



Classic NFL Rookie Card

McNAIR PASSES

McNAIR: Black college, NCAA and NFL star felled in tragic shooting in Nashville.

CHOWAN MAKES HISTORY, STARTS NEW ERA AS FULL MEMBER OF CIAA

UNDER THE BANNER

WHAT'S GOING ON IN AND AROUND BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

TSU COACH TO LEAD WORLDS:

Tennessee State head track and field coach **Chandra Cheeseborough** will serve as the women's head coach for Team USA at the 2009 IAAF World Outdoor Championships in Berlin, Germany. USA Track & Field announced Monday.



TSU Sports Photo

CHEESEBOROUGH: TSU track and field coach named women's coach for World Championships.

Cheeseborough and the Team USA staff will guide the World's #1 Track & Field Team at the World Championships, August 15-23 in Berlin.

At the most recent World Outdoor Championships in 2007 in Osaka, Japan, Team USA tied the all-time World

Championships record for gold medals with 14, matching its feat from 2005, and tied the American all-time medal tally at a World Outdoor Championships with 26. In Osaka, Team USA led a medal table in which a record 46 countries won medals. Team USA last won 26 medals at a World Outdoor Championships in 1991.

Currently the head women's and cross country coach at her alma mater Tennessee State University, Cheeseborough, a National Track & Field Hall of Famer broke onto the international track scene as a 16-year-old when she won two gold medals at the 1975 Pan American Games, taking the 200 meters in American-record time of 25.77 seconds. A three-time Olympian under the tutelage of National Track & Field Hall of Fame coach **Ed Temple** of Tennessee State, Cheeseborough won two gold medals (4x100 and 4x400 relays) at the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, becoming the first woman ever to accomplish that double-relay feat, with both finals staged less than an hour apart. She also won a silver medal in the 400 meters at the 1984 Games, and twice set the American record in the women's 400 meters.

Cheeseborough was named Tennessee State's men's and women's coach in 1999. Internationally, she has served as an assistant coach at the 2008 Olympic Games, the 2001 World Outdoor Championships and the 1999 Pan American Junior Championships. University of Alabama head coach Harvey Glance will serve as the men's head coach.

NEW HOOPS COACH AT FSU:

Fayetteville State introduced **Eva Patterson-Heath** Tuesday as its new head women's basketball coach.

Patterson-Heath served as the head girl's basketball coach at Red Spring High School in Red Springs, N.C. for the past 13 years. Under her leadership, the Lady Devils had a 503-128 record. This outstanding record led her teams to 17 conference titles, 11 conference tournament championships, and 23 state playoff appearances with two state championship appearances.

In 2009, she was inducted into the Robeson County's Inaugural Sports Hall of Fame and in 2006 she was chosen as the North Carolina High School Athletics Association Female Coach of the Year.

Coach Heath's career began as an activities coordinator in 1977 with the Robeson County Parks and Recreation Department; she later became an athletic director, which led her into her coaching careers in basketball as well cross country and track. She began her path into education at **North Carolina A&T State University** where she received her Bachelor's of Science in History with a concentration in education. She later received her certification from Fayetteville State in Special Education and her Master of Arts Degree in Education from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

CONWAY RETURNS TO A&T:

N.C. A&T alumnus **Toni Conway** has been pegged by Athletic Director **Wheeler Brown** as the school's new head volleyball coach. Conway spent the previous four seasons as the head coach at **Bowie State**. Three out of those four seasons saw the Bulldogs finish with a winning record in the CIAA.

During Conway's playing days, N.C. A&T went 31-7 in the MEAC, including an 8-0 conference record in 1998. It was the first and only time in school history the Aggies finished the conference season undefeated. Conway was also a two-year member of the Aggies swim team.

On the passing of Steve McNair

LUT WILLIAMS
BCSP Editor

Former record-setting **Alcorn State** quarterback and eventual NFL star **Steve McNair**, who was found tragically shot to death Saturday at his apartment in Nashville, Tn., is about as responsible as anyone for the success of this publication, **THE BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS PAGE**.

You see, the BCSP began with Steve McNair. It's safe to say that he has been the biggest black college star in any sport over the 15-year history of the BCSP. He's given us plenty to cover.

Fortunately for me, in the spring of 1994, I had the bright idea to start a publication that would cover black college sports. And again, fortunately for me, Steve McNair was about to enter his senior season at Alcorn State.

The two facts were really unrelated but quite fortuitous. McNair was not the reason I was starting the BCSP but he became its perfect foil.

