

BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS PAGE



Jackson State Sports Photo

WIN AND ADVANCE

JACKSON STATE AND SOUTHERN VIE FOR SWAC TITLE, BOWL BERTH; VIRGINIA UNION VYING FOR D2 SEMIS

LETHAL WEAPON: 1,000-yard rusher, Jackson State senior RB Irv Mulligan, is the Tigers chief offensive weapon as they take on Southern in SWAC title game.



JACKSON STATE TIGERS (10-2)

EAST DIVISION CHAMPION SOUTHWESTERN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE



Head Coach T. C. TAYLOR

Table with columns: TEAM RECORD, 2024 RESULTS, COACH'S RECORD, and 2024 RESULTS for Jackson State.



VS.

SOUTHERN JAGUARS (8-4)

WEST DIVISION CHAMPION SOUTHWESTERN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE



Head Coach TERRENCE GRAVES

Table with columns: 2024 RESULTS, TEAM RECORD, COACH'S RECORD, and 2024 RESULTS for Southern.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2024 • JACKSON, MS. • MISSISSIPPI VETERANS STADIUM • 1 P.M. CST • ESPN2

And then there were four; Three in play this week

LUT WILLIAMS BCSP Editor

There are four black college football teams still alive in the 2024 postseason. Three will be in action Saturday.

In Jackson, Mississippi (1 p.m., EST) homestanding Jackson State, winner of the SWAC East Division, will play host to West Division winner Southern in the 26th SWAC Championship Game.

Down in Valdosta, Georgia Saturday (1 p.m., ESPN+), CIAA champion Virginia Union (10-3) plays at Valdosta State (11-0), the top Div. II team in the region and the nation, in the championship game of Super Region II.

The other team still alive is MEAC champion South Carolina State. The Bulldogs await the SWAC champion who they will face next Saturday, Dec. 14 at Mercedes Benz Stadium in Atlanta in the Cricket Celebration Bowl.

Let's take a look at this week's match-ups. SWAC Championship Game Saturday's game in Jackson is a rematch of a JSU vs. SU game from early in the season.

After losing 41-20 to Grambling State the following week, JSU has run off eight straight wins



THE LEADERS: (L. to r.) Junior DB William Davis, Head Coach Dr. Alvin Parker Jr. and senior star RB Jada Byers will lead Virginia Union into the NCAA Div. II quarterfinals Saturday at No. 1 Valdosta State.

led by 6-4, 227-pound junior Syracuse transfer QB Jacobian Morgan and 1,000-yard senior RB Irv Mulligan. Mulligan averages a league-best 105.8 rushing yards per game while Morgan has thrown for nearly 2,000 yards with 19 TDs and only six interceptions.

Southern head coach Terrence Graves has turned to 6-1, 200-pound freshman Jalen Woods at quarterback since the youngster helped pull out a 25-23 five-overtime win on Nov. 9 vs. Bethune-Cookman.

Woods has been able to lean on a three-headed senior running attack of Kendric Rhymes, Kobe Dillon and C. J. Russell that has topped 200 yards rushing in each of the last three contests.

GAMES THIS WEEK

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2024

Table listing games for Saturday, December 7, 2024, including Southern at Jackson State and Virginia Union at No. 1 Valdosta State.

Virginia Union at No. 1 Valdosta State

Head coach Dr. Alvin Parker Jr.'s Panthers of Virginia Union won on the road for the second straight week - their first two playoff wins in history - in the NCAA Div. II playoffs as they dominated Lenoir-Rhyne 44-12 Saturday.

In Valdosta State, VUU is taking on a team that faced one CIAA opponent this season - Fayetteville State. The Blazers shut out the Broncos 34-0 on Sept. 14.

VSU went unblemished in running to a Gulf South Conference championship game 28-7 win over West Florida. The Blazers are led by senior QB Sammy Edwards, the GSC offensive player of the year.

The VUU/VSU winner will play the winner of the California (PA) vs. Slippery Rock quarterfinal in the national semifinals on Dec. 14. The D2 championship game is set for Dec. 21.

SCORES

Table listing scores for Thursday, November 28, 2024 and Friday, November 29, 2024, including Alabama State vs. Tuskegee and Florida A&M vs. Alabama A&M.

