



Fayetteville State Sports photo

# THE DANCE IS UNDERWAY

**TYREECE BROWN:** Fayetteville State head coach has Lady Broncos in Atlantic Region title game looking for berth in NCAA Div. II Elite Eight.

REPEAT CHAMPS IN MEAC; JSU, GRAMBLING TAKE SWAC CROWNS; LANGSTON, FAYETTEVILLE STATE ADVANCE

## TOURNAMENT FINALS RECAPS

### MEAC MEN

Howard 70, Delaware State 67

NORFOLK, VA – Fourth-seed **Howard** fought off a determined effort from sixth-seed **Delaware State** to prevail 70-67 and repeat as MEAC men's champion in the MEAC Basketball Tournament early Saturday afternoon at a cold Scope Arena.

Howard (18-16), who knocked off top seed **Norfolk State** in the semifinals, led 40-34 at the break before DelState opened the second half on an 8-1 run capped by **Jevin Muniz's** 3-pointer that gave the Hornets (15-18) their first lead since early in the game at 42-41.

DSU built as much as a six-point lead at 55-49 with just under 11 minutes left before the Bison responded. They tied the game three times, the last time at 60-60 before going up 62-60 on a layup by **Bryce Harris** with 4:18 to play. From there, Howard stayed in front and was a perfect 8-of-8 from the free throw line to pull out the victory.

Howard got a team-high 18 points from tournament MVP, 6-1 grad senior point guard **Jordan Hairston**. He finished with three of his four baskets from behind the arc and was 7 of 7 from the line. Nine of Hairston's 13 baskets in the three-day tournament were from long range. Junior forward **Bryce Harris** bullied his way to 16 points and canned clutch free throws in the waning moments. Twenty-six year old grad senior forward **Seth Towns** scored eight of Howard's first 17 points and also finished with 16 points and had a team-high 8 rebounds. Sharp-shooting senior **Marcus Dockery** added 15 points as starters scored all but two of the Bison's total.



**Hairston**

Muniz had a game-high 24 points for DSU who also got 16 points and a team-best 8 rebounds from all-MEAC senior **Martaz Robinson**.

The Bison and fourth-year head coach **Kenny Blakeney** will head to the Big Dance, the NCAA men's tournament, for the second straight year and face NEC champion **Wagner** (16-15) in a First Four game Tuesday (see related story).

### MEAC WOMEN

Norfolk State 51, Howard 48

NORFOLK, VA – Top-seed **Norfolk State** outscored second-seed **Howard** 18-10 in the fourth quarter to overcome a third-quarter deficit and pull out a 51-48 win in the women's championship game of the MEAC Tournament here Saturday afternoon.

The Lady Spartans (27-5), after leading most of the game including a 20-18 lead at the break, were outscored by the Bison 18-13 in the third quarter to trail 36-33 entering the final period. But that's when NSU Player of the Year, 6-1 junior forward **Kierra Wheeler** went to work.

She scored nine straight of her team-high 20 points, including a free throw with five minutes left that gave the Spartans a 42-41 lead they did not relinquish. **Diamond Johnson's** ensuing 3-pointer at the 4:23 mark increased the lead to 45-41. Howard (15-16) pulled within one point twice over the final minutes but could not overtake NSU. The Spartans knocked down 6 of 8 free throws to keep the Lady Bison at bay.



**Johnson**

Johnson, named MVP of the tournament, struggled with 4 of 16 shooting and finished with 12 points, the only other double-figure scorer for NSU. The NC State transfer had 30 points and 11 rebounds in a 29-point semifinal blowout win over **Coppin State** and 19 points and 6 rebounds in a 32-point win over **South Carolina State** in the quarterfinals. Howard point guard **Iyanna Warren** was the only double-digit scorer for the Lady Bison with 19 points.

NSU and head coach **Larry Vickers** earned the MEAC's automatic berth into the women's NCAA Tournament for the second straight season. They will face Pac-12 runners-up **Stanford** (28-5) in a first round game on Friday (see related story).

