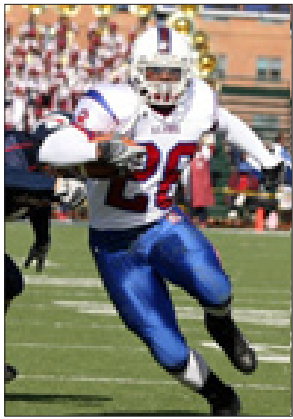


BLACK COLLEGE PAGE

SPORTS



Rodney Pierce / SCSU Sports Photo

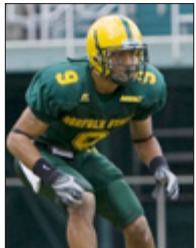
LIKELY 2009 GRIDIRON STARS

McNAIR REMEMBERED; SEVEN MAKE PRESEASON SN ALL-AMERICAN SQUAD

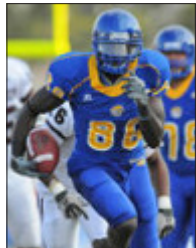
FORD: SC State running back one of two HBCU stars named to Sports Network preseason first team.

UNDER THE BANNER

WHAT'S GOING ON IN AND AROUND BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS



WHITEHEAD



STEWART



VANN

EARLY FOOTBALL HONORS:

Four **Mid Eastern Athletic Conference** standouts and a trio of **Southwestern Athletic Conference** seniors have been named to *The Sports Network* preseason FCS All-America football team.



SCU Sports Photo

FORD: SC State running back needs just over 1,000 yards to become all-time MEAC rushing leader.

South Carolina State running back **William Ford**, the reigning MEAC offensive player of the year, and **Norfolk State** free safety **Terrell Whitehead**, an all-MEAC first teamer, were named to the respective first teams.

Southern WR **Juamorris Stewart** and Texas Southern punt returner **William Osbourne**, both SWAC first teamers a year ago, were voted to the second team along with **Hampton** defensive tackle **Kendrick Ellis** who was named to the the MEAC second team last season and **Florida A&M** kick returner **LeRoy Vann**, an all-MEAC first-teamer. **Prairie View A&M** cornerback **Anthony Beck** was voted to the third team.

Ellis, a junior, is the only underclassman of the selectees.

Ford (5-11, 185) led the MEAC in rushing with 1,499 yards, averaging 6.1 yards per carry and 115.3 yards per game. He was tied for third in the conference in scoring (78 points). With 3,640 rushing yards in his career, Ford is just 1,009 yards away from becoming the MEAC's all-time leading rusher. He is also one of the early selectees on the *Walter Payton Award* Watch List.

In 2008, Whitehead (6-2, 200) led NSU and ranked seventh in the MEAC with 83 tackles. He had the second-most passes defended (15) of any MEAC player, tallying four interceptions and 11 pass deflections. His four picks gave him 13 for his career and tied for fourth-most in the MEAC. Whitehead has been named to the Consensus Draft Services All-America first team and was selected preseason MEAC Defensive Player of the Year by *The Sporting News* preview magazine.

Stewart, a 6-3, 195-pound wideout, caught 76 passes for 1,138 yards and 12 touchdowns in 2008. He was third in the SWAC in receptions, and led the conference in both receiving yards and touchdown receptions. Stewart was seventh in the nation in receiving yards.

At 5-7, 160 pounds, Osbourne averaged a SWAC-best 15.9-yard average per punt return, seventh best in the nation. Osbourne led the SWAC in all-purpose yards with 2,308 (1,092 receiving yards, 831 kickoff returns yards, 349 punt return yards, 36 rushing yards).

The equally diminutive Vann (5-9, 182), could have been chosen as both the kickoff and punt returner. He was third in the nation in kickoff returns amassing 1,101 yards in returns, averaging 27.6 yards per return while bringing back three for scores. He was fifth in the nation in punt returns bringing back another three punts for touchdowns while averaging 16.0 yards per return.

Ellis (6-5, 340) anchored the defensive line for Hampton totalling 39 tackles, 16 solos and 3.5 sacks.

Beck, at 6-1, 205, was third on the Panthers in tackles with 40 and led his team and was tied for second in the conference with five interceptions last season. He was a first team all-SWAC selection.



OSBOURNE



ELLIS



BECK

McNair remembered . . .

HATTIESBURG, Miss. (AP) -Titans quarterback Vince Young didn't expect to speak Saturday during his mentor's funeral. He wound up summing up the emotional day with just a few words.

"Steve was like a hero to me, and heroes are not supposed to die," Young said before stopping to rub his eyes as he talked about the man he knew from football camps as a teenager and called "Pops" - **Steve McNair**, his predecessor with the Titans.

Nearly 5,000 turned out to say goodbye to the 36-year-old during one of the biggest funerals in the recent history of Mississippi, McNair's home state.

Fans and old friends filed into the Reed Green Coliseum on the campus of the University of Southern Mississippi, and McNair's family rented buses to haul in people from his hometown of Mount Olive. Not far away sat men who competed against McNair or coached him on the field.

The high school football team McNair's son plays on wore their jerseys in honor of the man they often saw smiling from the sidelines.

