

SPORTS

Football photos by Renel Samuels

Last three losses leave team 2-3-1; but improved Vikes may prevail

By Mark Morris and James Sims

After going undefeated for three straight games, the ECSU Vikings had high hopes of having a winning record for the 1990 season.

The Vikings began their season travelling to Rocky Mount, N.C. and defeating Livingstone College in the First Annual North Carolina Classic, and also romping over the Broncos in the Port City Classic.

The Vikes then went on to tie Winston Salem 28-28. That game marked what was thought to be the start of a winning season; however losing the last three games pushed the Vikings back to a record of 2-3-1.

Losing their last three games to Norfolk State, powerhouse Grambling University and a still undefeated Virginia Union, moved the Vikings down to the number five spot in the Northern Division of the CIAA.

In the game against Union last Saturday, the Vikings stuck with the number one ranked Panthers by a score of 7-7 until the fourth quarter when the Panthers scored on a pass and won 14-7.

"We played a good game but it wasn't good enough because we didn't win," said Coach Johnny Walton in Monday's practice session. "We have to work harder and eliminate the small mistakes."

Despite the three-game loss, the Vikings have several areas of strength.

"We played a good game but it wasn't good enough because we didn't win. We have to work harder and eliminate the small mistakes."

Coach Walton

—in reference to Saturday's Virginia Union game

On the offensive side of the ball for the Vikings, the ECSU ground attack is probably one of the most versatile in the CIAA. The Vikes have 796 yards in rushing alone.

With a multi-dimensional backfield, the Vikings' horns are pointing toward a completely different turnout this season.

Freshman sensation Andre Nelson from Lugoff, S.C. has electrified Viking fans this season to the tune of 214 yards in five games on an average of 53 carries.

Nelson received the Player of the Week award after scoring two touchdowns against Livingstone September 1.

"I'm glad to be a part of the team," said Nelson. "And I will do anything possible to help the team have a winning season and possibly go to the playoffs."

Along with Andre Nelson, Billy Powell, a power fullback from Currituck, N.C., has contributed a total of

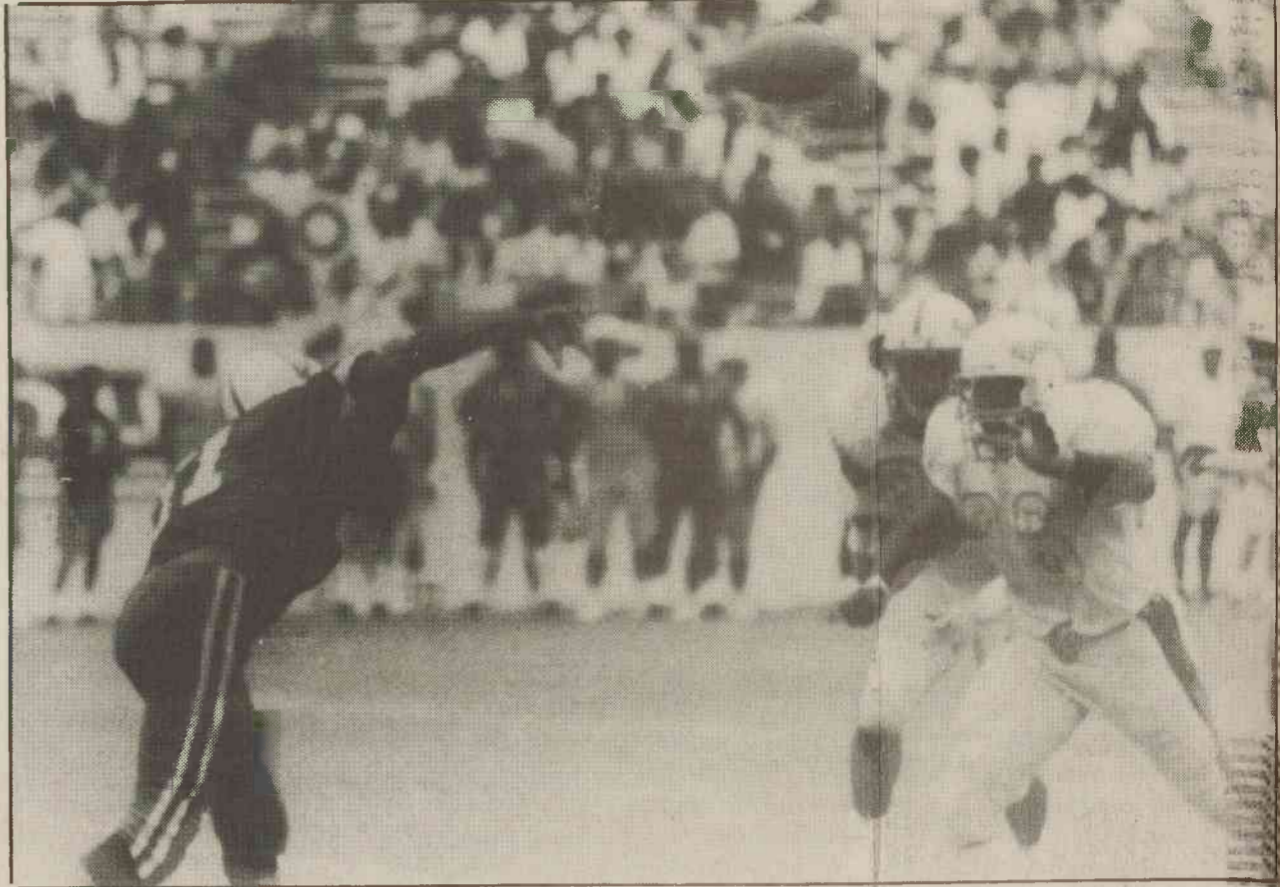
232 yards on 50 carries and a "healthy-at-last" Nelson Welch, a senior from Fayetteville, Ga. has averaged 284 yards on 86 carries.

