Track nationals

because it made me a better performer."

The showdown between Johnson and Fortune almost didn't take place. In the qualifying heats, Johnson had been initially disqualified. A protest was lodged stating that Johnson had deliberately hit black college women's team captured a the last two hurdles so he could gain an majority of the limelight. The Lady advantage over the competition. Coach Pirates of Hampton finished the highest Williams, however, stepped in, appealed, and the decision was overruled by meet team standings. officials.

The 400 promised to be a showcase of one-lap sprinting talent and the finals Spence. Spence entered the champilived up to that billing. Back was defending champ Howard Burnett of New York speedster. Last May, she won national Tech. Burnett was sure to receive strong challenges from St. Aug's Graham and Johnny Barnes of Hampton.

Their challenges were mighty. But Burnett had the answer, going out fast sprints, but she wanted a title in the open and maintaining his cushion where neither Graham or Barnes could make up any ground. Burnett won in a blistering 45.32. Graham clocked 46.09 while Barnes ended up third at 46.21. Duane Johnson and Donovan Callum earned additional points for the Falcons, finishing fourth and sixth respectively. Virginia State's Roderick Stafford placed eighth.

It was very fitting for St. Aug's to cap their team victory by literally blowing away all foes in the 4 x 400, sizzling all the way to the finish line in 3:05.42. Callum and Duane Johnson provided the Falcons with a slight lead after two legs. But it was Brokenburr who broke everythird leg. By the time Graham got the Royster (Norfolk State) also finished that fit. He wears a size 8.

From Page 11

exactly what I wanted," he added. "And stick for the final quarter, the race, for all this year, I've run against some of the intents and purposes, was over. Had St. best. The competition was good for me Aug's been challenged, the general consensus was that the foursome may have approached 3:01, 3:02 -- a time good enough to win at the Division I nationals.

While the Falcons were the dominant factor in the men's competition, no one among black colleges, placing third in the

When you speak of Hampton women's track, you speak of sprinter Vivienne onships as the division's top female titles in the 100 and 200.

This year, her desires were very ambitious -- perhaps too ambitious. Not only would she compete in the short 400 to go along with running in the 4 x 100 and 4 x 400. As good as Spence is, it was clear that she had done sufficient conditioning work to prepare her for such a monstrous undertaking.

Given that, Spence wasn't her usual self. She did win the 200, and ran an impressive leg on the 4 x 100 relay which produced a title for Hampton. However, the times she recorded were slow. She had run faster races before -- faster than the times that beat her at this year's

In the 100, she finished a surprising fifth as Abeline Christian's Alesia Turner (11.99) pulled off the major upset. Saun- cons to run in the 4x100. Fortuone with a scintillating 45.5 split on the dra Harrison (St. Aug's) and Cynthia nately, Mason found some shoes



Photo by Max Dunhill After winning the long jump, Mark Mason had to borrow sprinter's shoes from one of the Lady Fal-

ahead of the dethroned champion -- Harrison was third and Royster was fourth. The Lady Falcons' Sharon Ford placed

The 400 was equally as astonishing. Running out of lane eight, Spence decided to lay back during the first 200, then catch people during the last 150. When she reached that point of the race, the acceleration just wasn't there. She faded to fourth. By meet's end, the exhaustion on her face was as well defined as her neatly braided hair.

Black college runners defeating Spence included Alabama A & M's Charmaine Welsh (second place) and Norfolk State's Josetta Royal (third place). Dionne Bruff (Alabama A & M) ended up in fifth place and Norfolk State's Bertha Knox placed seventh.

Competing in five events took their toll. "It really had a bad effect on me," Spence said. "When I lost that first race (400), that really set the pace. Afterwards, I felt really down. But I did manage to pick myself back up after a while."

Spence didn't get the three crowns she was after. She proved vastly superior in the 200. She looked good in winning, but inside, she felt lousy. "I felt worse in the 200 than I did in my other races," she confided. "But I figured it might be my best race because I can run a good curve and I used that to my advantage. By the time I hit the straightaway, everyone else had to try to catch me, which was impossible for them to do."

