

BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS PAGE



GSU/SCSU Sports Photos

TWO AT THE TOP

VA. UNION NAMES NEW COACH; SWAC NAMES TOP PLAYERS; REVIEWING THE SIAC'S BAD CALL

CO-CHAMPS: SWAC champ Grambling State and MEAC champ South Carolina State best black college football teams of 2008.

UNDER THE BANNER

WHAT'S GOING ON IN AND AROUND BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

TWO BAD CALLS

Upon further review, the **Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC)** needs to overturn its punishment of **Philip Harden**, the back judge whose missed call supposedly cost **Tuskegee** its 26-game winning streak, an undefeated season and the Golden Tigers' second consecutive Black College National Championship.



Commentary

ROSCOE NANCE

Interim SIAC Commissioner **George Mategakis** permanently suspended Harden after the conference's commissioner of officials ruled that Harden made the wrong call when he said Tuskegee receiver **Jonathan Lessa** was out of bounds when he caught what would have been the go-ahead touchdown with seconds remaining in the *Turkey Day Classic*, which **Alabama State** won 17-13.

The punishment simply doesn't fit the crime, and another bad call won't undo the first one.

While Harden's mistake robbed Tuskegee of a place in history - a victory would have broken the school record for consecutive wins, and, given the state of the SIAC, there is no telling how many more games the Golden Tigers might have won before losing - it was just that, a mistake.

We've seen officials at all levels, including the NFL, which is supposed to have the most highly-skilled, well-trained game officials in the world, blow calls every week without being fired, which is essentially what the SIAC did to Harden. We've even seen NFL officials miss calls despite having the help of instant replay without anyone being fired.

SIAC Public Relations and Marketing Director **Harry Stinson III**, the conference's incoming interim commissioner, who will replace Mategakis, told *The Birmingham News* the suspension "wasn't based solely on him missing that call," but didn't say what other factors were involved. For Stinson not to lay all the cards on the table, if there are cards to be laid on the table, is a disservice.

The SIAC's handling of the situation is curious at the very least. For starters, the conference didn't complete its investigation into the matter until nearly a week after the game was played. Then it took Mategakis to release a poorly constructed statement, in which he said among other things "We expect complete honesty from our officials at all times. Anything else is simply unacceptable." The implication is Harden was dishonest and deliberately blew the call. If that were the case, Mategakis should say so in no uncertain terms.

Dr. Moses Norman, SIAC supervisor of officials and the man who conducted the investigation, says he found no evidence that the call was nothing more than an error on Harden's part. Norman came to that conclusion after reviewing video and stills of the play. Harden didn't have that luxury. Mategakis also said the entire crew "did a distressingly poor job officiating the contest." Yet only Harden is being punished. Norman and Dr. W. J. Maye, a neutral observer for the conference at the game, disagreed with Mategakis.

"I thought the game was well-officiated," Maye says, adding that he doesn't have an opinion on the accuracy of Harden's call because he didn't have good view of it from his seat in the press box. Norman says Mategakis' characterization of how well the game was officiated "was an unfortunate and ill-used term."

Interestingly, Norman recommended a one-year suspension for Harden because in his estimation Harden missed a call that he shouldn't have. Therefore, he should be punished, but even a year's suspension is steep.

The permanent suspension pleases Tuskegee's administration, alumni and fans, who probably wouldn't be opposed to even harsher punishment - whatever that might be.

"It is cruelly unfair for game officials to tilt the contest against one of the teams," Tuskegee President **Dr. Benjamin F. Payton**, who is also President of the Presidents Council for the SIAC, said in statement from Tuskegee. "Such behavior lays the groundwork for an odious corruption to enter college athletics and to nurture moral cynicism among our youth. The strongest possible sanctions need to be used against such conduct." A missed call doesn't equal corruption.

The bottom line is no sanctions against Harden, regardless how harsh, will change the Golden Tigers' record or alter the fact they just were not sharp against Alabama State, for whatever reason. **Eddie Robinson**, the late, great **Grambling State** coaching legend, used to say that, "You should lose with dignity and win without acting the fool."

The Golden Tigers would do well to practice the former. With 611 all-time victories, tops among HBCUs and among the most in all of college football, whining and complaining isn't befitting a program of Tuskegee's tradition and stature.

Roscoe Nance is a veteran sportswriter whose career began in 1975. He most recently covered the NBA for USA Today for 14 years. He is a 1971 graduate of Tuskegee.

Grambling takes SWAC title; Shares top spot

LUT WILLIAMS
BCSP Editor

Grambling State did its part Saturday, thrashing **Jackson State** 41-9 to claim the **Southwestern Athletic Conference** football championship before a crowd of over 25,000 at Birmingham's Legion Field. But even with that dominating victory, the Tigers did not overtake **Mid Eastern Athletic Conference** champion **South Carolina State** in the final **BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS PAGE** Top Ten for 2008.

