

# BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS PAGE



Morehouse Sports Photo

## TOURNEY MARCH CONTINUES

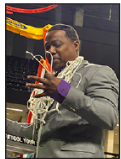
MILES WOMEN, MOREHOUSE MEN TAKE SIAC HOOPS CROWNS; SEVEN TEAMS IN DIV. II PLAYOFFS; SWAC, MEAC TOURNEYS TIP

**SUPER-SUB:** Morehouse soph Josiah Lawson scores double-digits in each of three wins to take SIAC Tourney MVP award.

### 2026 TOURNAMENT FINALS RECAPS

#### SIAC WOMEN Miles 59, Lane 52

MORROW, GA – West Division top seed Miles and head coach



Asmond

**Pete Asmond** won their third straight women's SIAC Basketball Tournament title, pulling away from a 24-24 halftime tie to down division second-seed Lane 59-52 in the league's championship game Saturday afternoon.

Freshman all-SIAC first team point guard **Samarian Franklin**, whose 24 points and 8 assists spurred the Lady Golden Bears (24-5) to a scintillating 75-72 overtime win vs. **Clark Atlanta** in Friday's semifinals, again came up big in the finale. Though she tallied only a team-high 12 points, 10 came in a decisive third quarter where her scoring and playmaking helped her squad to a 44-39 lead. Lane pulled within 54-50 on a layup by **Lauren Lain** with 1:45 to play but that was as close as the Lady Dragons (22-6) got.



Franklin

Franklin, a 5-3 Birmingham, Ala. native, was named the tournament's most valuable player. **Makayla Rieves** had 11 points and a game-high 15 rebounds for Miles. **Shannon Niles** added 10 points. Lane got 13 points from Lain and 11 each from **Kamil Washum** and **Dyani Bernstine**.

"She's the conductor," Asmond said of Franklin. "We rely on her to set the tempo and direct us home, and she did that today."

In four years at the helm, Asmond has led Miles to the tournament championship game each season, winning the last three titles. Before taking over the ladies program at Miles in 2022, he served as an assistant to current Miles' men's head coach **Fred Watson**. He played for Watson at **Benedict** and after his playing career was also on Watson's staff at **Benedict**.

By virtue of the title, Miles earned the SIAC's automatic bid to the 64-team NCAA Div. II national playoffs for the third straight season. The Lady Golden Bears are seeded fourth and will face 5th-seed Nova Southeastern in the opening round of the South Region playoffs Friday in Indiana (Pa.). **Edward Waters** (23-6), the SIAC East Division regular season champ, who was ousted by **Albany State** from the SIAC Tournament in Wednesday's quarterfinals, received an at-large bid, is seeded eighth and will face top-seed and host Indiana (Pa.) on Friday.

#### SIAC MEN

**Morehouse 66, Tuskegee 56**

MORROW, GA – East Division top seed **Morehouse** got a 31-9 advantage in bench points as it rode its depth to a 66-56 win over West top seed **Tuskegee** in the men's championship game of the **SIAC Basketball** Tournament here Saturday evening.

Six-seven sophomore super-sub **Josiah Lawson** led the Maroon Tigers (22-9) with 17 points. He was tops among four double-figure scorers including 10 from reserve guard **Sincere Key** and 11 and 10 from starters **Sincere Moore** and **JerMontae Hill** respectively.

"When you've got Josiah Lawson coming off the bench that will help you win a lot of bench points," said victorious Morehouse head coach **Larry Dixon**.

Lawson, who had 18 off the bench in a semifinal win over Miles and 17 in a reserve role in a quarterfinal win over **Edward Waters**, was named the tournament's most valuable player. Teammates **Brandon Peters** and **Hill** joined Lawson on the all-tournament team.

The win for Morehouse and Dixon comes in his first year since taking over the program in May 2025. Down 8-0 in the game's first three minutes, Dixon turned to his reserves who forged a 12-12 tie and then were key in a 14-2 run that put Morehouse up 26-14 leading to a 33-24 halftime lead.

"I think the biggest thing is we've been preaching 'team' all year," said Dixon. "We didn't get off to a great start with our first five but our second five came in and gave us a big, big lift. But that's our whole team philosophy and our mantra – a whole team effort. And that was on display tonight."

Tuskegee (22-8) battled gamely but struggled from the field (19 of 53, 35.8) and even more from beyond the arc (5 of 21, 23.8%). Golden Tigers' Player of the Year **Kusamae Draper** had 13 points to lead Tuskegee. Point guard and outside threat **R. J. Walker** made just 2 of 11 shots, 2 of 8 3s, to finish with 11 points. **Anthony Wright** also had 11 points and a game-high 12 rebounds.

