

BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS PAGE



HBCU Swingman Classic Photo / Logo
KEN GRIFFEY JR.: Baseball Hall of Famer puts his name and brand behind Friday's Swingman Classic in Texas showcasing best black college baseball players.

SUMMER CLASSICS

HBCU BASEBALL ON MLB STAGE; 2024 SIAC FOOTBALL PREDICTIONS; WSSU HOOPS COACH

UNDER THE BANNER

WHAT'S GOING ON IN AND AROUND BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

NEW WSSU MEN'S HOOPS COACH:

Winston-Salem State scheduled a press conference at 4:45 p.m. Tuesday and according to several sources, will name its new head men's basketball coach.

Stephen Gaither of *HBCUgameday.com* reported Monday that Shaw assistant and WSSU alumnus **WyKevin Bazemore**, a finalist for the job, had been informed that he will not be hired as the head coach.

Gaither's reports said **Corey Thompson**, a former WSSU forward and current high school coach, is expected to be the new head coach.

Thompson is currently the head coach at St. Paul's High School in Fayetteville, North Carolina. He has held that position since 2016. He previously served as an assistant coach at Fayetteville State and UNC-Pembroke. He was a grad assistant at Slippery Rock and a volunteer assistant at his alma mater (2004-2005).

He played at WSSU from 1998 - 2002 and helped lead the Rams to two CIAA Tournament titles and four NCAA Div. II playoff appearances.

Thompson was previously a candidate in the 2018 search that ultimately saw **Cleo Hill Jr.** get the job.

The Rams are looking to replace Hill who left last month after five years at the helm to take over the men's program at Maryland-Eastern Shore.

Hill had led WSSU to two CIAA Tournament titles (2020 and 2023) and NCAA Div. II playoff appearances while compiling a 90-50 overall record. **Eric Wilson**, associate head coach, served as the Acting Head Coach and was a candidate for the permanent position.



Thompson

Friday's HBCU Swingman Classic to provide good look at Major League Baseball prospects

LUT WILLIAMS
BCSP Editor

Fifty (50) NCAA Div. I black college all-star baseball players will descend on Globe Life Field, home of the World Series Champion Texas Rangers, this Friday (July 12) for the 2nd *HBCU Swingman Classic*.

The all-star game, the brainstorm of Baseball Hall of Famer Ken Griffey Jr., is part of a four-day experience for the players that coincides with Major League Baseball's All-Star week that culminates with Monday's (July 15) All-Star game.

The Classic is a collaboration between Griffey, Major League Baseball, the Youth Development Foundation and the MLB Player's Association (MLBPA) and is being presented by main sponsor, T-Mobile.

Over four days, the players will be provided opportunities to develop leadership and mentorship skills and eventually get a chance to show their skills on the diamond Friday (MLB Network, 7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET) before scouts and a national television audience on pro baseball's biggest stage. The game will also be carried on MLB.tv, MLB.com, and the MLB app. Former Major Leaguer Harold Reynolds and David Sims will call the game.

"This is a celebration of HBCUs and black baseball at the collegiate level," said Del Matthews, Vice President of Baseball Development for Major League Baseball. "It's an opportunity to educate our fans about HBCU baseball, past, present and future."

"And hats off to Ken Griffey Jr., who allows us to use his name and brand to promote HBCU baseball - another impactful legacy for him and what he's doing off the field to encourage the next generation of players coming through the game."

Matthews, who played baseball at **Texas Southern** (1998-2000) and in the minor leagues, is the son of 17-year MLB veteran and all-star outfielder Gary Matthews Sr. and the brother of all-star outfielder Gary Matthews Jr., who had a 10-year MLB career. Two-time Major League all-star and World Series champion Dusty Baker, who also won a World Series (2022) with Houston during a 25-year managerial career, is his godfather.

"Baseball is all our family has known," said Matthews. "I feel fortunate and blessed to go to work everyday doing something I know and love very well."

For **Kyle Walker** and **Cameron Bufford** of **Grambling State** and catcher **Canyon Brown** of **North Carolina A&T**, the Classic is another opportunity before scouts and a national television audience to prove they are ready for professional baseball.



ONES TO WATCH: Grambling State infielders Kyle Walker (l.) and Cameron Bufford (c.) and NC A&T catcher Canyon Brown (r.) participated in the MLB Draft Combine and will look to add to their resume at Friday's HBCU Swingman Classic in Texas. The game will be carried live on MLB Network (7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET).

Walker, Bufford and Brown were the only HBCU products among 300 top high school and college prospects invited to the June 18-23 MLB Draft Combine held at Chase Field in Phoenix, Arizona. The Combine gave those players a chance to boost their stock headed into this year's MLB Draft which begins on Monday (July 15).