But the major story on the gridiron is an inspired Viking defense. This season it's no longer "The Iron Mike Show." The Viking defense is spearheaded by linemen Everette McGyver and Mark Hines.

McGyver, also known as "Big Mac," has had an awesome season thus far with 22 unassisted and 25 assisted tackles, 4 sacks, 1 interception and the Port City Classic MVP award.

The linebacking corp, which includes Mike Mabrey, Spencer Abraham, and the new and improved Van Freeman, have proven to be one of the best in the CIAA.

The Vikings are preparing to journey to Bowie Maryland this week-end to play Bowie State University. Bowie State, CIAA champions last year, have a 1-4 win-loss record.



Juan Langford gets rid of the ball while being rushed by Bronco defenders in the Port City Classic game, September 8. The Vikes went on to win 10-3.



ECSU's Everette McGyver along with Michael Mabrey, take control of the Bronco's offense, holding them to only 3 points in the Port City Classic.



Lee Macon moans on the bench because of an ankle injury that took him out of the game against Fayetteville State University. Macon's face shows the pain of his injury sustained in the 3rd quarter.



Steve Juiston takes a breather while ECSU's offense take the field. Juiston, a defensive end, made one of his two interceptions Saturday night, Oct. 6 against Virginia Union. Despite a hard fought game, the Panthers went on to win 14-7.

CIAA Football Standings (week 6)		
NORTHERN DIVISION		
Conference		
Virginia Union	4	0 0
Norfolk State	3	0 0
Hampton	3	1 0
Virginia State	2	1 0
ECSU	1	2 0
Bowie State	0	4 0
Overall		
Virginia Union	6	0 0
Norfolk State	5	1 0
Hampton	3	3 0
Virginia State	3	3 0
ECSU	2	3 1
Bowie State	1	4 0
SOUTHERN DIVISION		
Conference		
Winston-Salem	2	0 1
N.C. Central	1	2 0
Fayetteville St.	1	4 0
J.C. Smith	0	2 0
Livingstone	0	3 0
Overall		
Winston-Salem	3	2 1
N.C. Central	2	4 0
Fayetteville St.	2	4 0
J.C. Smith	0	5 0
Livingstone	1	4 0
*Vikings Win-Loss Record		
overall	2	3 1
conference	1	2 0
non-conf.	1	1 1
home	0	1 0
away	2	2 2

Eaton poised for his senior season

By Mark Morris

As sweat rolls off of James Eaton's face onto the floor, he leans forward and grabs the end of his shorts; then, with a sudden thrust, he runs around a screen, catches the ball and fires a pass inside the lane for an assist.

Instead of looking for a rewarding "high-five" he just hustles back to play defense.

It's a scenario that the senior point guard from Franklin, Virginia must have lived more a thousand times. In fact, it's merely a fundamental movement for Eaton as he gets poised and ready for his fourth and final season with the ECSU basketball team.

"To me, a point guard is the most important player on the court, because he has to know what everyone else is going to do," says Eaton.

"As a point guard, my job is to make good decisions and to make sure everyone knows when to shoot, pass, and everything else."