"Mississippi has lost a tremendous legend," said **Cardell Jones**, McNair's college coach at **Alcorn State**.

The hearse carrying McNair's silvery-gray casket was escorted 30 miles down Highway 49 by nine police officers on motorcycles and several vehicles carried family members. After the two-hour service, the procession headed back down the road for a private burial at Griffith Cemetery, about 20 miles from Mount Olive.

Police escorted McNair's wife, **Mechelle**, and his mother, Lucille, into the stadium beforehand. Near the end, a handful of people surrounded his mother and his sons, waving them with fans and programs and giving hugs.

Brett Favre, who had a home near McNair's here in Hattiesburg, sat a few rows behind the McNair family but did not speak. Titans coach Jeff Fisher, Baltimore linebacker Ray Lewis and Chicago quarterback Jay Cutler attended. Former **Grambling** and NFL quarterback **Doug Williams**, the first black quarterback to win the Super Bowl, also was on hand.

Young was added to the service late, and the quarterback drafted by Tennessee in 2006 to replace McNair remembered him as a father and mentor. Young said he felt selfish at times taking McNair away from his four sons to help him through his own life.

He then pointed at the Oak Grove High football team sitting in the stands and told them not to give up if they have someone who inspires them.

"Pay attention to that guy because every day you know I had to

hear that guy's voice," Young said.

Lewis played against McNair and was his teammate the final two years of his NFL career. Lewis said he learned studying film and proper technique wouldn't help him beat a quarterback fueled by will, heart and sacrifice.

"I find myself in awe when I speak about a man like Steve McNair," Lewis said.

Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones was among those who sent flowers. Titans owner Bud Adams attended a memorial service Thursday night in Nashville, where thousands more attended. Fisher was called up to speak from the audience, and he pulled Young over to the podium and led the audience in the Lord's Prayer just as he did during 11 seasons with McNair before every kickoff.

Bobby Hamilton, who played at Southern Miss and in the NFL with New England and Oakland, used to sleep on the floor of McNair's oldest brother, **Fred**, when he played at Alcorn State. He also cheered on McNair during his career and recalled how McNair rallied Alcorn State once by scoring two touchdowns with less than a minute left.

"It's very painful. We know he was a warrior. ... I can't even say the word how this warrior went down," an emotional Hamilton said.

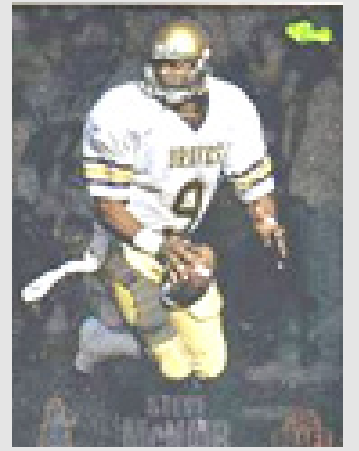
The program included memories from McNair's mother, his wife and sons, brothers, and nieces and nephews. Photos were also displayed of the quarterback who played 13 NFL seasons with Tennessee and Baltimore before retiring in 2008.

Coach Nevil Barr brought the jersey-clad Oak Grove team to the service. **Steve McNair Jr.** attends Oak Grove, and his father joined Favre at a summer workout two weeks ago to play catch with the kids.

"He was on our sideline every Friday night supporting his son," Barr said. "He loved to come watch Steve Jr., and we loved having him there. He always had that smile."

Deloris Cagins of nearby Columbia wore the purple and gold of McNair's alma mater, Alcorn State, and had a pom-pom tied to her walker. She has relatives who eventually joined her beloved Braves, where McNair made a Heisman Trophy run and set a number of NCAA Division I-AA records before going third overall in the NFL draft in 1995 to the then-Houston Oilers.

"Alcornites to me are a different breed of people," she said. "It's like a family. If you do something, we'll support you."



The McNair record

A look at the records set by **Steve McNair** during his illustrious career at **Alcorn State** gives a clue to his brilliance and impact on the college game.

A decade before his arrival, the **SWAC** had seen **Mississippi Valley State** quarterback **Willie Totten** and receiver **Jerry Rice** take the nation by storm and rewrite the record books. McNair came along and did them one better.

In an NCAA record book littered with the names of black college greats, McNair's now reigns supreme. As far as total offense and passing records go, he now holds some 34 titles.

Listed below is a look at the NCAA numbers he put up while leading the Braves during the 1991 thru 1994 football seasons that still stand today.

