FOOTBALL WRAP-UP

Will the real conference champs please stand up?

For now, Delaware State is the official Derrick Faison. conference champ. Their 28-21 victory over Howard University put them in position to take the crown.

There's one hitch though.

Del State has been charged with using an ineligible player this season. If they are found guilty, and have to forfeit their wins, then Bethune-Cookman could become the conference kings by virtue of their head-to-head wins over both the Hornets (10-9) and Florida A & M (25-0 in the Florida Classic, see page

The confusion began at the start of the season when the Rattlers (6-4-1, 4-2) beat DSC 35-31 in the season opener for both teams. FAMU used an ineligible player and had to forfeit that win. Before the Rattlers played B-CC, no MEAC team had defeated them. But Del State's victory over Howard victory over the Rattlers.

At presstime, the MEAC hadn't concluded its investigation concerning the eligibility vate little battle for the league's rushing title. of the unnamed Hornets player. Conference Killings scored more TDs than Barnes (seven commissioner Ken Free is expected to render to five) and gained more yards (1,452 to that game, the Rattlers appeared to be destined 17-7, A & M.

conference wins, the Wildcats (5-6, 4-2) feel average was higher, but just barely -- 133.6 to with the Marauders and Bethune. Had they they should own the crown because they beat both front runners.

Before all of this surfaced, DSC snatched the title by holding off the Bison. They took a helped DSC to total 343 total offensive yards scheduled for the Saturday after Thanksgiv- control of the game. But Vertuno missed the three touchdown lead, then staved off for the day. Linebacker Ed James was a defen- ing, the same weekend that the playoffs start- PAT and the Rattlers were down by four Howard's rally to preserve the win.

Quarterback Darren Felton led the Hornets to a 21-7 halftime lead. He threw a 31yard scoring pass to Dave Jones and ran for two TDs himself.

Howard got their lone first half score

Reggie Barnes extended DSC's lead with his 29-yard scoring run in the third quarter. Barnes and Howard's Fred Killings were ous jeopardy.

DSC end zone again.

The title, for the moment, is in Dover. But as we know by now, that could be in seri-



Mideastern Athletic Conference

gave them a 5-1 conference slate, the same as engaged in a battle of the conference's best A & M. DSC won out because of the forfeit runners. Barnes totaled 146 yards and Killings ran for 137 rushing yards.

Barnes and Killings had their own pri-- 132.0 for Killings.

sive sparkplug for Del State as they slammed ed. In order for A & M to have been considinstead of three. the door on HU when it counted the most.

the Hornets, 28-21. But the Bison's rally regardless of what they did in their final two interceptions. on a 54-yard TD pass from Lee DeBose to was cut short and they couldn't dent the games.

ing, and feeling very confident that the '88 Harry Brown. MEAC football trophy will find its home in Daytona Beach.

Should Del State be forced to drop some basis, Barnes won because his yards per game and only needed to win their remaining games yards and three touchdowns. ered, the B-CC game date would have had to

playoffs was North Carolina A & T in '86. It seems that officials from Bethune and A & M will have to work out a new schedule for that game so they will be in compliance with NCAA requirements. Otherwise, the conference is likely to start a long streak of teams not being able to make the playoff field because of game scheduling.

The NCAA says that no teams can be

considered for the playoffs if their regular sea-

son doesn't end by the weekend before the

playoffs begin. This is the second year that the

conference hasn't been represented in post-

season play. The scheduling of the B-

CC/Florida A & M was the reason why the

conference didn't have a playoff team last sea-

son. The last MEAC team to appear in the

Against Central State, the Rattlers bolted out to a 17-0 lead in the first half. James Vertuno kicked a 37-yard field goal and Antoine B-CC coach Larry Little is smiling, wait- Ezell threw TD passes to Curtis Green and

However, the Marauders put some points on the board during the waning moments of Florida A & M's year pretty much ended the half. Henderson Moseley threw an 11-yard with their 27-23 loss to Central State. Before TD pass to Drake Jackson to make the score,

a decision on this matter at the MEAC's Mid- 1,336), but Del State had a 10 game schedule, to be the conference representative in the 1- Moseley proved to be very elusive. He Winter meetings in Atlanta in mid-December. while the Bison played 11 games. On that AA playoffs. They were ranked in the Top 20 burned the Rattlers defense for 94 rushing

