

Four-way battle

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Dean and McClendon commanding respect as vicious defenders. Orlando Dean (five sacks) had his best individual game vs. Morris Brown with 13 hits and one interception.

Offensively, SSC has few equals (444.3 total ypg is second in the SIAC only behind Tuskegee). The strength of the offense is the ground game (223.8 ypg), led by Cole (949 yards), whose nine rushing TDs is tops in the league.

Tuskegee University

Except for the Morehouse game, Tuskegee has diced and sliced opposing defenses. They lead the conference in total offense (474.9 ypg) and are second in scoring (36 ppg). In wins against Hampton University, Clark/Atlanta and

Albany State, the Golden Tigers averaged close to 50 ppg.

But turnovers have a way of negating powerhouse offenses. That was the case vs. Morehouse. Maurice Heard, the top-rated passer (1,972 yards, 23 TDs) had three interceptions, far too many in a close ball game.

Even so, the Tigers got some brilliant play from Chris Holder, who had 306 all-purpose yards in defeat — 11 catches for 205 yards and a score; three kickoff returns for 101 yards. On defense, Cleveland Gipson was the top performer with 18 tackles and a fumble recovery.

TU has more going for its offense than Heard and Holder. That was evident in a couple of games where single game career highs were established. Against

Clark/Atlanta, Howard Rodman rushed for 221 yards, an all-time best. Wide-out Joseph Washington caught four TD passes against Albany State, a personal best for him.

The Golden Tigers haven't allowed their conference setbacks to spoil their performance against non-league teams. In a 46-33 win over Hampton, Heard hit on 22 of 36 passes for 273 yards and four touchdowns. Rodman chipped in with 105 rushing yards and one TD.

TU's defensive stars for that game were Maurice Buford, Desmond Brown (two interceptions), Walter Brooks and Gipson. Brown, by the way, is a master burglar in the secondary. He has seven

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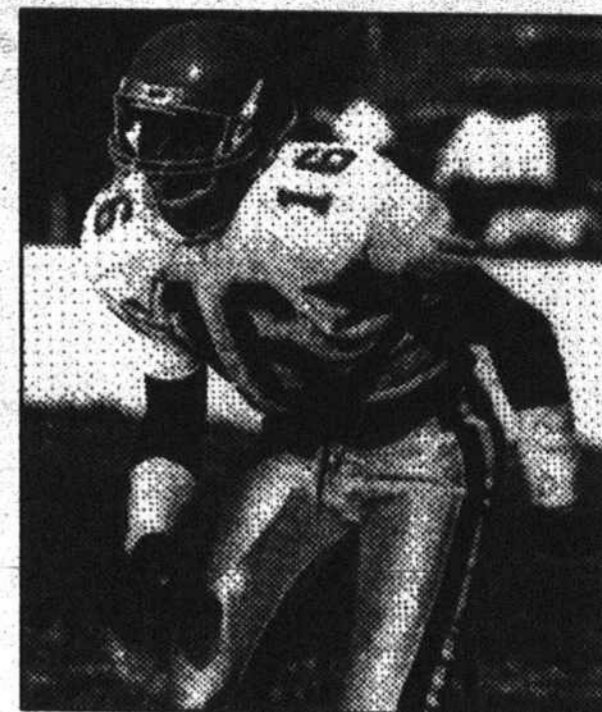


Photo by Isaac Corker

'Skegee wide-out Joseph Washington is the SIAC's top receiver with 51 catches for 870 yards and 11 touchdowns.

Hornets continue to lead

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ceptions, three pass break-ups and nine tackles.

Defense is the name of the game for coach Willie Dorsey's crew. Valley topped the league in three categories: total defense (246.4 ypg), scoring defense (13.3 ppg) and pass defense (93.8 ypg).

Ambrose and Williams are among the top-ranked pass thieves, combining for nine interceptions. Alphonso Brown is their leading tackler with 55 hits.

Southern University

The Jaguars dropped a heartbreaking 7-0 decision to Valley and were blown away by Alcorn State, 52-29. But they got some measure of payback by spoiling Jackson State's Homecoming celebration, walking off with a 21-20 victory.

The final outcome of the Jackson game was decided in the first quarter

when Byron Daniels blocked a JSU PAT kick.

It appeared that Jackson had the game in hand. They led 12-7 at intermission. But Southern rebounded in the second half, outscoring the Tigers, 14-8. Jags quarterback Nate Harrison threw a 27-yard TD pass to Cornell Johnson midway through the fourth quarter to seal the win. Linebacker Roger Green played solid in his first college start, with nine tackles, a forced fumble, and two quarterback hurries.

