SPORTS

Sam Lacy

Thanks?

There will be only one football game between black college teams on Thursday .... That may not be worth much discussion among many of our readers, and among some, the younger ones, there could be wonder about a reason for any discussion at all.

But, Thanksgiving Day in previous years was traditionally a big day of football on black college campuses and a big day socially in cities where those colleges were located .... That tradition is dead .... Even the one game which has survived — between Grambling and Southern — is not a campus event .... It is being played at the Superdome in New Orleans.

Different game

Maybe it is just as well, though .... Everything else has changed in the last decade or so .... The social activities have gone from invitation-only dances to open crack parties .... And the game itself would not be recognized by reincarnated stars of the past.

THIS was football

These were the rugged times when football players played football — all the way .... There were no platoons of offensive guys and defensive behemoths to share the burden of trying to beat the opponent .... The so-called "special squad" was unheard of at times of kickoffs and punts and the like.

If you made the team it was because you outplayed all the cats trying to beat you out for your position, by blocking, running the ball, catching it and tackling the other side's best .... And you made the team not because you were a giant-sized ape who frightened the hell out of the opponents, but because you were lightning quick, nail tough and scared of nothing.

And you were academically sound.

Notable quotable

All-time great heavyweight champion Joe Louis: "Everybody wants to go to heaven, but nobody wants to die."

Something is same

However, there is one aspect of the season that remains constant .... It is the unholy concept that has taken over and thrown the true meaning of thanksgiving for a loss.

As the birth of Christ has been turned into a commercial derring-do, as Memorial Day has become a drudge for families which spend but one day in the year to remember loved ones, the day that has been set aside to treasure the gifts that have been bestowed upon us is virtually buried.

Isn't it true that for most of us Thanksgiving Day should be every day? .... Can it be denied that each of us ought to be thankful that our plight is better than that of a lot of others?

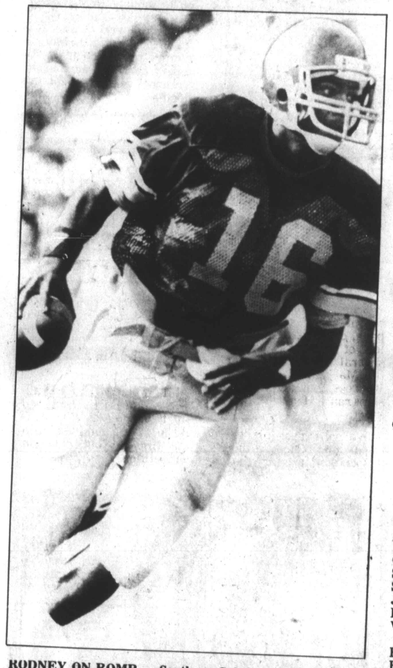
I'm thankful

Repeat quietly any or all of our normal daily prayers — "Our Father," "Hail Mary," "The Apostle's Creed," and/or "The Confiteor" — and think about them .... and realize that each is asking for something.

Except for the grace that expresses gratitude for the food on the table, no thanks of any kind are forthcoming.

If the reader elects to chastise me for becoming a self-styled, one-week missionary, it is alright .... It means that I have his attention.

And for that I'm thankful.



RODNEY ON ROMP — Southern Cal quarterback Rodney Peete led a 50-0 Trojan rout of Arizona State Saturday to propel his team into the Rose Bowl against Michigan and QB Demetrius Brown. Peete completed 23 of 33 passes for 361 yards and 2 touchdowns. He thus ran his season's output to 169 completions for 2,440 yards and 15 TD's.

Bowie St. in title tourney

Bowie State College, loser only once in 10 outings this season, embarks on its first-ever quest of a national football championship on Saturday.

The surprising Bulldogs (8-1-1) travel to Portland (Oregon) State for a first-round game in the NCAA's Division II playoffs.

In another game of the tourney Winston-Salem visits North Carolina Central.

Other opening-round contests include Augustana, S.D., (8-3) at North Dakota State (10-0); Millersville, Pa., (9-1) at Indiana, Pa., (8-2); Sacramento State (8-2) at Cal-Davis (7-2-1).

