

and sensitivity, both politically and athletically.

As rhythm and blues singer Lou Rawls would say, "It's a new day, baby."

It was a new day in 1962, when James Meredith, flanked by U.S. marshals, made history by walking to class at the then-segregated University of Mississippi. A year later, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. cast his text aside and echoed from the heart "with this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope" during his emotional "I Have a Dream" sermon on Aug. 28 at the Lincoln Memorial.

That Christmas of the same year in New Orleans, 6-foot-9 Grambling Fame. senior Willis Reed scored 40 points and

The SWAC was on a satiety diet. The others are: Clemon Johnson, memorable era of consciousness- And other basketball programs at Florida A&M, Philadelphia 76ers; raising roared with signs of progress predominantly black schools in the Truck Robinson, Tennessee State, New ing NBA talent. South and along the eastern seaboard were licking their chops.

North Carolina Central, Zelmo Beatty Johnson, Dillard, New Jersey Nets. of Prairie View A&M, Bob Dandridge of Norfolk State, Dick Barnett of Tennessee State and Jimmy Jones of Grambling would shine on any team.

"They (black colleges) were getting the cream of the crop in those days," says Clarence "Bighouse" Gaines, head coach at Winston-Salem State. Gaines, who coached former NBA allstar Earl "The Pearl" Monroe in college, has more than 700 wins to his credit and is in the basketball Hall of

However, since then, many of the grabbed 256 rebounds against Bob black schools are often getting the "Butterbean" Love of Southern curds and whey, while the cream is

"It's hard but it's fair. That's what they (the NBA coaches) say (about their evaluations during rookie camp). I don't beleive it, but you got to love it."

-- Joe Binion

University in a tournament. Although Love, a junior that season, got his Kentuckys, etc. usual 28 points, Grambling went on to win the tourney, and Reed was named the Most Valuable Player.

Those were the halcyon days of black college basketball, while the na tion was faced with social upheaval.

"We (black athletes) were caught renaissance," Reed recalled. "All those things were going on during that time. It had a lot of effect on black athletes.'

Reed, now in the National Basketball Association's Hall of Fame and Creighton University's head coach, went on to lead the New York Knicks to two championships, and the 6-8 Love was an all-star forward with the Chicago Bulls.

The Southwestern Athletic Conference in those days was a fat cat in Los Angeles Lakers; Earl Jones, the basketball alley, featuring top University of District of Columbia talent mainly because of segregation. Lakers; Audie Norris, Jackson State, For many black athletes, there were Portland Trail Blazers; Larry Smith only two choices in the early '60s: stay Alcorn State, Golden State Warriors; in the South and go to black schools or Purvis Short, Jackson State, Warriors; take the long road north to the more Major Jones, Albany State, Houston

lured to the Georgetowns, Indianas,

·Can you imagine a Wayman Tisdale at Mississippi Valley State in 1984? Probably not.

Unlike football, predominantly black schools haven't been a recent major producer of top basketball talent for the pros. NFL stars such as Walter Payton of Jackson State, between a beginning and an end of a Charlie Joiner and Everson Walls of Grambling and Tennessee State's Ed "Too Tall" Jones are household names from black schools. However, most fans would probably be stumped to name two or three NBA players from the SWAC or Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference.

> The central question: Where have the stars gone?