At that point CSU led 27-17. But A & M won vs. Central State, their post-season hopes answered when Andre Williams hit Howard Guard Raymond Andrews was the would still have been nil. The B-CC contest, a Huckaby with a 12-yard scoring pass. It workhorse on the Hornets offensive line. He big one financially for the Wildcats had been seemed that the Rattlers were ready to regain

FAMU had two other opportunities to Trailing by 21, Bison quarterback been moved to an earlier date. Because the take the lead late in the game. On both occa-DeBose went to work. He scored two TDs two schools weren't able to make the change, sions, they had drives that penetrated CSU's to bring Howard to within seven points of the Rattlers were out of the playoff picture 20, but each time the drives were thwarted by

-Sonny Parks

Albany State wins it, but misses out on playoffs

Albany State walked away with the conference title. But they were nixed for the Division II playoffs when Savannah State pulled



Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference

off a huge 28-22 upset.

The Rams were ranked No. 12 in the imposed similar guidelines. division at the time and had every right to expect a post-season bid as a member of the South Region.

had other ideas. The Tigers (8-2, 6-1) showed gained 1,096 yards on the ground and had the conference at 7-3, 6-1. themselves to be among the league's elite, 1,358 all-purpose yards, including 11 TDs. even though they weren't eligible for the Bell rushed for 1,044 yards and amassed league title this season.

NCAA guidelines stipulate that all Division II being dropped from Division II.

In the meantime, no SSC sports team is eligible for an NCAA team title. Tiger athletes are eligible for individual titles. The SIAC has

Statistically, this was a very good year

But coach Bill Davis and Savannah State rushed for over 1,000 yards in '88. Burt

an all-purpose yardage total of 1,284 yards

Savannah State's Shannon Sharpe headed match. The school has one year to rectify to page 3). But Morris Brown's Lionel Camel crown because of their probationary status. discrepancy. If they don't, they're in danger of also had an extraordinary season as a wide receiver. He led the league with 58 catches for the hands of Alabama A & M (14-10). They 1,007 yards for a 17.3 yards per catch average. He beat Sharpe out by one catch.

On the defensive side the ball, the league has its share of top shelf performers. Alabama per game). A & M defensive back Fred Garner was named as the SIAC Defensive Player of the Burt and Curtis Bell of Fort Valley State, both Year. Garner intercepted four passes this sea-

son for the Bulldogs, who finished second in

Morris Brown's Tony Robinson was the toast of all defensive linemen in the league. The defensive end was voted the conference's Earlier this year, the NCAA placed and 10 touchdowns. The junior running back top defensive lineman. He led the league in Savannah on probation because they didn't averaged 128.4 all-purpose yards per contest sacks (13) and was the No. 2 tackler, record-

Perhaps the most intriguing story in the tennis programs must have five on the team the league's crop of offensive weapons, being SIAC this year is Davis' Savannah State team. and play a minimum of 10 matches. SSC had named as the conference's offensive player of Quite possibly, they were the best team in the two women players and they played only one the year for the second straight season (see league that wasn't able to compete for the

The Tigers only conference loss came at had the league's top offense (351.5 total yards per game) and the defense wasn't shabby at all (gave up an average of 262 offensive yards

