

Mixing It Up

North Carolina A&T senior guard Jimmy Brown muscled his way inside to aid the Aggie cause (photo by Joe Daniels).

North Carolina A&T wins

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...an all year, but he saved his best performance for when we really needed it," Corbett said. He and Brown did it. The other players didn't have the experience that they played their roles and contributed."

The regular season-champion Aggies, like second-seeded Howard, drew a first-round bye and got to the title game by easily defeating Bethune-Cookman, 64-59. Bethune had upset South Carolina State, 54-53, in the opening round.

Delaware State knocked off Maryland-Eastern Shore 68-62 in the other opening-round game.

Joining Boyd on the all-tournament team were teammates Brown, who scored 21 points in the championship game,

and freshman center Claude Williams, who had a game-high 13 rebounds to go with nine points.

Howard's Hill and Robert Jones, who had 14 points and nine rebounds off the bench, rounded out the team.

The Aggies, winners of the league tourney for the 10th time in the MEAC's 14-year history, will have little time to celebrate their win, however.

Having lost first-round games to the likes of West Virginia, Princeton and, last year, Morehead State, A&T (19-9) finds itself seeded dead last this year in the Midwest Regional.

Consequently, the Aggies will take on top-seeded and nationally fourth-ranked Oklahoma (28-5),

winner of the Big Eight tournament, which features consensus all-America and Olympic star Wayman Tisdale, on Thursday night, March 14, in Tulsa, Okla.

Meanwhile, Howard (17-12) has accepted an invitation to play in the NCAA-sanctioned Georgia Invitational Basketball Tournament in Atlanta.

Other teams invited to the tournament, which has been described as an NIT for black colleges, include Shaw University, Savannah State, Hampton University, Elizabeth City State, Mississippi Valley State, Clark College and South Carolina State.

Play will begin in the tournament on March 21.

INSIDE STUFF

What's all the fuss about recruiting?

DICK DeVENZIO
Associated Columnist

Reporters often call it "pressure" now, which makes it obvious they never went through it themselves.

When I hear kids say it, it seems to me they must have incredibly easy lives. I'm talking about the so-called "pressure" of being recruited as a high school athlete. *USA Today* included a player's story recently -- and seemed to make an effort to highlight the frenzy of it.

Sports Illustrated writes about it periodically, with the zeal of tireless investigative reporters and a bloodhound's mission. But what is so tough about being recruited?

The NCAA has thousands of rules to restrict recruiting, and high school coaches, sometimes with big egos in the way, often make an effort to limit their players further, while they try to orchestrate a player's contacts and narrow his choices according to their own preferences. In many cases, a high school coach merely wants to get attention for himself. It's his brief time to get the ear of the big-time coaches, to be invited to work at college camps and to rub shoulders with, and be recognized by, the big names in the sports world -- all because of one high school athlete.

Coaches claim they do all this "for the kid," to

keep him away from high rollers and shady characters and would-be exploiters. But in the process, I think they often do the kids a disservice.

I personally feel that the college recruiting experience I went through in '66 and '67 was one of the highlights of my life, both socially and educationally.

Through contact with hundreds of people and through the bombardment of questions -- What do you plan to major in? What factors will determine your decision? -- a player has to learn about himself and learn how to express his ideas. Every super-salesman has a story. They all claim to be the best. If they do not have the best academic reputation in the nation, then perhaps they have the best athletic program in the southwest corner of a particular state. Taking it all in, a player has to learn to discern fact from fiction.

It was a great education. But the athletes don't get it anymore. Now they don't have the chance to make life-long associations through constant contact with coaches and alumni. The contact is too limited to enable real friendships to form. I think it was better, more personal, more human, more enjoyable, when you could see the coaches many times and they could take you and your family out to dinner as often as you wanted to go.

In the guise of protectionism, I think the NCAA Please see page B4

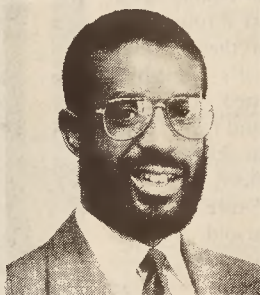
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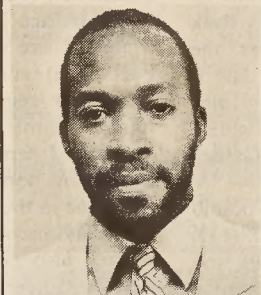
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