

# sports

Columns, Scores, Profiles, Predictions

## Black College Sports

### South Carolina State Should Continue Reign

By BARRY COOPER  
Syndicated Columnist

This is the second in a series of black-college football previews.

In the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference, South Carolina State is what Hertz is to everybody in the car rental business -- No. 1.

The Bulldogs, who seem to stockpile talent and merely reload each year, have won every MEAC title since 1974, and all but three MEAC football trophies reside in Orangeburg, S.C.

Lately, though, the MEAC has become more competitive, if only slightly.

Florida A&M, which joined the conference in three years ago, has proven worthy opposition for S.C. State.

Close does not count, however, as S.C. State has beaten FAMU by a total of five

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points in their three meetings.

This year, the Bulldogs' mastery of FAMU could continue, and if so, the MEAC race should finish this way: 1)S.C. State, 2)Florida A&M, 3)Bethune-Cookman, 4)Delaware State, 5)Howard, 6)North Carolina A&T.

My scouting reports:

S.C. State (4-1-0 in the league last year, 9-3-0 overall) returns eight starters from last year's team and plenty of replacements are available for the missing.

Quarterback could be the Bulldogs' only weakness. Lamont Green, who played sparingly last season, should start, but he lacks the speed and quickness of previous Bulldog quarterbacks.

Capsule look: S. C. State had the best defense in all of Division I-AA last year and expects to be almost as strong this year.

If Green develops into a top-flight quarterback, the Bulldogs could be super. Only Florida A&M is good enough to stop the Bulldogs from winning the MEAC.

Florida A&M (4-1-0, 6-5-0) certainly in-

tends to be the Bulldogs' biggest obstacle. The Rattlers, coming off one of their best recruiting hauls in years, have 11 starters returning from last season. To a man, the Rattlers have dedicated themselves to getting by S.C. State.

They hope to do it with the help of wide receiver Ray Alexander, considered by most one of the best in the country.

Capsule look: Second place is a cinch for FAMU, but the Rattlers must develop an offensive line and prove themselves at quarterback before they can hope to dethrone S. C. State.

This could, however, be the best season for Rudy Hubbard's club since it won the Division I-AA championship in 1978.

Bethune-Cookman (3-2-0, 5-5-0) figures it will challenge S.C. State and FAMU, even if no one agrees.

The Wildcats have plenty of ammunition for their argument, too, as 18 starters return for Coach Larry Little to work with.

Capsule look: Little was great in the NFL as an offensive guard, but he'll have to prove himself as a coach.

And he'll have to produce a running game; the Wildcats rushed for an average of less than 100 yards a game last year.

Delaware State (2-3-0, 4-7-0) is making great strides under third-year Coach Joe Purzycki.

The Hornets shocked all of black college football by knocking off S.C. State early last season and could sneak up on some more teams this year.

Capsule look: The Hornets' defense was porous last year, surrendering more than 300 yards and 24 points a game. That must be fixed.

Howard (2-3-0, 6-5-0) has a new coach in Joe Dennis, successor to Floyd Keith, who quit unexpectedly at the end of last season.