Other games have Mississippi College (9-2) at Texas A&I (8-2); Butler, Ind., (8-1-1) at Tennessee-Martin (10-1); West Chester State (9-1) at Jacksonville State (9-1).

FAMU gals MEAC champs

Florida A&M University swept through five matches to win the 1988 Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference double elimination women's volleyball championship held at Howard University.

In the title match, FAMU defeated a determined South Carolina State squad 15-9 and 15-10.

The Rattlerettes entered the tournament with the best record at 19-5, and downed Delaware State (15-5, 15-6), defending champion Howard (12-15, 15-13, 15-5), Maryland Eastern Shore (15-5, 15-6), and UMES again (15-5, 15-6) to reach the finals.

SC State defeated Coppin and lost to UMES, before eliminating Delaware State and Howard.

Football this week

COLLEGE SCHEDULE
Saturday
Delaware State at Howard
A and T at Western Kentucky (N)
Central State at Fla. A&M
S. Carolina State at Ga. Southern
Jackson State at Alcorn
Langston Univ. at Prairie View

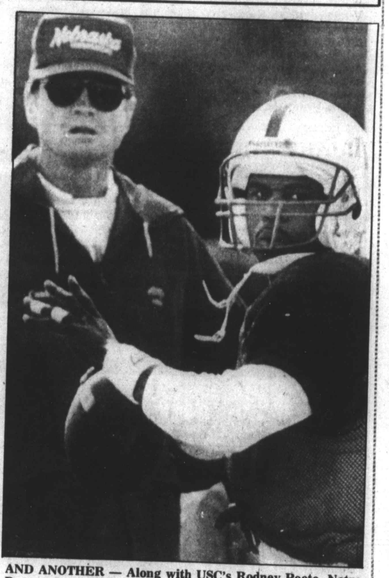
COLLEGE RESULTS
Howard 35, Morgan State 13
Bowie State by forfeit UDC
W. Illinois 22, Delaware St. 17
Ala. A and M 19, Tuskegee 9
Bethune 48, Morris Brown 13
Fort Valley 35, Kentucky St. 12
Morehouse 38, Clark 14
Alabama St. 23, Miss. Valley 0
Lane College 31, Ky. Wesleyan 13
Savannah State 28, Albany St. 22
Southern 10, Tenn. State 7

Week in boxing

Nov. 15 at San Diego — c-Orlin Norris vs. Jesse Ferguson, 12, NABF heavyweight title.

Nov. 22 at Las Vegas, Nev. — Cubanito Perez vs. Anthony Jones, 10, lightweights.

Nov. 22 at Atlantic City — Ras-I Bramble vs. Bryant Paden, 10, lightweights.



AND ANOTHER — Along with USC's Rodney Peete, Notre Dame's Tony Rice, West Virginia's Major Harris, Auburn's Reggie Slack, Michigan's Demetrius Brown and Oklahoma's Charles Thompson, Steve Taylor (here) quarterbacks Nebraska among the nation's top college teams. Taylor and the Cornhuskers battle Thompson and the Sooners Saturday for the Orange Bowl berth.

Debi Thomas headed for DC in Dec.

LANDOVER, Md. — The top figure skaters in the world, led by American Debi Thomas, will return to the Capital Centre in D.C., on Friday, Dec. 9 for the NutraSweet World Professional Figure Skating Championship.

Black Olympian among newcomers

Detonated Blast seeks fresh firepower

A downward slide that reached an 8-year career bottom with a 6-games — below .500 last season, has prompted the Baltimore Blast to look for resurgence with new faces and young legs.

The team, which opened its 1988-89 Major Indoor Soccer League home campaign Saturday defeating Tacoma, continues Saturday with the Wichita Wings as guests at the Baltimore Arena.

Local fans will be seeing three black players in Blast uniforms this season, one of whom, Desmond Armstrong, is the first such American to make the lineup.

Earlier black players, Richard Chinapoo and Paul Kitson, were not American born.

The same is true of current players Mike Reynolds and Freddie Thompson, both Canadians.

