COACHES

Riley aims to rekindle FAMU's sagging spirits

By BARRY COOPER Special To The Review

Florida A&M, a school long steeped in tradition but lately frustrated by a lack of success, has turned to one of its own. Ken Riley, for 15 years a stellar defensive back with the Cincinnati Bengals and most recently an assistant coach with the Green Bay Packers, is the Rattlers' new football coach. He replaces Rudy Hubbard.

Riley is a Rattler through and through, having starred at quarterback for three years under former FAMU Coach Jake Gaither.

It was that relationship -- his closeness with Gaither - that apparently tipped the scales in favor of Riley when the Rattlers filled what is regarded as one of the top coaching jobs in black college sports.

Although established coaches like Archie Cooley of Mississippi Valley and Bill Hayes of Winston-Salem State applied, it was clear that it was Riley's job from the start. None of the other candidates was even seriously con-

The Rattlers first considered Riley in October, when he flew into Tallahassee to speak at an alumni function.

"A lot of people asked me if I would

don't call (taking this job) a cut in pay. I realize that if I had stayed in pro football, the earning potential would have been greater. But money is something that goes through your hand every day. The opportunity like this -- to come back to my school -- was greater than the earning potential."

Even if Riley does not need more money for himself, he surely will need it for his assistant coaches. FAMU's assistants have been vastly underpaid, with some of them earning as little as \$14,000 a year.

The problems began several years ago, when the Rattlers did away with their policy of having coaches serve as classroom instructors first, coaches se-

The change had a devastating effect. It meant that the coaches would have to be paid from the athletic department's budget rather than by the state of Florida, and there just wasn't enough money to go around.

Florida is one of the few states that does not subsidize its college athletic programs. While schools like Jackson State and Tennessee State receive up to \$600,000 each year from their state governments, FAMU receives nothing. The Rattlers can spend only what they A Swashbuckler

"In the next two or three years, we should be competitive against anybody. I know it is going to be a struggle initially, and some people are going to be looking for immediate results. I'm going to be looking for immediate results. All I ask for is support."

be interested in the job and I told them yes," Riley said. "I wouldn't have taken any other small-college job. I felt that I could come back and contribute in a positive way."

The Rattlers signed Riley to a fiveyear contract worth about \$50,000 a year. Hubbard was paid a little more than \$42,000 last year.

Riley's salary makes him one of the highest-paid black college coaches in the country. Grambling's Eddie Robinson makes about \$70,000 a year, and Southern University's Otis Washington is paid about \$50,000 a year.

For Riley, it will be a pay cut. He was said to earn around \$70,000 at Green Bay. But Riley doesn't lack two nickels to rub together. Well-placed sources said that, when Riley retired from the Bengals, he walked away with a lump-sum check for more than \$250,000. °

"Some people say I have the first dollar I ever made," Riley said. "I

take in through ticket sales and donations. Over the last few years, FAMU has incurred a deficit each year.

Two FAMU assistant coaches, Bobby Lang and Costa Kittles, left Hubbard's staff to return to the classroom and took more than 50 years of combined experience wiht them. Another veteran coach, Fred Goldsmith, quit to take a job at the Air Force Academy. Suddenly, the Rattlers found themselves in a pinch.

Unable to hire from outside because of the budgetary restrictions, Hubbard filled the positions with some of his players, none of whom had coached before. Those coaches have finally gained some experience, but they remain underpaid.

"We will definitely have to upgrade salaries for our assistant coaches," Riley said. "That's one of the first things I asked about."

Riley is expected to keep three of Hubbard's top assistants. He is ex- worse for FAMU, virtually no Rhodes scholarship.



A former FAMU quarterback, Riley prefers a wide-open attack to Rudy Hubbard's more conservative approach.

sive coordinators from outside.

The Rattlers' new coach will need some help if he is to put FAMU back on track. The Rattlers have slumped since winning the Division I-AA national championship in 1978. They have had two losing seasons in the last five, and most of their wins in the last few years have come at the expense of lesser Division II teams.

