CIAA REPORT

Tally-Ho! Norfolk's Golden Nugget's a high roller

Perpetual Motion

Below, Tally turns the corner on an opponent. Right, he beats Union's high-flying Jamie Waller to the glass (photos by James Parker).



By ABE GOLDBLATT Special To The Review

NORFOLK -- Three years ago, Norfolk State University hit a recruiting jackpot in Atlantic City.

And Ralph Tally, the Spartans' Golden Nugget, is still paying off.

The slim, 6-foot-1, 170 pound-junior guard who has mastered every shot in the book, has averaged 27.6 points a game in leading the Spartans to vicseason.

Street & Smith's Basketball Yearbook rated the CIAA phenom as one of the top five College Division players in America.

And none other than Marty Blake, the NBA director of scouting, says Tally just might be the best guard barring none in collegiate ranks.

"He's got a lot of talent," Blake NCAA Tournament last year. "He can Tally proved to be his Golden Nugget.

tories in their first seven starts this score, has great moves and can shoot the basketball. He needs to gain about but he certainly has a good chance of making it. He'll get a lot of attention from all the scouts next season."

> Tally played at Atlantic City High School, where he averaged 25.9 points, 5.9 assists and 5.1 steals as a senior.

Charles Christian, the Norfolk State coach, had heard of another player, said after watching Tally play in the Crosby Hayes, in Atlantic City. But

"I never saw him play in high school, but he was recommended to me 10 pounds before he gets to the NBA, by Jim Bradley, a Norfolk State graduate and a Tally family friend," Christian remembers. "Jim recommended him so highly we recruited him, sight unseen."

After sitting out a year, and working as a floor man at the Golden Nugget gambling casino, Tally gambled on Norfolk State academics and Norfolk State basketball, sight unseen.

Please See Page 11

SWAC REPORT

Finally, a tournament in honor of The Master

By LONZA HARDY JR. Special To The Review

Illinois-Chicago Coach Willie Little's dream became reality when the first John D. McLendon Classic tipped off in the Windy -- and frigid and snowy -- City on Jan. 3.

Alcorn State, Illinois-Chicago, Jackson State and Tennessee State provided the competition, but the image of honored Hall of Famer John McLendon clearly ruled centercourt:

"In high school I had a tournamer tournament to the UIC administration more than a year ago. "McLendon was always helpful and there for support.

"How close can you get to anyone who knew a person who invented

Indeed, McLendon is a living legend. of 522 games on the college level and was the first coach to win three straight NAIA national titles. He later became

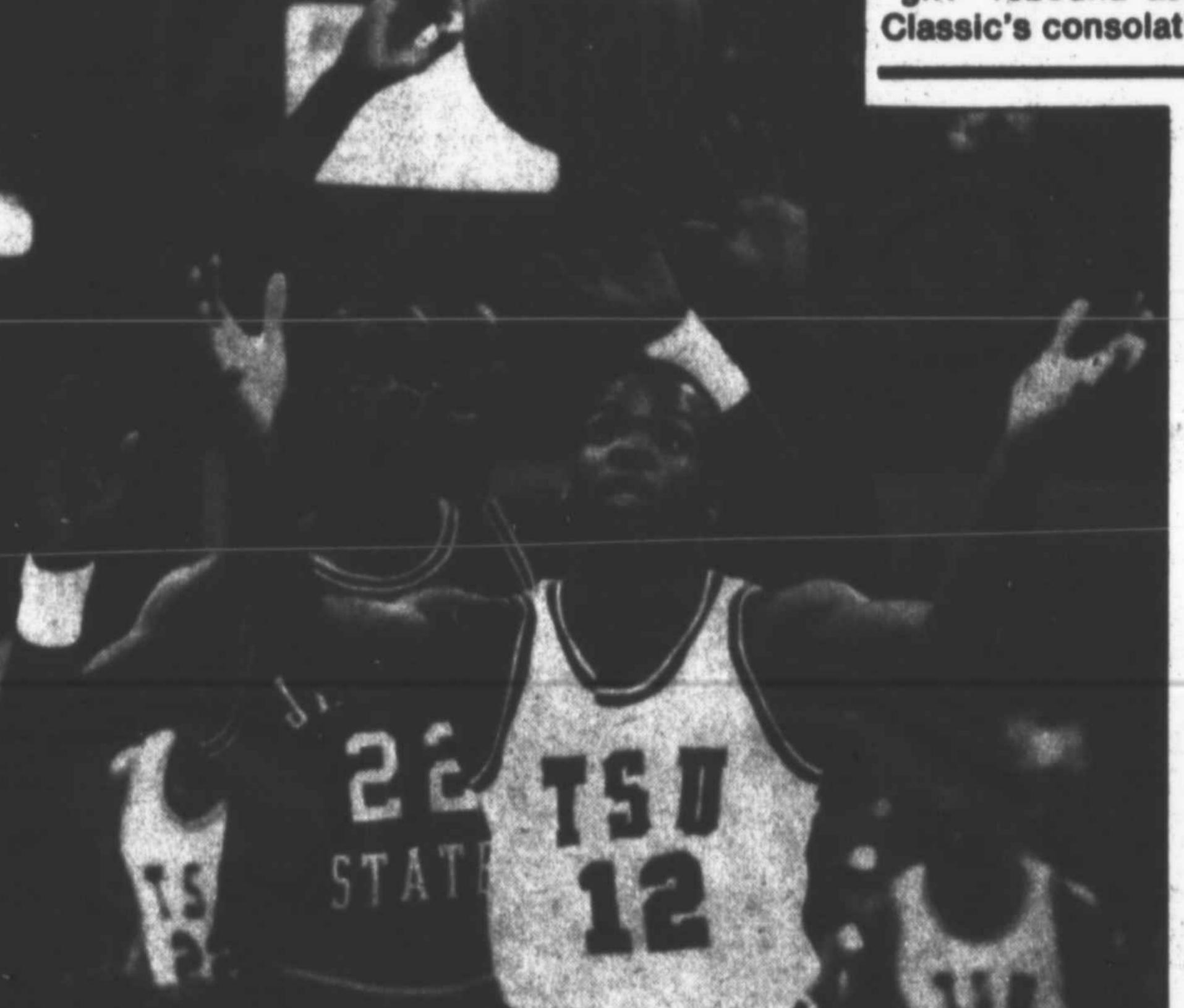
coached the Cleveland Pipers in 1961. He also coached the ABA's Denver Rockets during the 1969-70 season.

