

BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS REVIEW

Celebrate *CONTINUED*

by nipping Bethune-Cookman 71-65 in overtime.

The total attendance for the first two nights of the event was less than 4,200 and enough to make one wonder what the gate might have been had the hometown Aggies stumbled against Delaware State.

That prospect looked possible in the first half of that contest as A&T trailed the Hornets, under first-year Coach Joe Dean Davidson, on two occasions and never built more than a five-point lead on its way to a 30-29 lead.

The Hornets tied the score for the final time less than a minute into the second half on a three-point play by Dominic Snowden but were never able to catch the Aggies again after A&T scored the game's next eight points.

However, the Delaware effort, led by freshman all-MEAC pick Bernard Campbell's 18 points, gave notice that the Hornets will be a team to be reckoned with in years to come.

But in this tourney, as had been the case in eight of the preceding 12 events, the title belonged to the Aggies.

For Corbett, it was a time to reflect on a surprisingly good season and think about his fourth straight post-season bid.

The Aggies fell to Duke in the first round of the NIT in 1981, the last time they failed to win the MEAC tournament. And their loss to the Bison in the finals that year was the only time they made it to the title game and failed to claim the crown.

"With this win, we have accomplished three of the goals we set for ourselves before the season began," Corbett said. "We have won 20 games

and both the regular season and tournament titles. Now we can concentrate on doing our best in the NCAA playoffs to erase the stigma that is attached to black schools in Division I post-season competition.

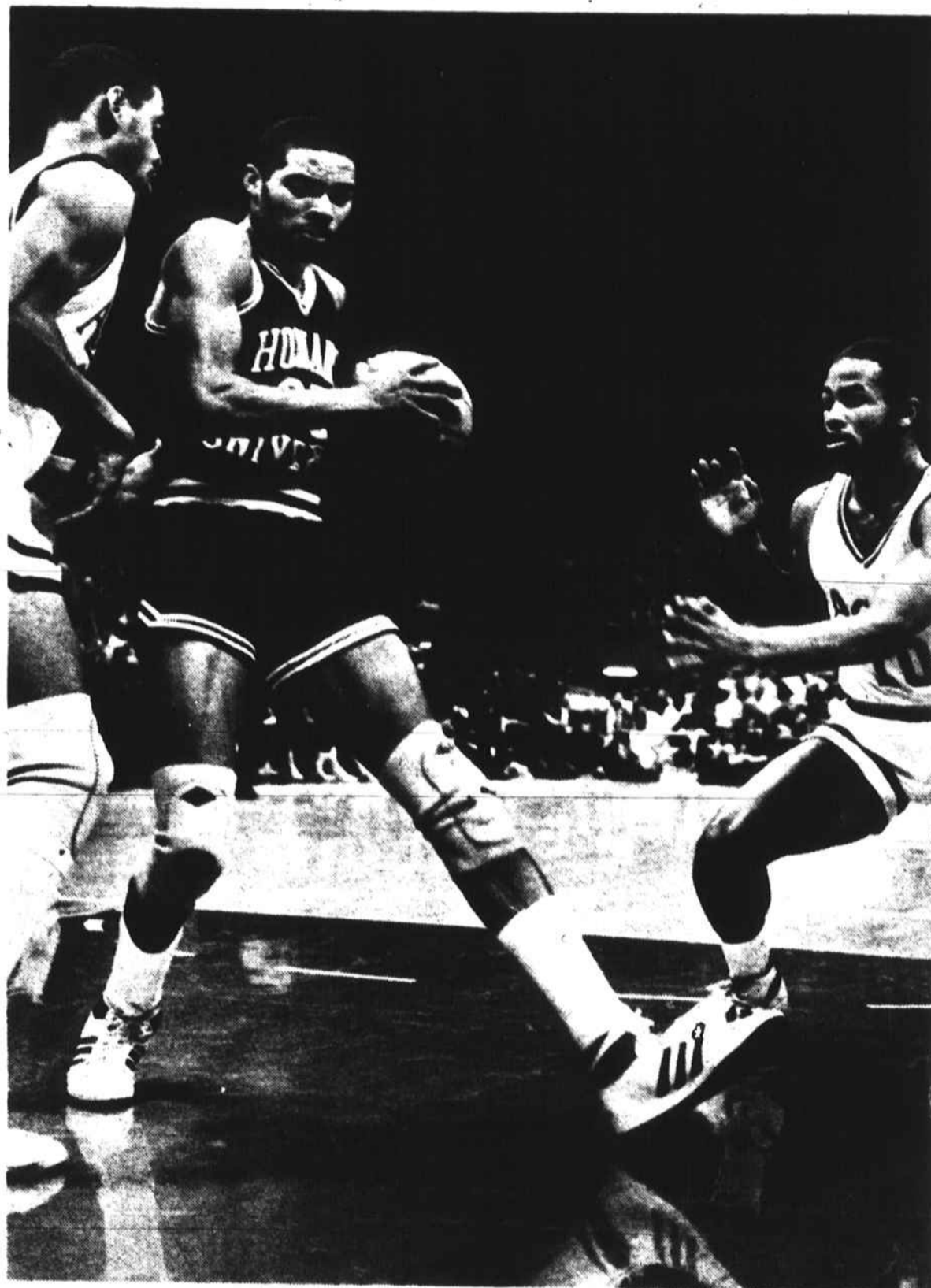
"It is always said that we can't win the big one. But this year we are more determined than ever.