"I know Coach Hubbard would always say that we aren't getting the top talent and things are different than sent, former and future. My aim will when I played," Riley said. "Well, I be to rekindle the old FAMU spirit. I realize that we are not going to get all think that we can go back and establish the top players, but we should get our

University of Miami. We should be 30-10 record (.750 winning percentage) competitive against the teams we are during that time -- 1965-68 -- and Riley

compensate for the Rattlers' limited resources. The school spent only \$8,000 on recruiting last year. Most of and 14 touchdowns. He was named the top black colleges spent at least FAMU's Most Valuable Player that twice that much. To make matters season and also was nominated for a pected to hire his offensive and defen- recruiting has been done over the last

six months. Hubbard, sensing perhaps that his contract would not be renewed, concentrated more on coaching

"We probably will be stuck with the recruiting budget for a while, but I think there are some ways we can overcome that," Riley said. "We will be going back to the different cities in Florida, asking for alumni support. That will be one of my first priorities to try to reunite all the FAMUans, presome of the pride I had as a player."

Riley's playing days were the Rat-"We aren't playing Florida or the tlers' glory days. FAMU compiled a was known as a tough, swashbuckling Still, it will be difficult for Riley to quarterback who did whatever was needed to win. His senior year, he completed 100 of 187 passes for 1,408 yards

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CIAA REPORT

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Why Norfolk State?

"I came out of high school and went to 103 steals. Proving again he was an three-point line was used. St. Peter's, my high school coach's college, for a summer session. It didn't work out and I sat out a year and worked in the Golden Nugget."

Christian is glad he did.

"He's a superlative," says Christian, one of the most successful coaches in NCAA Division II. "Not only does he have the quickness and the skills, but by the time we won the CIAA Tournament his freshman year, he matured as a leader.

"In the semifinal game against St. Augustine's, he came down the court with the game on the line and, very obviously and in no great hurry, took charge. I knew then how fine a player he could be.

"He has the leaping ability to be up there in rebounds, the ability to steal the ball."

As a freshman, starting all but two games, Tally averaged 12.8 points and 4.4 rebounds and managed 68 steals. In his first collegiate game, he scored 33 points against Tuskegee. He was named to the all-CIAA team and was the first freshman ever voted Most Valuable Player in the prestigious CIAA Tournament.

unselfish player, he was credited with 112 assists.

At last year's CIAA Tournament in the Norfolk Scope, NBA scouts came to evaluate Charles Oakley, the big Virginia Union center. They came away singing the praises of Tally. Although Norfolk State didn't win the title, Tally was named co-winner of the MVP award with Oakley, who led Virginia Union to the title and was a first-round pick in the NBA draft.

Tally also repeated as all-CIAA and all-tourney, and was voted to the Basketball Weekly and NBA Scouts of America all-America teams.

toward bigger backcourt players, the 6-1 Tally isn't worried.

"I like playing bigger guards," he maintains. "Last year, I played against high zones, against box and one's, triangle and two's, everything you can think of. And I got my points."

The GIAA adopted the three-point line from 19 feet, 9 inches this season. Tally wasn't concerned.

"Shucks, that's my range anyway, he says, laughing. It turned out to be "Tally's Alley."

Tally picked up another booster this season in Robert Pritchard, the Clark College coach.

"He's a coach's dream," Pritchard said after watching Tally lead Norfolk State to its second victory this season over Clark. "He plays both ends of the court. If I ever saw a pro prospect, Tally is definitely one."

Norfolk State has been picked to win the Northern Division championship

largely because of Tally's presence. "I don't feel any pressure," Tally

He scored 11 three-point goals in the says. "I know I'm expected to carry a "Because they wanted me," he says. averaged 20.9 points while recording first three conference games that the heavy load, but it's been like that since high school. I like it this way."

In Atlantic City, they're still following their man Ralph.

Last year, the major of Atlantic City came to watch him play in the NCAA Tournament. Two busloads of Tally fans came down from Atlantic City for the Spartans' first home game this

Still, "I don't feel any pressure," Tally says.

He likes it that way.

Abe Goldblatt is a sports writer for The (Norfolk, Va.,) Virginian-Pilot.

While the trend in the NBA is Like father, like son ...

