



# **SWAC UP FOR GRABS**

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23** 

**SATURDAY. NOVEMBER 25** 

NCAA Div. II Playoffs, Super Region II,

SCORES

Turkey Day Classic

SIAC

2nd Round

Alabama State 41, Tuskegee 3

Lenoir-Rhyne 35, Benedict 25

week in the quarterfinals.

SWAC Championship Game logo WIN OR GO HOME: Florida A&M and Prairie View meet in Tallahassee with SWAC title and Celebration Bowl berth going to the winner.

FAMU/PVA&M PLAY FOR SWAC TITLE, BOWL BERTH; BENEDICT AND NC CENTRAL BOW OUT OF PLAYOFFS

SWAC

MEAC

**PLAYOFF GAME RECAPS** 

NCAA DIV. II, SECOND ROUND

Lenoir-Rhyne 35, **Benedict** 25

the 11th-ranked Lenoir-Rhyne Bears shut down Benedict in the third

quarter and rallied with a pair of touchdowns to take a 35-25 victory over

the fourth-ranked Tigers in the second round of the NCAA Division II

touchdown passes from Aeneas Dennis to Reginald Harden, the Bears

held the Tigers to zero yards on just nine offensive plays in the third

in the second round of the NCAA Division II playoffs for the second

year in a row after being the No. 1 seed in the region. Lenoir-Rhyne

improves to 12-1 overall and will face 14th-ranked Valdosta State next

per game, second best in the nation. But the Bears carved Benedict up

for 560 yards. It was the most yards ever allowed by a Chennis Berry

coached squad, and the most by a Tiger team since giving up 604 yards

to **Livingstone** in the opening game of the 2015 season, when the Tigers

went 0-10. Benedict was holding opponents to 86.4 yards per game on

the ground, 12th best in the nation, but the Bears rushed for 250 yards, led by Dwayne McGee with 216 yards on 21 carries. Benedict gave up

310 yards passing to L-RU QB Sean White (27-35-1), despite entering

Benedict converted on just 3-of-15 third downs in the game, while

The Tigers finished with 441 yards of offense against a Le-

Benedict rushed for 65 yards on 30 carries including five sacks.

**FCS FIRST ROUND** 

Richmond 49, North Carolina Central 27

lead but could not hold on as the Eagles fell at Richmond in a first round

FCS playoff game, 49-27. It was NCCU's first FCS playoff appearance.

MVP dislocated his shoulder on a late second-quarter score and went out

for one series late in the quarter. He (16 of 27, 262 yards, 1 TD, 1 int.)

returned in the second half but was no where near as effective as he was

mage on a 35-yard pass from QB Kyle Wickersham to Nick DeGenarro.

It came two plays after the Spiders opened the game with a flea-flicker

pass off a hafback pitch back than ended up going from Wickersham to

yards in nine plays to score on quarterback Richard's 1-yard run with 4:44 left in the period. Placekicker Adrian Olivo missed the PAT to leave

NCCU punt returner Brandon Codrington

muffed a late first quarter punt but recovered to give

the Eagles possession at their own 2. On the third

play after the muff, Richard hit Devin Smith on a

long pass and Smith shook off a tackler to go the rest

of the way to paydirt. The play covered 91 yards and

put the Eagles up 14-7 with :02 seconds left in the

period. Smith led the Eagles with six catches for 202

RICHMOND, VA - North Carolina Central built a 20-14 halftime

NCCU (9-3) played the second half with star quarterback Davius Richard fighting an injured shoulder. The reigning MEAC Offensive

Richmond drew first blood, scoring on the third play from scrim-

The Eagles (9-3) weathered that opening drive as they drove 57

the contest with the nation's best pass defense.

noir-Rhyne defense that entered the game ranked

fourth in the nation in total defense. Dennis com-

pleted 17-of-29 passes for a season-high 376 yards and four touchdowns. Harden had a monster game,

catching six passes for a career-high 230 yards and

three touchdowns. He caught touchdown passes of

58, 87 and 36 yards, the last coming with 5:49 to

play. In its last possession, Benedict drove to the

L-RU 23 before Dennis was intercepted with a

Benedict posted four sacks and nine tackles for losses.

while the Eagles built the first-half lead.

WR Ja'Vion Griffin for 38 yards.

the Eagles trailing 7-6.

Lenoir-Rhyne converted on 8-of-16.

half-minute left.

football playoffs on Saturday in Charlie W. Johnson Stadium.

quarter, while scoring a pair of touchdowns to take a 28-19 lead.

