If it pleases your honor, the offense rests

By SAM DAVIS

Maybe it was the arctic weather. Or the lack of time the players had to work together.

Whatever the reason, the offense never really materialized in the second annual Freedom Bowl All-Star Classic in Atlanta, which had been billed as a scoring free-for-all.

The SWAC defense was the beneficiary of five MEAC turnovers, two of which it turned into touchdowns, to take a 14-0 win in an uninspiring defensive struggle.

Considering the gifts the SWAC received deep in MEAC territory, the score could have been more lopsided. However, four times the SWAC bogged down inside the MEAC 20 and Grambling's Jorge Rosales missed field goals of 31, 27, 22 and 32 yards.

Even more disappointing was the performance of Mississippi Valley's Jerry Rice, a recent number one pick in the USFL draft and a sure firstrounder in the upcoming NFL draft. Rice, who caught 112 passes during the '84 season, was billed as the game's top attraction, but caught only one pass for 40 yards.

job stopping Rice, but when he did manage to work himself free, the SWAC quarterbacks were unable to get him the ball.

SWAC Coach Marino Casem said his team went to a conservative runnbecause his team had trouble connecting on its passes.



N.C. Central's Gerald Fraylon behind center at practice. His scrambling keyed what little offense the MEAC team could muster (photo by James Parker).

"I'm not disappointed," said Rice, who brought the 18,000 fans at the do. game to their feet when he almost ing attack because the MEAC put a lot scored on his only reception of the titude of doing well and showing the ing really well for us," said Blue. "I of emphasis on stopping Rice and game in the first quarter. "I think I NFL scouts something," said Magee, a think they were so worried about our had a good day. I had a chance to open things up for other people."

"They jumped on Rice and we killed them with another fine receiver. Magee can do it with the best of 'em."

-- Marino Casem

"I just took what they gave us," said Casem. "I'm just glad we won."

thought his team would throw often, Cooley. but once he saw the defensive scheme of the Larry Little-coached MEAC, he play college football and now it was chose to resort to another plan of at-

"I thought we'd be able to throw the SWAC." it," said Casem, whose quarterbacks, While Rice was being hounded by Kevin Parker of Fort Valley State, completed only nine of 19 passes for 135 yards. "If you can't throw it, then you have to try something else that you can do."

Rice, who had turned down an opportunity to play in the prestigious Senior Bowl to come to Atlanta, said he was satisfied with the way he played even though few passes were thrown his way.

Rice said he chose to play in the game as a tribute to his conference and Going into the game, Casem said he his coach, Archie "Gunslinger"

> "The SWAC gave me a chance to time for me to give something back, " said Rice. "I'm a strong supporter of

227-pounder from Southern University, caught four aerials for 71 yards, including a 34-yard touchdown pass from Parker.

"It took a total team effort to win, game's Most Valuable Player. "It was a privilege just to play in a game like

"I came into the game with the at-Breakers in the USFL draft. "Playing ning game." with the players here really helped me because it opened things up for me.

underneath," said Magee. "Rice drew the defensive backs when he went deep

Casem agreed.

them with another fine receiver," said share of chances in the first stanza. Casem. "Magee can do it with the best After holding the SWAC on downs on

"They were doubling up on our wideouts and we had to find a way to solve it," said Casem. "So, when they with short passes and a running game up the middle."

Leading the way for the SWAC in the second half, when it began dominate play, was unheralded running back Carl Blue of Jackson State, who finished the day with a game-high 64 yards on 21 carries.

Blue tallied the SWAC's only other touchdown on a two-yard burst up the middle in the final 1:24 of the game

and was named the SWAC's outstanding offensive performer.

"I think the power game was workterritorial pick of the Portland passing game that it opened up the run-

Little and the MEAC chose to let the SWAC use short-yardage plays to con-"With a player like Rice on the out-, trol most of the third and fourth side, it gave me a lot of passes quarters rather than gamble on Rice breaking the big play.

"We weren't going to let Jerry Rice and that gave me the inside to work beat us," said Little. "... The key to the game was turnovers."

Though the SWAC dominated play "They jumped on Rice and we killed in the second half, the MEAC had its the initial possession of the game, the MEAC mounted the first offensive threat of the day.

Starting MEAC quarterback Gerald Fraylon of North Carolina Central (one of the CIAA players invited to play in the game) moved his team from its own 46 to the SWAC 29, but when the drive stalled, Fardad Sayyarpour's 46-yard field goal attempt fell short.

Later in the quarter, the MEAC began to mount another drive that carried into SWAC territory. Fraylon, who ignited his team with his scrambling, get-it-down-anyway-I-can leader-

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WHERE COACHES FEAR TO TREAD

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Two of black college football's most talked-about seniors: Mississippi Valley wide receiver Jerry Rice and his nemesis, Alcorn State defensive back Issiac Holt (photo by Mark Lyons).