

BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS PAGE



Albany State Sports photo

GETTIN' FOOTBALL READY

QUINN GRAY SR.: His Golden Rams of Albany State picked to finish first in 13-team SIAC football race.

HBCUGO SCHEDULE, SWAC, SIAC PREDICTIONS IN; THREE IN MLB DRAFT; NEW AD AT MVSU

THE STAT CORNER

WHO ARE THE BEST PERFORMERS IN BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

2025 PRESEASON ALL-SWAC FOOTBALL SELECTIONS

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Jacobian Morgan, Jackson State

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Ckelby Givens, Southern

ALL-SWAC FIRST TEAM OFFENSE

Quarterback: Jacobian Morgan, Jackson State
Running Back: Jacobian Sewell, Alcorn State
Running Back: Thad Franklin Jr., Florida A&M
Offensive Lineman: D'Andre Townes-Blue, Jackson State
Offensive Lineman: Charles Davis, Florida A&M
Offensive Lineman: Ashton Grable, Florida A&M
Offensive Lineman: Ronald Brown, Alcorn State
Offensive Lineman: Desmond Daniels, Alabama State
Wide Receiver: Nate Rembert, Jackson State
Wide Receiver: Joanes Fortilen, Jackson State
Tight End: Marvin Landy, Jackson State

ALL-SWAC FIRST TEAM DEFENSE

Defensive Lineman: Ckelby Givens, Southern
Defensive Lineman: Jeremiah Williams, Jackson State
Defensive Lineman: Bryce Cage, Grambling State
Defensive Lineman: Davion Westmoreland, Florida A&M
Linebacker: Stemarion Edwards, Alcorn State
Linebacker: Vincent Paige Jr., Southern
Linebacker: Nay/Ron Jenkins, Florida A&M
Defensive Back: Keane Lewis, Alabama State
Defensive Back: Antwone Watts, Bethune-Cookman
Defensive Back: TJ Huggins, Florida A&M
Defensive Back: Horacio Johnson, Southern

ALL-SWAC FIRST TEAM SPECIALISTS

Place Kicker: Gerardo Baeza, Jackson State
Punter: Johnny Schifano, Grambling State
Return Specialist: Travis Terrell Jr., Jackson State

ALL-SWAC SECOND TEAM OFFENSE

Quarterback: Cam Ransom, Bethune-Cookman
Running Back: Lamagea McDowell, Prairie View A&M
Running Back: BJ Curry, Arkansas-Pine Bluff
Offensive Lineman: Quaveon Davis, Jackson State
Offensive Lineman: Cameron Smith, Alabama State
Offensive Lineman: Tahj Martin, Grambling State
Offensive Lineman: Dezmond Penn, Alabama State
Offensive Lineman: Tyrell Lawrence, Alabama A&M
Wide Receiver: Maleek Huggins, Bethune-Cookman
Wide Receiver: Trenton Leary, Texas Southern
Tight End: Dupree Fuller, Southern

ALL-SWAC SECOND TEAM DEFENSE

Defensive Lineman: Damarcus Thompson, Texas Southern
Defensive Lineman: Adrian Hall, Bethune-Cookman
Defensive Lineman: James Gardner Jr., Florida A&M
Defensive Lineman: Nick Glenn, Alabama A&M
Linebacker: Reid Pulliam, Jackson State
Linebacker: Ashton Taylor, Jackson State
Linebacker: Malik Stinnett, Bethune-Cookman
Defensive Back: Shamar Hawkins, Jackson State
Defensive Back: Blake Davis, Grambling State
Defensive Back: Herman Brister III, Southern
Defensive Back: Jameel Sanders, Florida A&M

ALL-SWAC SECOND TEAM SPECIALISTS

Place Kicker: Trey Glymph, Arkansas-Pine Bluff
Punter: Jeremy Ramirez, Texas Southern

