

FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 28 - APRIL 3, 2006

# BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS PAGE



## HOOPS SEASON CLOSES

VUU BOWS IN NATIONAL FINALS; HARGROVE NAMED NCAA DIV. II TOP PLAYER

**HARGROVE:** Two-time CIAA Tourney MVP and 05-06 player of the year led Panthers back to Division II title game.

## NCAA DIVISION II ELITE EIGHT RECAPS

### FINALS (Men)

WINONA STATE 73, VIRGINIA UNION 61

Virginia Union's Panthers fell behind by 18 points in the first half and a frantic second-half comeback never got them back even as Winona State stopped their bid to repeat as NCAA Div. II champions in the national title game Saturday in Springfield, Massachusetts. VUU (30-4), who made up nine-point second-half deficits in winning quarterfinal and semifinal games, cut WSU's early 35-17 lead down to nine, 38-29 at the half. After the break, the Panthers went to a pressing defense to get the lead down to six three times and got as close as five, at 54-49 with 8:32 left. The Warriors, however, beat back every comeback attempt including going on a 10-2 run to go up 64-51 with 4:45 remaining. VUU made one final run at the Warriors, climbing to within 66-59 with 2:11 to go before WSU closed the game on a 7-2 run. **Brad Byerson** led the Panthers with 22 points and 14 rebounds but he was the only Panther to reach double figures. VUU shot a woeful 9% (1 of 11) from three-point range and just 40% (23 of 58) from the floor. The loss was VUU head coach **Dave Robbins'** first in four trips to the championship game. WSU canned 10 of 25 3-pointers and had four players reach double figures.

### SEMIFINALS (Men)

VIRGINIA UNION 68, SEATTLE PACIFIC 63

Virginia Union made up a nine-point second half deficit for the second night in a row and outscored Seattle-Pacific 17-5 over the final nine-and-a-half minutes of Thursday's semifinal game at the MassMutual Center to earn a shot at a repeat national championship on Saturday. The Panthers (30-3) led 33-30 at the half but were outscored 23-11 over the first seven-and-a-half minutes of the second half to trail 53-44 with 12:40 left. They pulled within two, at 53-51 before the Falcons scored five straight points to lead 58-51 with 9:38 to play. VUU, who hit 62.5 percent (15 of 24) of its second-half shots, then began its final run on **Chris Greene** bucket and back-to-back baskets by **Darius Hargrove**. But VUU still needed heroics from point guard **Buster Perkins**, whose putback provided the two-point margin of victory in the quarterfinal game. SPU all-American guard **Tony Binetti** canned a three-pointer for the last of his 17 points with 2:10 left to pull the Falcons even at 63. A free throw by center **Brad Byerson** game VUU a 64-63 lead before Perkins came through tipping home a Crockett miss to put VUU up 66-63 with :45 seconds left. Just as in Wednesday's game, the bucket by Perkins was his only tally of the evening. SPU would not connect again. Hargrove (22 points) and Byerson converted free throws to close out the scoring. Byerson had 14 points and a game-high 16 rebounds for the Panthers while Greene also had 14 points.

### QUARTERFINALS (Men)

VIRGINIA UNION 60, SIU-EDWARDSVILLE 58

Point guard **Buster Perkins** rebounded a **Darius Hargrove** layup miss and swished an eight-footer with 7.6 seconds left to provide the winning margin for the Panthers (29-3) in an Elite Eight quarterfinal game Wednesday in Springfield, Miss. Perkins got his only basket of the game after SIU-E tied the game with :42 seconds left on **Mike Hardiek's** two free throws. The Panthers trailed 33-32 at the half in a game that had 15 lead changes and were down 52-43 with 8:25 left until a 10-0 run put them up 53-52 at the 4:09 mark. **Brad Byerson's** jumper put the Panthers up 58-56 with 1:03 left. Byerson was the high man for the Panthers with 16 points and 10 rebounds. VUU's dynamic trio of **Darius Hargrove** (3 of 11), **Duan Crockett** (2 of 13) and **Chris Greene** (2 of 10) shot a combined 7 for 34. Crockett was 9 of 10 from the line to finish with 14 points.