Grambling quarterback **Greg Dillon** was the difference in Saturday's SWAC title game. The 6-foot, 200-pound junior signal-caller completed 12 of 17 passes for 137 yards and three touchdowns and ran for another as the West Division champs (11-2) pulled away from a 13-0 halftime lead to the decisive win.

After being held scoreless in the first half, East Division champ **JSU** (7-5) appeared to gain some life when they recovered a **GSU** fumble early in the third quarter and converted a 42-yard field **Eric Perri** field goal to pull within 13-3 with 10:57 left in the period. But Grambling's **David Stuckman** return the ensuing kickoff 91 yards for a score and a 20-3 Grambling lead.

Moments later, Grambling got the ball back on **T. J. McCord's** interception and needed just three plays to score, this time with Dillon connecting on his third TD pass of the day of seven yards to **Kiare Thompson**. Thompson also caught a five-yarder from Dillon to open the scoring in the first quarter.

McCord's interception was one of five take-aways for the Grambling defense which held **JSU** to 56 rushing yards in 30 attempts while picking off three passes. **GSU** closed out the scoring on

an 85-yard interception return late in the fourth quarter.

"We controlled the game from start to finish and really never let them get into it," said victorious second-year coach **Rod Broadway**, who lost to **JSU** 42-31 in last year's title game.

"In some ways, it was a good, old-fashioned butt-kicking," said **JSU** head coach **Rick Comegy**.

The dominating championship game win and Grambling's 10-0 record against SWAC teams gives the G-Men a strong case for first place in the final **BCSP** Top Ten, but the relative weakness of the SWAC this season opened the door for an equally dominant **South Carolina State** team to join them at the top.

After repeated second-place finishes, the Bulldogs finally got it done this year in head coach **Oliver "Buddy" Pough's** seventh season, running the table (8-0) in the much stronger **Mid Eastern Athletic Conference** and earning the league's automatic FCS playoff bid. A strong showing in a 37-21 first round loss to three-time defending FCS champion **Appalachian State** proved the Bulldogs' mettle as did a 17-0 regular season loss to Div. I Central Florida that opened the season. Their only other loss was to **Clemson** of the ACC.

Behind the two top teams in third in the final **BCSP** ranking is resurgent **Prairie View A&M** (9-1) who finished behind Grambling in the SWAC West and whose only loss was to the G-Men, 40-16. In his fifth season, **Henry Frazier** now has the one-time moribund Panthers as defensive terrors and legitimate SWAC title contenders.

SIAC champion **Tuskegee** (10-1) was poised

to win its second straight final **BCSP** No. 1 ranking before they stumbled in its season finale at **Alabama State**, 17-13. That loss to a then 2-8 team dropped them to fourth in our final Top Ten.

Everyone knew that head coach **Joe Taylor's** move from **Hampton** to **Florida A&M** would spell good things for the Rattlers. Nobody, however, expected it to pay dividends so soon. Taylor rejuvenated the proud Rattler program, finishing 9-3 and as the hottest among four teams that tied for second in the **MEAC** behind **SC State**. Florida rival **Bethune-Cookman** (8-3) was perhaps more of a surprise. **Alvin Wyatt's** squad also tied for second after being picked seventh by league coaches in the preseason.

After leading the Ohio Valley Conference race thru the middle of the season and earning a spot in the **FSC** Top 25, **Tennessee State** (8-4) closed out the season with two tough losses to knock them out of championship and postseason berths. Still, with wins over Southern, Alabama A&M and Jackson State, they earned a seventh-place finish in our final ranking.

Morgan State and **Southern** both posted 6-5 record and finished just out of the money in the **MEAC** and **SWAC**. **MSU** was the last team with a shot at **SC State** but stumbled before that game against the Bulldogs vs. Norfolk State giving the Bulldogs the title. They went on to knock off **Hampton** to gain a share of second place in the **MEAC**. **Southern** kept its hopes for a **SWAC** title alive until the season-ending Bayou Classic, where they suffered a 29-14 loss to Grambling.

CIAA champ **Shaw** (8-3) and **SIAC** co-runners-up **Albany State** round out the final Top Ten.