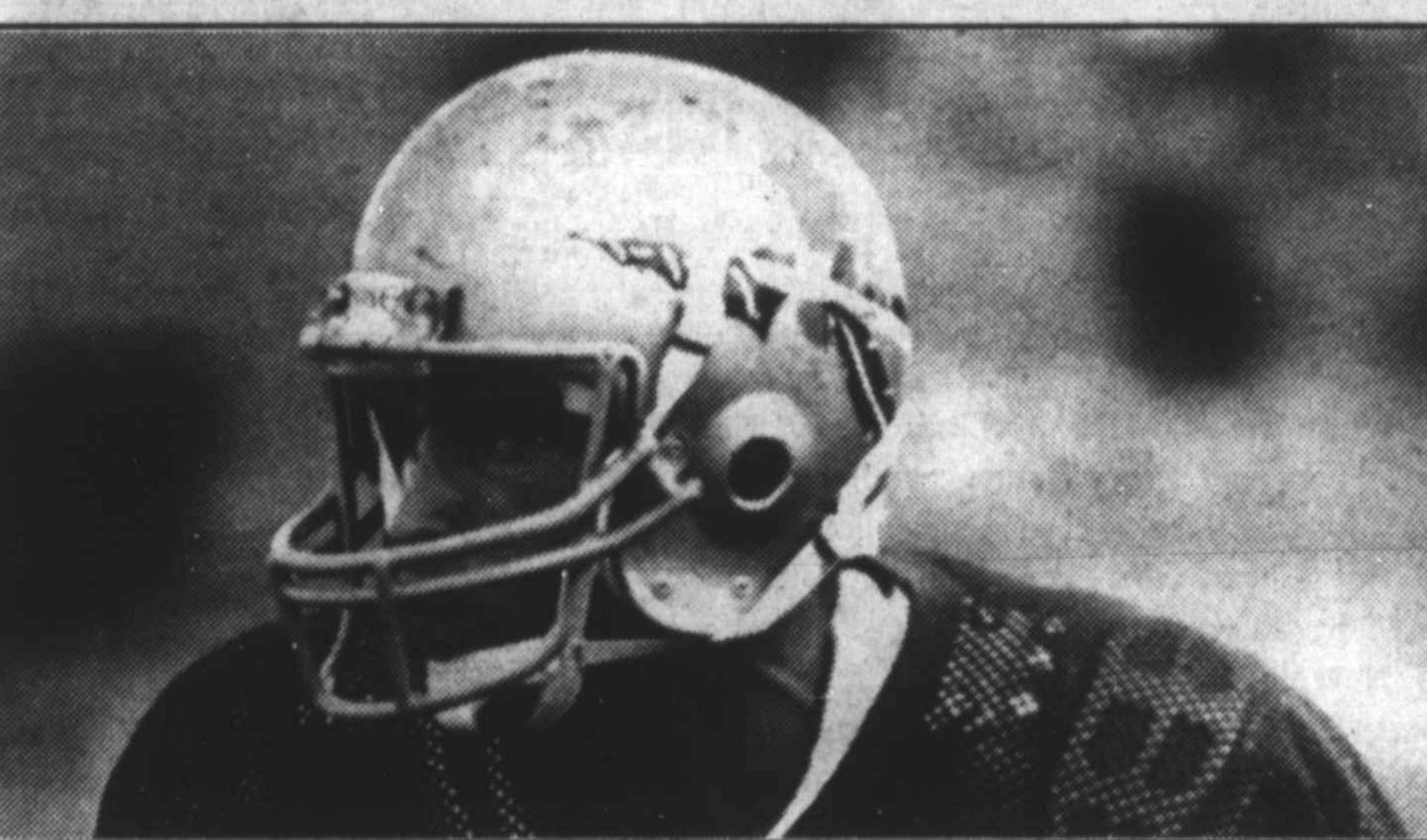
Quarterback Richard Basil took over the leadership for the Davis crew. He topped the

Please See Page 14



Photo by The Magnificent Eye

Back-up quarterback Keith James came on strong in his role as reliever to guide Winston-Salem State to the CIAA championship.



Alcorn's Gerry Butler finished '88 as one of SWAC's top scoring threats.

Photo by Max Dunhill

Coach Bill Davis has the Savannah State Tigers growling and biting Photo by J.D. Schwalm again. Too bad they weren't eligible for the SIAC title.