### QUARTERFINALS (Women)

ST. CLOUD STATE 78, SHAW 71

CIAA and South Atlantic Region champion **Shaw** (29-5) battled gamely but could not get past the national quarterfinals for the second year in a row as they fell to St. Cloud State (29-4) in the opening game of the NCAA Div. II Elite Eight at the Summit Arena in Hot Springs, Arkansas Wednesday. The Lady Bears came out in a full-court press and led 13-7 early before SCSU rallied to lead by nine with just over four minutes left in the first half. Shaw closed the half on a 10-4 run capped by **Leslee Anderson's** 3-pointer just before the buzzer and trailed 34-31 at the break. They went down by ten early in the second half, cut that lead to two and then saw SCSU go up by nine, 55-46 with 8:48 remaining. Shaw got no closer than five points the rest of the way. They stayed within striking distance however with their biggest deficit being 70-58 with 3:18 to play. Anderson led the Lady Bears with 19 points while **Nastassia Boucicault** added 17.

## FINAL BCSP MEN'S TOP TEN

1. VIRGINIA UNION (30-4) - Defending NCAA Division II national champs lost in return trip to title game to Winona State. Led by D2 co-Player of the year **Darius Hargrove** and all-American **Duan Crockett**. **Dave Robbins'** Panthers won third straight CIAA title and second straight South Atlantic Region crown.
2. SOUTHERN (19-13) - Under new head coach **Rob Spivery**, Jaguars won SWAC regular season race by four games and swept to tournament title. They then battled No. 1 overall seed Duke to 70-54 loss in first round NCAA tournament game.
3. DELAWARE STATE (21-14) - Hornets won MEAC regular season title by four games to earn NIT bid despite losing in MEAC Tournament finals. Worked Northern Arizona in NIT before losing at top-seed Louisville.
4. JOHNSON C. SMITH (23-8) - CIAA West Division champs lost to Va. Union in CIAA finals and in first round of D2 South Atlantic Regionals.
5. WEST VIRGINIA STATE (27-7) - Won WVIAC Tournament title and made it to D2 East Regional semifinals.
6. GRAMBLING STATE (16-13) - SWAC regular season runners-up lost in SWAC Tournament semifinals playing without league scoring leader **Brian Rush**.
7. BENEDICT (22-6) - Won SIAC regular season win 20-2 mark, lost in tournament quarterfinals and in first round of D2 South Regional.
8. ST. AUGUSTINE'S (19-7) - CIAA W. Div. runners-up lost in quarterfinals of CIAA Tournament.
9. STILLMAN (21-9) - Finished second in SIAC but swept to Tournament title. Lost in first round of D2 South Regional.
10. COPPIN STATE (12-18) - Played toughest non-conference Div. I schedule in country, played into second-place finish in MEAC. Bowled out in tournament quarters.



**ROBBINS:** Falls short in return trip to D2 title game.

## FINAL BCSP WOMEN'S TOP TEN

1. COPPIN STATE (22-9) - Derek Brown's Lady Eagles repeated as both the regular season and tournament champions of the MEAC, finishing with an 19-0 mark in league games, then battled national power Connecticut in a first round NCAA game. That's enough to unseat three-time champ, Shaw.
2. SHAW (29-5) - Jacques Curtis's Lady Bears won their fourth straight CIAA Tourney title, second straight South Atlantic Region title but fell again in the national quarterfinals. CIAA win streak at 77 games.
3. FORT VALLEY STATE (28-3) - Lady Wildcats went 20-0 to take SIAC regular season crown, lost in tournament finals to Paine and lost by one in South Regional.
4. SOUTHERN (20-11) - Tied for first with Jackson State in SWAC regular season, won tournament title over Alabama State. Lost badly to Duke in first round of NCAA.
5. JACKSON STATE (17-14) - Tied Southern for SWAC regular season crown. Lost in Tournament semis.
6. DELAWARE STATE (21-9) - Finished as runners-up to Coppin State in MEAC regular season and tournament.
7. J. C. SMITH (20-11) - CIAA West Division winner, finished as tournament runner-up. Ousted in first round of S. Atlantic Regional.
8. N. C. CENTRAL (23-7) - Finished behind JC Smith in CIAA West. Lost to Shaw in CIAA Tourney semis and again to Lady Bears in S. Atlantic Regional semis.
9. ELIZABETH CITY STATE (20-9) - Runners-up to Shaw in CIAA East, lost controversial semifinal game to J.C. Smith in CIAA Tourney.
10. PAINE (22-8) - Finished behind Ft. Valley State in SIAC regular season, knocked off FVU in tourney finals before losing in first round of South Regional.



**BROWN:** Has won 29 straight MEAC games.

# Va. Union, Coppin State finish on top

## LUT WILLIAMS

BCSP Editor

One year after winning its third NCAA Division II national title, head coach **Dave Robbins'** Virginia Union basketball team was right back in Saturday's championship game.