TOTAL OFFENSE

(Rushing Plus Passing)

MOST PLAYS PER GAME

Season

59.0—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994 (649 in 11 games)

MOST YARDS GAINED

Season

5,799—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994 (4,863 passing,936 rushing)

2 Years

9,629—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1993-94 (8,060 passing,1,569 rushing)

3 Years

13,686—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1992-94 (11,601 passing,2,085 rushing)

Career

(4 yrs.) 16,823—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1991-94

(14,496 passing, 2,327 rushing)

MOST YARDS GAINED PER GAME

Season

527.2—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994 (5,799 in 11)

Career

400.5—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1991-94 (16,823 in 42)

MOST SEASONS GAINING 3,000 YARDS OR MORE

4—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1991-94

MOST YARDS GAINED IN TWO, THREE AND FOUR CONSECUTIVE GAMES

2 Games

1,280—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994 (633 vs. Grambling, Sept. 3; 647 vs. Chattanooga, Sept. 10)

3 Games

1,859—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994 (649 vs. Samford, Oct. 29; 624 vs. Mississippi Val., Nov. 5; 586 vs. Troy,Nov. 12

4 Games

2,423—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994 (649 vs. Samford, Oct. 29; 624 vs. Mississippi Val., Nov. 5; 586 vs. Troy, Nov. 12; 564 vs. Jackson St., Nov. 19)

MOST GAMES GAINING 300 YARDS OR MORE

Season

11—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994

Career

32—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1991-94

MOST CONSECUTIVE GAMES GAINING 300 YARDS OR MORE

Season

11—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994

MOST GAMES GAINING 400 YARDS OR MORE

Season

9—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994

Career

15—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1991-94

MOST CONSECUTIVE GAMES GAINING 400 YARDS OR MORE

Season

5—Willie Totten, Mississippi Val., 1984; Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994

MOST GAMES GAINING 500 YARDS OR MORE

Season

6—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994

Career

9—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1991-94

MOST YARDS GAINED AGAINST ONE OPPONENT

Career

1,772—Steve McNair, Alcorn St. vs. Jackson St., 1991-94

Also holds per-game record with 443.0 (1,772 in 4)

GAINING 2,000 YARDS RUSHING AND 4,000 YARDS PASSING

Career

Tracy Ham (QB), Ga. Southern, 1984-86 (2,506 rushing, 4,871 passing); Bill Vergantino (QB), Delaware, 1989-92 (2,287 rushing, 6,177 passing); **Steve McNair (QB), Alcorn St., 1991-94 (2,327 rushing, 14,496 passing)**; Ryan Vena (QB), Colgate, 1996-99 (2,008 rushing, 7,427 passing); David Dinkins (QB), Morehead St., 1997-00 (3,765 rushing, 5,572 passing); Travis Wilson (QB), Wofford, 1998-01 (2,488 rushing, 4,067 passing) *Armanti Edwards, Appalachian St., 2006-07 (2,741 rushing, 4,199 passing)

HIGHEST AVERAGE GAIN PER PLAY

Game

(Min. 50-59 plays) 11.4—Steve McNair, Alcorn St. vs. Chattanooga, Sept. 10, 1994 (57 for 647)

(Min. 60 plays) 9.7—Steve McNair, Alcorn St. vs. Grambling, Sept. 3, 1994 (65 for 633)

Season

(Min. 3,300 yards) 8.9—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994 (649 for 5,799)

PASSING

MOST PASSES ATTEMPTED

Career

1,680—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1991-94 (completed 927); Marcus Brady, Cal St. Northridge, 1998-01 (completed 1,039)

MOST YARDS GAINED

Season

4,863—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994

Career

14,496—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1991-94

MOST YARDS GAINED IN TWO, THREE AND FOUR CONSECUTIVE GAMES

2 Games

1,150—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994 (587 vs. Samford, Oct. 29; 563 vs. Mississippi Val., Nov. 5)

3 Games

1,626—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994 (587 vs. Samford, Oct. 29; 563 vs. Mississippi Val., Nov. 5; 476 vs. Troy, Nov. 12)

4 Games

2,159—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994 (587 vs. Samford, Oct. 29; 563 vs. Mississippi Val., Nov. 5; 476 vs. Troy, Nov. 12; 533 vs. Jackson St., Nov. 19)

MOST GAMES GAINING 200 YARDS OR MORE

Season

11—By 20 players. Most recent: Dominic Randolph, Holy Cross, 2007; Scott Riddle, Elon, 2007; Lang Campbell, William & Mary, 2004; Martin Hankins, Southeastern La., 2004; Chris Sanders, Chattanooga, 2000; Chris Sanders, Chattanooga, 1999; Joe Lee, Towson, 1999; **Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994**; Chris Hakel, William & Mary, 1991; Jamie Martin, Weber St., 1991

Career

41—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1991-94 (42 games)

MOST CONSECUTIVE GAMES GAINING 200 YARDS OR MORE

Season

11—By 16 players. Most recent: Dominic Randolph, Holy Cross, 2007; Scott Riddle, Elon, 2007; Martin Hankins, Southeastern La., 2004; Chris Sanders, Chattanooga, 2000; Chris Sanders, Chattanooga, 1999; **Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994**; Chris Hakel, William & Mary, 1991; Jamie Martin, Weber St., 1991

Career

28—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1991-93; Neil Lomax, Portland St., 1978-80

MOST GAMES GAINING 300 YARDS OR MORE

Season

10—Willie Totten, Mississippi Val., 1984; John Friesz, Idaho, 1989; **Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1994**

MOST CONSECUTIVE GAMES THROWING A TOUCHDOWN PASS

Career

36—Steve McNair, Alcorn St., 1991-94

