the points I made about the practice but which did give me a piece of Lefty's mind.

I wrote back saying I would love to be invited to College Park to be shown where I was wrong. Driesell claimed he and his staff teach basketball fundamentals "better than any other staff in the country." But I was not in-

vited there to witness this teaching. I did, however, get the following letter from Lefty at the end of last season -- in May:

Dear Dick:

I saw your negative article "Get 'em Next Year" and I just want to tell you one thing. Do not ever show your face in Cole Field House or near the University of Maryland. You are on a wild ego trip and I feel sorry for you.

I had an answer to your question about our Wake Forest game but then I decided that I did not want to get into a letter-writing confrontation with you.

That is all I have to say to you and, if I recall, our team finished second in the ACC regular season race this year and won the ACC championship, which is not bad in my opinion. All I do is try the best I can and I resent your remarks about me.

Consider this the end of our correspondence and friendship.

Sincerely,
Charles G. "Lefty" Driesell

If it is hard for me to understand how any intelligent individual could tell anyone not to show his face in a public building or near a

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