### SWAC MEN

Grambling State 75, Texas Southern 66

BIRMINGHAM, AL – Top seed **Grambling State** ran out to a 41-24 lead at halftime and was never headed in downing third-seed **Texas Southern** 75-66 to claim its first-ever men's title Saturday night at the SWAC Basketball Tournament here at Bartow Arena. TSU was seeking its fourth straight title.

The teams were tied at 13 early before GSU (20-14) finished the half on a 28-11 spurt. TSU (16-16) cut the lead to nine twice in the final seven minutes of the game and got as close as 7 at 73-66 with :30 seconds left.

GSU's 6-1 senior guard **Tra'Michael Moton**, who scored in double digits in all three of the Tigers' tourney wins, was named the Most Valuable Player. He had 10 points and a game-high 7 assists in the title game. He led GSU with 26 points and 6 rebounds in the semifinal win over **Bethune-Cookman** and tallied 14 points with 3 boards in a quarterfinal win over **Alabama State**. **Jourdan Smith** led GSU in the championship game with 20 points while **Antwan Burnett** had 14 and **Jonathan Aku** 12. TSU was led by 21 points from **Jonathan Cisse** and 16 from **Deon Stroud**.



**Moton**

It is also the first tournament title and automatic NCAA berth for seventh-year Grambling head coach **Donte' Jackson** who will now take his Tigers' into a First Four game Wednesday vs. Montana State (17-17) (see related story).

### SWAC WOMEN

Jackson State 68, Alcorn State 44

BIRMINGHAM, AL – Top-seed **Jackson State** completed a 21-0 run thru SWAC competition this season with a 68-44 win over **Alcorn State** in the women's tournament championship game here Saturday at Bartow Arena.

A 17-2 deficit in the first quarter of its 67-58 quarterfinal win over **Prairie View A&M** was the only time JSU (26-6) trailed at the end of a quarter during its run to the title. In the championship game, the Lady Tigers jumped out to a 17-8 lead after one period and led 33-12 at the break.

Tournament MVP **Andriana Avent**, JSU's 6-foot senior guard who plays off the bench, led the way with 17 points. She tied for a team-high with 19 points in a semifinal win over **Arkansas-Pine Bluff** and had 11 points vs. PVA&M.



**Avent**

The balanced JSU attack got 13 points from **T'lan Boler** in the championship game and 11 from **Hayleigh Breland**. The 58-37 rebounding edge for Grambling was led by nine each from **Miya Crump** and **Angel Jackson**. Alcorn State (12-20), who came in as the tourney's 7th seed and knocked off No. 3 **Grambling** and No. 2 **Southern**, got 10 points each from **Nakia Cheatham** and **Kianna Henderson**. By virtue of the win, JSU earned the SWAC's automatic bid to the women's NCAA Tournament. The Lady Tigers will play at UConn (29-5) on Friday in a first round game (see related story).

## MEAC

**MEN**  
**QUARTERFINALS**  
Norfolk State 75, Coppin State 51  
NC Central 87, Maryland Eastern Shore 81  
Howard 78, Morgan State 65  
Delaware State 71, SC State 58  
**SEMIFINALS**  
Howard 80, Norfolk State 74  
Delaware State 71, NC Central 58  
**FINALS**  
Howard 70, Delaware State 67

**ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM**  
Jordan Hairston, Howard (MVP)  
Bryce Harris, Howard  
Seth Towns, Howard  
Martaz Robinson, Delaware State  
Jevin Muniz, Delaware State  
**OUTSTANDING COACH**  
Kenneth Blakeney, Howard

## WOMEN

**QUARTERFINALS**  
Norfolk State 75, South Carolina State 43  
Howard 49, Morgan State 44  
Coppin State 61, Maryland Eastern Shore 55  
NC Central 66, Delaware State 56  
**SEMIFINALS**  
Norfolk State 73, Coppin State 44  
Howard 69, NC Central 58  
**FINALS**  
Norfolk State 51, Howard 46

**ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM**  
Diamond Johnson, Norfolk State (MVP)  
Kierra Wheeler, Norfolk State  
Iyanna Warren, Howard  
Laila Lawrence, Coppin State  
Kaiya Creek, Howard  
**OUTSTANDING COACH**  
Larry Vickers, NSU

## SWAC

**MEN**  
**QUARTERFINALS**  
Alabama A&M 75, Alcorn State 63  
Grambling State 56, Alabama State 53  
Texas Southern 73, Jackson State 62  
Bethune-Cookman 73, Southern 58  
**SEMIFINALS**  
Grambling State 65, Bethune-Cookman 53  
Texas Southern 72, Alabama A&M 65  
**FINALS**  
Grambling State 75, Texas Southern 66

**ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM**  
Tra'Michael Moton, Grambling State (MVP)  
Lorenzo Downey, Alabama A&M  
Derrick Carter-Hollinger Jr., Bethune-Cookman  
Johnathan Cisse, Texas Southern  
Kintavious Dozier, Grambling State

**WOMEN**  
**QUARTERFINALS**  
Grambling State 66, Florida A&M 60  
Jackson State 67, Prairie View A&M 58  
Alcorn State 59, Southern 52  
Arkansas-Pine Bluff 82, Alabama A&M 74  
**SEMIFINALS**  
Alcorn State 61, Grambling State 59  
Jackson State 70, Arkansas-Pine Bluff 48  
**FINALS**  
Jackson State 68, Alcorn State 44

**ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM**  
Andriana Avent, Jackson State (MVP)  
Amiah Simmons, Alabama A&M  
Zaay Green, Arkansas-Pine Bluff  
Destiny Brown, Alcorn State  
T'lan Boler, Jackson State

# Big Dance different for HBCU men, women

## LUT WILLIAMS

BCSP Editor

The men's tournament champions of the **Mid Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC)** and **Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC)** have a much different draw than their women counterparts heading into their respective NCAA "Big Dance" Div. I national tournaments this week.

### The Men

MEAC men's champion **Howard** and SWAC men's champ **Grambling State** are both seeded 16th and last in their respective NCAA regions and will be involved in winnable play-in games – dubbed First Four games – early in the week.

Howard (18-16) won its second straight MEAC Tourney title, this time as a No. 4 seed. The Bison were awarded a First Four game Tuesday (6:40 p.m.) in Dayton, Ohio in the West Region vs. NEC champion **Wagner** (16-15). The Seahawks grabbed their league title as a No. 6 seed. The winner of the Howard/Wagner game will face the region's top seed, North Carolina, Thursday in Charlotte, N.C. (2:45 p.m.)

The Bison, making their second appearance under now fourth-year head coach **Kenny Blakeney**, were given a 16-seed a year ago and faced West Region top seed **Kansas** in the first round (a 96-68 loss). This is Howard's fifth appearance overall in the NCAA Tournament.

Grambling (20-14), under seventh-year head coach **Donte' Jackson**, won its first-ever SWAC men's tourney title as a No. 1 seed and earned the program's first-ever NCAA berth.

The G-Men drew Big Sky champion **Montana State** (17-17), who won its tournament title as a No. 5 seed, in a First Four Midwest Region game. Their match up is Wednesday in Dayton at 6:40 p.m. The GSU/MSU winner will face the region's top seed **Purdue** (29-4) on Friday in Indianapolis at 7:25 p.m.



**Blakeney**



**Vickers**

### The Ladies

Like Grambling's men, both SWAC women's champion **Jackson State** (26-6) and MEAC women's champion **Norfolk State** (27-5) emerged as winners of their tournaments as No. 1 seeds. Unlike Grambling however, the ladies were not seeded 16th or last in their respective regions.

And unlike Grambling or Howard, the ladies will be facing perennial national powers when they open play on Friday.

Jackson State, under sixth-year head coach **Tomekia Reed**, is making its third NCAA appearance in four years. The Lady Tigers earned a program-best No. 14 seed in the Portland 4 Region.

