

The Sports Column

# The storm gathers over Proposition 48

By BARRY COOPER  
Syndicated Columnist

A very nasty war is about to break out in intercollegiate athletics -- a battle as intense as a Hearn-Hagler fight, as bitter as a hate group marching through a black neighborhood.

The issue is a piece of National Collegiate Athletic Association legislation called Proposition 48. Approved by the NCAA last summer and scheduled to take effect in August 1986, the measure would require incoming student-athletes to score at least 700 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test or the equivalent of 15 on the American College Test.

In addition, the athletes would be required to have at least a 2.0 high school grade-point average (on a 4.0 scale) in a specific number of college preparatory courses.

This is heavy-duty stuff.

Studies show that 56 percent of all black students fail to score 700 on the SAT, an exam which is culturally and racially biased.

With a 700 SAT score being the cutoff, it is likely that the adoption of Proposition 48 would deliver a severe blow to the number of black athletes who enter colleges each year.

All-black basketball teams such as the one at Georgetown would become a thing of the past. Blacks would no longer dominate that sport as they do now, nor would they hold the advantage on many college football teams.

Proposition 48 might well bring about reform in the classroom. Moreover, it most certainly would give more white kids a chance to play.

Such a likely outcome has not been lost on black educators, who have quickly labeled Proposition 48 as being cloaked in racism.

Dr. Jesse Stone, who will retire in September from his post as president of historically black Southern University, said it is easy to see the real purpose behind this legislation.

"Proposition 48 is not an academic rule in its entirety," he said. "The grade-point average part of it is an academic rule. The rest of it is just a smoke screen to make it appear that something was being done about academics when what they were doing was really trying to come up with a way to sweep blacks out of athletics."

The idea for Proposition 48 was formulated a few years ago and subsequently passed at last summer's NCAA convention in Dallas. However, black educators were not invited to participate in the decision-making process until it was time to cast the votes.

Now the momentum has shifted. The uproar from black legislators has been so loud that Proposition 48 likely will be altered before it takes effect.

Most officials think that the SAT requirement will be dropped. The outcome likely will be known June 20-21, when the NCAA officials gather in New Orleans for their annual convention.

Black educators will be ready.

"I think the black athlete was dominating athletics to the dissatisfaction of some people," Stone said. "By the same token, you see that this movement is not only spreading through athletics, but through the entire

academic structure, and the people being hurt the most are black. What these folks are trying to do is make it tougher for black kids to go to college."

Although Proposition 48 would knock many blacks out of college athletics, it is clear something must be done to raise the educational standards of student-athletes. Many coast through high school and then waste up to five years of college, all in the hope of earning a professional contract.

When that does not happen, we have more tragic cases of athletes who not only failed to earn their degrees but also failed to gather any meaningful skills while in college.

Stone recognizes that problem, but he said rules like Proposition 48 are no solution.

"I think that the university has an enhanced responsibility for that student who provides such great attention for the university and helps it earn thousands of dollars," Stone said. "We have got to work with these kids and see to it that they do get an education while they are out there helping the schools on the gridiron or basketball court."

Larger schools, which depend heavily on the black athlete, would not be the only ones hurt by Proposition 48. Historically black schools, whose squads are all-black, would be hard-pressed to find enough players who meet the standards.

It would appear that Proposition 48 may have arrived before its time. A 2.0 grade-point average and demonstrated success in college preparatory courses should be enough to earn admission to all but the most stringent colleges. And men like Dr. Stone

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## The Doggett legend

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Nassau, The Bahamas, in August.

• During basketball season -- Doggett plays point guard for the Panthers -- the 5-foot-2, 130-pounder hurt her jaw. It was feared broken, but proved only to be a severe bruise.

• At the start of the prep track season, it was discovered that Doggett had enlarged septa. This explained her discomfort in running the 800, her least favorite event. An operation caused her to miss nearly a month of the season.

• As the season wound down, she was complaining of pain in her calves. After an examination, her physician determined that she had compartment syndrome, in which the muscles stretch outwardly, almost to the point of becoming detached from the bone. For a hurdler, this is a most painful condition.

"Running on your toes hurts a lot," she says. "But when you land after clearing the hurdle, you're miserable."

Dudley Coach Lonnie Phifer instructed Doggett to run on grass whenever possible. Now her doctor believes she may simply have shin splints and has directed her to lessen her load this summer.

"I'm not gonna run any of the invitationals," says Doggett, who has been running all over the East Coast since she joined Charlie Brown's Pacesetters Track Club when she was in sixth grade. "I'll

just enter the TAC meets I have to run in to make the nationals."

The TAC Junior Olympics are scheduled for August in Seattle.