Walker, a second baseman, stuffed the stat sheet for 2024 SWAC champion Grambling. The 5-9, 185-pound New Orleans native hit .381 on the season, third in the SWAC, and never hit below .370 during his four years playing for the G-Men. He was also tied for third in home runs (11) in the SWAC, was second in runs scored (72), tied for second in hits (77) and was third in total bases (122).

Bufford, a 6-3, 195-pound slugger from South Holland, Illinois, manned third base for the Tigers and finished his career as the all-time home run king at Grambling. He clouted double-digit home runs in each of his four seasons including ten this season to finish with 46 in his career. He drove in 219 runs and had a career .325 batting average.

Brown played catcher for the Aggies for the past three seasons. The Ormond Beach, Fla. native hit .322 this season and batted .292 with 18 home runs and 117 RBIs during his career. This season he had career-highs of 65 hits, 41 runs scored and 50 runs driven in.

Arkansas-Pine Bluff senior catcher **Edwin DeLaCruz**, who led the SWAC with a .428 batting average and was the league's Hitter of the Year, is also on the Classic roster. He finished seventh in Div. I batting. **Florida A&M** junior outfielder **Janmikell Bastardo** tied for third in the nation with eight triples.

FAMU junior righthander **Caleb Granger** (10-2, 2.87 ERA), the SWAC Pitcher of the Year, and Grambling junior righthander **Mason Martinez** (12-3, 85Ks in 114 innings), who led the nation with five complete games, are the top pitching prospects in the game.

Thirty-six (36) of the fifty players selected for the Classic played in the SWAC. Any player in good standing with their university, regardless of classification including draft-eligible seniors were in the pool to be selected for the Classic.

"Four players from last year's Classic were drafted in the 2023 Draft," Matthews said. "This is going to show that these kids can play the game. We're just trying to let kids know that there's an opportunity for you to play college baseball, and if you have success and work hard, all you need is an opportunity."

Major League Baseball has also sponsored the *Andre Dawson Classic* since 2008 where eight HBCUs play in a tournament at the beginning of the season, Matthews said.

"We have had conversations about how we (MLB) can impact (HBCUs), and now with NIL (Name, Image and Likeness) deals available for student-athletes, there are discussions and brainstormings on ways of how we can continue to help the HBCUs. But certainly through our foundations and non-profit arms of the league we're trying to help the HBCUs to the extent that we can."

"So we're doing our part hosting the HBCU Swingman Classic and providing another opportunity on television, at a major league facility at the all-star game for players of color to get into the game and have success."

Griffey Jr., Hall of Famer Dave Winfield and former two-time Major League all-star and **Florida A&M** product **Vince Coleman** are expected to be on hand and in the dugouts for the Classic. Griffey was part of a selection committee for the Classic that included representatives from Major League teams and the MLBPA.

Coleman is an HBCU success story and blazed a path that many of these current players would like to emulate.

He was drafted in the 10th round of the 1982 MLB Draft by the St. Louis Cardinals and went on to a productive 13-year MLB career, his first six with the Cards. He posted over 100 stolen bases in his first three seasons and led the majors in steals for six consecutive seasons. He was a unanimous choice as the 1985 National League Rookie of the Year.

2024 HBCU SWING CLASSIC SELECTEES

Tristan Curless, Brycen Hammonds, **Alabama A&M**; Juan Cruz, Randy Flores, Jamal George, Ali Lapread, Jafet Martinez, Luis Rodriguez, **Alabama State**; Garrett Palladino, **Alcorn State**; Edwin DeLaCruz; **Arkansas-Pine Bluff**; Tanner Boccabello, Daniel Gaviiria, Pablo Torres, **Bethune-Cookman**; Sam Nieves, **Coppin State**; Evan Bouldin, Kieran Etwaru, **Delaware State**; Janmikell Bastardo, True Fontenot, Caleb Granger, Ty Jackson, **Florida A&M**; Tiger Borom, Cameron Bufford, Mason Martinez, Jose Vargas, Kyle Walker, **Grambling State**; Joseph Eichelberger, Rodney Hibler Jr., Lenny Montesano, Robert Tate Jr., Isaiah Williams, Christian Womble, **Jackson State**; Manny Jackson, Justin Journette, Jamal Ritter, **Norfolk State**; Coley Kilpatrick, Tre Williams, **North Carolina A&T**; Michael Burroughs, Michael Smith Jr., **Prairie View A&M**; Christian Davis, KJ White Jr., Tyler Hawkins, Kyle Radcliffe, **Southern**; CJ Castillo, Domenic Martinez, **Texas Southern**;

