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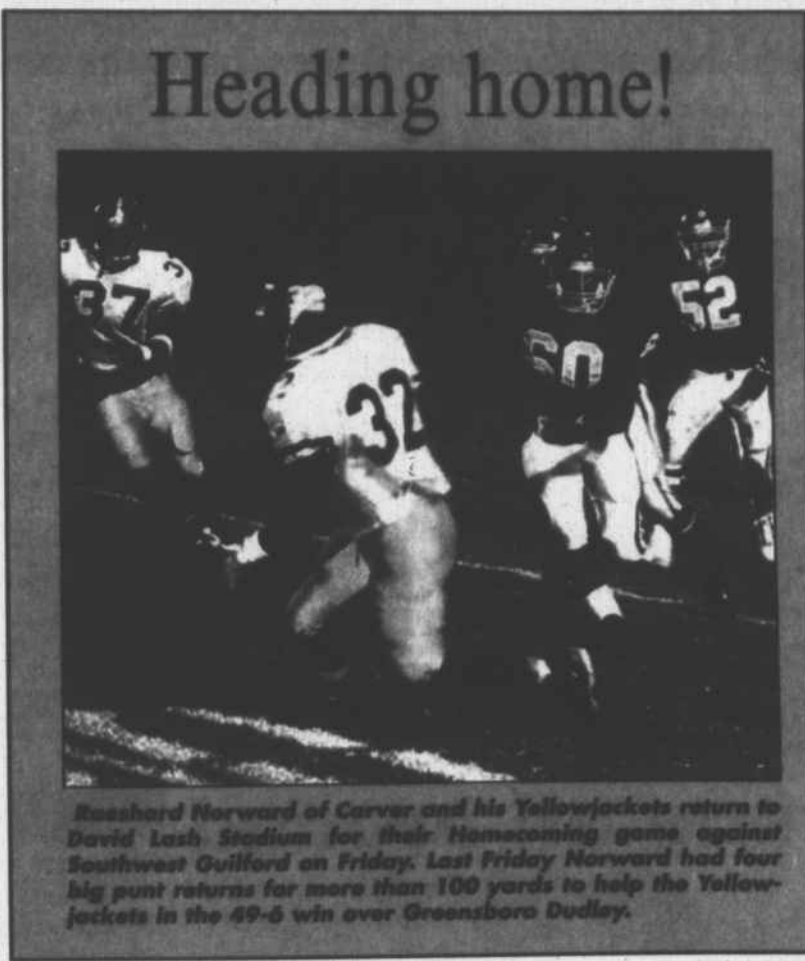
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the winning drive midway through the fourth quarter to earn the victory.

"I thought our kids showed a lot of heart and character," said Kerry Taylor, Carver's coach. "We had some rough spots, but we won a tough game against a good Dudley team. Our kids never quit and that's something that I'm very proud of. Hopefully now we can continue to improve and finish strong."

"We were a very young team going into the season and now I think some of the younger kids are beginning to come around," Taylor said. "We're making some strides on offense, especially on the offensive line. If we can continue to improve I think we'll finish very strong."

Carver will travel to Southwest Guilford in a key battle tonight while Dudley visits Deaton-Thompson Stadium for a game against Parkland.



Linebacker David Lash of Carver and his Yellowjackets return to David Lash Stadium for their homecoming game against Southwest Guilford on Friday. Last Friday Lash had four big punt returns for more than 100 yards to help the Yellowjackets in the 49-6 win over Greensboro Dudley.

Aggies' 3-0 MEAC record adds to appeal of homecoming showdown with Howard

By DAMON FORD
For THE CHRONICLE

This game doesn't need any pregame hype.

When North Carolina A&T and Howard get together to play football, no one has to say anything to either team to get the two combatants fired up.

This year's edition of the Aggie-Bison Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference match-up will carry even more significance than ever for A&T. The Aggies bring a 3-0 conference record into the game and need a win to keep pace with Florida A&M in the league standings.

Howard is fighting for its life after losing a couple of early games and has fallen to 2-4 overall and 1-2 in the MEAC. The Bison desperately need a win to salvage their season.

Aggie fans will be hoping for a repeat of their performance two weeks ago when A&T came home to Aggie Stadium after being on the road for their first four games. The Aggies were more than ready to take on two-time defending MEAC champion Hampton and didn't disappoint.

With more than 10,000 fans in the stands, the Aggies commenced to dismantle the Pirates, who were ranked 13th in the Division I-AA poll, to the tune of a 41-24 score that served notice that A&T will have a say in the conference race this season.

Behind the efforts of a stingy defense and a strong running game, A&T scored 38 straight points in the second and third quarters. By the time head coach Bill Hayes looked up at the scoreboard at the beginning of the fourth quarter, his Aggies held a 41-6 lead.

"We were primed and ready," he said. "Our kids came to play."

The Aggie offense, which scored 21 fourth-quarter points to beat Norfolk State University two weeks ago, continued to click on all cylinders against Hampton.

Tailback Maurice Smith led the charge, accumulating 142 yards on 18 carries and one touchdown, while quarterback Jason Battle combined with fullback Eric Farmer for another 102 yards on 13 carries. But what really set the



Adrian Parks' running could be vital to A&T's chances against Howard.

game apart for the Aggies was the play of their defensive unit. Linebackers B.J. Little and Josh Rogers, along with defensive Shawn Paylor, led the charge.