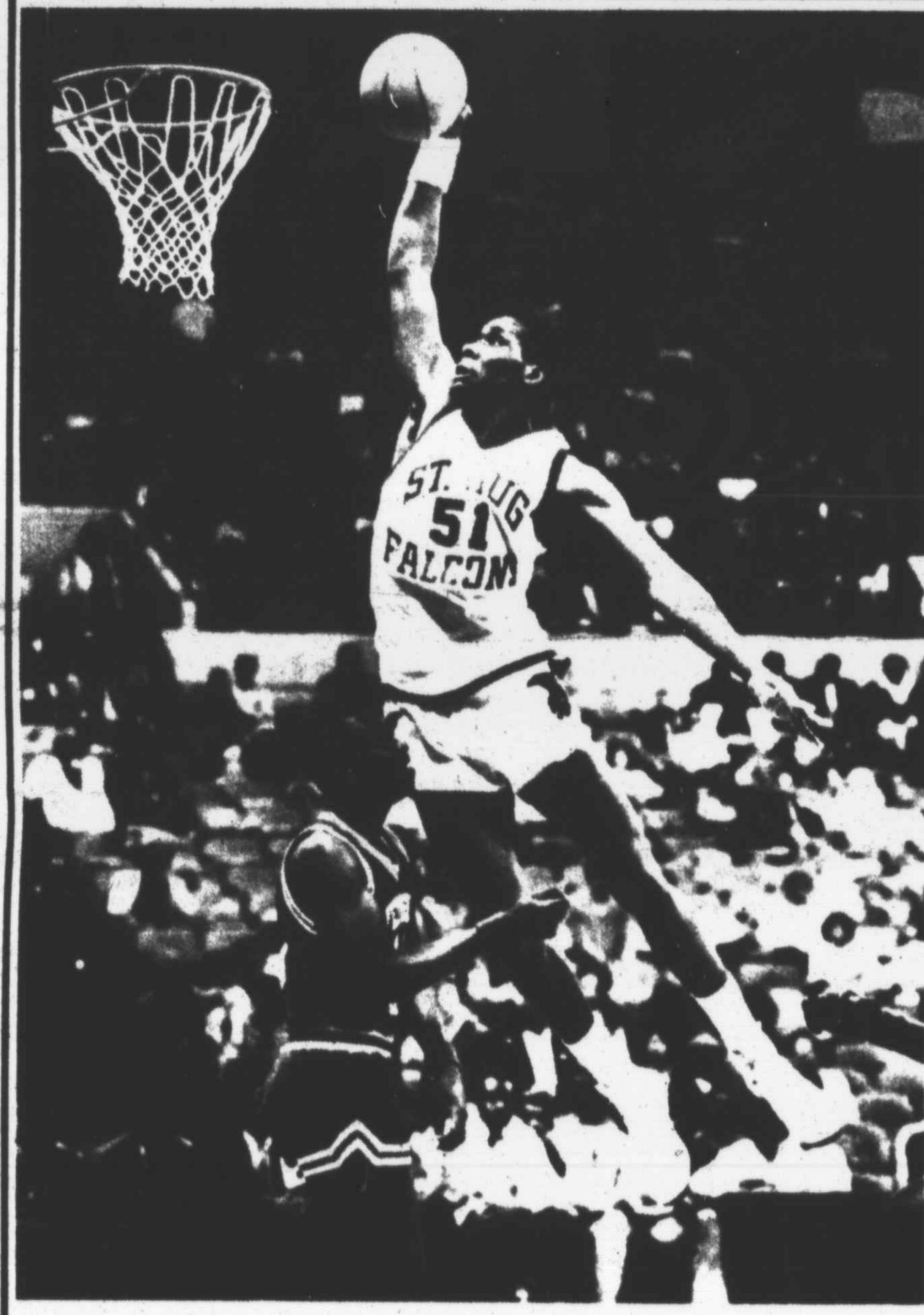
As of Nov. 23, there were only 14 players in the NBA from predominant y black schools. They are: Larry Spriggs from Howard, now with the State, Chicago Bulls.

Many black college alumni aren't household names like crowd-pleaser Michael Jordan, a North Carolina alumnus who's made it big in the NBA (photo by Joe Daniels).

teams in the early '60s. Sam Jones of Washington Bullets; and George powers.

York Knicks; Marvin Webster, dustrialization," or the assembly line-Morgan State, Knicks; Kenny Ban- mass production, status of major col-An NBA all-star squad could be nister, St. Augustine's, Knicks; Ron lege sports. Getting top-notch high formed from among Reed and Love Cavenall, Texas Southern, Knicks; school players has evolved into a and their counterparts from those Ricky Mahorn, Hampton Institute, science because of the major basketball

> "In basketball it's easier to find a However, of that total, only five are player at age 16 or 17," says CBS-TV



One black college alumnus who did make the pro grade this year is St. Augustine's Ken Bannister, who plays for the Knicks (photo by Joe Daniels).

Caldwell Jones and Mahorn. The rest 12th man -- or on their way out of the league because of diminishing skills, old age, injuries, etc.

"I'd say the days of the black player from a black school are numbered in the NBA, all but over," says Mike Douchant, associate editor and basketball analyst for The Sporting News.

Adds Reed: "It's unfortunate. I can see the handwriting on the wall."

basketball analyst Billy Packer. "If a kid is a great football player, he would are either reserves - some as low as the be seen in only 11 games. In basketball, say, a kid from Shelby, like a David Thompson, goes to a Gardner-Webb basketball camp. Then someone says, 'Hey, Jim Valvano, here's a kid; you should look at him.' Then Howard Garfinkel at the Five-Star Camp (in Pittsburgh) may hear about him, and he goes up there. Then everyone knows

Please See Page 12