FINAL 2008 BCSP FOOTBALL TOP TEN

- GRAMBLING STATE (11-2)** - The G-Men in their second year under Rod Broadway dominated SWAC competition winning ten games by a 30-8 average margin and won its fifth league title in nine years with a 41-9 thrashing of Jackson State in the title game. Their only losses were to Div. I Nevada-Reno (49-13) and FCS member Northwest Louisiana State (31-19).
- (TIE) SOUTH CAROLINA STATE (10-3)** - The Bulldogs finally got over the hump claiming their first MEAC title (first since 1992) after many close calls in head coach Buddy Pough's seven years and earned their first FCS playoff berth since 1984. Went 8-0 in much stronger MEAC and only suffered losses to Div. I members Clemson (54-0) and Central Florida (17-0) and a close decision to three-time defending FCS champion Appalachian State (37-21) in the national playoffs.
- PRAIRIE VIEW A&M (9-1)** - Worst-to-first scenario almost completed as head coach Henry Frazier's Panthers only loss was to SWAC champion Grambling State (40-16).
- TUSKEGEE (10-1)** - SIAC champ had its undefeated season, 26-game win streak halted in season finale by Alabama State, 17-13. Knocked



BROADWAY



POUGH

them out of shot at a repeat final No. 1 ranking.

- FLORIDA A&M (9-3)** - New head coach Joe Taylor's squad closed strong winning six of its final seven games to tie three others for second in the **MEAC** at 5-3.
- BETHUNE-COOKMAN (8-3)** - Picked seventh in pre-season MEAC coaches poll, Alvin Wyatt's troops surprised many by finishing in second-place tie in **MEAC** at 5-3.
- TENNESSEE STATE (8-4)** - Two straight losses to end season dashed James Webster's Tigers' OVC title and FCS playoff hopes.
- MORGAN STATE (6-5)** - Donald Hill Eley's Bears made a run at **MEAC** crown before faltering late in season at Norfolk State. One of four tied for second in **MEAC**.
- (TIE) SOUTHERN (6-5)** - With chance at **SWAC** West title, Pete Richardson's Jaguars fell to Grambling in Bayou Classic, 29-14.
- ALBANY STATE (7-4)** - Finished in three-way tie for second place in **SIAC** but earned NCAA Div. II playoff spot, losing in first round.
- SHAW (8-3)** - Darrel Asberry's dominant defense led Bears to second straight **CIAA** championship. Losses to Texas Southern, Albany State and St. Augustine's kept them from moving higher.

BCSP Notes

From AD, Bailey to become Virginia Union head football coach

Virginia Union has hired Athletic Director **Michael Bailey** as its football coach. In other words, Bailey, in effect, has hired himself.

Bailey, who has been athletic director at Virginia Union since 2001, announced last week that he will fill the vacant head coaching position for the Panther's football program. Bailey, 43, replaces **Greg Richardson**, whose contract wasn't renewed after just one season in which **VUU** went 5-5.

Bailey becomes **VUU's** third coach in nine months, and will be returning to the Panthers' sideline where he had been offensive coordinator from 1995 to 2001 under **Willard Bailey**.

"I felt good about what we accomplished when I was coaching under Coach Bailey to rebuild the program," Bailey told the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. Richardson was perhaps let go because the Panthers, picked to win the **CIAA** title this year by the league's coaches, underachieved.

Bailey is a 1986 Virginia Union graduate.

SWAC names top award winners

Southern quarterback **Bryant Lee** was named Offensive Most Valuable Player and **Jackson State** linebacker **Marcellus Speaks** was named Defensive Most Valuable Player of the 2008 **Southwestern Athletic Conference** football season, among individual honors announced last week.

Grambling State quarterback **Greg Dillon** earned Newcomer of the Year honors, and Texas Southern cornerback **De'Markus Washington** earned Freshman of the Year accolades in voting by conference coaches, sports information personnel, and selected members of the media.



BAILEY



LEE



SPEAKS



DILLON

Lee, a junior from Boutte, La., led the **SWAC** in completions (217), attempts (352), passing yards (2,682) and touchdown passes (20) while throwing just seven interceptions. He also rushed for 534 yards and six touchdowns.

Speaks, a 6-2, 230-pounder from Jackson, Ms., led the **SWAC** with 115 tackles (54 solo; 20.5 for loss), and also had five sacks, one interception, two forced fumbles, and one blocked kick in leading the Tigers to the **SWAC** Championship Game for the second consecutive year.

Dillon emerged as the No. 1 quarterback for Grambling, leading them to a ten-game winning streak and a 41-19 win in last weekend's conference title game. He earned most valuable players honors in the championship game completing 13 of 17 passes for 117 yards and three TDs and also rushing for a TD in the 41-9 win over Jackson State. This season, he completed 110 of 185 passes for 1,359 yards with 18 touchdowns with just eight interceptions. He also rushed for 676 yards and four touchdowns. Dillon led all **SWAC** signal callers in rushing this season.

Washington made 37 tackles with five interceptions with one forced fumble and averaged nearly 16 yards per kickoff return for Texas Southern. Washington was tied for second in the **SWAC** in interceptions and tied for third in the nation in interceptions among freshmen. The 5-9, 160-pounder from Dallas proved to be one of **SWAC's** best ball hawks, posting a pair of two-interception games in the first three games of the season.

