



Tennessee State alumnus and Olympic great Wilma Rudolph (photo by James Parker).

Tennessee State

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Thomas, before NCAA violations forced them to forfeit their wins.

Among Tiger track alumni is

Olympic great Wilma Rudolph. The OVC includes Akron, Austin Peay, Eastern Kentucky, Middle Tennessee State, Morehead State, Murray State,

Tennessee Tech and Youngstown State. Its members play Division I basketball and Division I-AA football.

Boston's blacks

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throughout the Boston area, if not the entire country. It's a shame, too. While the city of Boston may have its problems with racial relations, the Celtics do not. All they do is assemble the best players available and then go out and win world championships. Who can argue with that?

King To Return?

Mysterious Bernard King, the New York Knicks' star forward, is expected to be healthy enough to participate in training camp when it opens in October.

King, 29, missed all the season after being seriously injured on March 23, 1985, in a game against the Kings in Kansas City. He hurt his knee in a fall and the injury was so severe that speculation immediately grew that King's career was over.

For his part, King had helped fuel the speculation by saying virtually nothing about his knee or his rehabilitation program. Aside from a brief news conference in December, King has said nothing to reporters.

However, the Knicks say King is ready to come back and resume his place as one of the most exciting players in the game.

Knicks General Manager Scotty Stirling said King's "knee is structurally sound. He is working out hard four hours a day. In all the years I have been associated with sports, I haven't known of an athlete being more dedicated to his rehabilitation than Bernard."

If King can rejoin the Knicks and return to his old form, the team could become a power again. The Knicks finally have a center, Patrick Ewing, but he had little help last year and the Knicks again were one of the worst teams in the league. Injuries ruined the club, claiming more than a half-dozen players, including King, center Bill Cartwright and forward Pat Cummings. But the key for the Knicks is King's recovery.

Stirling said, "In his workouts, Bernard has been playing one-on-one and is doing all the basketball things he ever did. He's going to be fine. His lateral movement is good. Lately he has been concentrating on regaining his strength and quickness."

King has been so secretive about his workouts that he has not even allowed the Knicks to watch. But Stirling, who insisted, "We know what's going on," also warned, "It's one thing to look great working out and playing one-on-one against somebody and (another) playing in an NBA game with two and three guys bumping on you and pulling on your jersey. You never know."

College Confidential

Historically black Kentucky State University, plagued by controversy in its athletic department for most of the last decade, has announced another shakeup in personnel. The school has hired a new athletic director, a new football coach and a new basketball coach and has had its baseball coach to resign.

The new football coach, John Wright, will be Kentucky State's seventh head football coach in four years.

Paul Peck, an assistant for the past two years at Kentucky State, was named to replace basketball Coach Richard Skaggs, who compiled a three-year record of 30-50.

Track and field Coach Williams Head was named athletic director, replacing Jefferson Walker, who left to accept an administrative job at Florida A&M. Walker also was the baseball coach at Kentucky State.

Head becomes Kentucky State's third athletic director in two years.

The new football coach, Wright, said he thinks he can make Kentucky State a winner. The team was 0-11 last year.

"I feel like we can be competitive with our schedule," he said. "I'm glad they've dropped teams like Mississippi Valley and Alcorn State. There's no way we could compete with those teams in their current situation. It's going to take a lot of work."

Bob Hopkins has filled the basketball coaching vacancy at Grambling State. Hopkins, the coach at Southern University, will replace Fred Hodby, who retired at the end of last season. Hodby, 57-287 in 30 seasons, is 70. Hodby is now working as an assistant to Athletic Director Eddie Robinson.

It will be Hopkins' sixth head coaching job. He coached the Grambling women in 1983-84 and also coached at Prairie View A&M, Alcorn State and Xavier of New Orleans. He has pro experience, too, having served as an assistant and head coach of the Seattle SuperSonics and as an assistant with the New York Knicks

Southern University may be one of the richest black schools, but it still can't afford more than \$100,000 in salaries between the coach and athletic director. New Athletic Director Marino Casem is making about \$55,000

Former Florida A&M Coach Jake Gaither, something of a legend in his time, is retired now, but you can hardly tell it. Gaither, who is in his 60s, was seen recently in the Florida A&M weightroom, pedaling away on an exercise bike. Furthermore, Gaither attended virtually every FAMU practice session during the spring and has talked shop with the Rattlers' new head coach, Ken Riley. Riley played for Gaither and was one of the coach's favorite players. Gaither's appearance at Rattler practices is unusual for him. He frequently stayed away during Rudy Hubbard's 12-year tenure

Insiders say this probably will be the last year for Mississippi Valley State. The school's impending doom has been rumored for months, but signs are growing clearer and clearer that the end is near. The oil-price collapse that has rocked Texas is having an impact on neighboring states, too. Mississippi, already the poorest state in the union, is having trouble making ends meet. The school, which reportedly had its overall budget slashed by 33 percent this year, faces even more cuts

A new ABC-TV deal with the Florida Citrus Bowl could be a sign of things to come for colleges. In a revolutionary deal, ABC will pay nothing for the right to televise the Citrus Bowl, but will give the bowl advertising time to sell. Whatever the Citrus Bowl can command for the spots, it can keep. Sources say that could be as much as \$500,000. Meanwhile, ABC, which lost more than \$50 million last year, risks nothing. The same procedure could be applied to other games

Insiders say the arrival of new Athletic Director Casem should put to rest rumors that Southern is about to leave the Southwestern Athletic Conference. Former Southern AD Richard Hill reportedly was trying to guide Southern into a league of predominantly white colleges. Casem, longtime athletic director and football coach at Alcorn State, is a firm believer in the SWAC

Nike's Air Jordan shoe, endorsed by Chicago Bulls star Michael Jordan, has earned the company a staggering \$107 million over the last nine months. Jordan has a five-year, \$5 million contract with Nike.

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