#### PROMOTIONS/MARKETING

## Houston promoter attempts Freedom Bowl rescue

Lionel Day, a sports promoter based in Houston, is attempting to revive the Freedom Bowl All-Star Classic football game after a one-year hiatus.

Day is planning to stage the game Jan. 13 -- during the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday weekend -- at the Astrodome in Houston. The game will feature athletes from the 47 predominantly black colleges. Eddie Robinson of Grambling State and Willie Jeffries of South Carolina State have already committed to participate as coach-

The Freedom Bowl, last played Dec. 12, 1987 in Winston-Salem, N.C., was first held in Atlanta in 1983. It moved to Washington after two years.

Past games were plagued by bad weather, poor attendance and poor promo-

Day, a former lineman under Chuck Fairbanks at the University of Oklahoma, has devoted the past 18 months to reviving the Freedom Bowl. He is confident it can be a success.

"I think I have a better understanding of what it takes to make it successful," said Day, a former agent who at one time represented Greg Pruitt, Dexter Bussey, Aaron Kyle and James White among others. "In the past, it was done the old fashioned way. Houston has to embrace the game. It has to be promoted. The key is getting corporate decision-makers involved."

Day says he wants to make the game a national event, not just a local activity for Houstonians.

"The mere fact that the SWAC is back in it is an indication that we think we can be successful," said Dr. James Frank, commissioner of the Southwestern Athletic Conference.

The SWAC pulled out when its Council of Presidents decided the financial risks were too high and it required too much of Frank's time. Under Day's proposed budget, the SWAC and MEAC will not undertake any financial risk. They will receive an initial grant of \$100,000 --\$50,000 by July 1 -- and 20 percent of the profits will go to charities.

Day says the Martin Luther King Foundation of Detroit has committed \$400,000 to sponsor the game.

"I just hope they will be able to put on a good, first-class game," said Mississir pi Valley State athletic director Chuck "The original concept was to showcase The game will be played the same weekend years."

Previous Freedom Bowls have proathletes from schools which aren't predominantly black (about 10-15 per 50 -man

"That's a twist, not a change," he said.