Longtime friend and **Howard University** Sports Information Director **Ed Hill**, who by then had watched McNair put on dazzling displays as their teams met in 1991 (Alcorn State 46, Howard 27), 1992 (Howard 48, Alcorn State 42) and 1993 (Howard 38, Alcorn State 36), was among McNair's biggest boosters.

"I had seen him as a freshman and I realized then that he was not the typical quarterback at this level," said Hill. "For a freshman, his arm strength and ability to make plays were beyond belief."

During his freshman year, NFL scouts had come to Alcorn games to see wide receivers **Torrance Small** and **C. C. Tillman**, who were eventually drafted into the league. But as Hill sat with pro scouts at that 1991 game, the *Circle City Classic* in Indianapolis, they were drawn to the kid throwing to those talents. They were wondering 'who's this quarterback?'

"You could see then – the poise, the athleticism – that he was special," said Hill. McNair threw for 381 yards and 3 TDs in that game.

A year later at Greene Stadium at Howard, the legend grew. Hill says with Alcorn trailing 32-6 at the half, Howard defensive back **Neal Downing** made the mistake of stealing McNair's lucky towel (that he tucked in his waist) and giving it to his mother in the stands. McNair responded by accounting for 400 yards of total offense in the second half as the Braves mounted an awesome comeback.

"He was literally a one-man wrecking crew," said Hill. "He was

throwing and running, stiff-arming people as if to say, 'we're not going to lose.' The last pass of the game went about 60 yards in the air and was an inch away from the fingertips of (Alcorn receiver) **Marcus Hinton** in the end zone as the gun sounded to end the game. You could hear the entire stadium let out a collective sigh of relief. He was unbelievable."

After a sensational junior season, national media were warming to the idea that McNair was indeed something special.

By that time, the 6-2, 235-pound McNair had won an unprecedented three consecutive **Southwestern Athletic Conference** Offensive Player of the Year awards and had a host of NCAA passing and total offense records in sights. He made the cover of *The Sporting News* and was featured in a four-page color spread making a case for him as a serious Heisman Trophy candidate. *Street & Smith's Magazine's 1994 Pro Football Edition* rated him the top pick in the 1995 NFL Draft.

So, with Hill's promptings, it was an easy decision to put McNair at



McNAIR: On the cover of Sept. 24, 1994 edition of Sports Illustrated.



McNAIR: (L. TO R.) At Alcorn State, at Houston, with Tennessee and Baltimore.

the top of the first edition (Aug. 16, 1994) of the *Black College Sports Page*.

As it turns out, the BCSP literally rode McNair's coattails for our entire first year.

We covered him week-by-week through his record-breaking senior season where he produced miracle finish after miracle finish. He led Alcorn State to an 8-2-1 record and a I-AA playoff bid and won his unprecedented fourth SWAC player of the year award after passing for a mind-boggling 5,413 yards and 47 touchdowns. He added another 936 rushing yards and 9 TDs to that total.

We chronicled his run at the Heisman Trophy, responding to a *Sports Illustrated* cover story headlined 'Hand Him the Heisman' with our own 'The Case for McNair and the Heisman.' Our retort was "Don't hand him anything. Give him the Heisman because he's earned it!"

He finished an unappreciated third behind two running backs, Penn State's **Ki-Jana Carter** and the eventual winner, Colorado's **Rashaan Salaam**.

If it was injustice not to give him the Heisman, it would have been pure lunacy to deny him the *Walter Payton Award*, given to the best player in I-AA football. Win it he did.

We then followed him in all-star games, workouts and at the Combine as he solidified his status as the top quarterback and perhaps top pick in the 1995 Draft. He of course was the highlight of our draft coverage, going third (behind Carter and Tony Boselli) to Houston, at the head of a black college draft class of 13 which included two other first round picks (**Hugh Douglas** of **Central State** and **Tyrone Poole** of **Fort Valley State**).

And we even kept up with him as he negotiated his first contract.

He didn't disappoint. After a couple of years holding a clipboard and learning to play quarterback at the NFL level, he confirmed his status by becoming the star and face of the Houston franchise after its move to Tennessee. He led the Titans to Super Bowl XXXIV in 1999, losing a tight game in a re-match to St. Louis. Following that season he signed a lucrative six-year, \$47 million contract.

He had perhaps his most productive season in 2003, leading the Titans back to the playoffs and earning co-NFL MVP honors with Peyton Manning. He left Tennessee after the 2005 season and played his final two seasons with Baltimore.

As an NFL starter he posted a 91-62 record. He finished his career with a 60.1% pass completion rate, threw for 31,304 yards and 174 touchdowns. He rushed for another 3,504 yards and 37 touchdowns. He is only the third player in NFL history to pass for over 30,000 yards and rush for over 3,500 yards. Three time he was named to the Pro Bowl.

