

## Easy Street

Central State of Ohio, 8-1-0 at press time, appears to be a shoo-in for

the NCAA Division II playoffs, thanks to players like running back/wide receiver Alvin Street (photo by Brian Branch-Price).

## In MEAC, Hawk and Bethune-Cookman fly high

By SAM DAVIS Review Staff Writer

It didn't take former Miami Dolphin Larry Little long to make an impact at Bethune-Cookman College.

In only his second season at the their first MEAC football title since they entered the conference in 1981. Little's accomplishments loom even Wildcats' success in the past two years isn't based on an influx of new talent at

Rather, their fortunes turned with a change in attitude among team members and their willingness to accept Little's work ethic.

While outsiders are surprised by the way Little's team has come along i two years, Little says he felt his players was young. But our top people have were capable of doing as well in his come through for us." first season, when they went 4-4-1.

"We were hoping for this type of success last year," says Little of his team, which stood 6-2 at press time. "The only difference in last year and

untested players and we couldn't seem to win the close games.

"Before the start of this season, we set as our goal to win the MEAC," Little says. "We knew that we would have a good offensive team and our defense

Little says the major goal the players have had to attain is believing themselves and making the sacrifice to

"I think I brought the winning atthis year is that last year we had a lot of .. titude with me when I came back to

Bethune-Cookman," says the former all-Pro guard who helped lead Miami to two Super Bowl wins. "I knew what it would take to get the most out of

"I always prided myself in helping the younger players that came to the Dolphins when I was playing pro football," he says. "I thought I could do the same thing as a coach in college

Little will be the first to tell you his players are a reflection of him. With

molded the team to reflect the way he but we always have competitive footplayed the game.

I have an intense team. These guys struggle, but we get by." don't have any quit in them. You can see the intensity in the way they play."

And, although Little isn't surprised at the success he's had as a collegiate coach, he says he hadn't exactly planned on coaching college football.

into coaching," says Little. "When the position became open, I decided to go two years. back to my alma mater - a school that had always been good to me.

"I felt that anything I could do to help Bethune-Cookman, I would do later than the third round in the NFL

With no previous coaching experience, Little says, he knew there Hawk, the strong-armed, quick-footed would be pressure. Yet, he felt confi- signal-caller. dent he could do the job.

of the players," Little says. "I thought. I could take a group of youngsters and mold them into a unit. Most young guys just need someone to motivate them and I felt that I could handle it.

First on his agenda when he accepted the post was evaluating the talent on Leading the ground game for B-CC is hand. Little found enough to have a successful season. He also found some exceptional athletes that he needed to get as much out of as possible.

In Bernard Hawk, Little saw a true field general who was capable of spearheading a strong passing game. Wide receiver Leon, Gonzales added the perfect complement.

"With a quarterback like Bernard Hawk, I thought that we could throw the football against anyone," Little says. "Most college teams can't defend against the pass very well, so we decided to be a passing team."

As a member of the world champion Miami Dolphins, however, Little was most familiar with a grind-it-out style of offense. So he set out to find an offensive coordinator who had a strong background in passing. He came up with Rick Stockstill, a 26-year-old former standout passer with Florida

"Rick is a fine young coach who has done an outstanding job for us," says Little. "His background made him an ideal candidate for the job."

Upon further inspection of the players he inherited, Little saw the the way they play." potential for a strong team right away. But, he wasn't surprised at the ability of the players that had matriculated at the private, Methodist college.

"There's always been a mystique about Bethune-Cookman," says Little. "Although there aren't many student we've always been able to get good

"That's something that has carried

While the passing combination of Hawk to Gonzales gets the most headlines, Little is most pleased with his offensive line.

"Our offensive line has to be the key to the team," he says. "That's one of "I hadn't really thought about going our strongest areas overall. We've only had 10 quarterback sacks in the past

> Another of the team's strong suits is the receiving corps led by all-MEAC senior Gonzales. "I expect he'll go no draft," Little says of the fleet receiver.

Of course, the Wildcats' catalyst is

"Anything he does positively own. I think he's one of the finest passers in college football."

While the Wildcats rely mostly on their passing game, their running attack has come along well this season.



The Teacher, The Student

Coach Larry Little, below left, has plenty to smile about in '84, including record-setting junior quarterback Bernard Hawk (photos by Joe Daniels).

King Green, a transfer from Iowa State. But James Graham and Reggie Rucker also see considerable playing

Defensively, Bethune-Cookman has had its share of problems. "We have a couple of big guys up

Perhaps the biggest change between the team Bethune-Cookman put on the football field two years ago and this year's team is pride, a quality that Little radiates and that apparently is con-

"Coach Little really motivates us,"

"I think I'm an intense coach and that I have an intense team. These guys don't have any quit in them. You can see the intensity in

-- Larry Little

Little. "But we need more quickness. We've played a lot of young guys or defense because of some early injuries.

leader. "We've always had talent, but it took Coach Little to change our attitude about winning. He knows how to give us a lift when we need it.

"He has taught us to set goals and

"Sometimes when we're down he'll tell us about his playing days and it'll get us all fired up."

Though Little says his job at Bethune-Cookman is to produce winning football teams, he also says there are other lessons to be learned away from the gridiron.

"I want all my guys to have good character," says Little, whose articulate voice belies his massive frame. "I'm not just a coach for now, but their coach for life.

"Football has helped me discipline things don't go my way, and that's what I try to teach my players. I try to teach them how to carry themselves as young men. We have a good rapport, but they know that I'm a strict