COLUMBIA, S.C. – In a battle of two of the nation's best defenses,

After Benedict took a 19-14 lead at the half, thanks to a pair of long

Benedict ends its season for the second straight year at 11-1, falling

The Tigers entered the contest allowing opponents just 207.7 yards

Bayou Classic

Southern 27, Grambling State 22

FCS Playoffs, First Round

Richmond 49. NC Central 27





8-0

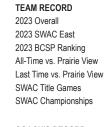
1st

6-3

**FLORIDA A&M** 



Head Coach WILLIE **SIMMONS** 



45-7 W, '23 ...Alabama State......10 W 31.... @ Miss. Valley State ...... 7 W 31.....@ Texas Southern.....21 W 45..... Prairie View A&M.......7 W COACH'S RECORD 42......@ Alabama A&M......28 W Alma Mater: The Citadel '03 Record vs. PV A&M: 1-0 28...... Lincon (CA) .......0 W Record at FAMU: 42-13, .763, 6th year 27.... Alabama A&M in Mobile, AL....13 W Career Record: 63-24, .724, 9th year 24...Bethune-Cookman in Orlando.....7 W



VS.

10-1

2023 RESULTS

37......@ Texas Southern.....34 W

..@ SMU.....

23.......@ Alcorn State ......20 W

20..... Grambling State in Dallas ...... 35 L

31..... Miss. Valley State .....12 W

0......@ Houston Christian ..... 30 L

7.......@ Florida A&M....... 45 L

38.....Arkansas-Pine Bluff.....14 W

27.......@ Southern......21 W

..Alabama State......14 W

16...... Abilene Christian .....

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M

2023 RESULTS

28. Jackson State in Miami .. 10 W

...West Florida .....

24......@ South Florida .

FLORIDA A&M

31....

### **PRAIRIE VIEW A&M** PANTHERS (6-5)

WEST DIVISION CHAMPION SOUTHWESTERN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

6-5

..45 L

. 69 L

**TEAM RECORD** 

2023 SWAC West

2023 BCSP Ranking

Last Time vs. FAMU

SWAC Championships

COACH'S RECORD

Alma Mater: Miami '89

Record vs. Florida A&M: 0-1

Record at Prairie View: 12-10. .545. 2nd year

**SWAC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME YARDSTICK** 

SWAC Title Games

All-Time vs. Floirda A&M

2023 Overall



6-5

6-2

4th

11 (Last '09)

Head Coach **BUBBA McDOWELL** 

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2023 • TALLAHASSEE, FL. • BRAGG MEMORIAL STADIUM • 4 P.M. • ESPN2

# Florida A&M/Prairie View play for SWAC title

**LUT WILLIAMS** 

**BCSP Editor** 

The Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC) takes center stage this week as East Division champ Florida A&M (10-1, 8-0 SWAC E) hosts West Division champ **Prairie View A&M** (6-5, 6-2 SWAC W) in the 25th league championship game (4 p.m. on ESPN2). The game is the next-tolast black college football game of the 2023 season.

The winner will advance to play Mid Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) champ Howard (6-5) in the season-ending Dec. 16 Cricket Celebration Bowl at Atlanta's Mercedes Benz Stadium.

### Game missing 2022 drama

This year's game has none of the drama or off-field intrigue that accompanied last year's championship game between undefeated (11-0)East Division champ Jackson State with head coach Deion "Coach Prime" Sanders and West Division champ Southern (7-4) led by Eric Dooley.

The 43-24 win by Sanders' team was almost overshadowed by the much-ballyhooed coach's postgame decision to bolt from JSU to take over the head coaching position at Colorado. Sanders, in fact, blew off the title game's postgame press conference to take his team back to campus at JSU to announce he was leaving.

### The coaches

Florida A&M sixth-year head coach Willie Simmons and Prairie View A&M head man **Bubba McDowell**, in his second season leading the Panthers, are very familiar with each other.

Prior to moving to FAMU in 2017, Simmons led Prairie View for three seasons (2015-17). McDowell, a former seven-year NFL veteran and defensive standout, was a defensive assistant on Simmons' staff. McDowell became the Panthers' head coach in 2022 after Dooley left to take over at **Southern**. McDowell had served as Dooley's defensive coordinator.

This will be FAMU's first time in the SWAC title game after leaving the Mid Eastern Athletic Conference in 2021 to join the SWAC. In the previous two seasons, Simmons' troops suffered their only losses in SWAC play to Sanders' undefeated Jackson State teams. FAMU earned an FCS playoff berth in 2021.

