

# SPORTS REVIEW

JULY 1989

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## Adding white schools to Freedom Bowl destroys the concept

Lionel Day's efforts to resurrect the Freedom Bowl All-Star Classic football game are to be commended.

Even though the game has been far from successful financially during its five-year history, there is a definite need for it. Apparently, Day recognizes this.

### Bad idea

Day's intention to open the game up to athletes from other than predominantly black schools is off base. He calls it a "twist, not a change."

### What's the difference?

The idea behind the Freedom Bowl is to provide athletes at predominantly black schools who are not invited to the Blue-Gray, Senior Bowl, East-West Shrine, Hula and other all-star competitions a game in which they can strut their stuff for pro scouts.

To include athletes from predominantly white schools goes against that concept. Day says only about 10 to 15 athletes per 50-man squad would be invited. But if only one is invited, that is still a contradiction because that player will occupy one roster spot that would ordinarily go to an athlete from a predominantly black school.

Day's desire to open up the game obviously is based on dollars and cents. Theoretically, athletes from the Southwest and Big Eight Conferences playing in a game in Houston would be drawing cards because many are from that area.

What has to be taken into consideration is the caliber of athlete the game would be getting. If Day thinks he's going to get the All-Conference performer who is a likely first-round draft pick, he's sadly mistaken. That type of athlete is likely to choose an older, more prestigious all-star game to participate in. Or else he'll opt not to play in any all-star games, feeling he has nothing to prove.

By including athletes from other schools, Day -- who says he's merely attempting to enhance the product -- is reinforcing the stereotype that black college athletics are inferior.

If Day is indeed able to stage the Freedom Bowl, he will have done a great service for black colleges across the nation as well as the athletes who will participate. But as things now look, he will also have done a major disservice to those black college athletes who stand to benefit the most from this type of game.

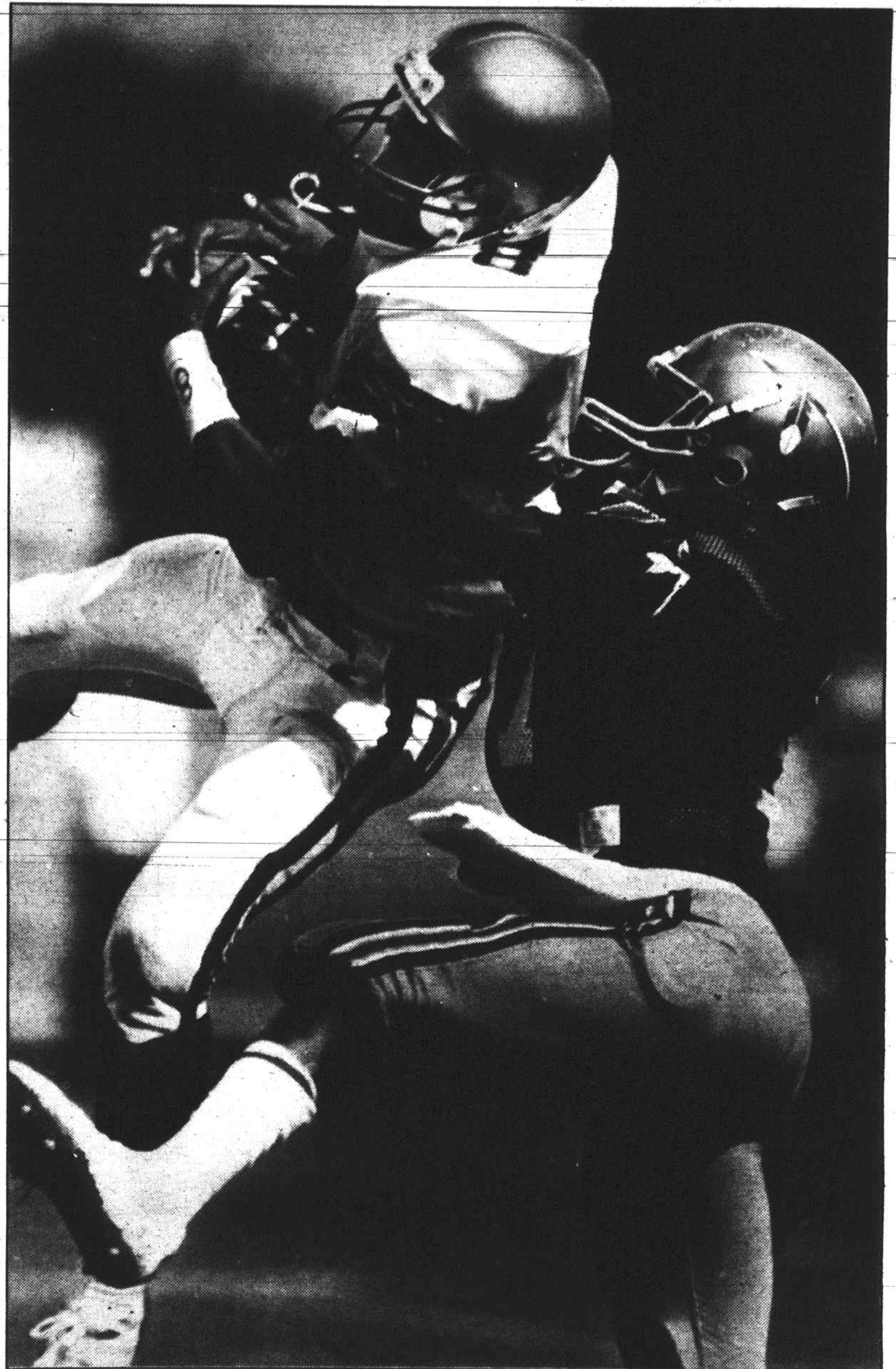


Photo by J.D. Schwalm

## Coming Next Month ...

**Black College Sports Review** presents its annual football issue in August. We'll provide insights and predictions on who should win and why. You'll get the latest information on teams in the SWAC, SIAC, MEAC, CIAA, plus the independents. In addition, this special issue will include a pull-out, pin-up poster that will contain the entire black college football schedule for '89. All of this and more in next month's issue of **BCSR**.

Black College Sports Review is published by Black Sports Inc., 617 N. Liberty St., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27102. Unsolicited manuscripts and photographs will not be returned. Inquiries should be addressed to Ernest H. Pitt, Publisher, Black College Sports Review, P.O. Box 3154, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27102.

PHOTO CREDITS: Cover photo -- TV & black college sports - by J.D. Schwalm; Freedom Bowl by BCSR Staff; The NBA's Rick Mahorn by Craig T. Greenlee; Coach Doug Porter by The Magnificent Eye.  
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