2025 PRESEASON ALL-SIAC FOOTBALL SELECTIONS

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Isaiah Knowles, R-Jr., QB, Albany State

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Ty'Metrius Patterson, Gr., LB, Benedict

FIRST TEAM OFFENSE

OL - Denzell Moore*, Sr., Clark Atlanta; Elliott Howell*, Sr., Tuskegee; Noah Stovall, Jr., Albany State; Desmon Self, Jr., Edward Waters; Lebron Merriweather, Jr., Tuskegee **TE** - Gentry Sparks*, R-Sr., Albany State **WR** - Jamill Williams*, R-So., Albany State; Javion Jackson, R-Sr., Albany State **RB** - Tiant Wyche*, So., Albany State; Javonta Leatherwood, R-Sr., Miles **QB** - Isaiah Knowles*, R-Jr., Albany State

FIRST TEAM DEFENSE

DL - Israel Nwokocha*, Sr., Benedict; Xavier Esquillen*, Jr., Savannah State; Mike White*, Gr., Central State; Kurtis Wayne*, Jr., Clark Atlanta **LB** - Ty'Metrius Patterson*, Gr., Benedict; Gary Davis Jr.*, Sr., Savannah State; Isaiah Stephens*, Gr., Benedict **DB** - Lawrence McConnell*, Jr., Kentucky State; Mikael King Jr.*, Sr., Tuskegee; Cam Williams*, R-Jr., Benedict; Carlos Dunovant Jr., Sr., Morehouse **PK** - Lorcan Ryans*, Jr., Tuskegee **P** - Seve Spruill II, Jr. Morehouse **PR** - Ronnie West, Sr., Clark Atlanta **KR** - Jaxon Williams*, So., Benedict

SECOND TEAM OFFENSE

OL - Leon Wesley, So., Albany State; O'Shea Stroman, So., Albany State; Keshawn Palmore, Jr., Savannah State; Khalifa Sene, Sr., Savannah State; Jason Miller, Jr., Benedict **TE** - Xavier Herndon, R-Jr., Albany State **WR** - Nanders Lawrence, Jr., Allen; Makai Lovett, Sr., Edward Waters **RB** - Johntrarious Thomas, Jr., Edward Waters; Desmond Leverette, Jr., Tuskegee **QB** - Jamir Dismukes, Sr., Allen

SECOND TEAM DEFENSE

Senior Cleveland, Ohio **DL** - Tyrese Williams, So., Edward Waters; Osirus Rhodes, R-Sr., Allen; Masiah Wells, Sr., Tuskegee; Abraham Clinkscales, R-Jr., Albany State **LB** - Sean Johnson, Jr., Morehouse; Kaquan Kimber, So., Tuskegee; Carson Pritchett, So., Miles **DB** - Aydin Henningham, Sr., Albany State; Darnell Stephens, R-Jr., Fort Valley State; Tyler Davis, Sr., Morehouse; Tyreshon Freeman, R-So., Allen **PK** - Kyle Wright, R-Jr., Albany State **P** - Trevor Bywater, R-Jr., Allen **PR** - Javion Jackson, R-Sr., Albany State **KR** - Brady Tillman, So., Edward Waters

- * RETURNING 2024 ALL-SIAC SELECTION

BCSP Football Notes

With football media events in the four black college conferences being held over the next two weeks – the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA), the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC) and Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC) – this week and the Mid Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) next week – the preseason results are pouring in.

Defending champion Jackson State leads the SWAC preseason parade

The Southwestern Athletic Conference announced its 2025 preseason all-SWAC football selections on Monday morning and its preseason Predicted Order of Finish on Wednesday.

In both cases, 2024 overall champion Jackson State was at the top of the lists voted on by the league's head coaches and sports information directors.

The Tigers, who went 8-0 in SWAC play last season, 12-2 overall en route to winning the league title over Southern and the Celebration Bowl title over MEAC champion South Carolina State, are picked to again finish on top of the SWAC's East Division.

