COMMENTARY

From Page 5

offset a lower score in either category until 1988.

But Southern University Athletic Director Marino Casem calls that "window dressing."

The bottom line is that the NCAA is undermining the very premise on which many black schools were founded: to educate the underprivileged and disadvantaged.

How are historically black schools to survive?

No one seems to know, but everyone is convinced that they will.

"We'll have enough athletes to do the type job we need to do," said Free.

But taking a wait-and-see attitude, which everyone is doing, won't get it done.

One way of getting the job done would be to reclassify to Division II, where Proposal 48 has no effect.

"My philosophy is, if you can't afford it, why try to live like the Joneses?" said Gorden.

Proposal 48 is certainly making Division I too expensive for black schools' wallets. But reclassifying is not a popular notion, even though it is practical.

"I feel all the athletes will be in Division II," said Gorden. "The only way we've survived is by taking the academically disadvantaged youth and educate him and let him participate in athletics. That was the only ace we had. We don't have money. We don't have nice facilities. We don't have the media. We don't have lobbying groups to sway public opinion. Now we're going to lose the athletes.

"I suggested we study making the move at our conference meeting, and I was laughed at. They felt Division II would be a step down to mediocrity. They didn't want that."

But black schools seem to be headed down the road to mediocrity anyway if they remain in Division I. It's six in one hand and a half-dozen in the other.

Black schools went to Division I (I-AA in football) for one reason and one reason alone -- television revenue from football. When the NCAA lost control over television rights, black schools lost their big payday.

Now there's no reason for them to remain in Division I other than prestige, and prestige doesn't pay the bills.

Roscoe Nance is a sportswriter for USA Today *and a* Review *columnist.*

PROFILE

From Page 17

tenacity and sweat. He's a thinking man with a 3.3 GPA and the vice president of the senior class. He also is an honor society member and residence hall assistant.

As for his plans outside of athletics, Elam has three options in mind. One is to attend law school and become a prosecuting attorney. Other options include positions with the Drug Enforcement Agency and the FBI.

Onzy's years with the Big Blue are full of good memories, but two games he'll always treasure. This year's win over MTSU is one. The other is his team defeat of the University of Louisville two seasons ago en route to an 11-0 record. That win, he says, was especially satisfying because TSU was a decided underdog and was barred from the Division I-AA playoffs due to an NCAA-imposed probation.

The captain envisions a higher level of performance for the defense this season. TSU will be better defensively, he says, because many of the same people are back and they have a better handle on the Gilliam plan and how to implement it. Additionally, there are some academic casualties returning from last year who are now eligible, which fortifies an already solid group. "The key," Elam adds, "is playing with more consistency, maximum effort, precise technique and execution."

More than a few schools knew about Elam as a high school senior. He had his share of offers from Miami, Florida A&M, Bethune-Cookman, Georgia Tech and Michigan.

However, Coach Thomas, a former TSU defender himself, sold Elam on the Tiger program, and both have been happy ever since.

If Captain Onzy has his way, there will be plenty of high-five hand slaps on the sidelines as the Tigers look forward to making the NCAA playoffs this year.

That will serve notice to the rest of the OVC that TSU will be a serious force to deal with when the Tigers become eligible to compete for the league championship in 1988.

Craig T. Greenlee is an Atlanta-based free-lance writer and a frequent contributor to the Review.

COACHES

From Page 4

who might not otherwise get that opportunity.

"Some people say that math is math and it's not black or white," he says. "But for many, a lot depends on the environment you come from that will determine how well-prepared you are for college. There are plenty of black-college graduates who didn't score well on those tests who are now doctors, lawyers and in other professions."

To remedy this situation, Davis explains, efforts to get student-athletes properly prepared should begin in the eighth grade. That, along with having students hone their test-taking skills, should also make a difference.

Bill Davis realizes there's still a lot more work to be done on his rejuvenation project. And he prefers not to measure progress in terms of how many years it takes to get to a level of winning consistently.

Nevertheless, he's being allowed to run his own show. The faith he's injected into the young Tigers is infectious. More wins like the one against Morris Brown will convert a lot of disbelievers quickly. Maybe, just maybe, Savannah State's program is on its way up the ladder to respectability in the SIAC.

Time will tell.

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BLACK COLLEGE REPORT

From Page 19

with the sentiment behind the NCAA Presidents Commission recommendation to make Division II schools accountable for Proposal 48 standards.

But Gaines warned that a sudden change is not desirable.

"The impact is too sudden for Division I right now," said Gaines, who's been at WSSU for 41 years. "I think Proposal 48 is good, really.

"I do think the implementation of it would affect us more because of recruiting procedures. In a sense, Division I schools are just reverting to the no-freshman restriction. But most Division II schools have to utilize their freshmen."

Gaines said high schools must be more aware of Proposal 48's specific academic requirements.

"I'd like to see a three-year grace period before the standards are enacted," he said. "It's going to take that long for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to make the 11 core subjects mandatory."

Gaines said some local school boards have already adopted stricter academic requirements for those participating in extracurricular activities. But he said the requirements would have to become more universal.

Any legislation applying Proposal 48, now called NCAA Bylaw 5-1-(j), to Division II institutions will not be introduced until the NCAA convention in January.

Baseball Liners

• **Vince Coleman** has become the first major-leaguer to steal more than 100 bases in his freshman and sophomore seasons. The St. Louis left fielder finished the 1986 season with 107 thefts after getting 110 as a rookie ....

• Former Jackson State pitcher **Marvin Freeman** has earned two of the best nicknames to come out of the '86 season.

The 6-foot-6, 182-pound Phillies prospect is called either "Starvin' Marvin" or "Manute Base-Bol" by teammates and beat writers.