Conference produced a prize harvest this year

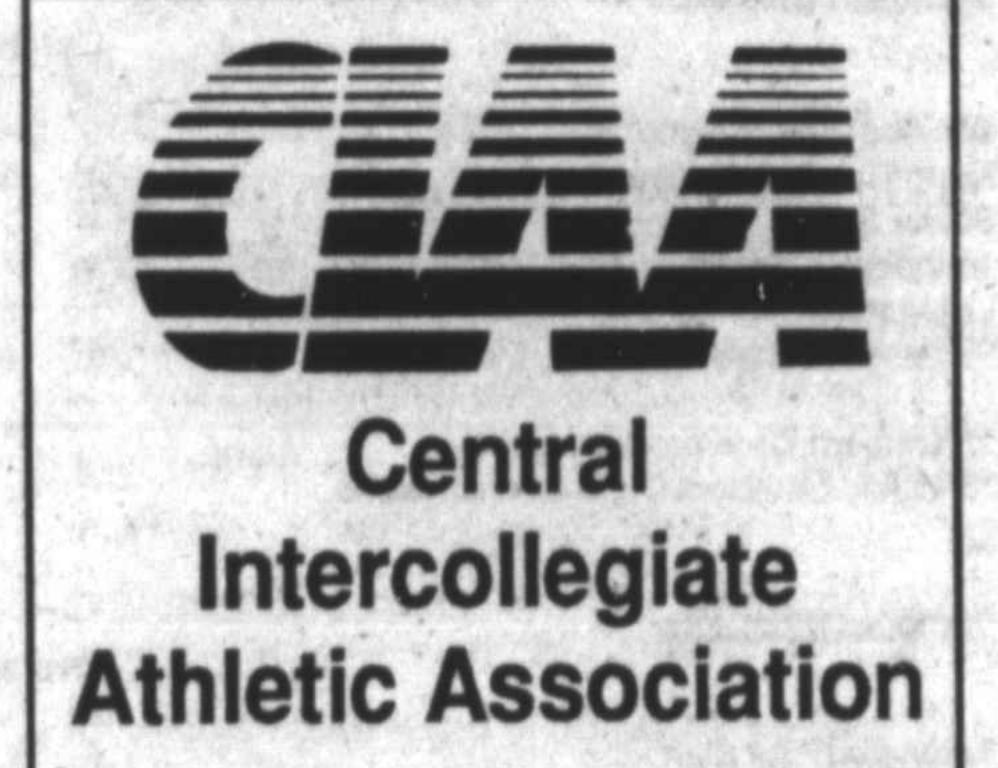
football season in quite a while. The conference had three teams ranked in the national polls and all three went to the Division II

Winston-Salem State led the contingent jans. as the top ranked black college team in Division II. The Rams had been ranked as high as No. 2 during the regular season. They were No. 5 before the playoffs started. North Carolina Central and Bowie State were No. 16 and No. 19 respectively.

But the interesting thing about conference football this year is that the Northern Division got little play from the national pollsters. Virginia State never cracked the Top 20, but they won the North and gave Winston all they could handle in the conference championship game won by the Rams, 13-9. It's also difficult to forget about Virginia Union, a conference's best team during the latter stages of the season. They weren't ranked in Division

solid, but surprising 26-14 over Virginia State in the Gold Bowl. The Panthers had been down by as many as two touchdowns in the first quarter. But they roared back in the second quarter and final half to subdue the Tro-

Jones took charge of the game, running



for two TDs and throwing for another score in the second half because of a badly sprained en route to being named the game's MVP. He ankle. Back-up QB Keith James entered the completed 11 of 19 passes for 100 yards and game and put a fire under the Rams, guiding rushed for 56 yards.

Linebacker Leroy Gause was a force for the Panthers (7-3, 4-2) in that showdown.

Gause recorded 15 hits and two quarterback sacks to lead the assault.

Union had a shot at winning the North if Norfolk State had beaten VSU in the season finale. The Spartans pushed the Trojans to their limit, but VSU prevailed 38-27 to take the division title.

In the CIAA championship game, Winston-Salem State staged a second half rally and stopped a last-ditch scoring drive with a staunch goal line stand to defeat Virginia State and repeat as the league champions.

The Trojans (7-4, 6-1) grabbed a 9-0 lead field goal by Robert Okonkwo. Coach George Moody's team put the big crush on Winston's running game and on offense they were able to control the game's tempo.

Things didn't look good for Winston. Starting quarterback Kenny Jones had to retire them to 13, second half points.

The Rams appeared to have the game tucked away with less than three minutes left

to play. But the Trojans wouldn't call it a day. Quarterback Rudy Elliot had run the Winston defensive pass rush silly with his scrambling and now you see me, now you don't moves. The Rams, usually an effective pass rushing team, were never able to put a lot of pressure on Elliot, who broke contain consistently, and broke the Rams defense down.

With less than a minute to play, the Trojans had moved inside the Rams' 10-yard line. Elliot threw a pass to Cooper, who made a clean catch in the end zone, but he failed to come down with at least one foot inbounds so on a touchdown run by Clifton Cooper and a the scored was not allowed. On fourth down, Elliot rushed his pass to the left corner of the end zone and overthrew his receiver. The game was over, the Trojans were dismayed and the Rams were jubilant.

Running back Broderick Graves and placekicker Dino Belegrinis enjoyed productive seasons for the league kings. Graves led the CIAA in scoring (16 TDs) and rushing (1,005 yards). Belegrinis was an effective instrument in the Rams scoring scheme, giv-

Please See Page 14

December1988 - Page 13