JSU, under third-year head coach T. C. Taylor, garnered 126 votes to lead all East Division teams followed by Florida A&M (99), Alabama State (91), Alabama A&M (62), Bethune-Cookman (45) and Mississippi Valley State (24).

2024 West Division champion Southern (120), led by second year head coach Terrence Graves, was tabbed to repeat in first place in the West followed by Alcorn State (90), Prairie View A&M (72), Texas Southern (60), Grambling State (55), and Arkansas-Pine Bluff (28).

In the voting, Southern tallied the most first place votes with 17 overall followed by Jackson State (16) and Florida A&M (3).

JSU quarterback Jacobian Morgan and Southern defensive lineman Ckelby Givens were named preseason offensive and defensive players of the year and lead the preseason all-SWAC selections (see STAT CORNER).

Morgan led his team to the 2024 SWAC and Celebration Bowl titles and eventual black college national championship while being named Offensive MVP of the Celebration Bowl last season. He finished the regular season with 2,051 passing yards completing 150 of 234 passing attempts in 13 games and a 10-1 record as a starter. The Tigers only loss with Morgan at the controls came in the Tigers' season opener vs. Louisiana-Monroe.

His JSU teammates, wide receivers Joanes Fortilen and Mississippi Valley State transfer Nate Rembert and tight end Marvin Landy make up the first team receiving corps. JSU had just one first teamer on defense, redshirt senior tackle Jeremiah Williams. Placekicker Gerardo Baeza and dynamic kick returner Travis Terrell Jr. were also selected as first team specialists.

Givens led the nation and the SWAC in tackles for loss (26.5) and was a key contributor for the Jaguars team who claimed the 2024 SWAC West Division title with a 7-1 conference record. He ranked eighth in the nation in sacks while ranking second in the league in that category.

The new head coaches in the SWAC this season are Sam Shade at Alabama A&M, Terrell Buckley at Mississippi Valley State and Tremaine Jackson at Prairie View A&M.

The 2025 SWAC Football Media Guide is available online at: https://swac.org/documents/2025/7/14/2025_SWAC_FB_Media_Guide.pdf

SWAC EAST

Jackson State - 126 points (16)
Florida A&M - 99 points (3)
Alabama State - 91 points (2)
Alabama A&M - 62 points
Bethune-Cookman - 45 points (1)
Mississippi Valley State - 24 points

SWAC WEST

Southern - 120 points (17)
Alcorn State - 90 points (2)
Prairie View A&M - 72 points (1)
Texas Southern - 60 points
Grambling State - 55 points
Arkansas-Pine Bluff - 28 points (1)
*First place votes listed in parenthesis ()

BCSP Notes



Poppell



Cruz



Douglas

Three players go in 2025 Major League Baseball Draft

Major League Baseball completed 20 rounds of its 2025 Draft Tuesday with a total of 615 players selected. Three were from the black college ranks, all from the Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC).

The first to go off the draft boards was Florida A&M catcher Broedy Poppell, who the San Francisco Giants took in the 13th round. Poppell had a .325 batting average for the Rattlers this season, leading FAMU with 69 hits, 58 RBI, and 12 home runs.

Alabama State then had two players taken in the 20th round, infielder Juan Cruz and Hornets catcher Kameron Douglas. Cruz was taken by the Washington Nationals and Douglas by the Detroit Tigers.

Cruz played in 60 games with 60 starts, hitting .420 with 23 doubles, two triples, 14 home runs, and 73 RBI (3rd in SWAC). He slugged .690 with a .480 on-base percentage.

Douglas earned First-Team All-SWAC honors. He played in 55 games and hit .338 with 16 doubles, one triple, 14 home runs, and 56 RBI.

HBCU GO unveils 2025 line-up of 26 black college football games

HBCU GO, in partnership with affiliate network The Grio, has unveiled a sweeping 2025 football broadcast schedule of 26 marquee games over the 13-week schedule.