PLAYOFF GAME RECAPS

Super Region II - Second Round No. 7 Virginia Union 44, No. 6 Lenoir-Rhyne 12 HICKORY, NC - CIAA champion Virginia Union ran for 345 yards and five rushing touchdowns in a dominating 44-12 win here at Lenoir-Rhyne in a NCAA Div. II Super Region II semifinal game.

The Panthers (10-3), who received the seventh and final seed in the region, will play at top-seed Valdosta State Saturday for the Super Region II title with the winner advancing to the Final Four of the D2 playoffs. VSU (11-0), playing at home Saturday, defeated SIAC champion Miles 33-17 in the other regional semifinal.

CIAA player of the year Jada Byers was again the workhorse for the Panthers. The 5-7, 185-pound senior running back carried 38 times for 185 yards, scoring on 6- and 7-yard runs in the second and fourth quarters.



Byers

VUU QB R. J. Rosales, who started in place of injured starter Mark Wright, ran for a touchdown and was an efficient 10 of 17 for 179 yards without an interception including a 78-yard scoring hook-up with wideout Reginald Vick Jr. in the second quarter.

L-RU was held to 54 yards on 20 carries and the Panther defense put pressure on L-RU QB Jalen Ferguson all day forcing him into a 19 for 41 effort for 252 yards and 2 TDs but two red zone picks. VUU DB Jalen Mayo led the defense with nine stops, five solos while D-lineman Isaac Anderson was relentless with 5 solo tackles, 2 pass break-ups and a QB hurry.

No. 1 Valdosta State 33, No. 4 Miles 17 VALDOSTA, GA - SIAC champion Miles had its 10-game winning streak halted and the opportunity to meet Virginia Union in the NCAA Div. II Super Region II final dashed as it lost here to region top seed, Gulf South champion Valdosta State Saturday, 33-17.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Jackson State, SWAC do it again

Jackson State is once again the FCS leader in average home attendance in 2024, drawing 27,213 fans per home game. The Tigers have led the FCS in home attendance 17 times since 1983 including over the last four seasons.

Figures are via the NCAA and through 11/23 games. They do not include FCS playoff games. % (far right column) is the percentage capacity of the stadium.

Table showing attendance figures for various teams, including Jackson State and Montana.

TOP PERFORMANCES

Table listing top performances in passing, including Kareem Keye and Draylen Ellis.

Table listing top performances in rushing, including Jada Byers and Curtis Allen.

Table listing top performances in receiving, including Robert McMinn and Chandler Whitfield.

Table listing top performances in tackling, including Cortez Andrews and Deco Wilson.

Table listing top performances in sacks, including Davion Westmoreland.

Table listing top performances in interceptions, including Davion Westmoreland.



BCSP NFL PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

For NFL games of November 28 - December 2, 2024

DEFENSE

#6 BRYAN COOK, S, Kansas City (3rd season, HOWARD / CINCINNATI) - In Kansas City's 19-17 win over Las Vegas, Cook started at strong safety and finished third on the team with six total tackles.

#14 COBIE DURANT, DB, Los Angeles Rams (3rd season, SOUTH CAROLINA STATE) - In the Rams' 21-14 win over New Orleans, Durant was credited with six total tackles, five solos with two tackles for loss while playing all 70 defensive snaps (100%).

OFFENSE

#71 TYTUS HOWARD, OL, Houston (6th season, ALABAMA STATE) - In Texans' 23-20 win over Jacksonville, Howard started at right offensive tackle as the Texans rushed for 108 yards on 25 carries and a TD and passed for 242 yards and one score while giving up two sacks (-24 yards).

SPECIAL TEAMS

#6 JAMIE GILLAN, P, New York Giants (6th season, ARKANSAS-PINE BLUFF) - In the Giants 27-20 Thanksgiving Day loss to Dallas, Gillan punted five times for 228 yards (45.6-yard average) with a net average of 46.2 yards. He had a long punt of 54 yards and had two punts downed inside the 20.