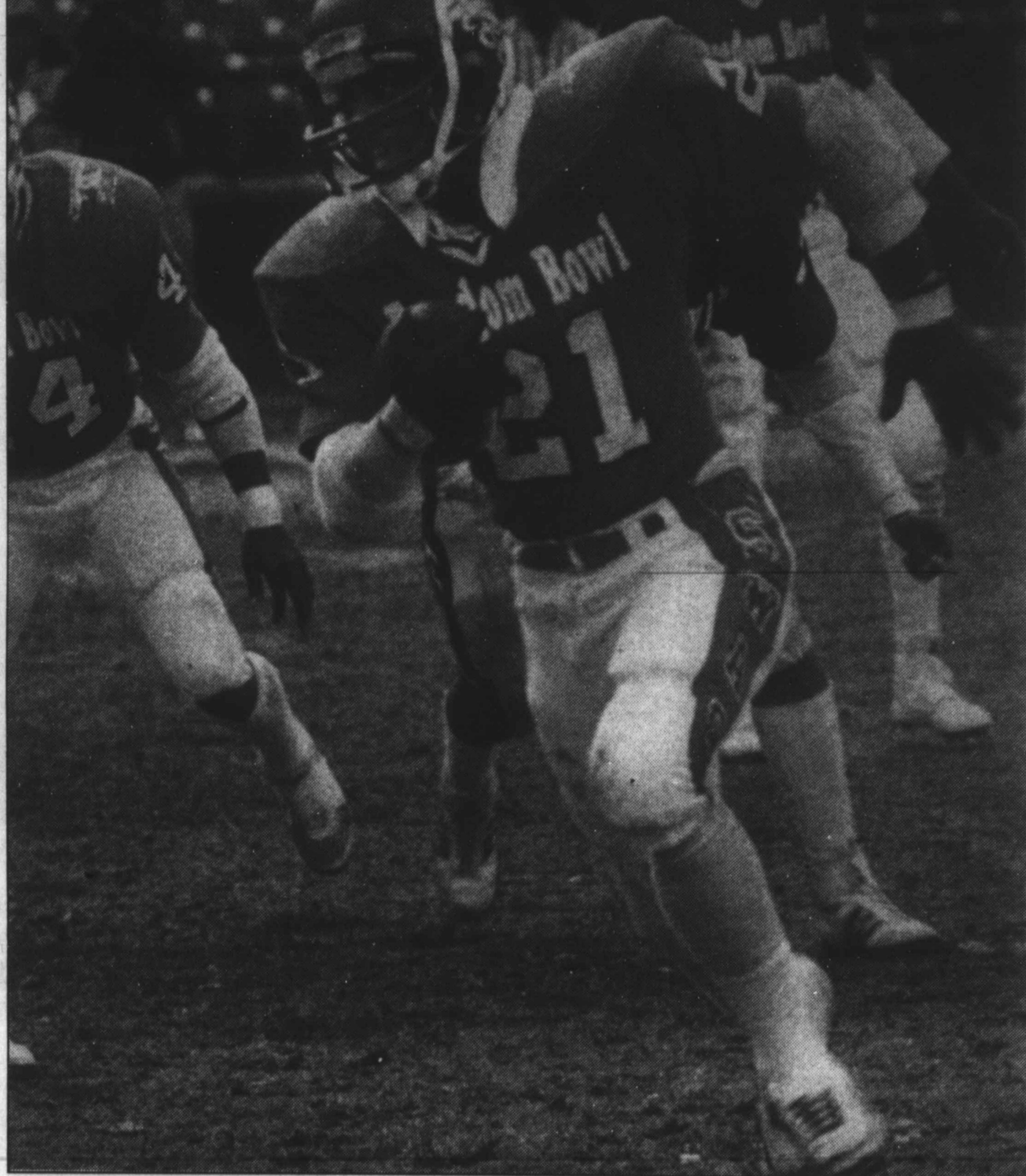


Photo by Craig T. Greenlee

The Freedom Bowl has been a God-send to black college gridiron talent seeking opportunities to play in the pros.

Prophet. "There have been so many shys- kids who don't get an opportunity. They'll as the NFC and AFC championship games ters involved in games like these over the still get their chance. We're trying to - the two contests that determine who will enhance the product."

Day's "twist" already has its oppoduced such NFL players as Jerry Rice, nents. "I'm not being selfish," said Savanbe elevated. That's why he plans to involve our athletes don't get. We need to showcase will keep scouts away. our athletes and not dilute the game. Maybe it would be all right to use athletes from some of the smaller schools."

Another problem could be the date. major dilemma since they play their home

appear in Super Bowl XXIV.

Previous games were played the week before the Super Bowl. That was more con-Sylvester Stamps and Robert Clark. But nah State head football coach Bill Davis. venient for NFL personnel. But Day doesn't Day says the level of competition needs to "But other athletes get opportunities that think that playing the game a week earlier

"They'll have people here," he said. If the Houston Oilers are involved in the AFC title match-up, there could be a can make them like it again."

games at the Astrodome.

"We'll have to look at a contingency date," said Frank. "We were told they were reserving it for the Oilers, but that it was

Day says the game can be a success and show a profit in its initial year. But he isn't deluding himself into thinking he doesn't face a lot of work.

"There's a lot of work to be done," he said. "But if I can make them like it once, I

### MILLER LITE CONFERENCE UPDATE

### Brought to you by Miller Lite. The proud sponsor of the CIAA, MEAC, and SWAC conferences.

SWAC - Gerald Kimble is preparing himself this summer for his first season as the head football coach at Southern University.

Kimble takes over for Marino Casem, who will give all of his concentration to being the school's athletic director.

Kimble feels that the schedule for the Jaguars this year is an ambitious one. In addition to the Jags' SWAC schedule, they will face Bethune-Cookman, Nicholls State, Florida A & M, and Tennessee State.