Games featuring teams from all four black college conferences are on the schedule including an exciting array of traditional matchups, homecomings and classic games.

All games will be available to stream

SIAC predictions peg Albany State as team to beat, Golden Rams offense dominates first team

The Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC) unveiled its 2025 Preseason Predicted Order of Finish and its preseason all-conference team Monday in advance of its Media Day in Macon, Georgia on Tuesday.

Predicted to finish at the top of the 13-team SIAC race is Albany State led by third-year head coach Quinn Gray Sr.

The Golden Rams dominated with six of the 11 picks on the offensive first team including five of six skill position selections (see STAT CORNER).

The team is led by preseason offensive player of the year, quarterback Isaiah Knowles, and includes wide receivers Jamill Williams and Javion Jackson, tight end Gentry Sparks and running back Tiant Wyche. Senior offensive lineman Noah Stovall is the sixth first teamer.

By contrast, the Rams did not have a single first-teamer on defense. They had another three second teamers on offense and four on defense including special teams.

Albany State, who finished 6-4 overall in 2024, 6-2 in SIAC play, was picked ahead of Clark Atlanta, who had a resurgence under new head coach Teddy Keaton, finishing 7-3-1 overall and 6-2 in league play. CAU lost to Miles in the 2024 SIAC title game.

Tuskegee, who was 5-6 overall a year ago and 5-3 in league play is the third choice.

Miles, who ran the table going 8-0 in SIAC play under then head coach Sam Shade, lost the former NFL vet and head coach to Alabama A&M. Chris Goode takes over as the new head man for the Golden Bears. Miles is picked to finish fourth.

The remaining predicted order is Fort Valley State, Savannah State, Benedict, Edward Waters, Allen, Kentucky State, Morehouse, Lane and Central State.

Preseason honors are as voted by the conference's head coaches and sports information directors.

Knowles, a redshirt junior out of Tampa, Florida, had a productive 2024 season. He completed a league-best 65.7 percent of his passes (190 of 269) for 2,555 yards, the league lead with 32 touchdown passes with just eight interceptions. He passed for an average of 255.5 yards per game and was No. 2 in passing efficiency at 171.0

Williams had 43 catches for 648 yards and nine TDs while Jackson had 44 receptions for 597 yards and six scores. Wyche ran for 553 yards and three TDs while averaging 5.5 yards per carry.

Ty'Metrius Patterson, the hard-hitting graduate linebacker from Benedict, was selected as the Preseason Defensive Player of the Year. Patterson racked up 41 solos and 53 total tackles with 12 tackles for loss in nine games.

Benedict led the defensive first team selections with three others – senior lineman Israel Nwokocha, grad linebacker Isaiah Stephens and redshirt junior defensive back Cam Williams. Sophomore Jaxon Williams of Benedict was voted the first team kick returner.

Of the 26 first-teamers selected, nearly 70% are returning All-SIAC selections.

In addition to Goode at Miles, the new head coaches in the SIAC this season include Tony Carter at Central State, Marlon Watson at Fort Valley State and Stanley Conner at Lane

PREDICTED ORDER OF FINISH

- Albany State
- Clark Atlanta
- Tuskegee
- Miles
- Fort Valley State
- Savannah State
- Benedict
- Edward Waters
- Allen
- Kentucky State
- Morehouse
- Lane
- Central State



Morgan



Knowles

for free via HBCU GO's digital platform, the HBCU GO mobile app, and The Grio's cable and streaming services, ensuring that alumni, students, and fans nationwide can experience every moment of the action.