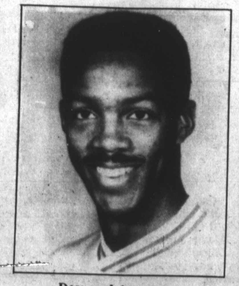
Reynolds, 25, earned All-American honors at George Mason University, where he led the Patriots to a NCAA Tournament appearance in his senior season. A 4-year starter at the Fairfax, Virginia school, he tallied 20 goals and 17 assists in his collegiate career.

He was the Blast's first pick in the 1986 college draft.

Born in Kingston, Jamaica, the 25-year-old Thompson spent his childhood in Mississauga, Canada, where he met Mike Reynolds. They have been close friends since their first meeting. The two now share an apartment in Baltimore County.

Reynolds is a Blast defender. Thompson who also starred at George Mason as a midfielder.

Armstrong, 24, who gained a position on the U.S. Olympic soccer team that went to Seoul, South Korea, was born in Washington, D.C.



Desmond Armstrong
U.S. soccerist in Seoul

His parents moved to Columbia, Md., where Desmond attended Howard High School, which produced another former soccer star, Darryl Gee.

The youngster majored in Business at the University of Maryland, and became a 3-time All-Atlantic Coast Conference selection as a Terp.

This is Armstrong's first Blast season after spending the last two campaigns with Cleveland, who selected him in the first round of the 1986 college draft.

Armstrong earned MISL All-Star status last season in only his second year in the league. The speedy detender is a versatile performer, capable of playing on the penalty killing and power play units.

Of his Olympic experience, Armstrong says: "Our goal was to get past the first round, and we didn't, which was very disappointing to everyone involved. Looking back on it, a win (instead of a 1-1 tie) over the Argentines would have put us through the next round.

"Still, our performance in Seoul was better than some predicted."

Of his acquisition by the Blast, last Sept. 8, as a free agent, he declares: "This is as exciting as the Olympic experience for me. To be able to play before my friends and family so close to home, is the realization of a dream I never dared to think about."

AREA SPORTS

Senior Olympian wins four medals

By Fred Lindsey
AFRO Staff Writer

He runs to stay active

As he prepares for the Eight Mile Subway Race, this weekend, sexagenarian Elmer Hall was almost overlooked at the recently held Maryland Senior Olympics at Towson State University.

Winning four medals and breaking three records for the 60-64 age group, Hall went about his training program as if nothing had happen.

Because of a computer foul-up and the lateness of Hall's events, his accomplishments were not placed in the records book until two weeks after the competition, but he took everything in stride.

"I wasn't so concerned about the computer or the record books because I was getting ready for the Nationals," Hall said.

"Although I was one of the few athletes to win four medals at the Senior Olympics, I was thinking about my competition in the 1989 U.S. National Senior Olympics next summer in St. Louis, Missouri, — that's where the heavy competition will be."

While breaking national age group record in track and field, Hall has maintained himself as a quiet champion with a mind-set only on the next event, but he insists that his labor of love to run has and will continue to be with him as long as he lives.

"It is necessary for me to run as much as possible," Hall said, "but because of my work schedule, I am unable to keep a proper training routine. Running keeps me active and I want to be active for as long as I can."

At the Senior Olympics, Hall won the 100-meter dash in 13:47; the 200-meter dash in 29:00; the 400-meter dash in 1.06 and the running broad jump at 15' 8", and he is looking forward to competing against the best.

"It feels great to win and be recognized," Hall said, "and it feels great to be a champion. But I won't feel right until I compete against those athletes from California. They are recognized as the best in the world and my aim is to beat them."

Hall, an automobile salesman at All-Star Chevrolet, is a native of Pittsburgh, PA., but has lived in Baltimore since 1955.

