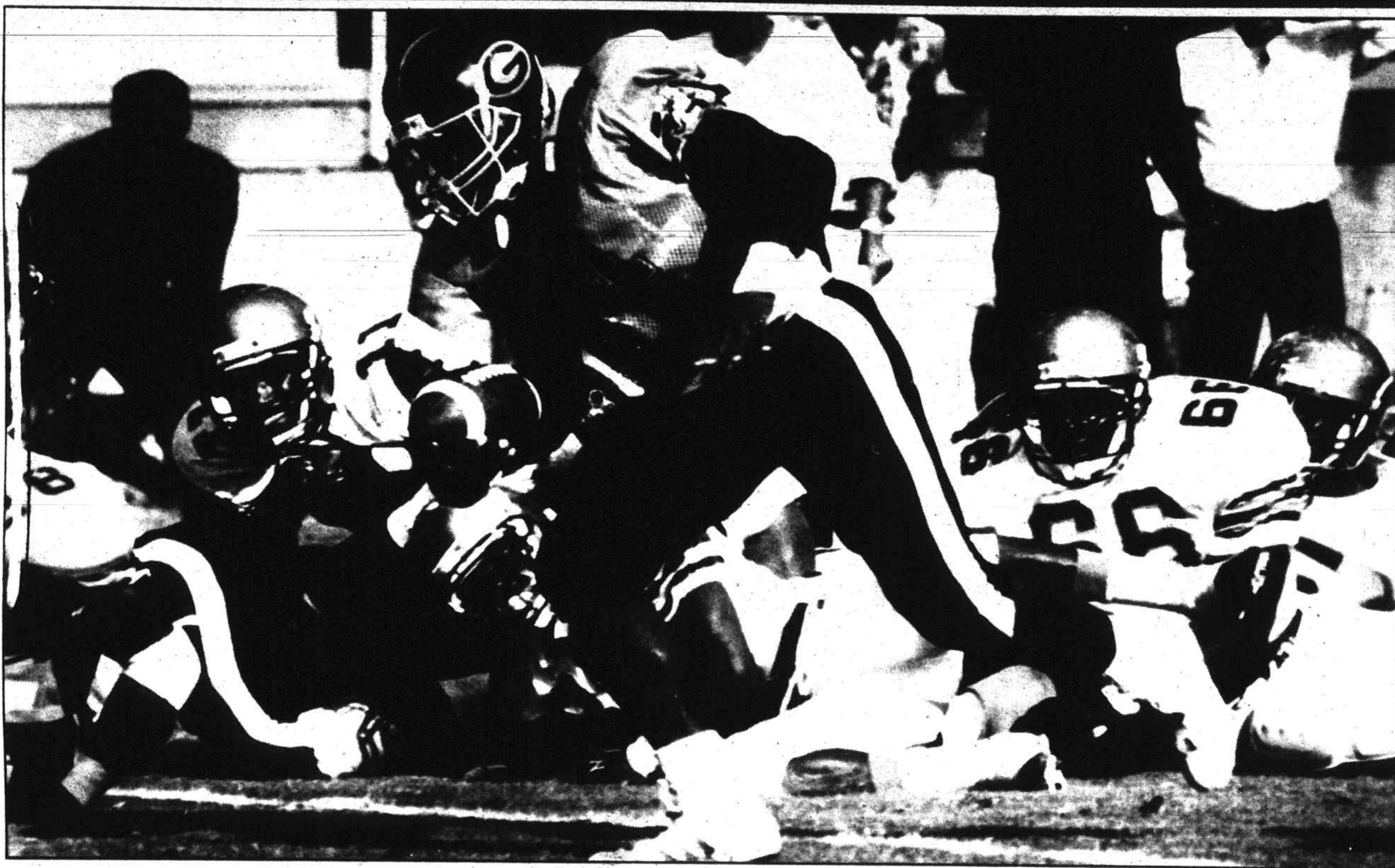


## NFL DRAFT PREVIEW



Scouts like Walter Dean of Grambling because of his ability to get the ball in the end zone.