They kept NFL quarterback prospect Roy Johnson and 1998 All-MEAC running back Montrel Coley in check for most of the game. Johnson was sacked twice, threw two interceptions and netted only 86 yards passing in the first three quarters before breaking loose for 149 yards in the fourth quarter against A&T's reserves. Coley, who ran for over 1,000 yards last year, could manage only a meager 26 against a defense that continued to pound him relentlessly at the line of scrimmage. "We're an eight-man front team and you're not supposed to be able to run on an eight-man front team," Hayes said.

Hayes went on to say that if it weren't for a couple of turnovers by the offense early in the game, which put Hampton in good scoring position, the Aggies' defense could have had a shutout going into the last quarter.

"We've got good team speed and you shouldn't underestimate it," he said.

Hampton coach Joe Taylor, who saw his team's record fall to 4-2 overall and 2-1 in the MEAC after that loss, gave the Aggies credit for coming in with a sound game plan.

"First of all you've got to take your hat off to (A&T)," he said. "Coach Hayes has got to be very proud of these guys because they played from beginning to end. 'Mo Smith just ran the ball hard.'" Hayes and the Aggies surprised

a lot of people by trying something different. Faced with a third and 21 situation on Hampton's 26-yard line, A&T surprised everyone by bringing in third-string quarterback Tim Funderburke, a redshirt sophomore, who came in to replace starter Jason Battle, who was sacked for a 7-yard loss on the previous play.

The Aggies quickly lined up in a shotgun formation with five wide receivers. Funderburke, a Charlotte native and former Shrine Bowl quarterback, took the snap and calmly lofted a perfect pass into the hands of fellow Charlottean Steve Shipp, who was also named to the Shrine Bowl as a wide receiver before signing with the University of Florida.

According to Hayes, the coaches had been trying to get Shipp some playing time but because of the kinks still being worked out in the Multiple-I, they hadn't been able to give him many snaps.

"I really wanted to run our five wide outs (wide receivers) there," Hayes said. "Shipp was hungry to get into the box (end zone)."

That helped to open the floodgates and from there, the Aggies coasted to victory.

The Aggies didn't have to rely on their passing in their win against Morgan State last week. A&T used the running of Eric Farmer and Mo Smith to dominate after falling behind 6-0. Farmer rushed for 90 yards and two touchdowns while Smith added 106 yards rushing.

The Aggies will need to mix the two together this week against Howard if they plan on, coming out victorious.

Williams is ready to evict Hingis from top of rankings

By ERICA BULMAN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ZURICH, Switzerland - After beating Martina Hingis in her own backyard, third-ranked Venus Williams is ready to evict her rival from her place atop the world rankings.

By hammering her way past Hingis in the final of the Swisscom Challenge 6-3, 6-4 on Sunday, Williams believes she was serving the top-ranked Swiss star notice.

"I definitely will be number one and probably next season," said Williams. "I have everything going for me."

"I have a lot of power. I'm capable. I'm a smart girl. I'm hard on myself. I have six titles this season."

Having clashed five times already this season, the two 19-year-olds have been locked in a fierce rivalry.

Sunday's victory marked Williams' second consecutive win over the Swiss player, having defeated Hingis in the semifinals of the Grand Slam Cup just two weeks ago, before coming up short against her sister, Serena.

While Hingis still has an 8-5 win-loss record against the lanky American, Williams leads this season's head-to-heads 3-2, having also defeated Hingis in the semifinals of the Italian Open in May.

Williams' only losses to Hingis came in the semifinals of the U.S. Open and the final in San Diego, when the Swiss player reclaimed her place atop the world rankings from American Lindsay Davenport.

But, Williams said, Hingis' lease on the top spot is nearly up.

Despite the fact that Serena was the first sister to win a Grand Slam title, defeating Hingis in the final of the U.S. Open, Venus still believes she'll be the one to replace the Swiss star from her perch atop the world rankings next year.

"I have no Grand Slams so I have no major points to defend," she said. "I have nothing to lose and only one way to go: up."

But Williams will have to brush up on a few elements before she can hope to usurp the top ranking from her rival.

In Sunday's final against Hingis, Williams' most potent weapon - her

missile-like serve - played as much against her as for her.

Serving up seven aces on the sluggish carpet, only 47 percent of Williams' first serves were good. Unwilling to risk a double fault, Williams' muscle was wasted.

But since losing to Hingis in the semifinals of the U.S. Open, Williams has been making a determined effort to master her serve.

Once she does, Williams says she'll be a force to reckon with.

"I'm practicing my consistency and placement and I'm really going for it," she said. "When I get it just right you won't believe it."

But Williams may need more than just a strong serve to oust Hingis, the winner of 26 career titles, including five Grand Slams and nearly \$11 million in career earnings.

Hingis has won seven titles this season, including the Australian Open. Four other of her titles this year came at Tier 1 events.

She also reached the final of the U.S. and French Opens and has a 65-11 win-loss record this season.

"With some more physical training I can beat her again," shrugged a confident Hingis.

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