Morehouse entered the tournament as the tenth ranked team in the NCAA Div. II South Regional Rankings. The tournament championship earns the Maroon Tigers the SIAC's automatic berth into the 64-team NCAA national tourney. They will face top seed and host Nova Southeastern Saturday at 5 p.m. in the first round of the Div. II South Regional.

#### OVG MEN

**Tennessee State 93, Morehead State 67**

EVANSVILLE, IND – Ohio Valley Conference regular season champion **Tennessee State** ran out a dominating 55-34 en route to a dominating win over Morehead State in the championship game of the league's tournament.

TSU (23-9) had five double-digit scorers getting 18 from **Antoine Lorick III**, 17 from **Travis Harper II**, 16 points and 11 rebounds from **Dante Harris**, 16 off the bench from **Carlous Williams** and 14 points and 6 assists from **Aaron Nkrumah**. In jumping to the big lead, the Tigers shot a blistering 60% (21 of 35) from the field in the first half including draining 12 of 15 (80%) 3-pointers. They shot 16 of 26 (61.5%) from long range for the game.

The title and subsequent NCAA Tournament berth ends a 32-year drought for TSU and comes in the first year under head coach **Nolan Smith**. Harris was named tournament MVP while Nkrumah and Harper II joined him on the all-tournament team.

## WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT

### OPENING ROUND

Saturday, Feb. 28  
5E Albany State 58, 4W Kentucky State 56  
3E Benedict 63, 6W Central State 58  
4E Allen 95, 5W Spring Hill 41  
3W Tuskegee 57, 6E Fort Valley State 52

### QUARTERFINALS

Wednesday, March 4  
5E Albany State 80, 1E Edward Waters 49  
1W Miles 68, 4E Allen 63  
Thursday, March 5  
2E Clark Atlanta 62, 3W Tuskegee 52  
2W Lane 56, 3E Benedict 54

### SEMIFINALS

Friday, March 6  
1W Miles 75, 2E Clark Atlanta 72, OT  
5E Albany State vs. 2W Lane - 2 p.m.

### FINAL

Saturday, March 7  
1W Miles 59, 2W Lane 52

### TOURNAMENT MVP

**Samarian Franklin**, Fr., G, Miles

### ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM

Na'Haviya Paxson, Albany State  
Dyani Bernstine, Lane  
Lauren Lain, Lane  
Samarian Franklin, Miles  
Atreonia Garner, Clark Atlanta  
Nayla Wesley, Miles  
Makayla Rieves, Miles

## MEN'S TOURNAMENT

### OPENING ROUND

Saturday, Feb. 28  
3W LeMoyné-Owen 76, 6E Albany State 74  
4E Benedict 59, 5W Lane 52  
5E Edward Waters 71, 4W Central State 63  
3E Savannah State 81, 6W Kentucky State 75

### QUARTERFINALS

Wednesday, March 4  
1W Tuskegee 70, 4E Benedict 53  
1E Morehouse 72, 5E Edward Waters 62  
Thursday, March 4  
2E Clark Atlanta 59, 3W LeMoyné-Owen 54  
2W Miles 48, 3E Savannah State 47

### SEMIFINALS

Friday, March 5  
1W Tuskegee 70, 2E Clark Atlanta 53  
1E Morehouse 71, 2W Miles 56

### FINAL

Saturday, March 7  
1E Morehouse 66, 1W Tuskegee 56

### TOURNAMENT MVP

**Josiah Lawson**, So., F, Morehouse

### ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM

Kusamae Draper, Tuskegee  
R. J. Walker, Tuskegee  
Josiah Lawson, Morehouse  
Brandon Peters, Morehouse  
JerMontae Hill, Morehouse

# SWAC, MEAC Tourneys underway

### LUT WILLIAMS BCSP Editor

Basketball tournaments got underway this week at the Gateway Center Arena in College Park, Ga. (**SWAC** - Monday, March 9 - Saturday, March 14 ) and the Scope Arena in Norfolk, Va. (**MEAC** - Wednesday, March 11 - Saturday, March 14) as these leagues determine which men's and women's teams will advance to the NCAA Div. I Big Dances.

The **Alabama A&M** women, under head coach **Dawn Thornton**, and the **Bethune-Cookman** men, led by head coach **Reggie Theus**, captured their first-ever SWAC regular season titles and top seeds in their tournaments.

The **Howard** women, with head coach **Ty Grace** at the helm, and Howard men, led by head coach **Kenneth Blakeney**, swept regular season MEAC titles and sit atop their brackets.

SWAC tournament play has alternating women's and men's early games at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. and late games at 5:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. thru Friday's semifinals.

