



Virginia Union Athletics Photo

## HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL

**A. J. ENGLISH RETURNS TO CIAA, VA. UNION; SPRING SPORTS IN FULL SWING; DELSTATE WOMEN'S COACH**

**A LEGEND RETURNS:** Former standout sharpshooter A. J. English returns to lead Virginia Union men's basketball.

## UNDER THE BANNER

WHAT'S GOING ON IN AND AROUND BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

### STANDOUT A. J. ENGLISH RETURNS TO VUU AS NEW BASKETBALL COACH:

Legendary former Virginia Union basketball coach **Dave Robbins** once told BCSP Editor **Lut Williams** that he never recruited an NCAA Div. II player during his remarkable 30 years leading the Panthers to a sparkling 713-194 (.786) record including NCAA Div. II national titles in 1980, 1992 and 2005.

One of those remarkable players included among NBA all-stars **Charles Oakley** and **Ben Wallace** and NBA veterans **Terry Davis** and **Jamie Waller** – **A. J. English** – was named as VUU's new head basketball coach last week. He is the 11th coach in VUU history.

English was introduced Friday by VUU Vice President of Intercollegiate Athletics **Joe Taylor**. He will replace **Jay Butler**, also one of Robbins' pupils, who stepped down last week after 11 seasons to become head coach at **Winston-Salem State**. Terry Davis is to be one of his top assistants.

"Coach (Robbins) reached out to me and it was a no-brainer," English said at Friday's introductory press conference. "I told Coach, if I coach, the only place I want to coach is at Virginia Union University."

"So, this moment isn't about A. J. English. This moment is about Virginia Union University and all of these young men representing Virginia Union University. I am so, so excited to hear from so many I haven't heard from in years about how excited they were about the program and to express their support and that said, 'A,' whatever you need to help these young people to become successful."

"I'm going to be demanding. But the demanding part is to take care of our legacy which is Virginia Union basketball."

As a player under Robbins, English was among the greatest standout performers in VUU history, scoring 2,396 career points and setting a school record with 1,001 points in the 1989-90 season when he averaged a career-best 33.4 points per game. He was a two-time CIAA player of the year and was named the 1990 NCAA Division II National Player of the Year, one of four such D2 players of the year (Oakley '85, **Derrick Johnson** '94 and **Darius Hargrove** '06) during Robbins' tenure.

English, 58, the 1986 Delaware High School player of the year, was selected by the Washington Bullets (now Wizards) in the second round (37th overall) of the 1990 NBA draft. He played two seasons for the Bullets, averaging 9.9 points per game before playing another eight years professionally in the USA and overseas.

Despite a limited coaching background, English brings a powerful combination of collegiate excellence, professional experience, and a deep connection to VUU. As a distinguished alumnus, English returns home to lead the next chapter of VUU basketball.

During English's introductory press conference, Robbins, whose teams won 14 CIAA championships and garnered 21 NCAA tournament appearances, gave bold remarks on his expectations of the Panthers under the new coach's direction.

"We're going to put [Virginia] Union back on the map with not one CIAA championship in 11 years, but a bunch. And we're going to win another national championship within the next four years."



VUU Athletics photo

**DAVE ROBBINS:** Former Virginia Union head coach at Friday's press conference with his three NCAA Div. II national championship trophies in the background.

# BCSP Spring Notes

## Fayetteville State outlasts field to claim 2026 CIAA Men's Golf Championship

MEBANE, N.C. — A championship that featured multiple lead changes and came down to the final four holes was ultimately decided by composure and closing execution, as **Fayetteville State** claimed the 2026 CIAA Men's Golf Championship team title and **Winston-Salem State's Cameron Lutterloh** surged late to secure individual medalist honors following three rounds at Mill Creek Golf Course.

Entering the closing stretch of the final round, the team race remained unsettled as Fayetteville State and Winston-Salem State traded momentum throughout the afternoon. With neither team able to fully shake the other, every shot over the final four holes carried championship implications.

Fayetteville State responded under pressure, posting steady pars and limiting mistakes down the stretch to finish at +8 for the tournament. The Broncos closed with a +2 final round, holding off Winston-Salem State (+12) as the Rams hunted late birdies in a bid to overtake the leaders. **Virginia State** finished third at +31, followed by **Bluefield State** (+36) and **Livingstone** (+51).