Photo by Mark Gail

## Four could go in the first round

Call the 1991 NFL Draft the year of the Fabulous Four for predominantly black schools. As many as four players from those schools could be selected in the first round. And nine could be taken by the end of the fourth round -- which would be the first third of the draft.

The Fab Four consists of Jackson State wide receiver Tim Barnett; Grambling running back/wide receiver Jake Reed; Southern cornerback Aeneas Williams; and Arkansas-Pine Bluff running back Ivory Lee Brown.

Five other players to watch closely are Central State tackle Eric Williams; Florida A&M running back Amir Rasul; Winston-Salem State wide receiver Yancey Thigpen; Grambling running back Walter Dean; and Delaware State tight end/wide receiver David Jones.

Other interesting players to watch during the April 21-22 draft are Central State wide-out Eddie Britton; Tennessee State wide receiver/kick returner Anthony Owens; Grambling defensive end Darryl Milburn; Jackson State defensive tackle Chris Gale; and Tennessee State cornerback Roger Jones.

Reed, a 6-3, 215-pounder who played wingback in Grambling's patented system, will most likely be positioned at wide receiver in the NFL. But can you imagine him as a combination H-back/wingback in the pros? According to Mel Kiper Jr.'s *Draft Report 1991*, the Grambling star "is a smooth, agile 215-pounder with a gliding running style that lulls cornerbacks into a false sense of security."

But it's also important to note that Reed ran a 4.44 in the 40 at the scouting combine at Indianapolis back in February.

"He's a big, strong guy," says David Razzano, San Francisco 49ers scout. "He'd be better as a wide receiver. He has size, running ability and hands. He can block, too. He knocks people out down-field."

Joel Buchsbaum, author of *Scout's Notebook*, an annual publication, predicts that Reed will go in the second round. "He lacks polish, doesn't cut that well, is inconsistent and doesn't switch the ball," he says.

Barnett, a 6-1 1/2, 209-pounder who ran a 4.55, "really concentrates on lock-

ing the ball into his hands," Kiper wrote, "then operates like a power fullback in the open field, lowering his head and shoulders to take on defenders. Speed allows him to run by cornerbacks on deeper routes, averaging 23.5 yards per catch last season."

Adds Razzano, "Barnett's a good receiver and had a heck of a Senior Bowl. He's got all the qualities to be a good NFL receiver. He's fast, can jump, can catch."

Buchsbaum feels that like Reed, Barnett won't be a first round choice because of speed. "He's a real good player," Buchsbaum says, "but I wish he were faster. He lacks blazing speed."

Southern's Williams, a 5-10, 189-pounder who has been timed at 4.39 in the 40, appears to be somewhat of an enigma.

Kiper is not as high on Williams as other scouts. "After studying film of him from the past season and watching him closely at the Senior Bowl, I really can't see how he is regarded so highly by some clubs in the NFL," Kiper explains. "He is smooth, quick and agile, but seems to lack the instinctive qualities in coverage

needed to make the tough transition from the small college ranks to the NFL."

Nevertheless, Williams still recorded 11 interceptions for 193 yards in returns. He also had 79 tackles, 17 pass break-ups and three blocked kicks.

"He has great quickness," says Razzano. "He can cover man-to-man, can run. Not afraid of physical contact. I saw him as a corner. He can stay with people."

Buchsbaum contends that Williams won't go any higher than the second round and may wind up being taken in the third round. "He didn't cover that well in the Senior Bowl," Buchsbaum points out. "That hurt him."

Brown, 6-1 1/2, 233, rushed for 2,829 yards in his career at UAPB, averaging 7.5 yards per carry and scoring 36 touchdowns. Says Kiper: "Physically and athletically, Ivory Lee has everything you want in a first-round draft choice." He added however, that Brown "has the necessary talent to make his mark at the pro level, but he appears to be the type who needs to be constantly pushed and driven to reach his maximum potential."

"Brown is a great talent who ended