The 12-team SWAC tourney's opening rounds Monday and Tuesday had the lowest seeded women's and men's teams facing each other (see results on right). At press time Tuesday, the first SWAC women's quarterfinals was set with top seed Alabama A&M facing No. 8 **Florida A&M** Wednesday at 11 a.m. No. 2 seed **Alcorn State** was to meet the winner of No. 7 **Arkansas-Pine Bluff** and No. 9 **Miss. Valley State** in Wednesday's 5:30 p.m. quarterfinal. The teams seeded third and fourth then face opponents in quarterfinal match ups on Thursday. The semifinals are Friday.

The women's championship game is Saturday at 1 p.m. with the men's title game at 7:30 p.m. All women's and men's SWAC Tournament games thru the semifinals will be streamed on ESPN+ with the championship game on ESPN.

The 8-team women's MEAC Tournament has games going off at 12 noon and 2 p.m. thru Wednesday and Thursday's quarterfinals and Friday's semifinals. The men's games will follow at 6 and 8 p.m.

The men's championship game will be held first at 1 p.m. Saturday followed by the women's title game at 4 p.m.

Because the **Coppin State** men are ineligible for the tournament this year, only seven teams are vying for the men's title. That means top seed Howard avoids a quarterfinal match up and gets a bye into Friday's 6 p.m. semifinal game. No. 2 seed **Morgan State** will play the only men's



### SWAC TOURNAMENTS - GATEWAY CENTER ARENA - COLLEGE PARK, GA

WOMEN FINAL - SEEDING	CONF	ALL	W	L	W	L
1) ^ Alabama A&M	17	1	21	9		
2) Alcorn State	14	4	17	12		
3) Alabama State	12	6	15	14		
4) Jackson State	10	8	12	18		
5) Southern	12	6	16	13		
6) Grambling State	10	8	13	18		
7) Arkansas-Pine Bluff	10	8	13	15		
8) Florida A&M	7	11	8	21		
9) Miss. Valley State	6	12	7	22		
10) Texas Southern	6	12	10	20		
11) Bethune-Cookman	4	14	6	25		
12) Prairie View A&M	0	18	2	27		

^ Regular season champ

WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE	WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE
Mon., March 9 - 11 am #11 Bethune-Cookman 66, #10 Texas Southern 62	Mon., March 9 - 2 pm #11 Alcorn State 77, #10 Alabama State 65
Mon., March 9 - 5:30 pm #9 Miss. Valley State 63, #12 Prairie View A&M 49	Mon., March 9 - 8:30 pm #9 Grambling State 77, #12 Miss. Valley State 52
Tues., March 10 - 11 am #8 Florida A&M 55, #11 Bethune-Cookman 52	Tues., March 10 - 2 pm #8 Prairie View A&M vs. #11 Alcorn State
Tues., March 10 - 5:30 pm #7 Ark.-Pine Bluff vs. #9 Miss. Valley State	Tues., March 10 - 8:30 pm #7 Jackson State vs. #9 Grambling State
Wed., March 11 - 11 am #1 Alabama A&M vs. #8 Florida A&M	Wed., March 11 - 2 pm #1 Bethune-Cookman vs. PVI/ALC winner
Wed., March 11 - 5:30 pm #2 Alcorn State vs. UAPB/MVU winner	Wed., March 11 - 8:30 pm #2 Florida A&M vs. JSU/GSU winner
Thurs., March 12 - 11 am #4 Jackson State vs. #5 Southern	Thurs., March 12 - 2 pm #4 Texas Southern vs. #5 Alabama A&M
Thurs., March 12 - 5:30 pm #3 Alabama State vs. #6 Grambling State	Thurs., March 12 - 8:30 pm #3 Southern vs. #6 Arkansas-Pine Bluff
Fri., March 13 - 11 am ALA&M/FAMU winner vs. JSU/SU winner	Fri., March 13 - 2 pm B-CU/PVI/ALC winner vs. TSU/ALAM winner
Fri., March 13 - 5:30 pm ALCUAPB/MVU winner vs. ALST/GSU winner	Fri., March 13 - 8:30 pm TSU/ALAM winner vs. SU/UAPB winner
Sat., March 14 - 1 pm Championship Game	Sat., March 14 - 7:30 pm Championship Game

### MEAC TOURNAMENTS - SCOPE ARENA - NORFOLK, VA

WOMEN FINAL SEEDING	CONF	ALL	W	L	W	L
1) ^Howard	13	1	23	7		
2) Maryland Eastern-Shore	11	3	17	13		
3) Norfolk State	11	3	16	13		
4) Coppin State	6	8	9	22		
5) North Carolina Central	5	9	9	19		
6) Morgan State	4	10	5	25		
7) Delaware State	4	10	7	22		
8) South Carolina State	2	12	5	24		

