TEXAS

TOPS IN 2023 HBCU FOOTBALL



LEADERS OF THE PACK: 2023 offensive leaders of the BCSP "Baad Team" of black college allstars are stat-stuffers LaDarius Owens and Malachi Langle.

TOP ATTENDED GAMES, HOMECOMINGS AND STATLEADERS; NEW COACHAT ALCORN STATE

STAT CORNER I

WHO ARE THE BEST PERFORMERS IN BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

HIGHEST ATTENDANCE AT 2023 BLACK COLLEGE FOOTBALL GAMES

1) MAGIC CITY CLASSIC - Oct. 28, Legion Field, Birmingham, AL Alabama State (31) vs. Alabama A&M (16) 69,210 2) BAYOU CLASSIC - Nov. 28, Ceasar's Superdome, New Orleans, LA 64,298 Southern (27) vs. Grambling State (22) 3) FLORIDA CLASSIC - Nov. 18, Camping World Stadium, Orlando, FL Florida A&M (24) vs. Bethune-Cookman (7) 4) STATE FAIR CLASSIC - Sept. 30 - Cotton Bowl - Dallas Grambling State (35) vs. Prairie View A&M (20) 52,389 5) SOUL BOWL (JACKSON STATE HOME GAME), Nov. 19, Veteran Stadium, Jackson, MS Alcorn State (28) at Jackson State (24) 9) CELEBRATION BOWL - Dec. 16, Mecedes Benz Dome, Atlanta, GA Florida A&M (30) vs. Howard (26) 41,108 6) SOUTHERN HERITAGE CLASSIC - Sept. 9, Liberty Bowl, Memphis, TN Arkansas-Pine Bluff (14) vs. Tennessee State (24) 32,518 7) GULF COAST CHALLENGE - Nov. 12, Ladd-Peebles Stadium, Mobile, AL Alabama A&M vs. Jackson State 8) TUSKEGEE HOMECOMING - Oct. 14, Abbott Stadium, Tuskegee, AL Edward Waters (41) at Tuskegee (38) 31,726 9) ALABAMA STATE HOMECOMING - Oct. 8, ASU Stadium, M'gomery, AL Jackson State at Alabama State 10) JACKSON STATE HOMECOMING - Oct. 14, Veterans Stadium, Jackson, MS Alabama State (24) at Jackson State (19) 11) SOUTHERN HOME GAME - Sept. 9, Mumford Stadium, Baton Rouge, LA Jackson State (27) at Southern (14) 12) TURKEY DAY CLASSIC, Nov. 23, ASU Stadium, Montgomery, AL Tuskegee (3) at Alabama State (41) 28,911 13) W. C. GORDEN CLASSIC - Sept. 23, Veterans Stadium, Jackson, MS 28 265 Bethune-Cookman at Jackson State 14) ALABAMA A&M HOMECOMING, Sept. 30, Louis Crews Stadium, Huntsville, AL Tuskegee (3) at Alabama A&M (58) 15) ORANGE BLOSSOM CLASSIC - Sept. 3, Hard Rock Stadium, Miami Jackson State (10) vs. Florida A&M (28) 24,967 16) SWAC/MEAC CHALLENGE - Aug. 26, Center Parc Stadium, Atlanta, GA Jackson State (37) vs. South Carolina State (7) 24,238

17) JACKSON STATE HOME GAME, Nov. 4, Veterans Stadium, Jackson, MS Texas Southern (19) at Jackson State (21) 18) ALABAMA STATE HOME GAME, Sept. 2, ASU Stadium, Montgomery, AL

Southern (10) at Alabama State (14)

Virginia State (33) at Norfolk State (24)

19) FLORIDA A&M HOMECOMING, Oct. 28, Bragg Stadium, Tallahassee, FL Prairie View A&M (7) at Florida A&M (45) 20) NORFOLK STATE HOMECOMING, Oct. 15, Price Stadium, Norfolk, VA Delaware State at Norfolk State 21) SC STATE HOMECOMING, Nov. 4, Dawson Stadium, Orangeburg, SC Howard (24) at South Carolina State (27) 22) LABOR DAY CLASSIC, Sept. 2, Price Stadium, Norfolk, VA