2024 BLACK COLLEGE FOOTBALL (Postseason Honors)

MEAC Postseason Football Awards

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN OF THE YEAR - Nick Taiste, Sr., OL, S.C. State ROOKIE OF THE YEAR - Jason Collins Jr., Fr., RB, Morgan State COACH OF THE YEAR - Chenais Berry, S.C. State (1st year)

SWAC Postseason Football Awards

FIRST TEAM OFFENSE - QB - Eric Phoenix, Gr., SCSU; RB - Jaden Sutton, Gr., DSU; J'Mari Taylor, R-Jr., NCCU; WR - Caden High, So., SCSU; Justin Smith-Brown, So., SCSU; TE - Keshawn Toney, Gr., SCSU; C - Eric Brown Jr., SCSU; OL - Darius Fox, Sr., HOW; Trevon Humphrey, R-So., NCCU; Cam Johnson, Sr., SCSU; Nick Taiste, Sr., SCSU; FIRST TEAM DEFENSE - DL - Noah Miles, Jr., HOW; Elijah Williams, Sr., MSU; Jayden Broughton, Sr., SCSU; Ashaad Hall, Jr., SCSU; LB - A. J. Richardson, So., NSU; Jaki Brevard, Sr., NCCU; Aaron Smith, Gr., SCSU; DB - Kenny Gallop, Jr., Gr., HOW; Kole Jones, Sr., NCCU; Jarod Washington, Sr., SCSU; P - Juan Velarde, Sr., NCCU; PK - Kyle Gallegos, R-Fr., SCSU; RS - Jaylen White, R-Jr., NSU; R-5 - Malique Leatherby, Sr., MSU

FIRST TEAM OFFENSE QB: Daniel Richardson, Sr., FLA&M; RB: Irv Mulligan, Sr., JSU; Donovan Eaglin, Sr., ALA&M; OL: Carson Vinson, Sr., ALA&M; Arelious Dunn, Sr., ALST; D'Andre Townes-Blue, Jr., JSU; Charles Davis, R-Jr., FLA&M; Ashton Grable, R-Jr., FLA&M; WR: JaVonnie Gibson, R-So., ARKPB; Nathan Rembert, So., MVSU; TE: Tavarius Griffin, Sr., ALC FIRST TEAM DEFENSE DL: Ckelby Givens, Jr., SOU; Tregwan Thomas, Sr., ALST; Malachi Bailey, Jr., ALC; Joshua Nobles, Jr., JSU; LB: Andrew Jones, Jr., GSU; Rico Dozier, Sr., ALST; Demarius Cunningham, Sr., ALST; DB: James Burgess, Sr., ALST; Amon Scarbrough, Sr., ALST; Ke'Vric Wiggins Jr., Sr., JSU; MJ Hibson, Fr., TXSOU ALL-SWAC FIRST TEAM SPECIALIST PK: Guillermo Garcia Rodriguez, Gr., PVA&M; P: Anthony Frederique, R-Sr., B-CU; RS: Travis Terrell Jr., Fr., JSU; LS: Avery Salerno, So., JSU SECOND TEAM OFFENSE QB: Jacobian Morgan, Jr., JSU; RB: Jacorian Sewell, R-So., ALC; Dennis Palmer, Fr., B-CU; OL: Ronald Brown, Jr., ALC; Desmond Daniels, Sr., ALST; Christon Love, Sr., ARKPB; Evan Henry, Gr., JSU; Kirk Ford Jr., Sr., JSU; WR: Keenan Hambrick, Jr., ALA&M; Jamar Gassett, Sr., FLAM; TE: Koby Gross, Gr., FLA&M SECOND TEAM DEFENSE DL: James Ash, R-Sr., FLA&M; Keelan Cox, Gr., TXSOU; Dorian Wesley, R-Jr., ALA&M; Jaden Hardy, Jr., GSU; LB: Cortez Andrews, Sr., ALA&M; Stemarion Edwards, Sr., ALC; Jaden Kelly, Jr., ARKPB; DB: Delvon Guley, Fr., ALA&M; Keane Lewis, Jr., ALST; Kendall Bohler, R-Sr., FLA&M; Edwin Summerer, R-Sr., ALC SECOND TEAM SPECIALIST PK: Gerardo Baeza, R-Jr., JSU; P: Matt Noll, Gr., JSU; RS: Darnell Deas, R-Sr., B-CU; LS: Clayton Thomas Jr., R-Jr., B-CU