

## COVER STORY

# Jaquars Take Another SWAC Championship From Jackson State

It is not hard to figure out what SWAC stands for.

Just ask anyone of the 5,995 fans that attended the conference tournament championship game at the Riverside Centroplex in downtown Baton Rouge.

The initials SWAC, which officially stand for Southwestern Athletic Conference, could easily be mistaken for Southern Wins Another Championship.

Since taking over the faltering Southern basketball program seven years ago, Ben Jobe has produced four conference tournament championships.

Its latest victim was highly-publicized Jackson State.

The Runnin' Gunnin' Jaguars kicked its up-tempo game into full gear to upset Jackson State 101-80 in the championship game to earn the conference's automatic bid into the

stopped JSU's nation's longest winning streak at 16 games in Baton Rouge. This time the prize was a lot bigger.

The winner earned the No. 13 seed in the NCAA West Regional.

"I'm surprised we beat them by 20 points," said Jobe, whose team had beaten its last six opponents by an average of 26 points. "This is probably the most rewarding for me. When you come down to the end of your career they mean a little more."

Although JSU won the regular season championship and received much praise from a tough non-conference schedule which included close losses to Kansas, Memphis State and Illinois and an upset win at Tulane, Southern was pre-season favorite.

Every team that beat the Tigers this season made it to the NCAA Tournament.

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*—Jobe*

## Big Dance.

Before packing his bags for Tucson, Ariz., and a first round NCAA Tournament game with Atlantic Coast Conference champions Georgia Tech, Southern guard Terry Thames had a very important telephone call to make.

Thames, who sparked the Jaguars with 33 points 11-of-18 shooting, wanted to call his father, Eddie Payton, a former star running back in the NFL and at Jackson State, to do some bragging. Payton is also the golf coach at JSU.

"I just wanted to tell him that I didn't make the wrong decision by coming to Southern," said Thames. "He always says he roots for me, but pulls for Jackson State."

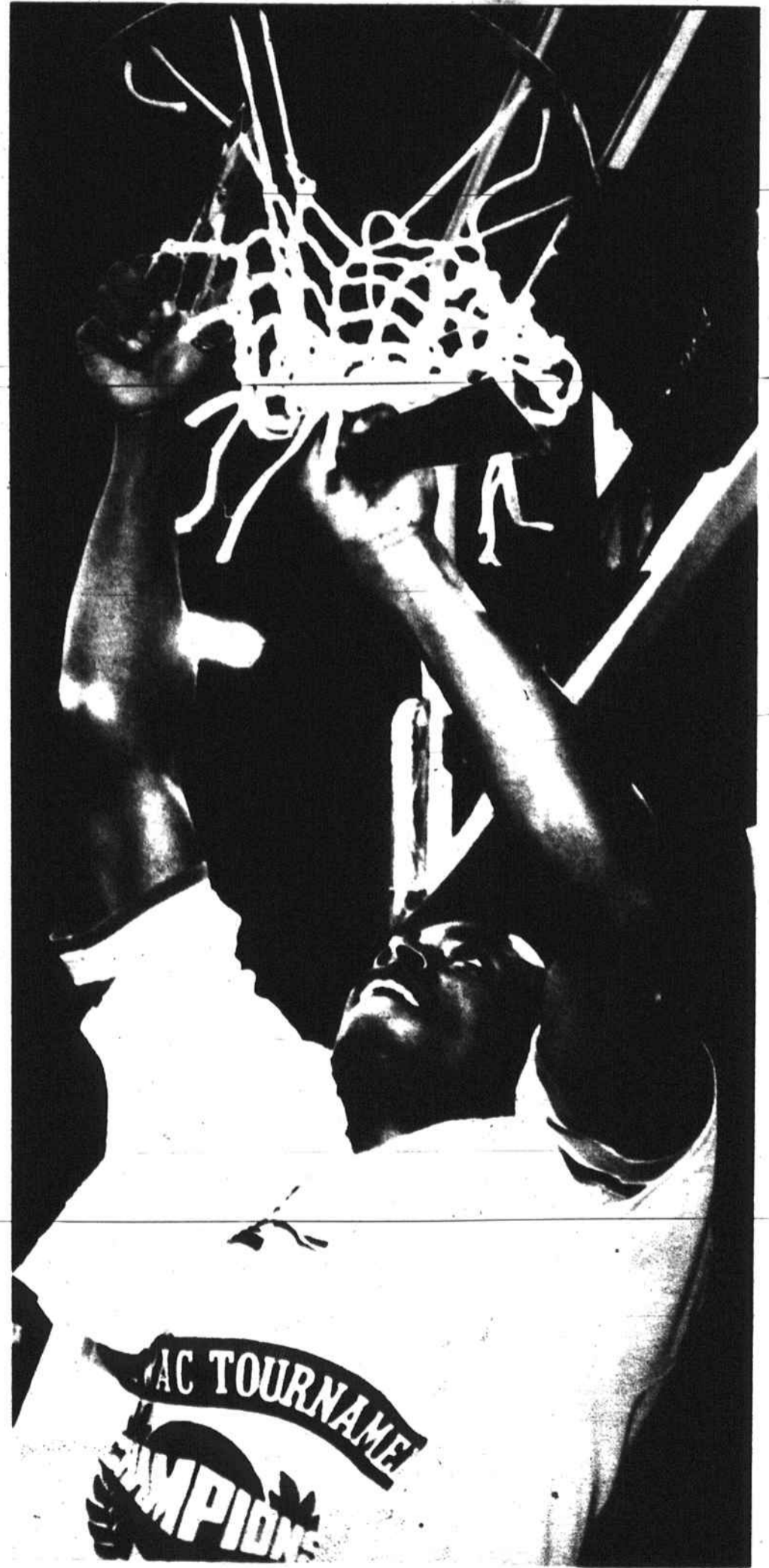
Earlier this season Southern

"We are disappointed because we had a chance to win," JSU coach Andy Stoglin said. "Our No. 1 goal all season was to go to the NCAA Tournament. This was a very good season, and I'm going to keep reminding the team of that."

Southern had five players to score in double figures along with Thames. Torrence Williams, a former walk-on, scored 16 points and grabbed 19 rebounds.

The 6-foot-7 senior had the best three days of his brief basketball career in the SWAC tournament. Williams made second team all-tournament after averaging 11.6 points and 12.6 rebounds.

*— By Derrick Mahone*



*A happy Jaquar cuts the nets after victory.*