Aside from Spence, black colleges took third, fourth and fifth in the half-lap race with Knox (Norfolk State), Welsh (Alabama A & M) and Harrison finishing

Please See Page 15



Rejoicing

Hampton U. rejoices after taking the victory in the women's 4x100. At far left, Kima Edwards shows her elation as teammate Vivienne Spence recovers. At near left, Edwards crosses the finish line in full flight.

Photos by The Magnificent Eye

SWAC BASEBALL

Ricky King: The case of the two-way pitcher

Alabama State baseball pitcher Ricky King is not a wasteful person.

While almost all of King's diamond counterparts are confined to hurling with one hand, King has his own system to keep both hands busy when he is on the mound.

King, you see, pitches righthanded and lefthanded.

The redshirt freshman officially unveiled his ambidextrous style when the Hornets faced Samford University in late April in Montgomery, Ala. It was not a memorable debut as Samford won 16-5. King was removed from the game after giving up three earned runs, two hits and five walks.

"I just couldn't get in the groove," King said in a post-game interview. "I never had good control. My left arm really felt good, but I couldn't find the

Nevertheless, King's double-dealing style was a winner. The media and spectators were both amazed and

Alabama State baseball coach Larry Watkins received an abrupt introduction to King's two-way pitching.

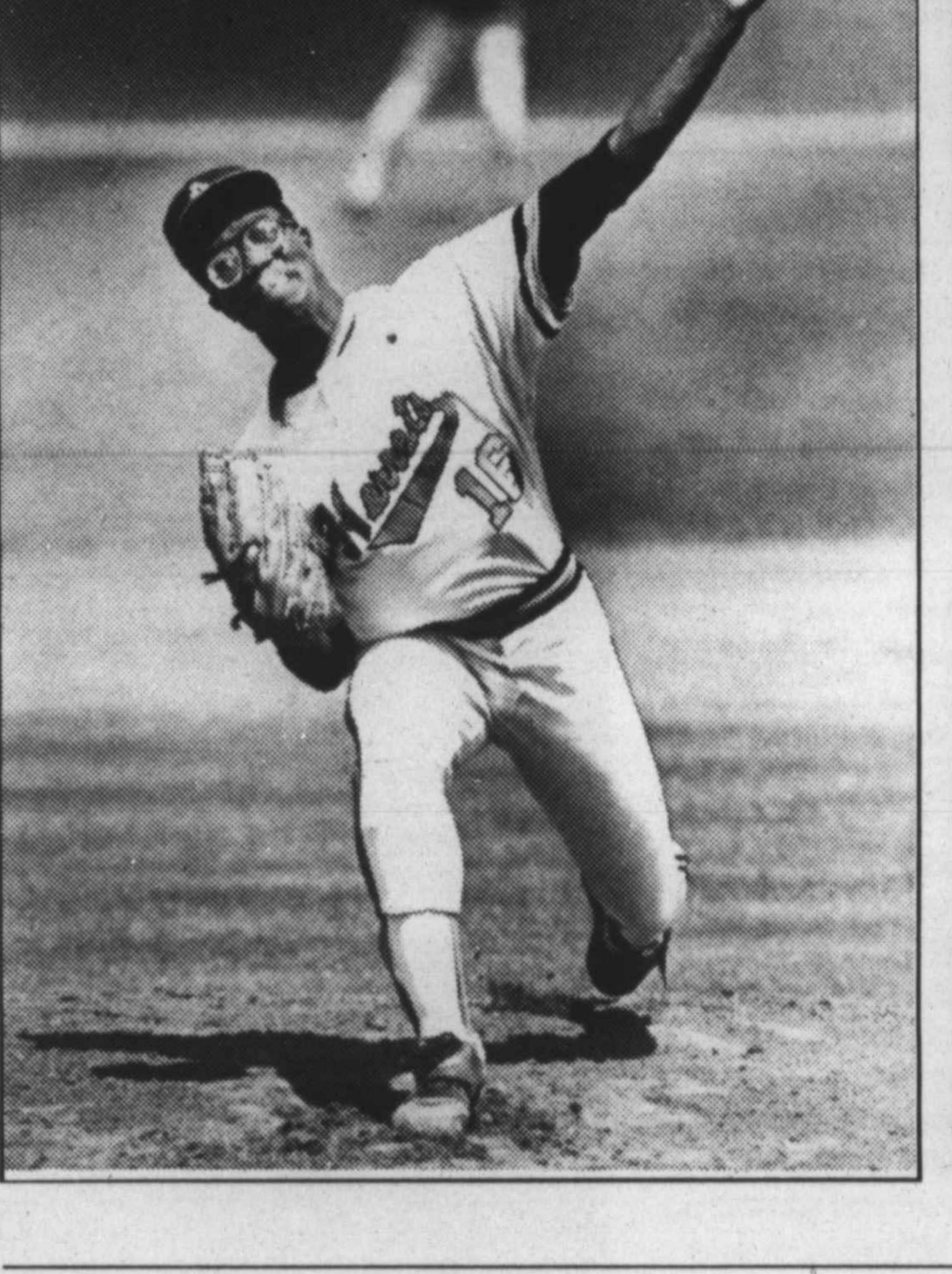
"After Ricky first arrived on campus," he recalled, "I saw him throwing right-handed on the sidelines before practice. The next thing I knew, he was throwing batting practice left-handed. I thought I needed my vision checked at ball, I've never seen anything like it.'