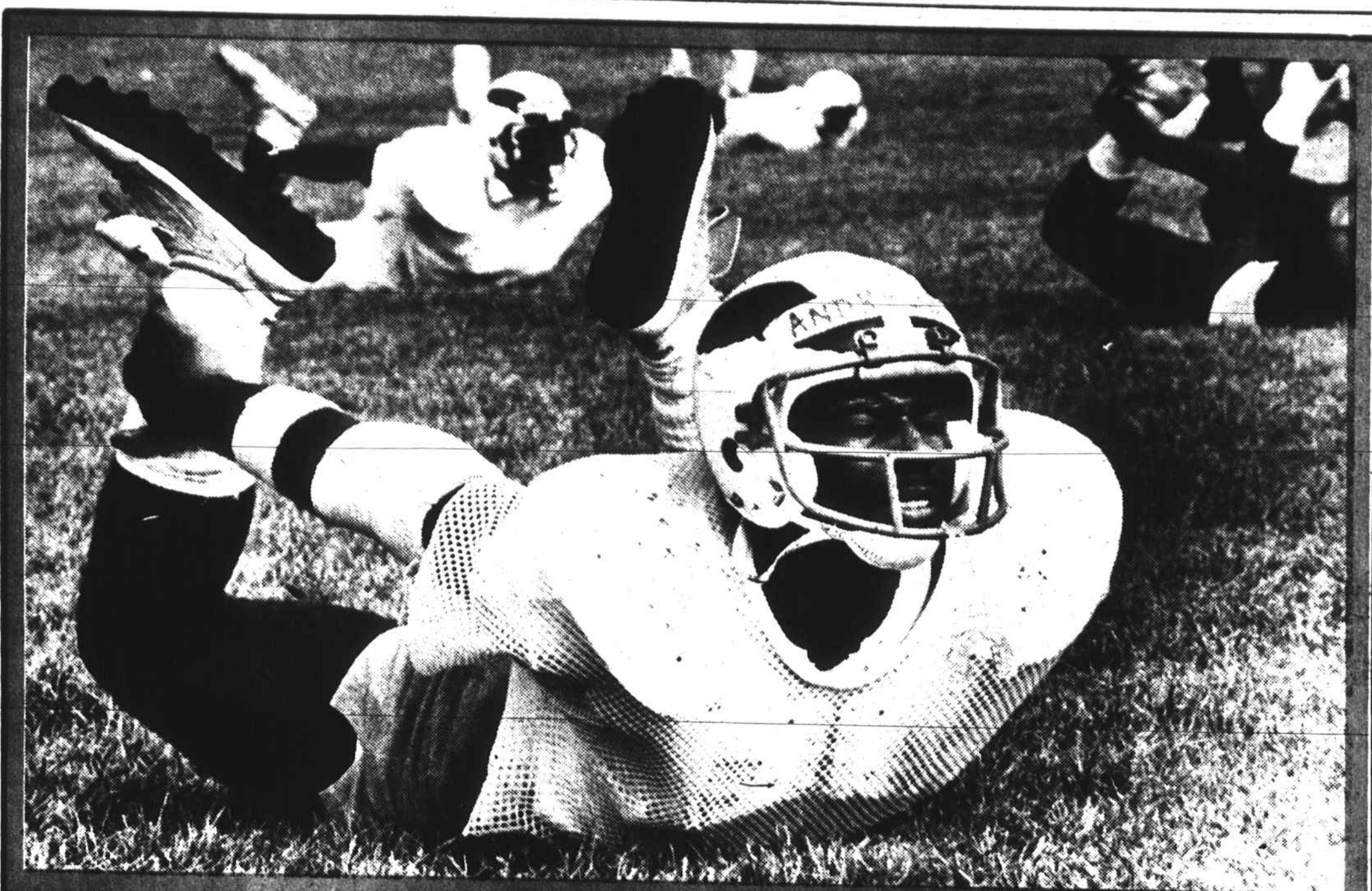
The Bison return 12 starters, including the MEAC's top passer last year, Sandy Nichols.

Capsule look: Nichols passed for 1,784 yards last year, but he's all the Bison have got.

North Carolina A&T (0-5-0, 2-8-0) is still rebuilding under Coach Mo Forte.

Capsule look: The Aggies haven't won a conference game in two years. Things look bleak again.

Next week: The Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association's Northern Division.



No Stress, No Strain - Just P... East Forsyth wingback Kenyon Andrews finds out that the other local football teams aren't necessarily engaged in need to a starting position is not always easy. Andrews and ... brutal two-day ... (James Parker)

### Pond Giants Win Memory-Filled Game

By ROBERT ELLER  
Sports Editor

There were more fond memories than hits, more smiles than outstanding defensive plays and more balls than strikes Sunday as the Winston-Salem Pond Giants Old-Timers easily defeated former Walnut Cove Tigers at Ernie Shore Field.

In a game played for fun, it was obvious that these baseball stars of more than a decade ago enjoyed donning their uniforms again.

The most exciting play of the game came in the fourth inning. With the Pond Giants holding a 3-0 lead, Bob Jones led off with a single to right field, and Birmingham Sam, who had struck out twice previously, walked. With Ralph Gardner at the plate, the two former Indianapolis Clowns, as well as Pond Giants, executed a perfect double steal -- perfectly

hilarious, that is.

With Chester Vernon on the mound for Walnut Cove after taking over for starter James Hairston at the start of the inning, the two took off on a 2-2 pitch from Vernon. It looked like an attempted double steal until Jones, on second base, headed back toward first, while Sam made a mad dash toward second.