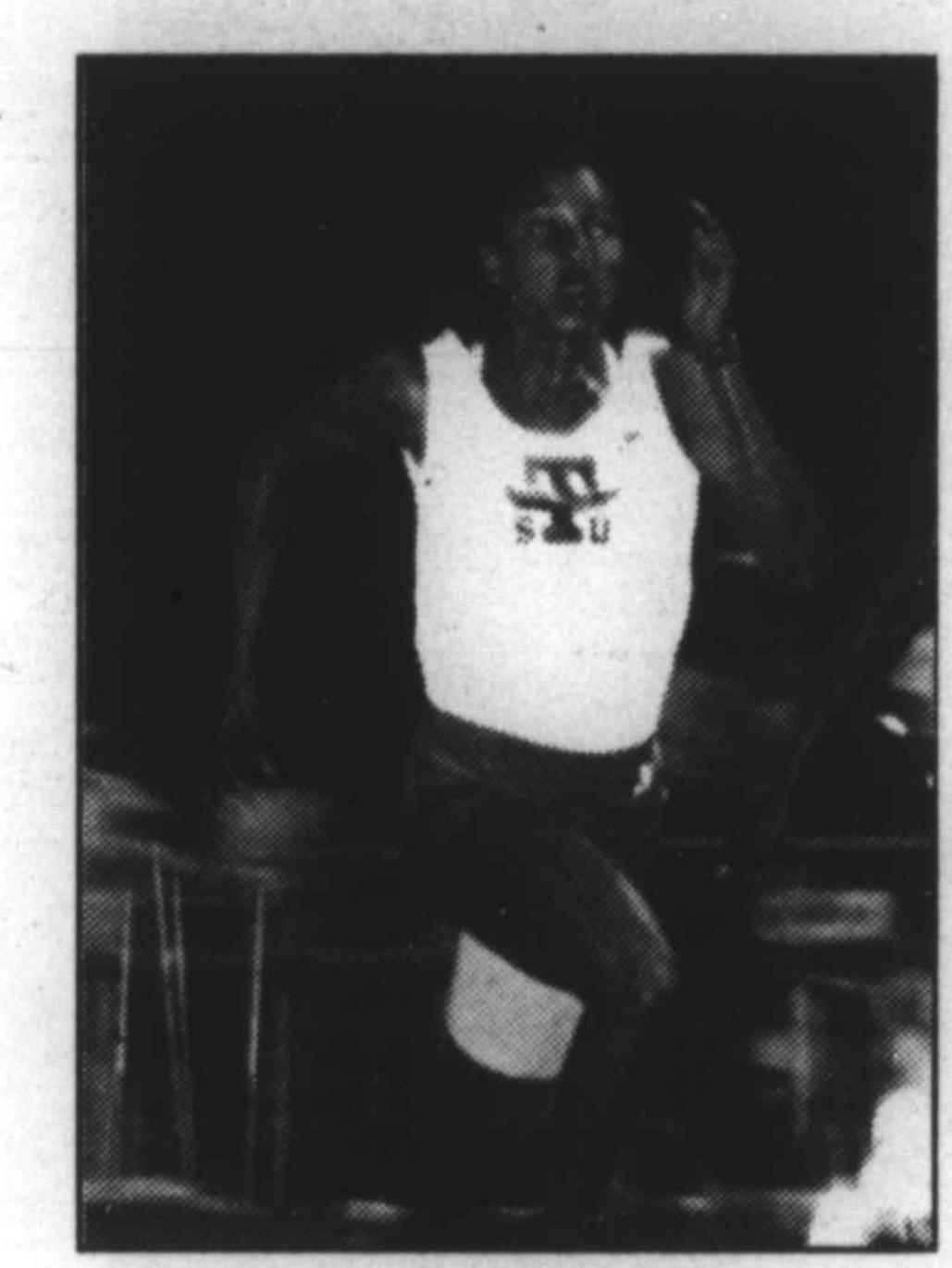
MEAC - South Carolina State head bas-

ketball coach Cy Alexander was recently interviewed for the Ohio State basketball coaching job.

Alexander, whose team won the MEAC basketball title in March, said that he isn't actively seeking employment elsewhere. But that doesn't mean that he wouldn't accept the position if OSU offered.

CIAA - The CIAA Football Coaches Association has made its annual pre-season predictions for the Northern and Southern

#### Lite Beer Athlete of The Month.



Mary Onyali

Black College Sports Review is proud to announce that Texas Southern University senior sprinter, Mary Onyali has been selected as Miller Lite's Black College Athlete of the Month.

Onyali, a native of Nigeria, was the prime-time performer for the Lady Tigers this season. She led her team to a fourth place finish at the NCAA Division I Track & Field Championships held last month at Provo, Utah.

Individually, Onyali finished second in the her speciality, the 200 (22.45) and fourth in the 100 (11.14). In addition, she was the prime force in the 4 x 100 relay as the anchor. She also was member of the 4 x 400 team which placed third at the nationals (3:32.18).

Her performance at the nationals earned her All-American honors.

This month, Onyali has succeeded on the world class track circuit. In a meet held at Edinberg, Scotland, she placed second in the 200 (23.17) and third in the 100 (11.61).

Miller Lite honors Mary Onyali as the Black College Athlete of the Month for July.

BEER

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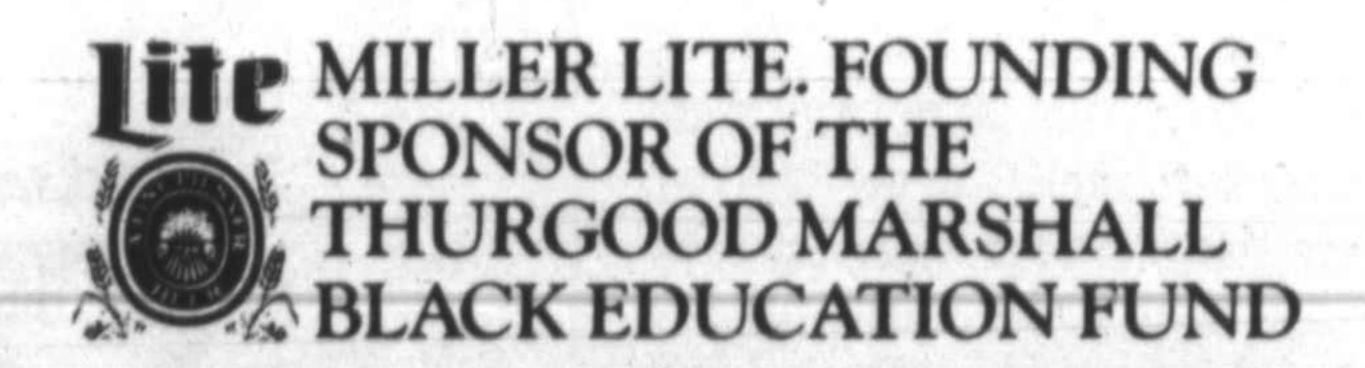
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