23) NC A&T HOMECOMING - Nov. 4, Truist Stadium, Greensboro, NC Fowswon (42) at NC A&T (32) 21,500 24) SOUTHERN HOMECOMING - Oct. 14, Mumford Stadium, Baton Rouge, LA Lincoln, CA (18) at Southern (45) 25) ALCORN STATE HOMECOMING, Oct. 7, Spinks Stadium, Lorman, MS

Grambling State (24) at Alcorn State (25) 26) CHICAGO CLASSIC - Sept. 2, Soldier's Field, Chicago, IL Mississippi Valley State (21) vs. Central State (24) (2023 - TOTAL 866,888 - 26 games over 20,000 - 33,341 average)

HIGHEST ATTENDANCE AT 2023 BLACK COLLEGE HOMECOMING GAMES

(2022 - TOTAL 954,149 - 25 games over 20,000 - 38,165 average

1) TUSKEGEE vs. Edward Waters - Oct. 14	31,726			
2) JACKSON STATE vs. Alabama State - October 14	30,947			
3) ALABAMA A&M vs. Tuskegee - Sept. 30	26,391			
4) NORFOLK STATE vs. Morgan State, October 28	24,976			
5) FLORIDA A&M vs. Prairie View A&M - October 28	22,338			
6) SC STATE vs. Howard - Nov. 4	22,269			
7) SOUTHERN vs. Lincoln (CA) - October 14	21,500			
8) N. C A&T vs. Towson - Nov. 4	21,500			
9) ALCORN STATE vs. Grambling State - October 7	21,012			
10) CLARK ATLANTA vs. Central State - Oct. 21	19,957			
11) ALABAMA STATE vs. Bethune-Cookman - October 7	17,995			
12) PRAIRIE VIEW A&M vs. Arkansas-Pine Bluff - Nov. 4	14,224			
13) TENNESSEE STATE vs. Norfolk State	13,975			
14) NC CENTRAL vs. Norfolk State - Nov. 4	13,626			
15) ARKANSAS-PINE BLUFF vs. Alcorn State - Oct. 21	13,469			
16) SAVANNAH STATE vs. Tuskegee - Oct. 21	12,723			
17) FORT VALLEY STATE vs. Morehouse - Oct. 21	12,113			
18) MOREHOUSE vs. Kentucky State - Oct. 28	10,213			
TOTAL - 336,554 (2023) 18 Homecoming Games over 10,000 18,773 average				
(2022 - 15 Homecoming Games over 10,000) 21,745	average			

UNDER THE BANNER

WHAT'S GOING ON IN AND AROUND BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

McNAIR TO TSU ON HOLD FOR NOW:

HBCUSports.com reported Tuesday that the decision to hire former Alcorn State head coach Fred McNair as the new coach at Texas Southern is being held up.

Citing a report from The Defender newspaper in Houston, the website says the "Texas Southern Board of Regents decided to table moving forward on McNair';s contract due to reservations stemming from the former Alcorn State coach presented by Texas Southern athletic director Kevin Granger."

According to the newspaper, two of the five-member TBR board are reportedly leaning toward former Houston Texans and NFL great Andre Johnson, who has indicated that he would "be open" to the Texas Southern job.

The Texas Southern Board of Regents announced it has called a special virtual meeting for Thursday morning where a coaching decision is expected.

Langley, Owens lead 2023 "Baad Team" offense

ers with 1,848 all-purpose yards (168.0

ypg.), third best in the FCS. He aver-

backfield is North Carolina Central

senior quarterback Davius Richard

and the 2022 BCSP co-Offensive Play-

er of the Year, Virginia Union junior

threat HBCU quarterback as he threw

for 2,177 yards and 21 touchdowns and

ran for another 630 yards and 18 TDs

while leading the Eagles to an NCAA

yards in 2022, finished behind Owens

with 1,186 rushing yards and 16 rush-

ceiver is Edward Waters sophomore

Johnny Jones. He finished with an

HBCU-best 71 receptions, 7.1 catches

per game, tied for eighth in Div. II foot-

positions are South Carolina State

tight end Keshawn Toney (20 rec. 244

yds., 4 TDs) North Carolina A&T

redshirt senior kick returner Taymon

Cooke and Benedict graduate place-

ers and tied for the FCS-best with three

kickoff returns for touchdowns. His

34.2-yard average on 16 returns was the

best in HBCU football and second best

in the FCS. Picirillo hit on 16 of 19 field

goals and 55 of 59 extra-point kicks to

pace Tiger scorers and lead all HBCU

placekickers with 103 points (8.6 ppg.).