Walnut Cove catcher Haywood Hairston threw to first base and Jones reversed and headed back toward second. As first baseman Allison Frazier prepared to throw to second, Sam screamed from between second and third. Frazier fired to third but it was too late to get Birmingham.

After Gardner took a called third strike, Sam stole home as Steve Anderson, another former player with both the Clowns and Pond Giants, directed him to the plate. That run was

disallowed, but it wasn't needed.

The Pond Giants, who scored 13 runs in the first inning of last year's contest while batting around three times, looked as if they might again have another field day in the opening frame this year. Shortstop Donald Johnston led off with a walk, and Floyd Greene followed with a free pass from Hairston.

Inky Lowry, who never played with the Pond Giants but was one of their worst nemeses while playing with their cross-town rival Red Legs, grounded to second, but Collis Morris could not find the handle and Johnston scored.

After Birmingham Sam struck out, Jody Wilson, Fred Willett and "Genie Boy" Griffin each walked, forcing in Greene and Lowry before Hairston regained his control and struck out "Big Dog" Wilson and Bill Dickey to retire the side.

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### Summer League Basketball

#### Tar Heels Take Title With Balance

By EDWARD HILL JR.  
Staff Writer

When the final buzzer sounded at last week's Winston-Salem Summer League championship game in the Carver High gym, player-coach Jeff Jones showed little emotion. Considering that his Tar Heel team had just annihilated the Sports World All-Stars 115-87 to finish the season undefeated, one would have expected some emotion.

But Jones says he had a reason for his reserve.

"Our goal at the beginning of the season was to go undefeated," said Jones. "When we got this individual talent together, we knew that if we would work to blend our skills together, we could accomplish that goal."

Jones, a 6-3 former star for East Forsyth, got the Tar Heels off to a good start by scoring six of his team's first eight points en route to a 21-14 first-period advantage.

*"Our game all season has been to get the ball off the boards and get it out on the break. Why should we change for the championship game?"*  
-- Michael "Pop Bottle" Thomas

The team concept that has characterized the Heels all season was evident in the second quarter, when Michael "Pop Bottle" Thomas took over where Jones left off.

"That's how this team has been all season," said Thomas, a former West Forsyth star who

played at Surry Community College last season. "Jeff did his thing the first period and I asserted myself the second." Thomas scored 12 points in the period as the Tar Heels opened up a 47-32 halftime advantage.

Despite playing with only a six-man squad, compared to the All-Stars' 10, the Tar Heels insisted on running the ball up and down the court at racehorse speed.

"Our game all season has been to get the ball off the boards and get it out on the break," said the high-flying Thomas, who finished with 24 points, including two monster dunks that shook the rims and had the lights blinking. "We kept the pressure on. Why should we change for the championship game?"

All-Star center Willie Ashford poured in 12

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### Black On Sports

#### Are More Blacks Stars In Baseball's Future?

By ROBERT ELLER  
Sports Editor

While watching former black semi-pro stars pull out their uniforms and take to the field again, it's easy to sit back and wonder what would have happened if major-league baseball had fully opened its doors to black players in the 50s and 60s.

Many young baseball fans, and a number of older ones, too, think baseball was integrated when Jackie Robinson joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in the late 40s. But that just isn't so, according to a number of players who feel they had major-league potential, only never to be signed or given a shot at the majors after toiling

in the minor leagues.

"Robinson didn't integrate baseball; he only tokenized it," said one former semi-pro star recently. "The owners were still very selective in what black players they signed, for the most

*"Jackie Robinson didn't integrate major league baseball; he only tokenized it. The owners were still very selective in what black players they signed, for the most part. And some just didn't want and would not sign black talent."*

part. And some just did not want and would not sign black talent."

As I watched the former semi-pro stars, or black-league stars, if you prefer, perform at Ernie Shore Field on Sunday, it made me wonder about baseball's future.

Will black superstars frequent the major leagues in a few years? Studies show that very few black major-leaguers come through the college ranks. And a look at any summer playground around the nation will show that basketball is now the preferred game of young blacks.

Still, some say blacks will continue to star in the major leagues simply because they can sign right out of high school, while they would have to play other sports in college first.

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Fingertips

Charles "Punkin" Douthit gets inside Michael "Pop Bottle" Thomas, a member of league champion Tar Heels, for a layup during the Winston-Salem Summer League season-ending all-star game that featured past stars against the best from this year's teams (photo by James Parker).