Unlike last year however, the Panthers could not get it done. They lost to Winona State (see ELITE EIGHT RECAPS). Robbins' first loss in four championship appearances to return to Richmond this year as national runners-up. They finished the season at 30-4, the identical record as in last year's title run.

But the loss didn't stop the Panthers from winning their fourth top spot in the final BCSP Top Ten ranking of black college men's basketball teams. They won their third straight CIAA Tournament title, Robbins' 14th, and their eighth South Atlantic Regional crown. Under Robbins, the Panthers are 8-0 in regional finals. It is the fourth time VUU has been selected as the BCSP's top team, adding to titles in 1996, '98 and 2005.

Finishing behind the Panthers this season is SWAC champion



**SPIVERY:** Won Jags first title since 1993.

**Southern**, who won both the regular season and tournament championships under new coach **Rob Spivery**. The Jaguars (19-13) clinched the runner-up spot with an outstanding performance against ACC champion and NCAA Div. I Tournament top seed Duke in the first round of the Atlanta Regional in Greensboro, N.C. That 70-54 loss stamped Spivery's influence on a program that had not won a SWAC title since 1993.

**Delaware State** won its second straight regular season title but was upset in the finals of the conference tournament. By virtue of their regular season title, the Hornets (21-14) earned automatic entry to the National Invitational Tournament (NIT) where they distinguished themselves with a road win over Northern Arizona. They lost in the second round to top seed Louisville. After finishing behind Va. Union last season, the Hornets are third this year.

While the top three teams made some noise on the national scene, the rest of the Top Ten was just inside the limelight. CIAA West Division titleist and Tourney runner-up **Johnson C. Smith** (23-8) is fourth. The Golden Bulls bowed out in the first round of the South Atlantic Regional. **West Virginia State** (27-7), who won the WVIAC Tournament and advanced to the semifinal round of the Div. II East Regional, is fifth.

SWAC regular season runner-up **Grambling State** (16-13) leads the second five, followed by SIAC regular season champ and South Regional participant **Benedict** (22-6), high-scoring CIAA W. Div. runner-up **St. Augustine's** (19-7), SIAC regular season runner-up and Tournament winner **Stillman** (21-9) and MEAC regular season runner-up **Coppin State** (12-18).

# BCSP Notes

## Hargrove named D2 player of the year

Virginia Union guard **Darius Hargrove** and South Dakota forward **Turner Trulholz** were named Division II co-players of the year last week by the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC).

Hargrove, a senior from Worfield, Va. that was named this year's CIAA player of the year, led the Panthers to a 30-4 record and their second consecutive berth in the national title game. He averaged 17.3 points and 4.5 rebounds. The 6-4 Hargrove, a three-year starter and all-CIAA player at VUU who was the 2004 and 2005 CIAA Tournament most valuable player, also led the team in steals (67) and free throw percentage (85.1).

Hargrove has been invited to play in the Portsmouth Invitational Tournament that begins next week, a showcase of top seniors in the nation for NBA and other pro scouts.

## O'Neal posts second top 15 finish

Former Jackson State golfer **Tim O'Neal** shot a final round 2-under 69 Sunday to finish in a tie for 14th at the Chitimacha Louisiana Open. O'Neal took home \$8,000 in his second start on this year's tour, the second in which he's finished in the top 15.

O'Neal's 3-under 280 total tied him with six other golfers who finished eight shots behind winner **Johnson Wagner**, who pocketed \$90,000 for his first Nationwide Tour win.

O'Neal was playing for the first time since finishing in a tie for 11th at the Movistar Panama Open in late January where he earned \$11,660. He skipped Nationwide events in Australia and New Zealand. He is currently 27th on the Nationwide money list.

## Albany State hoops coach and AD steps down

Albany State athletic director and head men's basketball coach **John I. Davis** has resigned effective June 30. Davis handed in his letter or resignation on Friday, March 17 and that school president **Everette J. Freeman** accepted the resignation later that day.

Davis' departure ends two separate stints at ASU. His first stint at Albany State began in 1976, when he accepted the role as men's assistant basketball coach under Coach **Oliver Jones**, while teaching at the college's Hazard Laboratory School. Davis held that position until 1982, when he was named head coach of the women's basketball team. He was women's coach from 1982-90.

During that time he also started the Golden Ram's volleyball program and served as head coach from 1986-90. He was inducted into the Albany Sports Hall of Fame in 1996. From 1990-2000, the Albany Sports Hall of Fame inductee (1996) and Golden Ram alum (1969) worked in various administrative positions in the Dougherty County School System.

