BLACK COLLEGE
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'Bighouse' = Big Heart

Winston-Salem State University's Clarence "Bighouse" Gaines is a giant in the coaching world, and not just because of his size - 6-5, 295 pounds - or record - 785 victories, No.2 on the all-time list.

Gaines is a throwback to what a coach used to be... someone who molded young peoples' lives.

He is involved in at least a half dozen civic and church organizations, including the Boy Scouts and Boys' Club. He helped found a youth baseball league in Winston-Salem, N.C., so black youngsters there would have a chance to play that sport.

He says he had spent more money getting other kids out of trouble than he did raising his own two children. He wasn't bragging when he said it. Helping others is just something Bighouse Gaines enjoys doing. He says he's just rendering a service.

That brings him as much pleasure, perhaps even more, than beating arch-rival North Carolina A & T or winning the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association championship, something he's done eight times.

Victories are getting harder and harder to come by for Gaines. The Rams were 16-12 this season and finished fourth in the CIAA Southern Division. Elizabeth City State eliminated them from the conference tournament in the first round. All the top players want to players prefer going to the larger schools that afford them the nationals exposure and the opportunity to play in huge arenas.

Those things are nice. But they are losers by not having Gaines touch their lives.

He has but one rule for his players - behave with prudence at all times. He never punishes a freshman, and he

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SWAC penalizes Southern Univ.

Will forfeit all 1987 TV monies

The Southwestern Athletic Conference's penalties against Southern University for using two ineligible football players last season has brought mixed reaction.

Commissioner James Frank ruled:

Southern will be publicly reprimanded and censured.

Stripped of three scholarships in 1989.

Forfeit all monies received from football telecasts in 1987.

Must make a complete report to the conference office by May 23 regarding preventive measures taken to cure the deficiencies.

"The penalties in this case," said Frank, "are intended to require the university to develop a system to certify eligibility whereby the persons at the university who sign the eligibility forms are fully knowledgeable about the exact status of all athletes."

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– Dr. James Frank

But some feel they're nothing more than a slap on the wrist, a very light slap at that.

"I thought it would be stiffer," said Mississippi Valley State athletic director Chuck Prophet. "To get to the heart of the matter, forfeits would have been the thing.

"If he's going to sanction the program, he should sanction for all league play and get some NCAA basketball money. It's mild compared to what he did for that guy who had a pistol at a baseball game."

Last spring, Frank suspended Mississippi Valley State first baseman Lavert Hawkins from competing in the SWAC for life because had a game at a baseball game with Jackson State.

Southern made for appearances on Black Entertainment Television networks telecasts last season at $3,000 per appearance. Forty percent of

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that total went to the conference. That means Southern will lose approximately $7,000.

Said another athletic director, "That's no hellava penalty. Seventy percent of the athletes in this conference are on Pell Grants anyway. He can hide three scholarships. Who's going to know how many he signs anyway?"

Alcorn State athletic director and football coach Theo Danzy hailed the penalties.

Dr. James Frank
SWAC Commissioner

"I like they way they went into it," said Danzy. "I think it's good the action is coming from the conference. I like to see the conference handle things internally so we can clean up a lot of things. You don't want to see any ill happen to any programs because of misinformation or an oversight. It's good to have accountability within your conference."

The penalties were imposed because Kervin Fontenette and Reginald Franks, a pair of starters, were ineligible last season, having had already

Theophilus Danzy Sr
Athletic Director, Alcorn State University

played four years.

Fontenette transferred to Southern from Southeastern Louisiana in 1985 after Southeastern Louisiana dropped football. He told Southern officials he had been redshirted a year at Southeastern Louisiana and had three years of eligibility remaining.

Reginald Frank was listed as a non-participant in 1985, but statistics show he made 43 tackles.

"It's hard to give up three scholarships and that money," said Southern football coach and athletic director Marino H. Casem. "We did everything possible to clean our skirts and keep out of trouble. Sometimes your reputation precedes you and they have to react to pressures."

-- Roscoe Nance

SIAC

It's business as usual for Alabama A&M

Photo by Craig Greenlee

Concerned Coach

A&M coach Vann Pettaway is very concerned about the lack of respect the SIAC gets nationally. He wonders why Black Entertainment Television has yet to cover a conference game when that network has covered games in the SWAC, MEAC and CIAA .

The beat goes on for Alabama A & M.

The Bulldogs 27-2 claimed their third straight SIAC tournament championship, whipping Albany State 96-91 at home in Huntsville, Ala. A capacity crowd of 5,000 screamed with glee.

For their efforts, A & M got its fourth straight trip to the Division II playoffs. They were seeded against Ashland College (Ohio) in the first round on March 12 in Owensboro, Ky.

It was no shock that the Bulldogs returned to the final round. They won the regular season title, going unbeaten in conference play at 14-0. A & M boasts three all-conference players in Ondray Wagner, Frank Sillmon and Willie Hayes. Coach Vann Pettaway was named conference Coach-Of-The-Year for the second year running, and Wagner was voted SIAC Player-Of-The-Year.

Albany State 17-8 had other notions. In their only confrontation earlier in the season, the Rams gave the Bulldogs all they could handle before dropping a 80-78 decision.

The Rams' ability to push A & M to their limit was attributable to their beefy front line, which ruled the boards and drastically reduced A & M's running game to a slow waltz in the half-court set-up.

Going into the contest, Pettaway was concerned how his team would handle Albany's bulk. "We didn't match up well with them because of their size," the coach said. "In the first half, they controlled the boards and we couldn't run. That's our game. They were killing us in the paint."

In the paint, Eric Gervin did his part for the Rams, with 21 points and 16 rebounds. Jimmy Emmers and Thomas Baker had 13 each, while Byron Martin finished with 12 and James Williams had 10.

Ultimately, the difference was that the running Bulldogs had too many weapons for the Rams to deal with. Wagner had 23 and Sillmon added 18. But the thorn that pricked the Rams was back-up guard Ronnie Tucker.

Tucker, a prolific three point shooter, came off of Pettaway's bench to bury 26 points. He canned four, three-point goals and had 18 points in the first half.

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spends hours and hours talking with his athletes about life and what they can expect from once they leave Winston-Salem State.

He doesn't paint a picture perfect world for them. He lets them know that the world doesn't owe them a thing. Hard work is the key to success, but it does not necessarily assure them of success. He tells them that there is no use for 6-7 jump shooters in the real world.

Those are the same words Gaines has been speaking to athletes at Winston-Salem State for the last 43 years, 42 of them head basketball coach. He has ever had a full-time assistant.

At one point, he was basketball coach, football coach, athletic director, team photographer and a teacher.

He keeps a less hectic schedule these days. He's only athletic director and basketball coach and teaches a health class three days a week. At 52,000 year, he has to be among the best bargains in the world.

Gaines will be 65 in May. No one knows how much longer he will coach, not even him. One minute he says he'd like to stay around long enough to get 800 victories and serve as president of the National Association of Basketball Coaches in 1990.

The next, he says he'll stay as long as he can contribute. That could be forever because contributions don't stop with winning and losing basketball games. Just ask the folks at Winston-Salem State.