Prairie View finished at 6-5 under McDowell last season, tied for first with Southern at 5-3 in SWAC play. Southern won the West title by virtue of its 45-13 win over PV in head-to-head competition.

### The Match Up – Florida A&M vs. Prairie View A&M

This year's hype is tempered by Florida A&M's 45-7 shellacking vs. Prairie View at the Rattlers' homecoming game this season on Oct. 28 in Tallahassee. In that game, FAMU scored in the last half-minute of the first half to lead 21-7 at the break. The Rattlers then shut out the Panthers in the second half, 24-0. The win clinched the SWAC East title for FAMU.

FAMU quarterback Jeremy Moussa was 17 for 25 for 272 yards and three touchdowns to three different receivers. Rattlers' defenders held Prairie View quarterback **Trazon Connley** to nine completions in 24 attempts with three picks. FAMU also had three sacks and nine tackles for loss while holding the Panthers to just over 200 yards while piling up 453 vards of offense.

### Will it be different this time around?

### Sheread Major Moussa Antoine Connley FLORIDA A&M **TEAM STATS** PRAIRIE VIEW A&M 30.3 ppg. (1st) SCORING OFFENSE 20.0 ppg. (9th) SCORING DEFENSE 14.3 ppg. (1st) 30.8 ppg. (10th) 369.5 ypg. (4th) **TOTAL OFFENSE** 342.5 ypg. (7th) 266.6 ypg. (1st) **TOTAL DEFENSE** 391.4 ypg. (11th) **RUSHING OFFENSE** 136.2 ypg. (11th) 158.3 ypg. (4th) **RUSHING DEFENSE** 133.3 ypg. (4th) 88.7 ypg. (1st) 233.4 ypg. (1st) PASSING OFFENSE 184.3 ypg. (8th) 177.9 ypg. (1st) PASSING DEFENSE 258.1.6 ypg. (12th) **INDIVIDUAL STATS** Ahmad Antoine RUSHING **Terrell Jennings** 492 yds., 44.7 ypg., 5.9 ypc., 7 TDs 491 yds., 49.1 ypg., 4.6 ypc., 2 TDs PASSING Jeremy Moussa Trazon Connley 182-317-8, 57.4%, 2,416 yds., 18 TDs 127-229-9, 55.5%, 1.972, yds, 9 TDs Jah'Marae Sheread RECEIVING Shemar Savage 19 rec., 22.3 ypc., 426 yds., 2 TDs 44 rec., 9.9 ypc., 434 yds., 2 TDs **TACKLES** Isaiah Major Keyshawn Johnson 94 tackles, 8.5 tpg. 79 tackles, 7.2 tpg. SACKS Anthony Dunn Jr. Derrick Ray 8.0, -36 yds. 4.0, -24 yds INTERCEPTIONS **Eric Smith** Dejuan Lewis 3, 0 TD 2, 1 TD Carlos Villagomez **Cameron Gillis PLACEKICKING** 41-41 PATs, 10-12 FGs, 71 pts. 20-21 PATs, 7-14 FGs, 41 pts

Arkansas-Pine Bluff (38-14), Southern (27-21) and Alabama State (21-14) to hold off **Alcorn State** and win the West Division title. Alcorn also had a 6-2 SWAC record but lost to Prairie View 23-20 in their headto-head meeting on Sept. 23.

In the FAMU game, Prairie View played without rushing leader Ahmad Antoine and top receiving threats Shemar Savage and Brian **Jenkins Jr.** All three are expected to play in the title game.

McDowell, in his interview on Monday's SWAC Championship Game teleconference, said he didn't recognize his team in the second half of the FAMU game.

"In the first half it was them (his team), in the second half, I don't know who that was. I told them at the end of the game, you guys were like two different teams. We can't be that second-half team that we were when we played against the Rattlers last time. We've pointed out all the mistakes and bad play that we had."

The difference for Florida A&M is simple.

"We're still playing," Simmons said on the teleconference. "That's the difference. This is the longest we've played since we've been here. In 2021, we lost in the first round of the (FCS) playoffs.

"And so, the biggest difference is that in the first week after Thanksgiving we're still in preparation. Everybody else has turned in their shoulder pads, turned in their uniforms.

"We're still rolling.

"And so it's a blessing to be in this position and I want to make sure our team understands that blessing, that we internalize it and allows us to go out and practice the way we should because we do get this great opportunity."