Central center Toricelli Simpson III

anchors the first team "Baad Team" of-

fensive line. He is flanked by **Benedict**

grad all-American lineman Mitchell

Romig, Virginia Union's CIAA Line-

man of the Year, senior Justin Meade,

second team all-CAA tackle Tariq

Stewart of NC A&T and Florida

A&M first-team all-SWAC and Box-

to-Row all-American graduate tackle

Cameron Covin.

MEAC Lineman of the Year, NC

Cooke led all black college return-

Holding down the other three skill

ball, for 855 yards and six TDs.

kicker Tom Picirillo.

ing TDs despite missing two games.

Byers, after topping 1,800 rushing

Joining Bailey as a first team re-

Richard was the most prolific dual-

running back Jada Byers.

playoff berth.

Joining Owens in the first team

aged a whopping 6.8 yards per carry.

LUT WILLIAMS BCSP Editor

Gaudy offensive numbers were not

the order of the day in the 2023 black college football season.

There were only three 1,000-yard rushers, one 1,000-yard receiver and just two 3,000-yard passers.

However, a couple of offensive performers distinguished themselves and they are the leaders of the 2023 BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS PAGE "BAAD TEAM" of gridiron all-stars and the 2023 BCSP co-Offensive Players of the Year.

Lincoln (Pa.) sophomore wide receiver Malachi Langley was the lone HBCU pass catcher to top 1,000 receiving yards this season. Langley teamed with fellow sophomore quarterback Isaiah Freeman to form a dynamic duo that helped propel Frank Turner's Lions into the thick of the CIAA North Division race. Lincoln dropped its final three games of the season to the top three teams in the division (Virginia Union, Virginia State and Bowie State), but showed with the Freeman-to-Langley connection they will be contenders in the future.

Langley finished with 46 catches for black-college bests of 1,042 receiving yards and 11 touchdowns. His average of 22.7 yards per catch was second best among HBCU receivers and his 104.2 receiving yards per game were fifth in NCAA Div. II football.

Langley is sharing the 2023 BCSP Offensive Player of the Year award with Texas Southern senior running back LaDarius Owens.

While the TSU Tigers struggled to a 3-8 overall mark, Owens shined. The 5-9, 180-pounder rushed for over 100 yards in eight games while finishing the season topping the 100-yard mark in seven straight contests. In two of those games – vs. West division foes Southern and Alcorn State – he rushed for 205 and 211 yards respectively. He posted three games with three TDs en route to finishing with a black-college best 1,369 rushing yards with 11 TDs. Owens also led all black college play-

FIRST TEAM - OFFENSE

QB - Davius Richard, Sr., NC Central; RB - Jada Byers, Jr. Virginia Union; LaDarius Owens, Sr., TXSOU; WR - Malachi Bailey, So., LINCP; Johnny Jones, So., EWC; TE - Keshawn Toney, Gr., SCST OL - Tariq Stewart, Gr., NC A&T; Toricelli Simpson III, Jr., NCCU; Justin Meade, Gr., VUU; Mitchell Romig, Gr., BEN; Cameron Covin, Gr., FAMU; PK - Adrian Olivo, Sr., NCCU; KR - Taymon Cooke, r-Sr., NCA&T

SECOND TEAM - OFFENSE

QB - Jeremy Moussa, Gr., FAMU; RB - Joel Felder, Jr., WVSU; Brandon Marshall, Gr., FVSU; WR - Keshane Hinckley, r-Sr., BSU; Jacquez Jones, Jr., Lane; TE - Travaunta Abner. Jr., MILES: OL - Nick Taiste. r-Jr., SCST: Jamree Mever. So., VUU: Joshua Simon. Gr., ALBST; Deontae Graham, Gr., JSU; Eric Dunn, Jr., r-Sr., PVA&M; PK - Tom Picirillo, Gr., BEN; KR - Barry Elliott, Jr., Gr., FSU

THIRD TEAM - OFFENSE

QB - Isaiah Freeman, So., LINCP; RB - Elijah Burris, Jr., HAMP; Jawarm Howell, Fr., SCST; WR - Kisean Johnson, So., ALST; Antonio Meeks, So., TUSK; TE - Kalen Carver, r-Jr., VUU; Jackson, Jr., FVSU; Brandon Hardy, Sr., Hampton; PK - James Lowery, r-Jr., TNST; KR

BCSP Notes

Cedric Thomas to lead Alcorn State

Alcorn State announced last week that alumnus Cedric Thomas has been hired as its new head football coach. Thomas becomes the 22nd head coach in the program's history.



