

# Rules Could Force Some Out of I-AA Status

Alcorn State athletic director and football coach Cardell Jones doesn't think it's time to push the panic button, but he does admit there is a need for concern over future NCAA legislation.

During the NCAA I-AA football meetings in Dallas two weeks ago, officials from those schools proposed legislation to reduce the number of scholarships from 67 to 45.

A survey by the Ohio Valley Conference revealed 64 of 99 NCAA I-AA schools favored the reduction. The proposal will be on the agenda at next January's NCAA convention.

"It is no way we would want to have that happen," Jones said. "We are trying to build a program here at Alcorn. We are totally against the move."

Jones is not alone in his feelings for maintaining the status quo.

"This would definitely hurt the smaller schools," Mississippi Valley AD Chuck Prophet said. "It would push the I-AA schools further to Division II and away from the I-A level. I don't think this will get on the agenda."

In a vote taken last week, it was 59-13 against cuts.

"That doesn't assure anything," said Georgia Southern athletic director Bucky Wagner, who is against the scholarship reduction. "That's just how people in the room voted — with football coaches present."

Prophet said he would be more in favor of scholarship reduction over the course of several years instead of all at once. He said a more reasonable approach would be to have two scholarships reduced each year until you get down to 55 in 1998.

Some of the larger I-AA schools said they would jump to the I-A level if the proposal is passed.

Southern athletic director Marino Casem said his school would look into that option.

"The whole thing would be the end to I-AA and Division II. For some of us, we would think about going into I-A. We could meet the attendance requirements."

To achieve I-A status, Southern would have to enlarge Mumford Stadium from 24,000 to at least 30,000 and average 17,000 in paid attendance. Last year Southern led I-AA in attendance with a 20,768 average.

**SPEED GAME:** In a league where up-tempo style is the norm, SWAC basketball coaches got a big boost when the

NCAA announced that the shot clock for men will be reduced from 45 seconds to 35 next season.

"It is going to speed up the game," Mississippi Valley coach Lafayette Stribling said. "What the new shot clock will do is create more fan interest. Teams won't be able to go into a stall. It will fit us OK."

Last year, all the teams in the SWAC averaged over 75 points a game with a combined average of 88.1 among the eight teams.

Southern University coach Ben Jobe, whose team won the SWAC tournament title, said the change won't have an effect on his team. The Runnin' Gunnin' Jaguars led the NCAA in scoring last season with a 97.1 points-per-game average.

"I'd like to see a 15-second (shot clock)," said Jobe, whose team stunned Georgia Tech in the first round of the NCAA tournament. "It doesn't affect us. We're going to play the same. We'll still try to average 93 shots a game—a shot every eight seconds. My concept of basketball is based on simplicity. We're going to do the same thing regardless."

**MAGNIFICENT 11:** This spring marks the 25th anniversary of Jackson State having a state-record 11 players drafted into the NFL.

It was the first time a Mississippi school had that many players selected by the NFL draft in a single season.

The players chosen were: tackle Tom Funches and defensive back John Outlaw by the Boston Patriots; defensive back Sidney Ellis and Jimmy Smith by the Cincinnati Bengals; defensive end Doug Chatman and defensive back Jimmie Holifield by the New York Giants; flanker Harold Jackson by the Los Angeles Rams; tackle Edgar Whipps and running back Willie Turner by the Cleveland Browns; and tackle James Jackson by the Baltimore Colts.

"We knew we had some good athletes back then," said JSU sports information director Sam Jefferson, who was a classmate of all the players. "We didn't realize at the time how big it was. It is certainly a big feat to have accomplished. We have always had guys to make it in the NFL."

**SOUTHERN WINS AGAIN:** For the second straight year, Southern has captured the three top prizes for athletic competition in the SWAC.

Southern, winners of seven league championships during the 1992-93 school year, captured the second annual SWAC Commissioner's Cup with 126 points, the C.D. Henry men's all-sports trophy and the women's all-sports trophy.

"Winning these trophies is a tremendous tribute to the quality of athletes and

coaches that we have in this program," Southern athletics director Marino Casem said. "It shows the hard work and sincere dedication that our people have put into producing winners."

"Winning the Commissioner's Cup is extremely gratifying to us. It's a great ending to a great year and is the ultimate stamp of approval for this total athletic program."

Following Southern in the Commissioner's Cup rankings were Grambling State with 93 points, Jackson State (92), Texas Southern (79), Prairie View (71.5), Alcorn State (66.5), Mississippi Valley (61) and Alabama State (47).

Southern won championships in tennis, indoor track and were co-champions with JSU in baseball.

In women's sports the Lady Jaguars were first in cross country, golf, and indoor track and tied with Alcorn in basketball.

—DERRICK MAHONE



Barbara J Jacket of Prairie View A&M one of 17 stars inducted into SWAC Hall of Fame on May 28, 1993 in New Orleans, LA. (Photo by A.J. Sisco)

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