



Alcorn Triumphs

Alcorn State freshman forward Reginald Porter dribbles past UDC's James Neal. Alcorn won the January clash between the black college basketball powers 79-40, but still has had some problems getting untracked this season. (photo by Brian Branch-Price).

Stellar Trio Rules SWAC Basketball Roost

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Ask anyone in the states of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana or Texas the three hottest names in Southwestern Athletic Conference basketball, and they're likely to list Lewis Jackson, Napoleon Johnson and Aaron Brandon, probably in that order.

The stellar three, from Alabama State, Grambling State and Alcorn State, respectively, have been the pacesetters among SWAC scorers in 1983-84, keeping a stranglehold on the top three spots in individual scoring all season. Additionally, the three "Kings of the Court" have ranked all year among the NCAA Division I scoring aces as well.

Alabama State's Jackson (see story on facing page) leads the SWAC in scoring and ranks fifth nationally with a 26.1 average. An all-around perfectionist, he also ranks among the league's leaders in several other categories, including field goal percentage, free throw percentage, steals and assists.

A first-team all-SWAC selectee a year ago, Jackson has been honored as

the senior player of the week three times this season and seems to be on course for player-of-the-year honors in the SWAC.

He's scored in double figures 34 consecutive games over the last two years and in 43 of his last 44 games.

"Lewis Jackson is probably the best and most complete basketball player I've had the opportunity to coach, and I've coached some pretty good players," says Alabama State Coach James Oliver. "I can't find any glaring weaknesses in Lewis and, believe me, I've tried."

With every feat Jackson accomplishes in the SWAC, though, Grambling's Johnson is right behind. The 6-foot-9, 220-pound center from Alexandria, La., is only a fraction of a point behind Jackson in scoring at press time, averaging 26.0 points per game to Jackson's 26.1. Johnson ranks second in the SWAC in scoring and sixth in the nation, just one notch below his rival Alabamian.

An intense intimidator, the "Napper," as Johnson has been tabbed, is laying claims as the premier center in the SWAC. Besides his scoring prowess, he leads the conference in field goal percentage while placing third in

rebounding and second in blocked shots.

Johnson was a first-team all-conference performer a year ago, averaging 19.0 points and 9.4 rebounds per contest. He also tallied an amazing



Aaron Brandon

47 slam dunks.

Alcorn State's Brandon has an uncanny ability to hit from the outside,

and, in Brandon's vernacular, "outside" means 20- and 30-footers.

"I haven't seen any shooters in the nation better than Aaron," says Brandon's teammate, Eddie Archie. "Most pros can't even shoot better than he. Every time he touches the ball, he's an offensive threat."

The 6-6, 180-pound forward from Jackson, Miss., currently ranks third in the SWAC in scoring with a 21.3 average. He has ranked as high as No. 1 in SWAC scoring and No. 2 nationally before his game-by-game point totals tapered off from the 28-point range to around 21. Despite practically all of his shots coming from 20 or 30 feet, he's blistering the nets at a percentage of 52.3 from the field (seventh best in the SWAC) and 73.5 from the free throw line (11th best in the conference).

Brandon, like Jackson and Johnson, was an all-league selectee in 1982-83. He was also voted the Most Valuable Player of last season's SWAC tournament.

"One of my goals this season was to be the best ballplayer that I could be," says Brandon. "I've been looking for opportunities and, when I see them, I take advantage of them."