He is taking the place of fellow Alcorn graduate Fred McNair who resigned a week earlier and stated he was slated to become the next head coach at Texas Southern. No announcement has been made on Mc-Nair's hire. Alcorn finished 7-4 overall and tied for first in the SWAC West with division champion Prairie View A&M at 6-2.

"I am thrilled to appoint Cedric Thomas as our new head football coach," Alcorn State President Dr. Trach Cooks said in a statement. "I believe he is uniquely positioned to continue our championship-winning

Thomas rejoined the Alcorn State football staff as the defensive coordinator in March 2022 after previously serving roles of defensive back coach and defensive coordinator for the Braves. Alcorn won four straight SWAC Eastern Division titles and back-to-back SWAC titles in 2014 and 2015 with Thomas on board. Before his return to Alcorn, Thomas was the head football coach at Mississippi Delta Community College and served as the defensive back coach at Southern Mississippi.

He also had a two-year stint as the head football coach at the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff.

Attendance Matters; Numbers up again!

A year after the tsunami of HBCU football attendance caused by one Jackson State with head coach Deion "Coach Prime" Sanders, attendance in 2023 remained steady, and with the exception of the inflated numbers from JSU's outsized attendance in every game, the numbers rose.

The top three intra-state classic games that were the top attended games from 2022 stayed the same in 2023 - the Magic City Classic (Alabama A&M vs. Alabama State), the Bayou Classic (Southern vs. Grambling State) and the Florida Classic (Florida A&M vs. Bethune-Cookman). Each topped its 2022 number. Holding down the fourth spot again is the Louisiana/Texas rivalry dubbed the State Fair Classic (Grambling State vs. Prairie View A&M) staged at the Cotton Bowl in Dallas that also had a higher attendance number than in 2022.

There was really no way to duplicate what Sanders' Tigers of JSU did last year when each of their 12 games topped 20,000 in attendance. But ten still topped 20,000 in 2023. That allowed the overall number of games topping 20,000 to increase from 25 to 26.

In homecoming attendance, **Tuskegee** with 31,726 for its Oct. 14 date vs. Edward Waters topped the list, quite a bit down from the over 51,000 at JSU's homecoming in 2022. The overall numbers were up from 15 to 18 in homeccoming games topping 10,000 fans.

STAT CORNER II

WHO ARE THE BEST PERFORMERS IN BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

2023 BLACK COLLEGE FOOTBALL INDIVIDUAL STAT LEADERS - OFFENSE

PASSING YARDS	CL	G	CM - AT - INT	РСТ	YDS	TDS	YPG
David Wright, ALL	R-SO	9	220-378-17	58.2	3019	19	335.4
Jyron Russell, EWU	GR	10	188-317-9	59.3	2768	24	276.8
Aeneas Dennis, BEN	GR	12	220-350-6	62.9	3098	23	258.2
Jeremy Moussa, FLAM	GR	12	214-371-10	57.7	2893	22	241.1
Isaiah Freeman, LINCP	SO	10	150-262-9	57.3	2312	25	231.2
Donovan Riddick, WVSU	GR	9	169-253-6	66.8	2021	14	224.5
Myles Crawley, GSU	FR	11	198-329-8	60.2	2313	16	210.3
Aaron Allen, ALC	JR	11	194-304-6	63.8	2265	15	205.9

PASS EFFICIENCY 10 150-262-9 57.3 2312 25 231.2 156.0 Isaiah Freeman, LINCP Aeneas Dennis, BEN GR 12 220-350-6 62.9 3098 23 258.2 155.5 GR 9 103-173-9 59 5 1610 13 178 9 152 1 Jordan Davis, VSU Jyron Russell, EWU GR 10 188-317-9 59.3 2768 24 276.8 152.0 11 166-273-4 60.8 2177 21 Davius Richard, NCCU SR 197.9 150.2 169-253-6 66 8 2021 14 224 5 147 4 Donovan Riddick, WVSU GR Damon Stewart, ALS SO 11 129-200-5 64.5 1655 11 150.5 147.2 56.5 1832 17 203.6 140.1 Kelvin Durham, FVSU R-FR 9 131-232-8