Individually, SU has three athletes doing well in the conference stats. Johnson is first in kickoff returns (30.4 ypr) and fourth in all-purpose yards (109 a game). Kendall Mabry is the leading punter (38.9 average) while Harrison is proving that he can do more than throw a football. Harrison has hit on 15 of 15 PATs and 10 of 15 field goals.

Jackson State

SWAC's team of the '80s can't seem to get much of anything going. Prior to the Grambling game, they were 0-3 in SWAC play, the first time that's happened since 1970.

It's not that Jackson is being body slammed. They lost to Southern (21-20) and Delaware State (37-34). That's a grand total of three points. Coach W.C. Gorden and staff have to be frustrated with this year's turn of events.

Jackson finally got their first league win by besting Grambling 34-22, breaking a three-game losing streak. The outcome was never in doubt. The Tigers led by as many as 20 points (34-14 after three quarters).

JSU's defense took over, forcing six Grambling turnovers which they converted into four scores. DB Terry Arnold led the charge with two interceptions and 10 tack-

les. Arnold's first theft was returned 15 yards for a score, the first of the game. His second interception set up another score.

Prairie View A&M

Things have been so bad for the Panthers that the main question has become not whether they will steal a win, but if they will score any points at all.

Well, the Panthers did reach the end-zone against Cameron (51-6 loss) and they even took a brief lead when they were ambushed by Grambling, 77-7.

Grambling coach Eddie Robinson was reportedly miffed when PVU scored on the opening play of that game. Running back Andre Rison connected with Tornell Lewis on a 74-yard touchdown pass. But after that, the game turned into a nightmare. The G-Men showed little mercy.

— Dan Wesley

MEAC basketball

Solomon, a transfer from Morgan State, should help immediately. Solomon, was a rising star for MSU two years ago, averaging nine points and eight rebounds a game. That's good news for Julius McNeil (11.3 ppg, 3.4 rpg) and Kelsey Sturdivant. With Solomon in the fold, they won't have to shoulder all of the responsibility for Howard's inside game. Ron Gibbs, Ron Cole and Charles Chase give the Bison more depth up front.

At guard, Milan Brown and Martin Huckaby return. Kentuckians Corey Beard (coach's son) and Tommy Brown could come in to challenge Brown and Huckaby for playing time as rookies.

Morgan State

The Bears opted for a facelift during the off-season, which should produce handsome dividends at some point in the

near future.

Coach Michael Holmes signed 11 new players who are capable of changing Morgan's roundball fortunes right away. Junior college transfers Terry Butler, Matt Burrell and Mike Brewer are the headline players who can make a difference. Butler was the California JUCO Player of the Year in '90. Burrell, at 6-8, 240, is a bona fide power player, and Brewer is a shot blocker who possesses considerable paint skills.

Aside from those three, Morgan has more weaponry in 6-11 rookie center Jarrod Smith and 6-8 Charles Feagin, a former all-state prepster in Ohio. Feagin's role will be vital, since he's versatile enough to play all five positions.

With so many new faces, Ural Hogans, the lone returning starter, is the guy who will be looked to for leadership.

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Hogans had a team-high 84 assists last year.

Bethune-Cookman

If the Wildcats are to rise in the league standings, they'll have to improve their defense and rebounding. Last year coach Cy McClaire's team was badly outscored (15.3 ppg) and outboarded (7.2 rpg).

Offensively, the 'Cats can hold their own. Reggie Cunningham (18.3 ppg, 7.2 rpg) is being counted on to raise his game to a higher level. Even so, he still needs assistance to keep defenses from focusing strictly on him.

Chris Carter, who missed nearly half of last season, is back to run the show at point guard. Terry Taylor is a possible starter at shooting guard.

Inside, 6-8 Thel Sargeant, along with

Jeffrey Robinson, Ambrose Austin and Jon Garvin are expected to provide added scoring and rebounding.

Maryland-Eastern Shore

Coach Bob Hopkins hopes to find a new flight path for his Hawks this season.

So far, the skies haven't been so friendly.

Darrick Purnell (12.7 ppg) and Leland Kent (9.5 ppg, 6.3 rpg) are the prime returnees. To strengthen the front line, Hopkins is counting on Vinnie Huger, Mike Dabbs and Thomas Colbert.

In the backcourt, all-rookie picks Dondre Phoenix and Shawn Johnson are more seasoned and ready to embark on another campaign. Greg Hudgins, a 6-5 JUCO transfer should give UMES some versatility as a swing player.

— Rolando Simmons