"It's an honor having the tournament named after me," said McLendon at a pre-tipoff banquet. "The participating teams are from successful programs and are beneficiaries of the vast changes which have taken place over the years."

Oddly enough, the first tournament named for the father of black-college basketball was hosted by a named after him," said Little, who predominantly white school. But UIC, presented the idea of hosting such a 25,000-enrollment, metro-Chicago school which had never before hosted a major in-season college tournament, jumped at the idea when it was

"Everyone thought it was a great something big?" Little added. idea," said Jim Schmidt, UIC's sports "McLendon was there with Naismith information director. "Several (the inventor of basketball). He's a businesses were willing to serve as walking history book and every first sponsors and the coaches were willing concerning basketball seems to concern to make room on their schedules. The athletic director (Tom Russo) said that, if corporate sponsors couldn't be In 25 years of coaching, he won a total found, the athletic department would pay for the expenses."

From the beginning, UIC officials felt that black-school involvement was the first black coach in any major pro- paramount. Initially, according to Litfessional sport when he founded and tle, the idea was that at least one



Above, undisputed star of the show: John McLendon. Below, TSU's Eddie Talley awaits a "gift" rebound as Jackson State's Michael Boyd and Lester Fonville look on during the Classic's consolation game (photos by Marcus J. Wilson).

> predominantly black school had to be involved. In the end, it was decided to invite three black schools.

That Alcorn State, Jackson State and Tennessee State were the three was not coincidental. Those schools, it was felt, were among the most successful of the NCAA Division I programs and each had substantial alumni backing in the Chicago area, important factors for game attendance.

Although the bodies slowly trickled in, by halftime of Jan. 3's nightcap contest between UIC and Jackson State, the attendance stood at 3,953. Some 4,112 fans showed for the championship game between UIC and Alcorn State (won by UIC) began the next night. Those figures may seem modest, but they compare favorably with several, more established holiday tournaments, and nearly doubled the home-game average at the UIC.

"We'd only been averaging about 2,000 fans for our home games this Classic games.

year," said Schmidt. "BET (Black Entertainment Television) came in and agreed to telecast the games, and, based on what everyone's saying, I'm sure it was successful enough to become an annual tournament.

For the future, several ideas are being entertained to make the Classic bigger and better. More corporate sponsorships will be sought, said Schmidt, and the event may cover three days and involve at least six teams, rather than maintain the two-day, two-team for-

Another Chicago-based school (possibly Loyola) may also participate.

The McLendon Classic may or may not survive in years to come. But, at least for 1986, it was a boost for UIC and Chicago. Little said it "showed the city is sensitive to the black community and the black heroes."

Thanks to corporate sponsorships, more than 600 underprivileged Chicago youths were able to attend the