"We have played a tough road schedule against top competition and we have that experience to draw on now," said Corbett, who had failed to win in NCAA tournament play in two previous tries.

Binion shared that feeling. "Tonight proved that we are an experienced team," he said. "I didn't have a good game but the other guys played superbly and took up the slack. I don't expect to have this type of game in the NCAA tournament but it takes a lot of pressure off knowing that your teammates can take charge when necessary."

"In the past we have not played together when we got to the NCAA. And when our shots have not been falling, we haven't taken our time and kept our cool. But after playing teams like N.C. State, we feel we are more accustomed to tackling those caliber teams now."

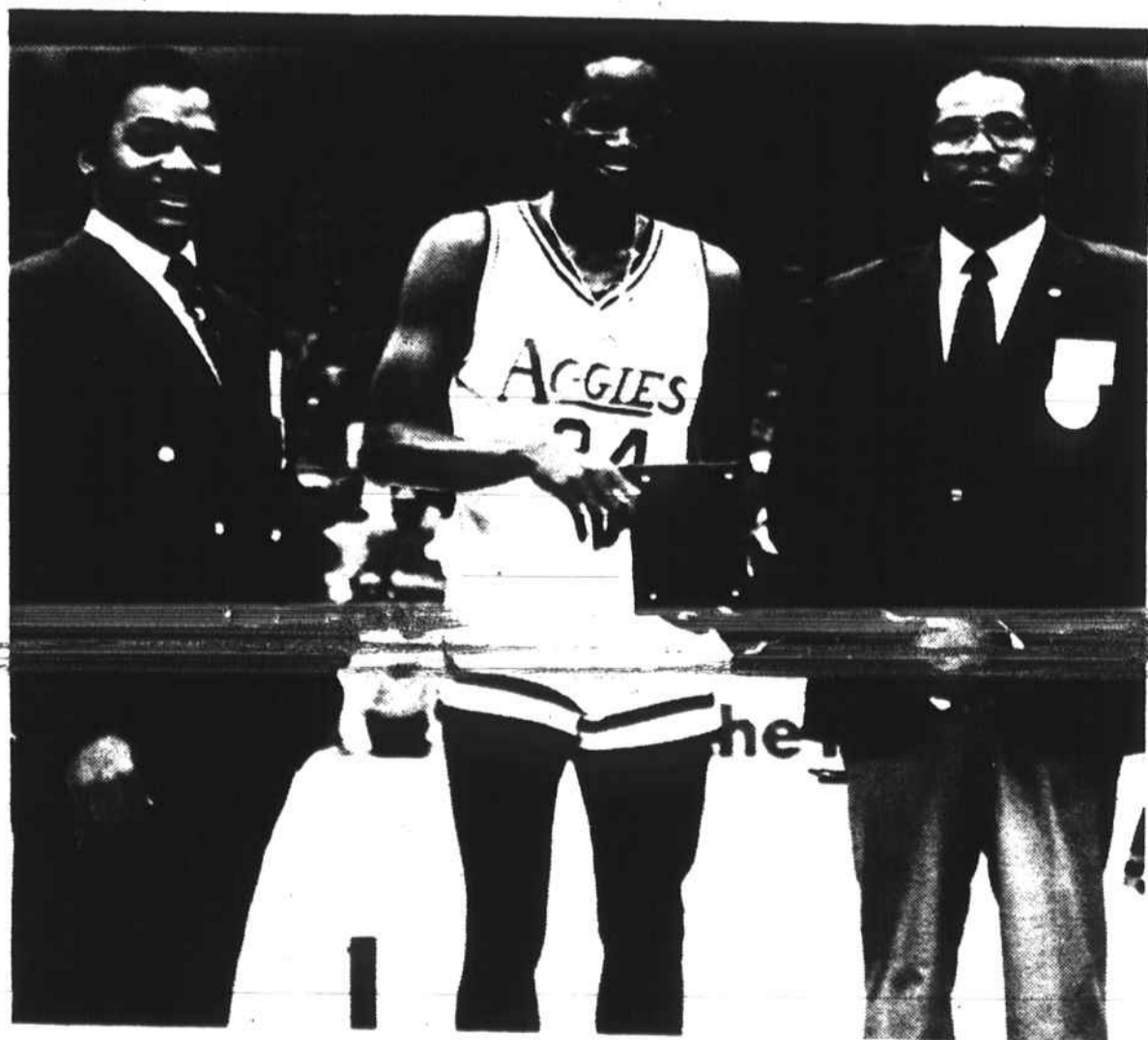
The Aggies knew they would enter the playoffs as decided underdogs, but Corbett and his players were determined to make a better showing this time around. "I can't guarantee that we will win, but I can guarantee that we will give it our best shot," Corbett said. "Now, if Boyd could only have another birthday party on the night of the NCAA finals...."



Howard's Robert McIlwaine sees A&T's Daryl Battle to his right. What he may not realize, however, is that the Aggies' Jimmy Brown is closing in, too, from the left (photo by James Parker).



A&T's James Horace breaks up an alley-oop pass intended for Howard's Kevin Scott (photo by Brian Branch-Price).



MVP Boyd: To the birthday boy go the spoils (photo by James Parker).