### **TOP PERFORMANCES** NOVEMBER 23-25, 2023 TDs (YDS) **PASSING** COMP-ATT-INT Aeneas Dennis, BEN 17-29-1 376 4 (58, 87, 29, 36) Davius Richard, NCCU 16-27-1 262 1 (91) Noah Bodden, SOU 13-28-1 1 (8) RUSHING YDS TDs (YDS) Floyd Chalk, GSU 22 172 1 (3) Kendric Rhymes, SOU 18 103 2 (2, 73) Johnny Morris III, TUSK 22 100 **RECEIVING** REC YDS TDs 3 (58, 87, 36) Reginald Harden, BEN 6 230 Devin Smith, NCCU 1 (91) August Pitre III, SOU 118 0 Caden High, BEN 102 1 (29)

# FROM HBCU GAMES OF

After the FAMU loss, Prairie View won its final three games vs.

### HBCU NFL PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

For NFL games of November 23 - 27, 2023

## **OFFENSE**

- #72 TERRON ARMSTEAD, OT, Miami (10th season, ARKANSAS-PINE BLUFF) - In the Dolphins' 31-13 win over the New York Jets, Armstead started at left tackle as the Dolphins rushed for 167 yards (28 carries) and two TDs and passed for 243 yards and one TD. Armstead played 49 (70%) of the offensive snaps.

### **DEFENSE**

- # 98 JAVON HARGRAVE, DT, San Francisco (8th season, SOUTH CAROLINA STATE) - Hargrave started at right defensive tackle in 31-10 win over Seattle and finished with seven tackles, two solos with 1.5 sacks for -10.5 yards while playing 40 (71%) of the defensive snaps and one (3%) special teams'

### SPECIAL TEAMS

- #6 JAMIE GILLAN, P. New York Giants, (5th season, ARKANSAS-PINE BLUFF) - In the Giants' 10-7 win over New England, Gillan punted eight times for 363 yards, an average of 45.4 yards with a average net of 40.3 yards. Four punts were downed inside the 20 with a long punt of 74 yards. Gillan was in on 10 (43%) of the special teams' snaps.

2023 ALL-MEAC FOOTBALL SELECTIONS

### Early in the second quarter, UR RB Fonnae Webb broke loose on a 56-yard run to the NCCU 2 before **Jason Chambers** knocked the ball loose with Matthew Reed recovering at the NCCU 7. After an NCCU punt, Richmond tried a fake punt on 4th-and-11 at its own 24 that the Eagles stuffed for just a 2-yard gain. Taking over from there, they needed

just two plays to score on Richard's 18-yard keeper to go up 20-7. UR drove 65 yards in 11 plays to score with :09 seconds left in the half on a 10-yard pass from Wickersham to DeGenarro to pull within

UR (9-3) took its first lead at 21-20 early in the third period on a 14yard TD run by Savon Smith. With :30 seconds left in the quarter, Smith brought back a Juan Velarde punt 65 yards to increase the Spiders' lead to 28-20. UR upped the lead to 35-20 with 13:38 to play in the final period as Wickersham (16-23-0, 291 yards) hit Jerry Garcia Jr. on a 71-yard

pass that went right thru the hands of a NCCU defender. The Eagles, buoyed by a 53-yard Richard to Smith hook-up, drove 75 yards in a drive that Richard (18 carries, 51 yards) capped with his third TD run, a 2-yard keeper. UR added two more fourth-quarter tallies as Garcia scored on a 6-yard run and Smith (15 carries, 73 yards) finished the scoring with a 24-yard run.

**Jayden Flaker** led the Eagles' defensive effort with 11 tackles, 7 solos. NCCU had 8 tackles for losses including two sacks.

# 2023 ALL-SWAC FOOTBALL SELECTIONS

OFFENSIVE POY - Jeremy Moussa, QB, FAMU **DEFENSIVE POY** - Isaiah Major, LB, FAMU NEWCOMER OY - Jace Wilson, QB, TSU FRESHMAN OY - Javon Robinson, WR. GSU COACH OF THE YEAR - Willie Simmons, FAMU

Colton Adams, ALST;