They will face Big East Tournament champion and perennial national power, No. 3 **UConn** (29-5) with Hall of Fame head coach Gino

## BLACK COLLEGES IN 2024 DIV. I NCAA TOURNAMENTS

### MEN

FIRST FOUR / WEST REGION on truTV  
TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 6:40 P.M. (ET) - DAYTON, OH  
#16 **Howard** (18-16) vs. #16 **Wagner** (16-15)  
winner vs. #1 **UNC** (27-7) on  
THUR., MARCH 21, 2:45 P.M. (ET) in CHARLOTTE, NC on CBS

FIRST FOUR / MIDWEST REGION on truTV  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 6:40 P.M. (ET) - DAYTON, OH  
#16 **Grambling State** (20-14) vs. #16 **Montana State** (17-17)  
winner vs. #1 **Purdue** (29-4)  
FRI., MARCH 22, 7:25 P.M. (ET) in INDIANAPOLIS, IN on TBS

### WOMEN

PORTLAND 4 REGION on Fubo!  
FRIDAY, MARCH 22, TBD (ET) - STORRS, CN  
#14 **Jackson State** (26-6) at #3 **UConn** (29-5)

PORTLAND 3 REGION on Fubo!  
FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 1:00 P.M. (ET) - STANFORD, CA  
#15 **Norfolk State** (27-5) at #2 **Stanford** (28-5)



**Jackson**



**Reed**

Auriemma Friday (1 p.m.) on the Lady Huskies home court in Storrs, Connecticut.

UConn has won 11 national championships under Auriemma but enters Friday's game with maybe eight healthy players. Don't count out the deep JSU squad.

After earning its second straight MEAC tournament title and NCAA berth under eighth-year head coach **Larry Vickers**, Norfolk State is seeded 15th in the Portland 3 Region.

The Lady Spartans will face Pac-12 Tournament runners-up No. 2 Stanford (28-5) on its home floor in Stanford, California, Friday at 1 p.m.

In their first appearance a year ago, Vickers' troops were seeded 16th and gained praise from top seed South Carolina head coach Dawn Staley after a 72-40 first round win by the Lady Gamecocks.

# Postseason play continues for nine HBCU hoops teams

The only winners from this past week's basketball action, in addition to the MEAC and SWAC men's and women's champions (see above) that advanced to the NCAA Div. I national tournaments, were the women of Fayetteville State and men of Langston.

## SCORES

**NCAA DIV. II - WOMEN**  
**Friday, March 15**  
#1 Valdosta State 66, #8 Miles 55  
#1 Gannon 73, #8 West Virginia State 53  
#3 Fayetteville State 72, #6 Indiana (PA) 63  
**Saturday, March 16**  
#3 Fayetteville State 70, #2 Fairmont State 62  
**MEN**  
**Friday, March 15**  
#1 Gannon 97, #8 Lincoln 63  
#2 California (PA) 96, #7 West Virginia State 80  
**Saturday, March 16**  
#3 Florida Southern 80, #6 Clark Atlanta 72  
#1 Nova Southeastern 115, #8 Benedict 95  
**NAIA WOMEN**  
**Friday, March 15**  
16) Indiana Wesleyan 100, 8) Fisk 69  
#8 Spring Arbor (MI) 81, #8 Langston 78  
#3 John Brown 61, -- #14 Xavier 50  
#7 Dakota Wesleyan 40, #10 Rust 34  
**MEN**  
**Friday, March 15**  
#15 Evangel (Mo.) 91, #12 Florida Memorial 76  
#1 Langston 79, #15 Bellevue 40  
#2 Cumberland 97, #15 Philander Smith 96  
#7 Tennessee Southern 69, #10 Tougaloo 55  
**Saturday, March 16**  
#1 Langston 91, vs. Ave Maria 61

FSU, the CIAA tournament champion, won two games in the Atlantic Regional and advanced to Tuesday's championship game in Erie, Pa. The Lady Broncos (29-2), the second-seed in the region, faced region top seed Gannon (34-2) at 5 p.m. The winner advances to the women's Div. II Elite Eight (national quarterfinals) at the St. Joseph Civic Arena in St. Joseph, Missouri, March 25, 27 and 29.