King, a natural righthander, developed his technique playing stickball the streets of Philadelphia as a youngster. At the time, it was no big deal to the then seven-year old.

"When you're young, you pick up on things much more quickly than you will later on in life," King said.

King's family moved to Montgomery when he was 10 and he later made the Lanier High School squad as an outfielder. As a senior, King had the itch to become a pitcher. Realizing righthanders, he seized the opportunity and his two-handed style was reborn.

breaking balls with either hand. He still usually ready to go." has a livelier fastball from the right The only drawback as a two-way





Photos by Mickey Welsh

"Pitching with both hands is a regular part of Ricky's first. In my 15 years of coaching base- arsenal. To confine him to throwing with one hand would be like not letting a good breaking ball pitcher throw curveballs. It's much more than a fluke. Ricky has amazing talent and we plan to take full advantage of it."

-- Larry Watkins Alabama State Baseball Coach

imbalance through a weight training program that will focus on his left arm.

Pitching with both hands has some unique, built-in advantages.

"You can never have enough left- arm, but I could still pitch with my n't take very long." handed pitching," King points out. "As left," King said. "Of course, it also For those who've witnessed King a high school senior, I played the out- negates a lot of switch-hitting moves. If in action, the feeling is that his best field right-handed and pitched as a the other team switches batters and two-handed days are ahead of him. lefty. I picked up a couple of saves that brings a left-hander to the plate, I just "I'm going to let him continue throw both ends of a doubleheader -King has a fluid motion from both if I'm not in the groove with my right said. "He's got the best mechanics on handed. sides of the mound. He can throw arm, I can switch to the left side and it's the team. If he continues to work, he

side. But he expects to even out the guy, King says, is that it takes twice as ular part of Ricky's arsenal. To confine

long to warm up.

two arms to get ready to go," he "In high school, I injured my right them down after games. But that does- ing talent and we plan to take full

can be an effective collegiate pitcher.

"Pitching with both hands is a reg-

him to throwing with one hand would be like not letting a good breaking ball pitcher throw curveballs. It's much reminded. "I also have to ice both of more than a fluke. Ricky has an amazadvantage of it."

In the meantime, King chases the dreams that only two-handed pitcher's dare entertain. He plans to someday, switch over and pitch left-handed. Also, pitching with both hands," Watkins one right-handed and the other left-

> "That would be the ultimate for a two-handed pitcher," King said.

> > -Jack Jeffery

June 1989 - Page 13