Aaron Miller, BEN

**TACKLES** 

**SACKS** 

**NTERCEPTIONS** 

2.0 1.0

All-SWAC First Team Offense - QB: Jeremy Moussa, FAMU; RB: LaDarius Owens, TSU; Jarveon Howard, ALC; OL: Eric Dunn, PVA&M; Cameron Covin, FAMU; Robert Alston IV, ALS; Deontae Granam, JSU; Ryan Atkins, UAPB; WR: Kisean Johnson, ALS; Monterio Hunt, ALC; TE: Tavarious Griffin, ALC All-SWAC First Team Defense - DL: Malachi Bailey, ALC; Anthony Dunn Jr., FAMU; Sundiata Anderson, GSU; Ckelby Givens, SOU; LB: Isaiah Major, FAMU; Colton Adams, ALS; Rico Dozier, UAPB; DB: Omari Hill-Robinson, B-CU; Kendall Bohler, FAMU; Jordan Carter, SOU; Eric Smith, FAMU All-SWAC First Team Specialist - PK: Cameron Gillis, FAMU; P: Jimmy Iles, GSU; RS: Terrell Gardner, AA&M; LS: Braxston Blackwell, Southern

All-SWAC Second Team Offense - QB: Aaron Allen. ALC; RB: Chance Williams, GSU; Donovan Eaglin, AA&M; OL: Ashton Grable, FAMU; Arrington Taylor, PVA&M; Dominic Boyd, ALS; Arelious Dunn, ALS; Evan Henry, JSU; WR: Jah'Marae Sheread, FAMU; Marcus Riley, FAMU; TE: D.J. Stevens, JSU

All-SWAC Second Team Defense - DL: Tahj Brown, SOU; Gentle Hunt, FAMU; Treqwan Thomas, ALS; Zareon Hayes, Alabama A&M; LB - Isaac Peppers, JSU; Jacob Williams, TSU; Johnny Chaney Jr., FAMU; DB - Emari Pait, AA&M; Keenan Leachman, ALC; Mikey

Victor, ALS; Lovie Jenkins, FAMU -All-SWAC Second Team Specialist - PK: Joshua Griffin, SOU; P - Matt Noll, JSU; RS: Robert McMinn, ALS; LS: Clayton Thomas Jr., B-CU

OFF LINEMAN OY - Toricelli Simpkins II, C, NCCU ROOKIE OY - Jawarm Howell, RB, SCSU COACH OY - Trei Oliver, NCCU

First Team Offense - QB: Davius Richard, Sr., NCCU; RB: Latrell Collier, R-Sr., NCCU; Jawarn Howell, Fr., SCSU; WR: Kasey Hawthorne, Sr., HOW; Devin Smith, Jr., NCCU; TE: Keshawn Toney, Gr., SCSU; C: Torricelli Simpkins III, Jr., NCCU; OL: Amin Dankway, Gr., HOW; Nick Taiste, R-Jr., SCSU; DaQuan Thomas. R-Jr., NCCU: De'Metrius Witherspoon, R-So., HOW:

First Team Defense - DL: Darren Brokenburr, Gr., HOW; Jaden Taylor, R-Jr., NCCU; Elijah Williams, Jr., MSU; Patrick Godbolt, Gr., SCSU; LB: Erick Hunter, Jr., MSU: Terrance Holton, Jr., HOW: Javden Flaker, So., NCCU; DB: Kenny Gallop Jr., Sr., HOW; Jordan Toles, Sr., MSU; Jason Chambers, So., NCCU;

Jae'Veyon Morton, Gr., MSU; P: Aaron Bickerton, So., HOW; PK: Adrian Olivo, Sr., NCCU; RS: Brandon Codrington, Sr., NCCU

Second Team Offense - QB: Quinton Williams. Sr.. HOW; RB: Eden James, So., HOW; Jarett Hunter, Sr., HOW; Marquis Gillis, R-So., DSU; C: Eric Brown Jr., Jr., SCSU; OL: Darius Fox, Jr., HOW; Cam Johnson, R-Jr., SCSU: Trevon Humprev, R-Fr., NCCU: Treyvon Branch, Jr., MSU; Second Team Defense - DL: Trey Middleton, R-Jr., NCCU; Naejuan Barber, R-So., SCSU; Jamel Stewart, Jr., HOW; Keyshawn Lynch, R-So., NSU; LB: Aaron Smith, R-JR., SCSU; Lawrence Richardson, Sr., MSU; Daylan Long, R-So., NSU; AJ Richardson, Fr., NSU; DB: Kole Jones, Jr., NCCU; Devon Allen, Jr., NSU; Carson Hinton, Sr., HOW; R. J. Coles, R-Jr., NSU; P: Jonathan Cardoza-Chicas, Sr., DSU; PK: Aaron Bickerton, So., HOW; RS: Keith Jenkins Jr., So., MSU; Ian Wheeler, Gr., HOW

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