Johnson C. Smith Coach Robert Moore is one of the most successfy basketball coaches in the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

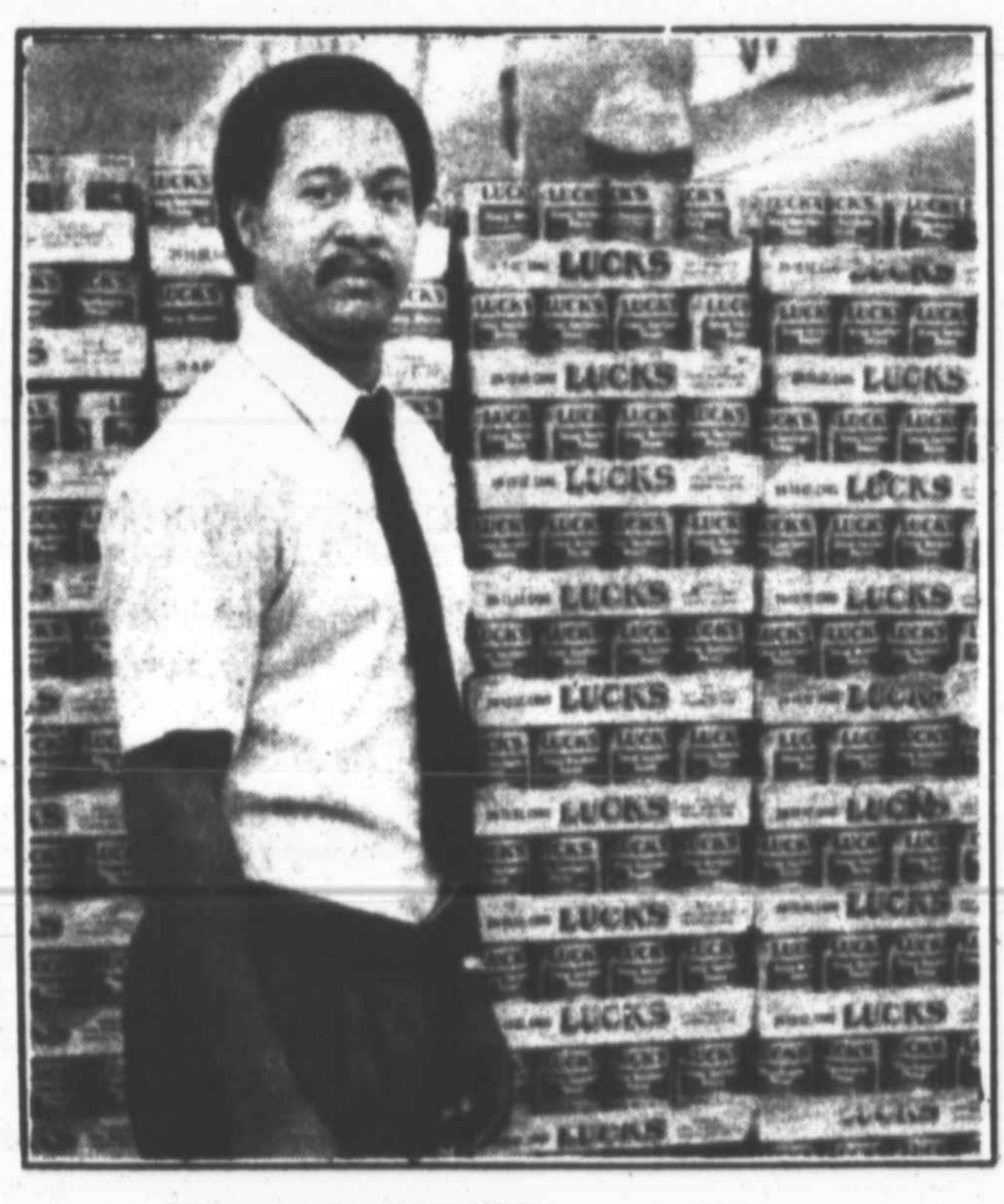
Moore started this, his 13th season at Smith with exactly 200 career coaching victories. That included backto-back CIAA Southern Division championships in 1981 and 1982.

His coaching success began at Atkins High School in Winston-Salem, N.C.,

where he directed the Camels to the state 4-A title in 1969.

Moore, whose father is a member of the Western North Carolina Athletic Hall of Fame, now has a son at North Mecklenburg High in Charlotte. Bobby Moore is turning heads with his play at point guard and is rated the best junior in Mecklenburg County, the largest metropolitan area in the state. The 6-foot point guard was averaging 14 points early in the season

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