Doggett's entry into the track world came when she won a two-lap race around a softball field in sixth-grade Field Day activities.

Soon after that, she entered and won the 60-yard dash at an all-comers meet in the Greensboro Coliseum. That caught the eye of Brown, who signed her on as a Pacesetter. At that time, the team was led by Clara Hairston, the former East Forsyth standout who holds the state 100-meter hurdles record and now attends Auburn. Brown decided to put Doggett in the hurdles because he had so few hurdlers and too many sprinters.

"Sometimes a sprinter can't run the hurdles," Brown says. "But, in Pam's case, a good sprinter turned out to be a great hurdler."

Brown realized Doggett was special. She could do everything well, except run long distances. He decided to enter her in the heptathlon to capitalize on her talents.

"If Pam could participate in more than four events, Dudley would win the state title," Brown said last year at the sectionals. As it turned out, Doggett's winning four events -- two hurdles and two relays -- was enough for Dudley to win its first girls track title since 1970.

Two weeks ago, Doggett won

the hurdles and participated in the winning 4x400 relay team as the Panthers' roared to 26-point victory over High Point Andrews.

Next year, Dudley should have little trouble repeating and would become only the second girls' team to win three straight. Hoke County, propelled by long

jumper Kathy McMillan, won five in a row from 1972 through 1976.

The spoils of success include a daily supply of letters from colleges hoping to lure Doggett. The decision will be Pam's, according to her parents.

"Nobody can make that deci-

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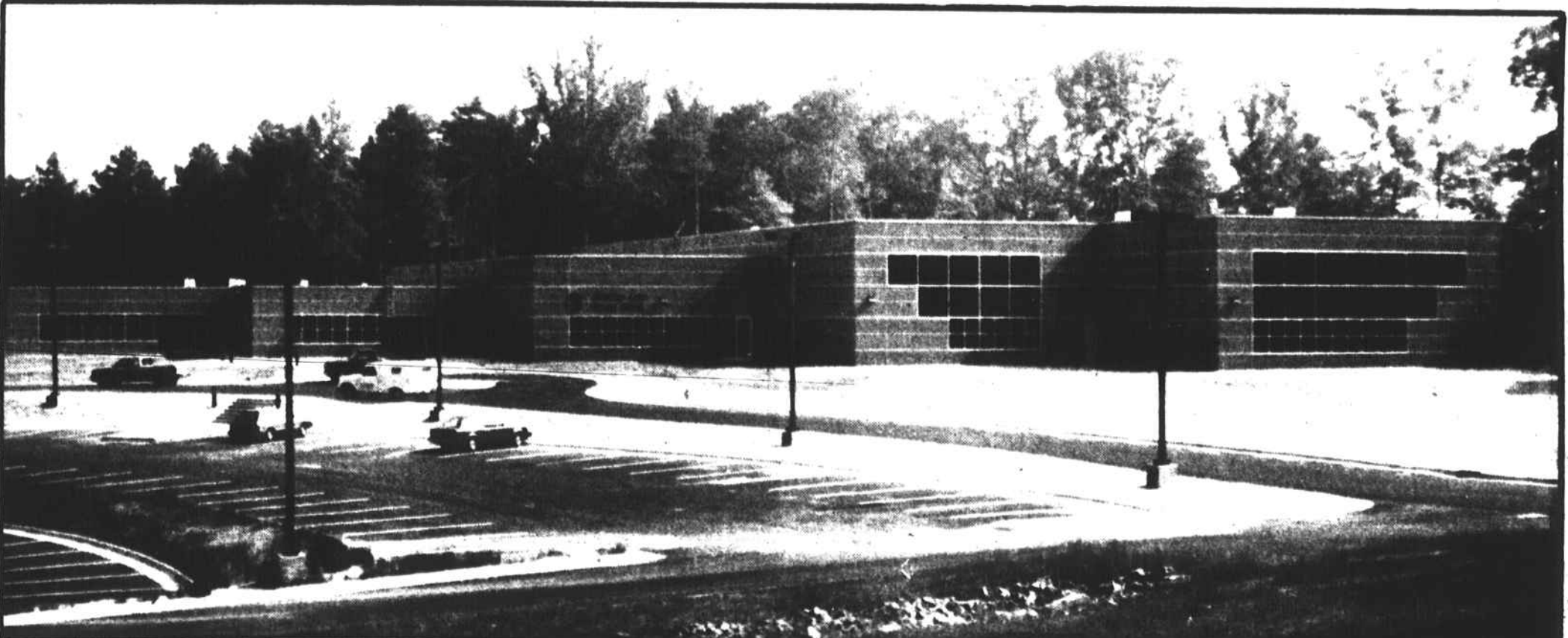
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