Here's the line-up:

SAT., AUG. 30	Hampton at Jackson State (HBCU GO)	3:00 PM
	Fayetteville State at Benedict (TheGrio)	5:00 PM
SAT., SEPT. 6	Alcorn State at Alabama A&M (HBCU GO)	7:00 PM
	Central State at Tuskegee (TheGrio)	7:00 PM
SEPT. 13	Morehouse vs. Howard (HBCU GO)	1:00 PM
	HBCU NYC Classic	
	Miles at Alabama State (The Grio)	5:00 PM
SAT., SEPT. 20	Edward Waters at Bethune-Cookman (HBCU GO)	3:00 PM
	Hampton at Howard (TheGrio)	4:00 PM
	TRUTH AND SERVICE CLASSIC	
SAT., SEPT. 27	Alabama State at Florida A&M (HBCU GO)	3:00 PM
	Alcorn State at Arkansas-Pine Bluff (TheGrio)	7:00 PM
	SOUTHERN HERITAGE CLASSIC	
SAT., OCT. 4	Central State at Fort Valley State (HC) (TheGrio)	1:00 PM
	Alabama A&M at Jackson State (HBCU GO)	5:00 PM
	GULF COAST CHALLENGE	
SAT., OCT. 11	Virginia State at Bowie State (TheGrio)	1:00 PM
	NC Central at Florida A&M (HBCU GO)	3:00 PM
SAT., OCT. 18	Tuskegee at Albany State (HC) (TheGrio)	1:00 PM
	Prairie View A&M at Southern (HC) (HBCU GO)	5:00 PM
OCT. 25	Edward Waters at Clark Atlanta (HC) (TheGrio)	1:00 PM
	Jackson State at Grambling State (HBCU GO)	6:00 PM
	LAS VEGAS CLASSIC	
NOV. 1	J. C. Smith at Fayetteville State (TheGrio)	1:00 PM
	Alcorn State at Texas Southern (HBCU GO)	3:00 PM
NOV. 8	Virginia State at Virginia Union (TheGrio)	1:00 PM
	Florida A&M at Arkansas Pine Bluff (HBCU GO)	3:00 PM
NOV. 15	Bethune-Cookman at Jackson State (TheGrio)	1:00 PM
	CIAA CHAMPIONSHIP (HBCU GO)	3:00 PM
NOV. 22	Arkansas-Pine Bluff at Alabama State (TheGrio)	1:00 PM
	Alabama A&M at Texas Southern (HBCU GO)	3:00 PM

Mississippi Valley State hires new athletics director

ITTA BENA, Miss.—Mississippi Valley State has named Dr. Alecia Shields-Gadson as its new Director of Athletics, effective Tuesday,

July 15.

With more than 25 years of experience in collegiate athletics leadership, Shields-Gadson brings a record of strategic innovation, competitive success, and student-athlete advocacy to the Delta Devils family.

Shields-Gadson most recently served as Deputy Athletic Director at Alcorn State where she was responsible for strategic planning, executive consultation, and departmental oversight. Prior to her time at Alcorn, she served as Director of Athletics at Delaware State, where she led 19 Division I varsity programs.

Under her leadership at Delaware State, the university launched the nation's first Division I women's varsity wrestling program and underwent significant athletic facilities transformation. Her efforts also included successful Title IX equity planning, increased student-athlete academic support, and major conference alignments.

"We are excited to welcome Dr. Alecia Shields-Gadson to Mississippi Valley State University," said MVSU President Dr. Jerryl Briggs, Sr.

Shields-Gadson has held multiple leadership roles at institutions across the country, including Coppin State and Alcorn State, where she began her career as head track and field coach and Senior Woman Administrator.

In accepting the role, Shields-Gadson expressed her gratitude and her forward-looking vision for the program.

"My vision for MVSU Athletics is one of growth, excellence, and unwavering commitment to our most prized possessions—our student-athletes. The goals are focused on competitive success, sustainability, and expanding our footprint, while creating a supportive and enriching environment where student-athletes can thrive academically, athletically, and personally."

Shields-Gadson holds a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from Delaware State, a Master of Science in Physical Education from Alcorn State, and a Bachelor of Arts in Broadcast Journalism from Southern University and A&M College.