

# Jackson State's Jackson Has Never Lost

By DERRICK MAHONE

Rod Jackson never loses.

At least that is true when the Jackson State pitcher is on the mound.

Jackson, a senior, has never lost a game during the regular season of his two-year career for the Tigers.

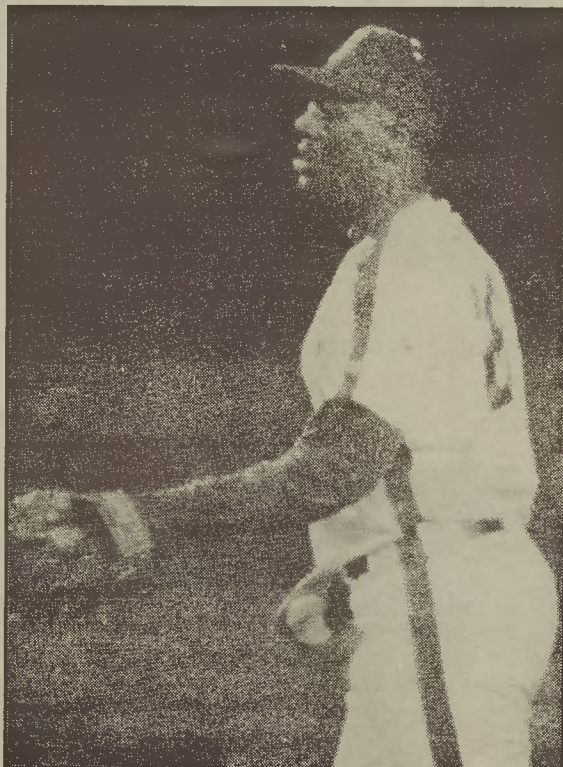
The Rockledge, Fla. native was 7-0 this season with a 1.52 ERA. He was voted the Southwestern Athletic Conference's most outstanding pitcher by the league's eight coaches.

As a sophomore in 1991, Jackson played in only seven games. He started and completed three of them for a 3-0 record in 30 1/2 innings. He gave up only 11 runs on nine hits while striking out 26 batters. He has an ERA of 1.78 during that year.

"I've really been working on my mechanics," Jackson said. "It is surprising to be unbeaten. I knew I could pitch."

The right-hander, who considered a major league prospect, has a 90 mph fastball. Jackson had a conference-leading 70 strikeouts. Jackson, who pitched 65 1/3 innings, went the distance in five of his 11 starts.

"Rod has a sneaky fastball," said JSU coach Bob Braddy, who coached major league pitchers Dennis "Oil Can" Boyd and Marvin Freeman. "He has a strong wrist. Rod wants to be on the mound when the game is close. He doesn't shy away from competition."



Rod Jackson

Academic problems kept Jackson from playing four years at JSU. After sitting out his freshman season under Proposition 48, Jackson became eligible his sophomore season.

He lost his eligibility as a junior, but was able to regain it this past season. During his career, Jackson had a 10-0 record.

"Rod has worked hard to get his priorities straight," Braddy said. "He is a lot more mature. We are proud of the fact we hung with him during the time he was having problem off the field."

Jackson said he realizes he made some mistakes.

"I'm disappointed in the fact I didn't do what I suppose to have done," said Jackson. "After a long talk with coach, I realized some things I needed to do. Not playing me affected me emotionally. I really wanted to play. I just did the right things to come back."

Coming out of his high school, Jackson was recruited by Florida A&M, Grambling State, Southern and several junior colleges.

"When I visited Jackson State I really liked the campus and the atmospheres," Jackson said. "I'm pleased I chose Jackson State, because of the relationship I've had with coach Braddy. Coach is like a second father to me. He has

showed me a lot of things. If I make it, I owe him a lot for sticking by me.

"He has helped me keep my head on straight. I just wish I could have played all four years. I think my career was pretty successful. On the field I did what was expected of me."

In high school, Jackson had a 22-10 overall record and 1.65 ERA during his three-year career.

Jackson said he is looking forward to the upcoming major league draft.

"It has been a dream of mine to play in the major league," Jackson said. "I hope I've done well enough to play on the next level."

Pro scouts were a command site at JSU games this season. Although Jackson has aspirations of playing professional baseball, he admits to having to make some improvements. "In the later innings I have suffered to use my arm more," Jackson said. "Coach has told me to drive more with my legs. My arm could last a lot longer if I start to do that more."

## Coach Mackey Has A Developing Team

By LANGSTON WERTZ, JR.

Claudie Mackey, head basketball coach at Elizabeth City State University in Elizabeth City, N.C., has a developing basketball team and a doctorate degree now.

But he's much happier to be alive.

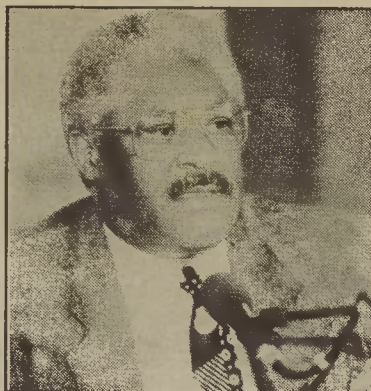
In 1986, Mackey was diagnosed with colon cancer.

In 1990, he was diagnosed with Guillain Barre, a potentially fatal virus that attacks your central nervous system and can temporarily paralyze you.

"You know every day that I wake up," Mackey said, "I thank God for giving me another day."

Today, Mackey is a man at total peace with himself. He says he could take his doctorate in educational administration and get into something other than coaching a Division II basketball program and make lots of money, six-figures money - think if you could give yourself a 100% raise, would you do it? But Mackey is staying at Elizabeth City because he wants to.

"Right now," he said, "I enjoy what I'm doing. Sometimes it's not always rewarding with championships, but I tend



Claudie Mackey

to think that it becomes regarding when you have a kid who's really thrown in the towel because there was no hope and you help him take his place in society regardless of all that. That's what kept me here. I love to watch guys making that transition."

OK, that's the 1993 version of Claudie Mackey, coach, doctor and husband. He's made it through the illnesses. "That guy upstairs in the blessing business, he's looked over me," Mackey said.

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