And with every accomplishment and award, he boosted the profile of the BCSP.

We thank you most by telling the story of your remarkable career and the thrills it brought to us. Rest in peace, Steve.

CIAA, Chowan to usher in new era



Hawks to compete as full member in CIAA's Western Division



HAMPTON, VA – After playing one season as a football-only member of the **Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association**, **Chowan University** and ten of its athletic programs enter the CIAA as a full member this year. The announcement signifies a new era in college athletics as Chowan is the first-ever non-HBCU to play as a member of the CIAA.

"Chowan University's history contains many firsts," stated **Dennis Helsel**, Director of Athletics at Chowan. "This is another example that was created by visionary conference and University leaders."

Chowan University and ten of their total twelve athletic programs are set to embark on a new playing season in 2009-10, committing to a vision that both the CIAA and Chowan University are happy to see into fruition.

"Today I am very excited to embark on this visionary journey with Chowan to further the expansion of this great conference," stated CIAA Commissioner **Leon G. Kerry**. "From a competitive stand point, Chowan offers a natural rivalry for our existing institutions."

Sharing the same sentiments as Commissioner Kerry, Chowan University President, **Dr. Chris White**, is equally as excited. Kerry and White envisioned a plan well over a year ago and worked together to help create a path in which it would succeed.

"The marriage of Chowan University to the CIAA holds historical significance that we all are proud of," stated White. "Equally as important is the opportunity afforded to our student-athletes and coaches to compete in a conference and potentially gain recognition for their successes on their respective fields of play."

The Hawks will play in the Western Division of the CIAA which includes **Fayetteville State University**, **Johnson C. Smith University**, **Livingstone University**, **Saint Augustine's College** and **Shaw University**. The league has a total of 12 member institutions with six schools also in the Eastern Division. They include **Bowie State University**, **Elizabeth City State University**, **Lincoln University (PA)**, **Saint Paul's College**, **Virginia State University**, and **Virginia Union University**.

In an effort to comply with CIAA sport requirements, Chowan announced in February the addition of a women's bowling program that will compete in the league this winter. With a new coach already in place, the team will begin practice in it's inaugural season in October of this year.

In the coming years Chowan will be required to revamp their men's and women's cross country teams, raising their number of teams competing in the CIAA to twelve.

Chowan is located in Northeast North Carolina, with close proximity to the greater Tidewater area of Virginia. This location has been and continues to be a stomping ground for CIAA past and present. Chowan will no doubt offer great rivalries to intuitions in this area as well as across the CIAA.

The Hawks will begin competition as a full-member in August of this year with volleyball and football. They will compete in women's bowling and men's and women's basketball in the winter season and baseball, golf, softball, and men's and women's tennis in the spring season.

BCSP Notes

A&T Lady Aggies to play in WNIT

The Women's National Invitational Tournament (WNIT) has invited **North Carolina A&T** to its prestigious 2009 Preseason Tournament.

"An invite to a tournament of this magnitude is truly an honor," said head coach **Patricia Cage-Bibbs**, who is heading into her fifth season. "Out of roughly 300 Division I schools, we are one of 16 teams invited. It shows the women's college basketball world is paying attention to this program, and what it has accomplished over the past few seasons. This will be an outstanding experience for my ladies."

The Lady Aggies will open the tournament at Marist on Nov. 13 at 7:30 p.m. Marist is in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. The winner will move on in a traditional tournament format to play the winner of the Towson at West Virginia matchup.

"Our players really deserve this," said Bibbs, who is 77-47 as the Aggies head lady. "In order to be considered for this tournament you must have a pretty good RPI. That means our young ladies have put in

the work it takes to win a lot of games. I'm proud of them."

In each of the last two seasons, the Aggies have broken the school record in wins. Last season they went 26-7 overall, and for the second straight season they were 15-1 in the MEAC. The 26 wins were not only the most wins in school history; the seven losses were the fewest in school history. The Aggies capped off the 2008-09 season by winning the MEAC Tournament for the first time in 15 years, thusly earning an automatic bid to the WNCAA.

NC A&T will join 15 other teams including 10 who advanced to the WNCAA last spring. Among those teams are Arkansas-Little Rock, Bowling Green, Florida Gulf Coast, Georgia Tech, New Mexico, Ohio State, Oklahoma State, West Virginia, Winthrop and Marist. Chicago State, Eastern Illinois, Northern Colorado, Towson and UTEP also accepted invitations.

Five seniors, including three-year standouts **Lamona Smalley** and **Ta'Wuana Cook**, will lead the 2009-10 team.