^ Regular season champ

WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE	WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE
Wed., March 11 - 12n #1 Howard vs. #8 S. Carolina State	Wed., March 11 - 6 pm #2 Morgan State vs. #7 Delaware State
Wed., March 11 - 2 pm #2 Maryland-E. Shore vs. #7 Delaware State	Thurs., March 12 - 6 pm #4 Norfolk State vs. #5 S. Carolina State
Thurs., March 12 - 12n #4 Coppin State vs. #5 N. Carolina Central	Thurs., March 12 - 8 pm #3 NC Central vs. #6 Maryland-E. Shore
Thurs., March 12 - 2 pm #3 Norfolk State vs. #6 Morgan State	Fri., March 13 - 6 pm #1 Howard vs. NSU/SCSU winner
Fri., March 14 - 12n HU/SCSU winner vs. CSU/NCCU winner	Fri., March 13 - 8 pm MSU/DSU winner vs. NCCU/UMDES winner
Fri., March 14 - 2 pm MDES/DSU winner vs. NSU/MSU winner	Sat., March 14 - 1 pm Championship
Sat., March 14 - 4 pm Championship	

game Wednesday in a quarterfinal contest vs. No. 7 **Delaware State**. Teams seeded fourth (**Norfolk State** - 6 p.m.) and third (**NC Central** - 8 p.m.) have quarterfinal games Thursday. ESPN+ is streaming all the games thru Friday's semifinals with ESPN News carrying the women's final and ESPN2 carrying the men's championship contest on Saturday.

# BCSP Notes

## Seven black college teams make NCAA Div. II Basketball Championship fields

Seven black college teams, four women's squads and three men's squads, made 64-team NCAA Div. II Basketball Championship fields when the selections were unveiled Sunday night.

The women of **Winston-Salem State**, champions of the CIAA Tournament, and the women of **Miles**, SIAC Tournament champions, received automatic bids by virtue of their tournament titles to the Atlantic Region and South Region respectively. The same automatic bids in the same regions went to CIAA men's tourney champ **Fayetteville State** and SIAC men's tournament champion **Morehouse**.

At-large bids went to the women of Fayetteville State, CIAA tournament runners-up in the Atlantic Region, and to the women of Edward Waters, the SIAC East Division champs who bowed out in the quarterfinal round of the SIAC tourney in the South Region. The men of **Virginia Union**, who had the best record in the CIAA but lost in the quarterfinals of that tournament, also received an at-large berth in the men's Atlantic Region.

WSSU (26-3), led by head coach **Tierra Terry**, is seeded third in the women's Atlantic Region and will face No. 6 **Glenville State** (24-6), the tournament runners-up from the Mountain East Conference (MEC) on Friday, March 13 at host and top seed Indiana (Pa.) at 12 noon. Fayetteville State (21-5), led by head coach **Tyrece Brown**, is seeded fifth and will face 4th-seed Seton Hill (21-8) on Friday at 7:30 p.m. Seton Hill lost to Gannon in the semifinals of the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (PSAC) Tournament. The PSAC got three other women's teams in the eight-team women's Atlantic Region field - top seed Indiana (Pa.) (26-3), No. 2 Gannon (28-4) and No. 7 Edinboro (19-13).

In the women's South Region, Edward Waters (23-6) with head coach **Edward Jackson Jr.**, is seeded eighth and will face top seed and host Alabama Huntsville (28-5), the Gulf South Conference regular season champ

MEN	WOMEN
<b>Player OY</b> - Daeshun Ruffin, JSU	<b>Player OY</b> - Kalia Walker, ALA&M
<b>Defensive POY</b> - Jerquarius Stanback, ALST	<b>Defensive POY</b> - Nakia Cheatham, ALC
<b>Newcomer OY</b> - Michael James, MVSU	<b>Newcomer OY</b> - Indiya Bowen, UAPB
<b>Freshman OY</b> - Antonio Munoz, GSU	<b>Freshman OY</b> - Pierre-Noelle Tchouhououa, JSU
<b>Coach OY</b> - Reggie Theus, B-CU	<b>Coach OY</b> - Dawn Thornton, ALA&M

MEN	WOMEN
<b>Player OY</b> - Bryce Harris, HOW	<b>Player OY</b> - Zennia Thomas, HOW
<b>Defensive POY</b> - Cedrick Taylor III, HOW	<b>Defensive POY</b> - Jasha Clinton, NSU
<b>Newcomer OY</b> - Cedric Taylor III, HOW	<b>Newcomer OY</b> - Khila Morris, CSU
<b>Sixth Player OY</b> - Elijah Johnson, NSU	<b>Rookie OY</b> - Ariella Hanigan, HOW
<b>Rookie OY</b> - Noah Treadwell, SCSU	<b>Third Player OY</b> - Brianna Barnes, UMES
<b>Coach OY</b> - Kevin Broadus, MSU	<b>Coach OY</b> - Ty Grace, HOW