Langston won two blowout games in the NAIA's Duer Quadrant to advance to the national Sweet 16 in Kansas City, Missouri on Friday. The No. 2 32-1 Lions will face off against No. 12 LSU Shreveport (24-8) in the 1 p.m. contest. Langston is behind only 32-1 top seed Grace (Ind.) in the NAIA seeding.

Six other black college teams are playing after falling in the MEAC or SWAC tournaments. **North Carolina A&T** is still alive after losing in the quarterfinals of the CAA Tournament.

SWAC men's runners-up **Texas Southern** along with the men of **Alabama A&M** and **Bethune-Cookman** and the women of **Grambling State** of the SWAC are playing on this week.

TSU (Tuesday at Tarleton State) and Alabama A&M (Wednesday at Austin Peay) are competing on the road in the first round of the men's College Insider.com Tournament (CIT).

The men of B-U play in the first round of the College Basketball Invitational (CBI) on Saturday vs. Arkansas State in their home city of Daytona Beach, Fla.

Grambling's women are playing in the Women's NIT (WNIT) first round Thursday at Oral Roberts.

The Lady Aggies of NC A&T are hosting crosstown opponent UNC-Greensboro Friday at Corbett Arena on their campus in a first round WNIT match up.

## MORE GAMES THIS WEEK

**NCAA DIV. II ATLANTIC REGION WOMEN'S FINAL**  
Tuesday, March 19 in Erie, PA - 5 p.m. (ET)  
#3 Fayetteville State (29-2) vs. #1 Gannon (34-2)

**(M) COLLEGE INSIDER.COM TOURNAMENT (CIT)**  
Tuesday, March 19 - Lou Henson Classic  
**Texas Southern** (16-16) @ Tarleton State (23-9) - 7 p.m. (ET)  
Wednesday, March 20 - Hugh Durham Classic  
**Alabama A&M** (11-20) @ Austin Peay (19-15) - 8 p.m. (ET)  
Saturday, March 23 - **John McClendon** Classic - 4 p.m. (ET)  
Austin Peay/Ala. A&M winner @ **Norfolk State** (22-11)

**POSTSEASON (WOMEN'S) WNIT FIRST ROUND**  
Thursday, March 21 - 8 p.m. ET  
**Grambling State** (22-9) @ Oral Roberts (21-8)  
Friday, March 22 - 7 p.m. ET  
UNC-Greensboro (21-11) @ **North Carolina A&T** (20-11)

**NAIA MEN - SWEET 16**  
Friday, March 22 in Kansas City, MO - 2 p.m. (ET)  
#5 **Langston** (32-1) vs. #12 **LSU Shreveport** (24-8)

**(M) COLLEGE BASKETBALL INVITATIONAL (CBI)**  
Saturday, March 23 in Daytona Beach, FL  
#4 Arkansas State (18-16) vs. #13 **Bethune-Cookman** (17-16) - 1 p.m.  
#3 **Seattle** (19-14) vs. #14 **Delaware State** (15-18) - 5 p.m.

## MEAC REGULAR SEASON BASKETBALL HONORS

2023-24 WOMEN'S ALL-MEAC  
Player of the Year - **Jamarii Thomas**, NSU  
Rookie of the Year - **Tyana Walker**, HOW  
Defensive POY - **Laila Lawrence**, CSU  
Newcomer OY - **Diamond Johnson**, NSU  
Sixth POY - **Faith Blackstone**, CSU  
Coach OY - **Larry Vickers**, NSU

