

Sports Review

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Post-season bowl game is great idea

Black Expo, the Indianapolis based organization that sponsors the Circle City Classic football game, is to be applauded for its latest endeavor -- a post-season bowl game involving black colleges.

Such a game is a phenomena that's long over-

There have been ill-fated attempts to stage such a game in the past. The Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association champions met in the Gate City Bowl in Atlanta in the mid-70s. That game was played in the rain and was poorly attended.

And up until now, the idea of a post-season bowl for black schools had been abandoned.

There is an undeniable need for black colleges to have their own bowl. Black colleges are starving for money and publicity. A bowl game could help solve both problems.

Currently, there are 17 bowl games. But all of them are committed to major colleges. Black schools' chances for post-season play are limited to the NCAA Division I-AA, II and III playoffs and NAIA playoffs. But none of those competitions are very lucrative financially because there is no television to be had. Given Black Expo's track record with the Circle City Classic, a bowl game could be a bonanza for the participating teams. The four-year old event has never drawn fewer than 37,000 fans. Last year's game between Tennessee State and Central State grossed approximately \$700,000.

The potential for such a bowl game is limitless. With proper planning and support, it could be the vehicle that puts black college athletics at center stage.

Can it succeed?

The answer, unequivocally, is yes. But it will succeed only if those of us who say we're fans of black college athletics get behind the game and support it. Otherwise, it will suffer the same plight as the various black all-star football games that have cropped up over the years. One after the other, they moved from city to city, changed sponsors and took on new names before eventually fading from the scene.

Will it succeed?

That's a question that only time can answer.
Here's hoping that it will.

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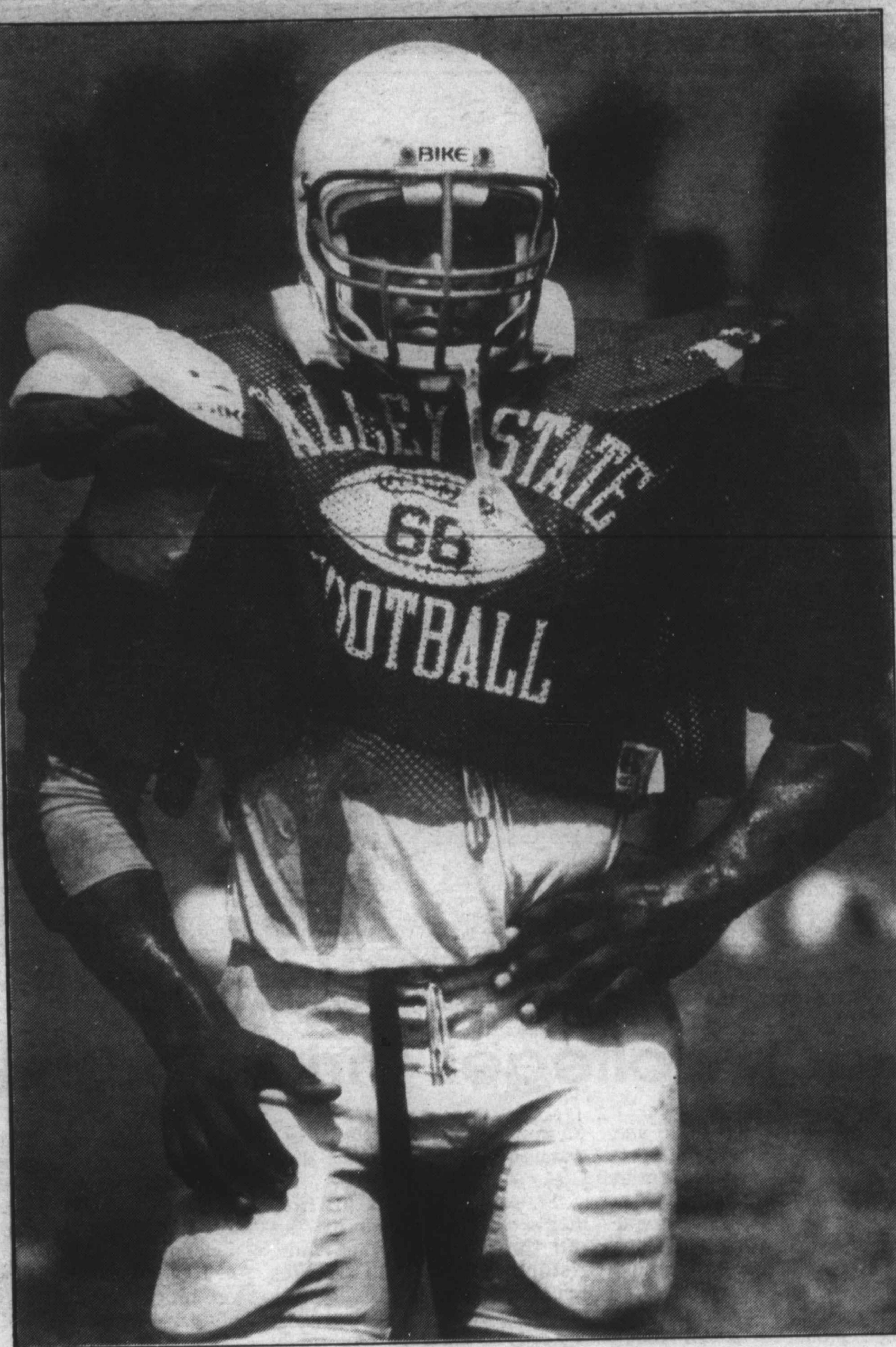


photo by J.D. Schwalm

cropped up over the years. One after the other, they moved from city to city, changed sponsors and took on new names before eventually fading from the They call him 'The Undertaker'

Vincent Brown, Mississippi Valley State linebacker, has the ominous nickname of "The Undertaker." At 6-2, 245 pounds, he leaves his mark on opposing ball carriers. Undoubtedly, he has been responsible for a few R.I.P.s. Brown was selected in the second round of the NFL draft by the New England Patriots. Brown isn't expected to step right in and play immediately, but he figures to make the team. Who knows? He could be the next Andre Tippett. Gregory Clay talks about black college players' NFL prospects on page 6.

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