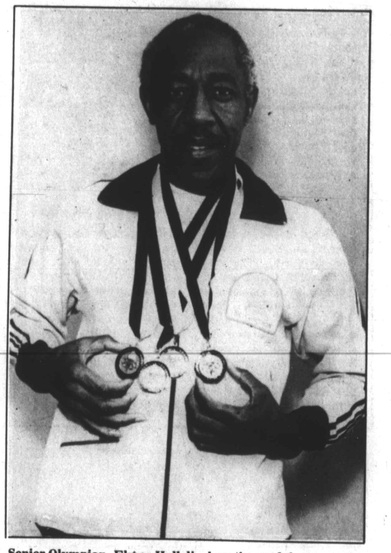
His love for track and field has been an intricate part of his life since his high school days in Martinsville, VA. He declares that his legs will tell him when he should stop running.

"I remember when I was 30," Hall said, "and I noticed that I was getting out of shape. I decided to join the Baltimore Olympic Track Club, but I became disenchanted with my times because I was competing against many young athletes. And I wasn't doing well.

So, someone suggested that I run against people my own age and I've been doing that every since and winning. It's always better when you win."

Unlike many world class athletes, Hall's dedication for perfection and winning records has earned him much recognition, but little in the way of resources and he says he needs additional financial support, if he is to challenge the world's best.

"I want to be the best in the world in my events," Hall said. My goal is to be the decathlon champion in my age bracket. To go to St. Louis, California and around the country takes a lot of money, but no matter what happens, I'm going to compete, now matter how I get there."



Senior Olympian, Elmer Hall displays the medals won at the Maryland State Senior Olympics.

Short Shots

Terp Standouts

Two former Baltimore City high school football players are ending their season at the University of Maryland with a lot of post season publicity.

Because of their standout play, 6-6, 227 defensive tackle, Warren Powers (Edmondson) and 6-1, 198 wide receiver Vernon Joines (Southwestern) are receiving a lot of attention from the professional ranks as well as the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC).

Power is leading the Terps in quarterbacks sacks and hurries. He is among the top tacklers on the team and he seems assured of an All-ACC berth.

Joines is the leading pass catcher for his position and was twice named the ACC Offensive Player Of The Week.

Indoor Soccer Tournament

The Maryland Recreation and Parks Association will hold its first Indoor Soccer Tournament, Saturday and Sunday, at the Myers Indoor Soccer Pavillion.

Originally set for teams to include a men's unlimited, a women's unlimited, a coed unlimited and a men's 30 and over, the Tournament was reduced to an open men's unlimited tournament because of the lack of women players.

With 12 teams, play will be divided into four divisions, starting at 8:00 a.m. and continuing to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. The championship rounds will start Sunday at a time to be announced.

Contact Mike Woodard for more information at 396-5782.

City Swimmer at Goucher

This winter, Goucher College will begin its second year of men's NCAA Division III Swimming.

Coach Rich Morris, who is optimistic about the season, have seven returning swimmers from Goucher's first-ever men's sports team.

In addition to the returnees, five newcomers, including Southern High Willie Olds will be joining the team this season.

Freshman Olds, a great competitor, gives the team strength in the Individual Medley (free style, breast stroke, butterfly and backstroke) and the Individual Butterfly.

With their experience and the newcomers, the Gophers will be expected to improve on their 0-8 record of last year.

Amateur Basketball Begins

The Organizational Meetings for both the 1988-89 Boys City-Wide Basketball Program and the Women's Unlimited Basketball Leagues was held Thursday, November 17th at the Virginia S. Baker/Patterson Park Recreation center.

For the Boys Program, leagues will be formed in the Under 10, Under 12, Under 14, Under 16 and Under 18 age groups.

Competition for the Boys' Program will begin Saturday, December 3rd. Women's Unlimited competition will begin Tuesday, December 6.For further information call 396-9314.

CCB Cross Country

Wanda Hilton (Western), shown in the middle of the pack, of the Community College of Baltimore was one of several women participant in the Maryland-JUCO Region 10 Cross Country Championships ran at Hanlon Park, last week.

In accordance with the National Junior College Athletic Association standards, the top ten individuals ran to represent the region at the National Cross Country Championships, this Saturday, November 12 in Twin Falls, Idaho.

Hilton placed 13th overall. The team title went to Montgomery-Rockville. CCB did not have a complete team and finished out of team competition.