THE STAT CORNER I

WHO ARE THE BEST PERFORMERS IN BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

UPCOMING 2024 HBCU FOOTBALL MEDIA DAYS

SIAC
Wednesday, July 10 - 8 a.m. ET
Chick-fil-A College Football Hall of Fame
Atlanta, GA

SWAC
Tuesday, July 16 - 10 a.m. CST
Sheraton Birmingham Hotel
Birmingham, AL (Live on ESPN+)

CIAA
Wednesday, July 17 - 9 a.m. ET
Holiday Inn Roanoke Hotel
Roanoke, VA

MEAC
Tuesday, July 23 - 9 a.m. ET
Hilton Norfolk The Main
Norfolk, VA (Line on ESPN+)

THE STAT CORNER II

WHO ARE THE BEST PERFORMERS IN BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

TEAMS FOR THE 2nd ANNUAL HBCU SWINGMAN CLASSIC

Friday, July 12 - Arlington, TX

TEAM 1

C - Michael Goudeau, TXSU; Canyon Brown, NCA&T; Irvin Escobar, BCU; **1B** - Dreylin Holmes, MVSU; Tatsunori Negishi, NCA&T; **IF** - Randy Flores, ALST; CJ Castillo, TXSU; Garrett Palladino, ALST; Jose Vargas, GSU; **3B** - Cameron Bufford, GSU; **OF** - Tyloer Hawkins, SOU; Ali Lapread, ALST; Rodney Hibler, Jr., JSU; Kyle Radcliffe, SOU; Brycen Hammonds, ALAM; Jamal Ritter, NSU; P - Pablo Torres, B-CU; Caleb Granger, FAMU; Evan Bouldin, DSU; Luis Rodriguez, ALST; Domenic Martinez, TXSU; Christian Davis, SOU; Daniel Gaviiria, B-CU; Isaiah Williams, JSU; **P/UTL** - Tre Williams, NCA&T

TEAM 2

C - Edwin DeLaCruz, APB; Jamal George, ALST; Manny Jackson, NSU; **1B** - Juan Cruz, ALST; Lenny Montesano, JSU; **IF** - Kyle Walter, GSU; Robert Tate Jr., JSU; True Fontenot, FAMU; KJ White, SOU; **3B** - Justin Journette, NSU; **OF** - Ty Jackson, FAMU; Michael Smith, PVA&M; Tiger Borom, GSU; Michael Burroughs, PVA&M; Joseph Eichelberger, JSU; Janmikell Bastardo, FAMU; **P** - Jafet Martinez, ALST; Tanner Boccabello, B-CU; Mason Martinez, GSU; Coley Kilpatrick, NCA&T; Christian Womble, JSU; Tristan Curless, ALAM; Renard Grace, SOU; Kieran Etwaru, DSU; **UTL** - Sam Nieves, CSU;

BCSP Notes

SIAC unveils 2024 football predictions, Individual preseason honors

ATLANTA — The **Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference** (SIAC) unveiled its 2024 Predicted Order of Finish and Preseason All-SIAC Football team on Tuesday, ahead of its preseason Football Media Day on Wednesday.

The SIAC's 2024 Football Media Day was set for Wednesday (July 10) at 8 a.m. ET. at the Chick-fil-A College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta.

Albany State was projected to win the conference, followed by **Fort Valley State** and **Miles**. Tuskegee is predicted to finish fourth, while two-time defending champion **Benedict** rounds out the top five.

Edward Waters, Kentucky State and **Savannah State** are expected to follow in the sixth, seventh, and eighth positions. **Central State, Clark Atlanta, Allen, Lane, and Morehouse** complete the rankings.

The preseason all-SIAC team showcases 30 returning players from the 2023 SIAC Football All-Conference team, including all 11 members of the first offensive team and 12 of the 14 members on first team defense and special teams.

Lane running back **Kylan Duhe** was named Preseason Offensive



Duhe

Player of the Year. Junior defensive back **Mikael King** from **Tuskegee** was named Preseason Defensive Player of the Year.

Duhe led the SIAC in rushing in 2023 with 928 yards on 204 carries, an average of 4.5 yards per carry. He averaged 92.8 rushing yards per game and scored eight rushing touchdowns. King led the league with six interceptions and was third with 14 passes defended. He finished with 44 tackles on the season.

The Preseason All-SIAC Football team selections, individual honorees, and the Predicted Order of Finish were determined by votes from the conference's head coaches and sports information directors.