TOTAL OFFENSE RUSH PASS 3108 R-SO David Wright, ALL 9 89 3019 424 345.3 Jyron Russell, EWU GR 10 94 2768 381 2862 286.2 Isaiah Freeman, LINCP SO 10 497 380 2809 Aeneas Dennis, BEN GR 12 244 3098 416 3342 278.5 Donovan Riddick, WVSU GR 9 376 1997 324 2373 263.7 630 2177 390 255.2 Davius Richard, NCCU SR 11 2807 Jeremy Moussa, FLA&M GR 12 -10 2893 407 2883 240.3 Aaron Allen, ALC 11 386 2332

RECEPTIONS/GAME 10 71 12.0 Johnny Jones, EWU Kisean Johnson, ALST SO 10 61 829 13.6 82.9 Keshane Hinckley, BSU 10.8 59.5 R-SR 595 5.5 10 Antonio Meeks, TUSK SO 17.3 93.1 Jacquez Jones, LANE 878 16.9 87.8 579 11.4 57.9 Brevin Caldwell, JCSU Brandon Brock, CSU JR 40 416 3 10.4 52.0 5.0 8 39 15.8 Armone Harris, ALL R-SO 8

RECEIVING YARDS CL 10 Malachi Langley, LINCP SO 46 1042 11 22.7 4.6 104.2 Antonio Meeks, TUSK 8 745 17.3 93.1 Jacquez Jones, LANE JR 10 52 878 16.9 87.8 5.2 Johnny Jones, EWU 10 855 12.0 85.5 Kisean Johnson, ALST 10 829 13.6 730 Nathan Rembert, EWU 9 32 22.8 3.6 81.1 39 R-SO 8 618 15.8 4.9 77.3 Armone Harris, ALL 38 9 696 Deyandre Ruffin, ALL GR

ALL-PURPOSE YARDS CL RUSH RCV LaDarius Owens, TXSOU 11 1369 110 365 1848 168.0 Joel Felder, WVSU 10 1109 32 1351 135.1 210 27 1311 Jada Byers, VUU 10 1186 131.1 43 Johnny Jones, EWU 10 8 264 1170 117.0 SO Zyaire Tart, LINCP FR 86 236 717 1046 116.2 9 Malachi Langley, LINCP SO 10 32 1042 0 79 1153 115.3 Beau Herrington, ALL 404 0 0 1020 9 0 Kylan Duhe, LANE 1099

SCORING Jada Byers, VUU JR 10 18 0 0 0 108 10.8 Joel Felder, WVSU 10 17 0 0 104 10.4 Davius Richard, NCCU SR 11 18 0 0 0 108 Zaire Scotland, BEN R-FR 13 Tom Piccirillo REN 0 Kymani Clarke, VSU R-SO Malachi Langley, LINCP SO 12 Brenne Schmitt, WVSU



LEONARD ROAMS AGAIN!

Former Indianapolis all-pro linebacker SHAQUILLE LEONARD (#53, SOUTH CAROLINA STATE), (above I.), now playing for Philadelphia, sacks Giants' quarterback Tommy DeVito (top r.), stops RB Saquan Barkley (bottom r.) in two of his team-leading seven tackles in the Eagles' 33-25 win over New York Monday.



BCSP NFL PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

For games of December 21-25, 2023



DEFENSE - #53 SHAQUILLE LEONARD, LB, Philadelphia (6th season, SOUTH CAROLINA STATE) -Lenoard started at middle linebacker in Eagles' 33-25 win over the New York Giants and led the team

with seven total tackles, five solos with one sack for -7 yards and two tackles for loss. He was in on 54 (86%) of the defensive snaps and one (3%) of the special teams' snaps.

OFFENSE

- #72 TERRON ARMSTEAD, OT, Miami (10th season, ARKANSAS-PINE BLUFF) - Started at left offensive tackle in Dolphins' 22-20 win over the Dallas Sunday. The Dolphins rushed for 91 yards and passed for 293 yards and one TD while giving up just one sack. Armstead was in for 65 (100%) of the offensive snaps.



SPECIAL TEAMS - #12 KHADAREL HODGE, WR, Atlanta (8th season, PRAIRIE VIEW A&M) - In the Falcons' 29-10 win over Indianapolis, Hodge had one 5-yard reception in his only target. He was in on 20 (31%) of the offensive

snaps and 18 (64%) of the snaps on special teams.