SPORT SHORTS

By Frank Lee

The Howard University Bison got a big kick out of their recent season, primarily because their soccer team went undefeated with a 16-0-1 record and will be in the NCAA playoffs.

Howard, ranked sixth in the nation, will be making its eighth appearance in the playoffs (1962-63-72-74-75-76-80-88) where they captured the crown in 1974 with a 2-1 victory over St. Louis in four overtimes when their coach Lincoln Phillips.

Through the years the Bison are 12-7 in the playoffs with .632 winning percentage and have also finished third and fourth, once each.

In their championship campaign in 1974 the Bison downed George Washington, 2-0 in the first round, Clemson, 1-0, in the second round, and Philadelphia Textile, 5-3, in the quarterfinals. Their march in the semifinals continued with a 2-1 triumph over Harts before their title win.

The locals will take plenty of positive history and a very good season's mark into their second round encounter on Sunday, November 20 against Philadelphia Textile who defeated the Midshipmen, 1-0, at Navy in Annapolis on Sunday, November 13 in the opening round.

Howard will host the title at Greene Stadium on the HU campus at 1 p.m. The Bison received a first round bye this time around in the 24-team tourney along with Virginia (17-0-3), South Carolina, St. Louis, Ston Hall, Indiana, Portland, and Evansville.

Normally, because of being in the same region with Virginia the locals would meet the top-ranked squad in the second round. But, under the new playoff format this year, they will not meet for several rounds.

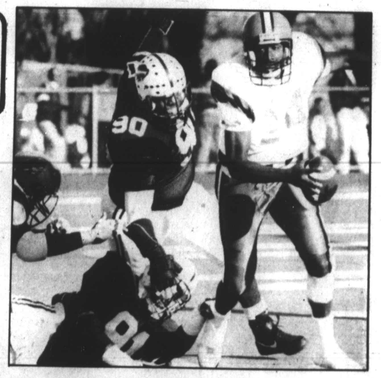
On Howard's last trip to the playoffs in 1980 they also drew a bye in the opening round before dropping a 2-1 decision to William and Mary in four overtimes on a penalty kick.

According to recent reports, the Bison's players are impatient, anxious, and "ready to play."

* * *

With shattered dreams of back-to-back titles in the MEAC and hopes of a Division 1-AA playoff berth disappearing, the Howard University Bison's football squad is set to host conference opponent Delaware State at Greene Stadium on the HU campus on Saturday, November 19 at 1 p.m.

It will be the final regular season encounter for both teams as the hosts boast a 7-3 overall mark and a 3-2 conference record and the visiting Hornets are 5-4 and 4-1, respectively, and tied with Florida A and M for the top spot in the circuit.



BISON'S LINEBACK Michael Clarington puts the bite on Morgan State quarterback Daryl Jackson (14) just as the defensive tackle Bryan Taltoan comes up from the rear. (Photo by C.R. Tuckson)

City-Poly 100th playing

A great deal of excitement has been generated around the 100th playing of the City/Poly football game this Thanksgiving Day at Memorial Stadium.

Although it is sometimes unnoticed, the same enthusiasm surrounds Sunday's touch football game for the alumni players scheduled for 12 noon at Polytech.

While all alumni football are invited to participate, regardless of age, there has been a steady flow of 40 or more players from each side practicing for Sunday's contest.

The word is that everybody wants to look good, including Mayors Kurt Schmoke and Dennis Callahan from Annapolis, both City College graduates.

"It's really a reunion of sorts more than a game," said Jim DeWald, a 1967 Poly graduate. "The touch football game will be more ceremonial than anything else, but the guys always want to be at their best."

"We will introduce everybody and start play with the older guys," DeWald continued "and work our way down to the younger players. We hope it will be competitive and provide the kind of excitement that will stir the group."

The Poly/City Football game is one of the oldest sustained high school rivalries in the country.

Poly has won 48 of the ninety-nine games with six ties, but the touch football game is open for interpretation.

"While we don't expect much of a crowd for our game," "DeWald said, "We do expect a nice, warm affair where we can talk about the times when we wanted to beat others on the field."