PREDICTED ORDER OF FINISH

1) Albany State 2) Fort Valley State 3) Miles 4) Tuskegee 5) Benedict 6) Edward Waters 7) Kentucky State 8) Savannah State 9) Central State 10) Clark Atlanta 11) Allen 12) Lane 13) Morehouse

PRESEASON OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Kylan Duhe, RB, Lane, R-Senior, Edgard, LA
PRESEASON DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR
Mikael King, DB, Tuskegee, Junior, Tuskegee, AL

FIRST TEAM - OFFENSE

OL - Dylan Lampkin*, Sr., EWC; Tyler Lowery*, Sr., MILES; Jamari Pierre*, So, EWC; Elijah Shareef*, Fr., CAU; Ahmed Brimah*, Jr., ALB **TE** - Xavier Herndon*, R-Fr., ALB **WR** - Johnny Jones*, So., EWC; Jaih Andrews*, Sr., MILES **RB** - Brandon Marshall*, Gr., FVSU; Kylan Duhe*, R-Sr., LANE; **QB** - David Wright*, R-So., CAU
FIRST TEAM - DEFENSE
DL - Aaron Miller*, R-Sr., BEN; Ka'Darrion Jones*, Sr., LANE; Marques Sherman*,



King

Sr., CAU; Jamichael Rogers*, Jr., MILES; **LB** - Asmar Hasan*, Jr., LANE; Malik Moore*, Jr., TUSK; Widmyer Garçon*, Jr., EWC; **DB** - Christian Ramsey*, Sr., TUSK; Kamari Blankumsee*, So., FVSU; Mikael King*, Jr., TUSK; Deandre Creaury*, So., SSU; **PK** - Daniel Gibbs*, Sr., FVSU; **P** - Roderick Smith, Jr., MILES; **PR / KR** - DeJuan Bell*, Gr., FVSU;

SECOND TEAM - OFFENSE

OL - Terrence Jarrett, Sr., ALL; Elliott Howell, Sr., TUSK; Walter McClinton II, Gr., KSU; Jason Stovall, Sr., MILES; Darian Anderson, So., LANE; **TE** - Travaunta Abner*, Jr., MILES; **WR** - Jaylin Peterson*, Sr., MILES; Da'Shun Mitchell, Sr., SSU; **RB** - Beau Herrington*, Sr., ALL; Shamarcus Poole, Sr., SSU; **QB** - Jadon Adams, Sr., SSU

SECOND TEAM - DEFENSE

DL - Jarell Culberth, Sr., TUSK; Nathaniel Chisholm, Jr., SSU; Isaiah Reaves, So., MHS; Terence Maize, Jr., TUSK; **LB** - Malik Harp*, Sr., FVSU; Vincent Hill, Jr., TUSK; Tyshun Gaiter, Gr., LANE; **DB** - Dahlii Wilkins*, Sr., CAU; Camron Ivey*, Sr., CAU; Rossie Grimes, So., TUSK; Ahlik Booker, Sr., SSU; **PK** - Lucas Wynn, So., BEN; **P** - Seve Spruill II, So., MHS; **PR** - Allie Brown, Gr., SSU; **KR** - Joseph Hampton, Jr., SSU
* - Returning 2023 all-SIAC selection

Grambling women's basketball player suing the NCAA alleging discrimination

HBCUSports.com cited a report Monday that says a **Grambling State** women's basketball player is suing the NCAA alleging that it discriminates against HBCUs.

Brenda McKinney is suing the NCAA for "discrimination against HBCUs through academic reform programs," the lawsuit says. The Academic Performance Program, adopted by the NCAA in 2004, has an adverse effect on HBCUs and their athletes' ability to maintain academic eligibility, Andy Berg of AthleticBusiness.com reported.

McKinney is a 6-1 junior small forward on the Lady Tigers' team from Washington, D.C. She played at Chipola College before transferring to Grambling. She started 11 of 30 games this past season and posted averages of 4.0 points and 4.8 rebounds for the 23-10 Grambling squad.

"Black student-athletes were not provided full information about the potential consequences of the NCAA's discrimination against Black student-athletes at HBCUs," the lawsuit alleges. As a result, unbeknownst to them, they entered their contracts with substantial disadvantages and effects."

McKinney's legal representative, Elizabeth Fegan, says "We are not trying to prevent the NCAA from monitoring academic performance. We want them to be educated and successful. But the NCAA promised in its bylaws to tie those measures to the student bodies of schools and that is where the NCAA has failed."

The NCAA's response is that McKinney does not have any legal standing for punitive and class-action measures because the Tigers' women's program has never faced an APP-related post-season ban. The organization also says the APP was instituted to "ensure that all college athletes gain a valuable education on a path toward graduation."