## LUT WILLIAMS

BCSP Editor

**Derek Brown's Coppin State** women's basketball team is less than halfway toward matching **Jacques Curtis'** Shaw Lady Bears' incredible 76-game win streak against CIAA competition, but the Lady Eagles have overtaken the Lady Bears in the final BCSP women's basketball rankings.

Coppin State, whose MEAC win streak is at 29 games, swept to its second straight regular season and tournament crown this season en route to a 22-9 finish. But what vaulted the Lady Eagles past the Lady Bears is somewhat of a breakthrough on the national scene.

One year after being drummed by North Carolina in an NCAA Division I first round tournament game, Brown's Lady Eagles gave national power Connecticut fits this year, leading for most of the first half before falling 77-54 to the Huskies in an opening round game. That performance helped Brown's troops nudge out the Lady Bears and end their four-year struggle on the top spot.

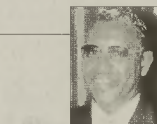
Shaw (29-5) continued its dominant ways in the CIAA, winning its unprecedented fourth straight tournament title and repeating as South Atlantic Regional champs. Their national championship quest again came up short, just as it did a year ago, with an Elite Eight first round loss (see ELITE EIGHT RECAPS).

**Fort Valley State** (28-3) was nearly as dominant in the SIAC and earns a third-place designation this year. The Lady Wildcats posted a 20-0 regular season mark before falling to Paine in the tournament finals. FVU lost a first round heartbreaker in the South Regional. **Paine** (22-8), who also lost in the first round of the Regional, finished tenth.

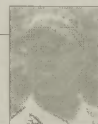
**Southern** (20-11) tied with Jackson State (17-14) for the SWAC regular season title and then knocked off Alabama State for the tournament crown. The Lady Jags, unlike the men's team, had a much harder time with Duke's women in the NCAA Tournament setting a record for scoring fertility in a 96-27 loss. Southern is fourth with Jackson State fifth.

**Delaware State** (21-9) finished behind Coppin State in both the MEAC regular season and tournament. The Lady Hornets hold down the sixth spot.

**Johnson C. Smith** (20-11), **North Carolina Central** (23-7) and **Elizabeth City State** (20-9), all played second fiddle to Shaw in the CIAA and hold down spots seven thru nine. JCSU finished as CIAA Tournament runner-up to Shaw, N.C. Central lost to the Lady Bears in the CIAA Tournament semifinals and the semifinals of the South Atlantic Regional. ECSU finished behind Shaw in the CIAA East.



DAVIS



O'NEAL



JOHNSON

Davis was coaxed into returning to his alma mater by then-president **Portia Holmes Shields**. The school had been placed on probation and Shields wanted Davis to oversee the school's efforts to get back into compliance with NCAA Division II standards. Davis returned in 2001 as both athletic director and head men's basketball coach.

Last year, ASU went off probation and the men's basketball team won the regular-season SIAC title. For the past two years, Albany State has won the SIAC's All-Sports Trophy as the top overall athletics program. The school won titles in seven of its 11 sports last year and has already captured three of four fall championships (football, volleyball and women's cross country) this season.

## Jackson State's Johnson to test NBA waters

According to a story in the Jackson Clarion-Ledger, **Jackson State's** 6-5 guard **Trey Johnson** has announced he will forego his senior season to make himself available for this year's NBA Draft.

The prolific scorer, whose 23.5 points per game was eighth best in Div. I basketball and second to **Grambling guard Brian Rush** (25.8) in the SWAC, believes his showing this season proves he's ready for the next level.

"After the season I just had, the timing seems right for me in terms of making this decision," the Clarion-Ledger reported Johnson said during his press conference Friday on the JSU campus. "I feel that (the statistics) I put up really opened up some eyes out there."

Johnson's father, **Clinton Johnson**, said the family will not hire an agent to represent his son, meaning the door will be left open for a return to JSU.

## Lincoln and Langston not to join SIAC

**Lincoln (Mo.) University** and **Langston University** have informed the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference that they will not be joining the conference. Financial and geographical issues contributed to the decision.

Langston and Lincoln were both in their first year of provisional membership in the SIAC. Langston was also applying for membership in the NCAA. Langston will remain a member of the NAIA competing in the Red River Athletic Conference. **Claflin University** is still a provisional member of the SIAC and is eligible to become the thirteenth full member beginning Spring 2007.