FIRST TEAM - Faith Blackstone, Sr., G, CSU; Laila Lawrence, Jr., F, CSU; Diamond Johnson, Jr., G, NSU; Kierra Wheeler, Jr., F, NSU; Tyana Walker, Fr., G, HOW;  
SECOND TEAM - Angel Jones, So., G, CSU; Iyanna Warren, Gr., G, HOW; Arianna Seawell, Jr., C, UMES; Niya Fields, Jr., G, NSU; Morgan Callahan, R-Jr., F, NCCU; THIRD TEAM - Ja'Naiah Perkins-Jackson, Sr., G, DSU; Kaiya Creek, Gr., F, HOW; Nile Miller, So., G, HOW; Mahogany Lester, Gr., C, UMES; Kyia Bryant, Fr., G, NCCU;  
ALL-ROOKIE TEAM - Tyana Walker, Fr., G, HOW; Tamarla Rumph, F, MSU; Da'Bye Clark, G, NSU; Kyia Bryant, G, NCCU; Anjana Richardson, G, NSU;  
ALL-DEFENSIVE TEAM - Laila Lawrence, r-So., G, CSU; Nile Miller, Gr., G, HOW; Diamond Johnson, Gr. F, NSU; Kierra Wheeler, Sr., F, NSU; Morgan Callahan, Gr., C, NCCU;

## SWAC REGULAR SEASON BASKETBALL HONORS

2023-24 MEN'S ALL-MEAC  
Player of the Year - **Jamarii Thomas**, NSU  
Defensive POY - **Troy Hupstead**, UMES  
Rookie OY - **Deywilk Tavaraz**, DSU  
Newcomer OY - **Jamarii Thomas**, NSU  
6th Man of the Year - **Allen Betrand**, NSU  
Coach of the Year - **Robert Jones**, NSU

FIRST TEAM - Jamarii Thomas, Jr., G, NSU; Martaz Robinson, Sr., G, DSU; Bryce Harris, Jr., G, HU; Fred Cleveland Jr., Sr., G, NCCU; Troy Hupstead, Jr., F, UMES  
SECOND TEAM - Wynston Tabbs, r-Sr., G, MSU; Jevin Muniz, So., G, DSU; Will Thomas, Jr., F, MSU; Ja'Darius Harris, r-Sr., G, NCCU; Marcus Dockery, Jr., G, HU;  
THIRD TEAM - Seth Towns, Gr., F, HU; Po'Boigh King, Sr., G, NCCU; Ryan Archev, Fr., G, CSU; Allen Betrand, Fr., G, NSU; Deywilk Tavaraz, Fr., G, DSU  
ALL-ROOKIE TEAM - Deywilk Tavaraz, Fr., G, DSU; Ryan Archev, Fr., G, CSU; Mitchell Taylor, Fr., G, SCSU; Chris Fields Jr., Fr., F, NSU; Camaran Sparrow, Fr., G, CSU  
ALL-DEFENSIVE TEAM - Troy Hupstead, Jr., F, UMES; Bryce Harris, Jr., G, HU; Seth Towns, Gr., F, HU; Jamarii Thomas, Jr., G, HU; Emmanuel Izunbor, r-Sr., F, NCCU

## SWAC WOMEN'S HONORS

Player of the Year - **Ahriahna Grizzle**, Florida A&M  
Defensive Player of the Year - **Angel Jackson**, Jackson State  
Newcomer of the Year - **Ryann Payne**, Prairie View A&M  
Freshman of the Year - **Kaylah Turner**, Alabama A&M  
Coach of the Year - **Tomekia Reed**, Jackson State

All-SWAC First Team  
Ahriahna Grizzle, Florida A&M  
Miya Crump, Jackson State  
T'lan Boler, Jackson State  
Ryann Payne, Prairie View A&M  
Zaay Green, Arkansas-Pine Bluff

## SWAC MEN'S HONORS

Player of the Year - **Ken Evans**, Jackson State  
Defensive Player of the Year - **Jordan O'Neal**, Jackson State  
Newcomer of the Year - **Rashad Williams**, Arkansas-Pine Bluff  
Freshman of the Year - **Chad Moodie**, Alabama A&M  
Coach of the Year - **Donte Jackson**, Grambling State

All-SWAC Second Team  
Jakobi Heady, Bethune-Cookman  
TJ Madlock, Alabama State  
Kylan Milton, Arkansas-Pine Bluff  
Tijiane Dioumassi, Southern  
Rashad Williams, Arkansas-Pine Bluff