

## MEAC

# Coppin Stretches Streak, Wins MEAC

## ▲ Eagles Trounce Del. State 80-53

Some of the best-kept secrets in sports are black college sports teams. Coppin State is a perfect example. The Eagles won the recent Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference basketball championship to advance to the NCAA Division I Tournament.

Here's what some people may not know: The MEAC championship victory over Delaware State was the Eagles' 16th victory in a row. That's the longest winning streak in the nation.

As expected, Coppin State (22-8) raced through the MEAC tournament field at Norfolk, Va., and trounced Delaware State, 80-53. It wouldn't be farfetched to suggest that Coppin State may be the best black college team in the country. During the regular season, coach Fang Mitchell's Coppin State squad held MEAC opponents to 70 points or less in all but one game.

This season, Coppin State played its best basketball since winning the MEAC title in 1990. Stephen Stewart scored 24 points to spark the title victory over Delaware State, but through most of the season Coppin State excelled without having anyone player carry the club.

Stewart played fine, all-around basketball all season. Kyle Locke has some big games, and Tariq Saunders provide to be one of the MEAC's top 3-pointers. Mitchell brought all the talents together to form the best team in the conference.

"We try to get a lot of balanced scoring with our team," Mitchell said. "It's been success this far, so why mess with success?"

Coppin won the MEAC with tenacious defense and great 3-point shooting.

In one regular-season game, against Florida A&M, the Eagles unleashed a barrage of 3-pointers. "We average about seven 3-pointers a game" Mitchell aid. "If you give them to us, we'll make them."

Later, Coppin reeled off an 18-0 rally that included two 3-pointers by Marcus Robinson. The Eagles led, 75-46, with 2:43 left.

Coppin State, which held the Hornets (13-16) to 27 percent field goal shooting left no opportunity for them to pull off an upset. The Eagles were outstanding in every phase of the game, including free-throw shooting. Stewart was 5 of 5 from the line to lead four Coppin players with perfect free-throw shooting. The Eagles were 22 of 25. Here are the complete results of the MEAC Tournament:

### MEAC Tournament Results

#### First round:

Howard 86, Bethune-Cookman 72.

#### Quarter finals:

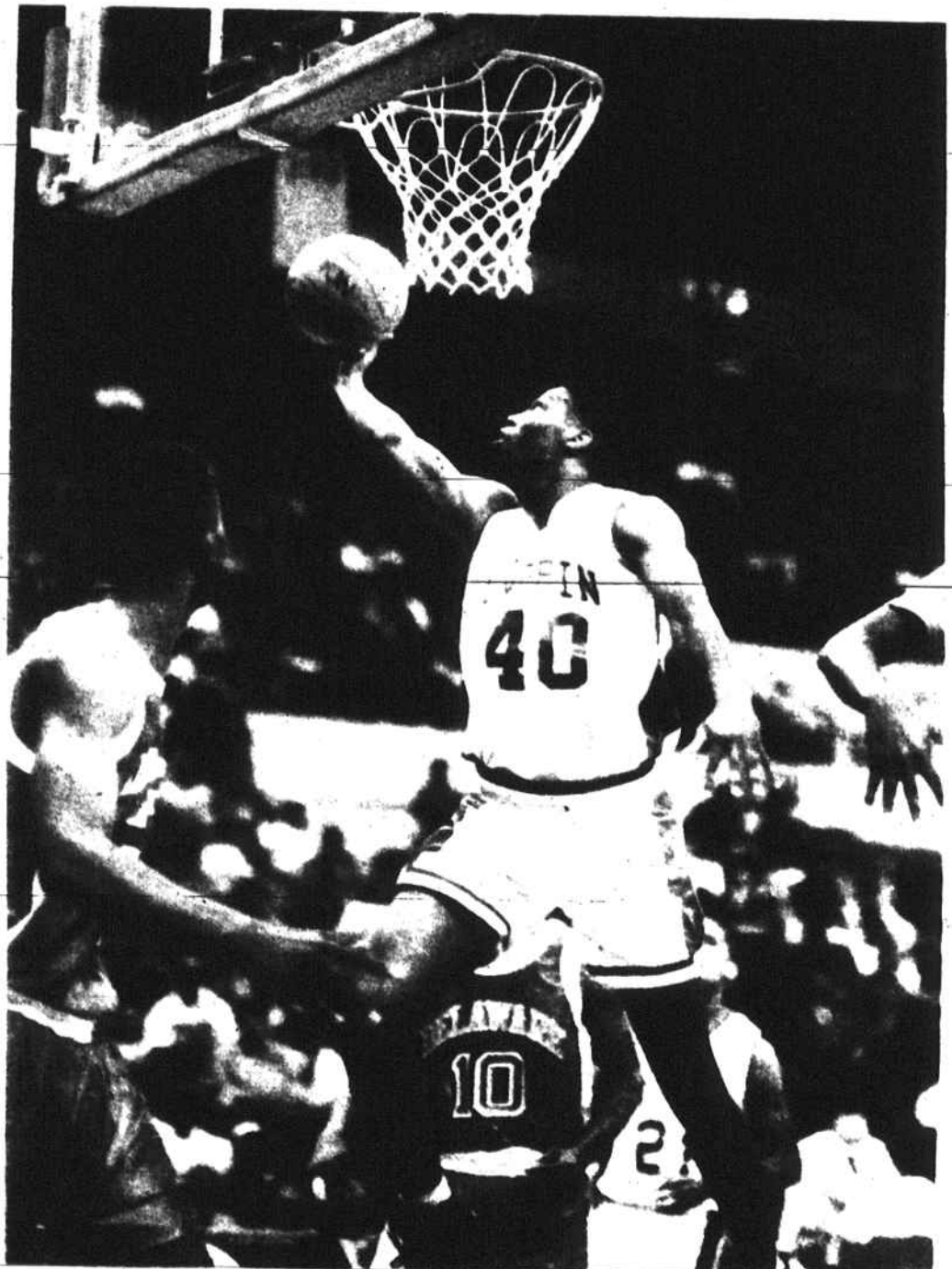
Coppin State 54, Howard 57  
 Florida A&M 90, Morgan State 87  
 Delaware State 88, vs  
 North Carolina A&T 79  
 South Carolina State 59, vs  
 Maryland-Eastern Shore 57

#### Semi finals:

Coppin State 81, Florida A&M 69  
 Delaware State 75,  
 South Carolina State 64

#### Final

Coppin State 80, Delaware State 53.



Coppin State's Michael Thomas, 40, lays one in during the MEAC Championship game while Del. State players are caught watching.



Commissioner Ken Free, Coca Cola USA Richard Franklin, Delaware State's Andrew Miles, H. Sabree, Coppin's Sidney Goodman, Steven Stuart (Tournament most valuable player), Michael Thomas, Dr. Henry Thomas (MEAC President) and Coca Cola Norfolk's Art Jarrett.