For the past three seasons, Eaton has done just that. Arriving on the scene at ECSU a 5'11", 175 lb., bouncing bundle of energy, it was his experience as a pure point guard that prompted head coach, Claude J. Mackey, to recruit him here in 1987.

And Eaton has not been a disappointment. In his three seasons, he has compiled 954 points (making 45-46% of his shots), 417 assists (5.1 per game), 281 rebounds, and 250 steals. He is also a 71% free-throw shooter.

Even more impressive, Eaton has been a starter since his freshman year, missing only two games out of 82 total coming into this season. Despite his accomplishments, Eaton is humble about his success.

"It wasn't easy for me," he recalls. "When I first came here, there were four guys that I had to compete with for the starting job. My edge came from hustle and hard work."

Eaton's hard work really began to pay off during his sophomore season, when the Vikings, under the leadership of Eaton and senior Ernie "EZ" Griffin, posted a 17-10 record and advanced to the semifinals of the CIAA post season tournament.

"My sophomore year was better than my freshman year," says Eaton,

"When I first came here, there were four guys that I had to compete with for the starting job. My edge came from hustle and hard work."

James Eaton

"because the guys that I came in with became used to playing with one another as well as the run-and-gun offense that is played here."

"The guys" are the group of seniors who all began their careers at ECSU in 1987: Tyson Ransom, Darryl Riddick, Patrick Harper, Ronald Couser, Melvin Satchell, Sean Mosley, Derrick Williams, Marvin Trotman, and Eaton himself.

Eight players from the class are

still with the team.

"By the time we were sophomores we were together as a team," Eaton recalls.

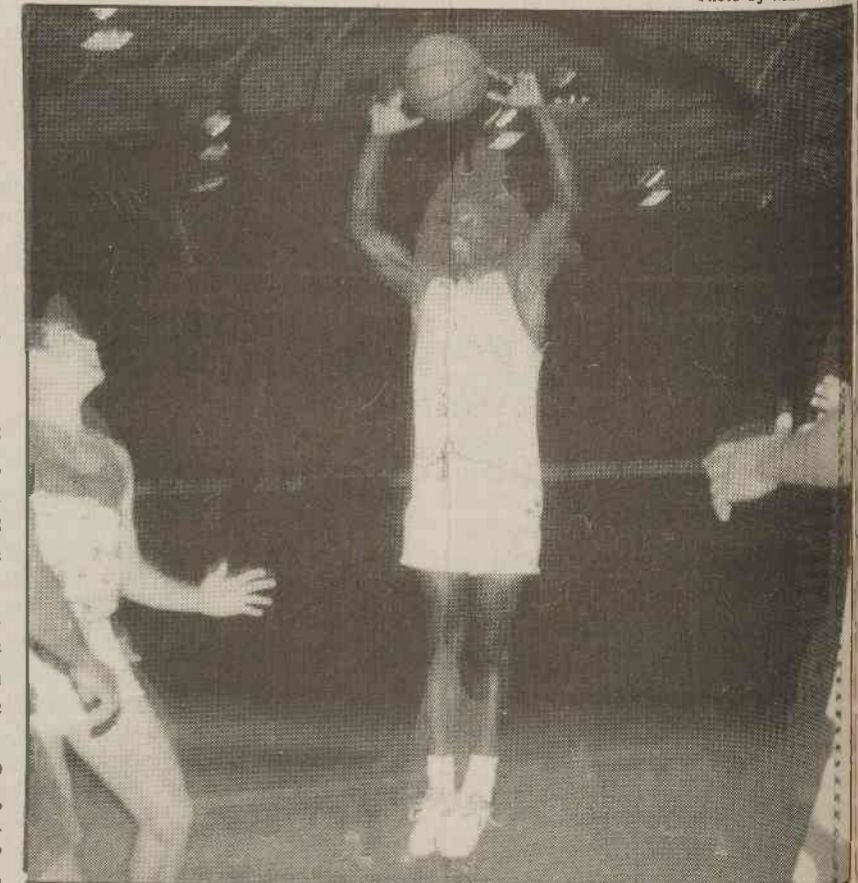
Eaton sees teamwork as being vital for success during his senior year.

"This year we need to focus on being together," he says. "The team is going to win it game by game."

And, with his characteristic humility, Eaton adds,

"I'm going to give it all I have."

Photo by Mark Morris



Senior point guard James Eaton, center, sees "teamwork" as the vital ingredient for success his senior year. "This team is going to win it game by game," he says.