2008 BLACK COLLEGE BASKETBALL (Men's Results, Standings and Weekly Honors)

CIAA CENTRAL INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

	DIV		ALL	
	W	L	W	L
Virginia Union	1	0	4	3
Bowie State	1	1	4	4
Elizabeth City State	0	0	8	1
Virginia State	0	0	3	5
St. Paul's	0	1	2	4
WEST				
Johnson C. Smith	1	0	7	1
Fayetteville State	1	0	5	1
St. Augustine's	1	1	3	4
Shaw	1	2	2	6
Livingstone	0	1	5	3

CIAA PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

PLAYER
RYAN SCOTT, 6-3, Sr., G, **JCSU**, Reston, VA - Averaged 15 points, 5 assists including 20-point outing in win over ECSU.
ROOKIE
NA
COACH
STEVE JOYNER, **JCSU** - Had 2-0 week including handing undefeated and nationally ranked ECSU its first loss of the season.

MEAC MID EASTERN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

	CONF		ALL	
	W	L	W	L
NC A&T State	1	0	5	4
Bethune-Cookman	1	0	4	5
Morgan State	1	0	4	6
Delaware State	1	0	2	12
Hampton	1	1	5	4
SC State	0	0	5	4
Florida A&M	0	1	2	7
Norfolk State	0	1	1	5
Howard	0	1	1	6
Coppin State	0	1	1	6
Md.-E. Shore	0	1	1	6

MEAC PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

PLAYER
REGGIE HOLMES, 6-4, Jr., G, **MSU**, Baltimore, MD - Had 29 points, 6 rebounds in win over DePaul hitting on 9 of 21 shots, including 5-for-9 from behind the arc. Also had two steals and one block.
ROOKIE
YANNICK CROWDER, 6-8, Fr., F, **FAMU**, Stone Mountain, GA - 9 points, 9 rebounds with two blocks in win over Kennesaw State. **FAMU**.
DEFENSE
ARTURO DUBOIS, 6-8, Sr., C, **DSU**, Harlem, NY - Averaged 11 rebounds in 2 games. Had 8 boards, 1 block and 2 steals vs. Maryland, 15 points, 14 rebounds vs. Rutgers.

SIAC SOUTHERN INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

	CONF		ALL	
	W	L	W	L
Clatfin	7	0	7	0
Albany State	2	0	3	0
Benedict	2	0	3	1
Clark Atlanta	2	1	3	2
Fort Valley State	2	1	2	4
Lane	1	1	3	2
Miles	2	2	2	5
Morehouse	1	2	3	3
Kentucky State	1	3	2	3
Tuskegee	0	1	0	2
Stillman	0	3	1	4
Paine	0	3	1	5
LeMoyne-Owen	0	3	0	4

SIAC PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

NA

SWAC SOUTHWESTERN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

	CONF		ALL	
	W	L	W	L
E. DIVISION	0	0	3	6
Prairie View A&M	0	0	2	7
Alcorn State	0	0	2	7
Alabama A&M	0	0	1	4
Grambling State	0	0	1	4
Alabama State	0	0	1	5
Jackson State	0	0	1	6
Southern	0	0	0	7
Ark. Pine Bluff	0	0	0	7
Texas Southern	0	0	0	8
Miss. Valley St	0	0	0	11

SWAC PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

OFFENSE
CORNELIUS HESTER, 6-3, Jr., G, **AA&M**, Mobile, AL - Led Bulldogs with 21 points on 8 of 23 shooting in win over Tennessee State.

INDEPENDENTS

	W	L
Cheyney	3	0
Edward Waters	9	2
W. Va. State	4	2
Central State	6	4
Savannah State	5	4
Tennessee State	3	5
Lincoln (Mo.)	3	7
UDC	3	6
Lincoln (Pa.)	2	6
Florida Memorial	1	6
Winston-Salem State	1	7
N. C. Central	0	11

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

OFFENSE
REGINALD HARWELL, - Scored 21 points in win over Miami Middletown. Made 11 of 15 free throws and had 8 rebounds.
JERRELL HOUSTON, 6-8, Sr., F, **TSU**, Memphis, TN - Had game-high 25 points, 3 rebounds and 2 assists vs. Alabama A&M.
DOMINIQUE CURRY, Sr., F, **CHEYNEY**, Philadelphia, PA - Tallied 18 points and had 11 rebounds in win over Lincoln. He was 10 of 12 from the free throw line with 2 assists, 3 steals and 3 blocks.
BRYANT LEACH, **LINCOLN (PA)** - Scored 31 points on 10 of 18 shooting, 7 of 11 from 3-point range in loss to Cheyney.