The Broncos' title capped a methodical three-day performance in which they improved each round, opening the championship at +6, surging with an even-par second round, and navigating the closing holes of the championship with the control necessary to finish the job.

While the team race tightened late, the individual competition delivered its own surge of drama.

Lutterloh (WSSU) produced the defining charge of the championship, catching fire over the final four holes as part of a sensational 5-under-par 67 in the closing round. Lutterloh vaulted past the field to finish at 4-under-par (212), becoming the only golfer in the championship to complete all three rounds under par.

**Landon Cabingas** (Fayetteville State) remained in contention deep into the final round before finishing second at 1-under-par (215), highlighted by a tournament-low 69 in round two. A three-way tie for third at +1 (217) featured **Eman Lim** (Bluefield State) and **Christopher Baguma** and **Samuel Kozisek** (Virginia State), all of whom closed strong to earn CIAA All-Tournament Team honors.

Winston-Salem State finished with three golfers inside the top 10, while Fayetteville State placed four players among the top 10, illustrating the depth, balance, and endurance required to survive a championship decided in the final moments.

The 2026 CIAA Men's Golf Championship once again delivered a fitting conclusion, with Mill Creek Golf Course providing a demanding test and a finish worthy of the conference's championship standard.

1	Fayetteville State	+8	+6	E	+2
2	Winston-Salem State	+12	+10	E	+2
3	Virginia State	+31	+13	+12	+6
4	Bluefield State	+36	+15	+16	+5
5	Livingstone	+51	+20	+18	+13
6	Virginia Union	+53	+13	+31	+9
7	Johnson C. Smith	+92	+42	+29	+21
8	Bowie State	+134	+41	+38	+55

## Howard secures back-to-back MEAC regular season softball titles

NORFOLK, Va. — The **Howard University** women's softball team clinched the 2026 **Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC)** regular season championship Saturday with a doubleheader sweep of **Coppin State**, earning victories of 8-0 and 10-5.

The title marks the Bison's second consecutive MEAC regular season crown. With the wins, Howard improved to 16-1 in conference play and 23-14 overall.

Howard has been dominant at home, compiling a 7-1 home record behind the strong play of **Maryn Jordan**, **Amirah Lenon**, and **Aiko Conaway**, who have been key contributors to the Bison's regular season success.

The Bison will begin their pursuit of back-to-back MEAC Tournament championships on May 6. For more information on tournament schedules and matchups, visit [MEACsports.com](http://MEACsports.com).

## Alabama State women claim SWAC Women's Tennis titles

NEW ORLEANS, La. – The **Alabama State** Hornets claimed the 2026 **SWAC Women's Tennis** Tournament Championship with a 4-2 victory over **Jackson State** on Sunday at City Park Tennis Center.

Alabama State secured the early advantage by winning the doubles point, as the tandem of **Kesmat El Tawil** and **Senna Van Den Heuvel** earned a 7-5 victory at No. 3, followed by **Cléanne Pickel** and **Alexia Campagna** posting a 6-4 win at No. 2.

In singles play, Jackson State opened with a win at the No. 1 position as **Paula Corbalan** defeated **Diana Craciun** in straight sets.

However, Alabama State responded with key performances across the lineup. El Tawil rallied for a three-set win at No. 2, while **Melisa Mekic** added another three-set victory at No. 3 to give the Hornets control of the match. ASU's **Jovana Petrovic** secured the victory at No. 6 defeating JSU's **Tiara Alvarez**.

Jackson State picked up its second point at No. 5 with **Helen Hernandez** earning a straight-set win, but Alabama State closed the door shortly after.

**ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM**  
Genesis Whitelock, Florida A&M  
Isabella Benavides, Jackson State  
Helen Hernandez, Jackson State  
Jovana Petrovic, Alabama State  
Alexia Campagna, Alabama State  
Kesmat El Tawil, Alabama State (MVP)

## Alabama State claims fifth straight SWAC Men's Tennis Tournament Title

NEW ORLEANS, La. – The **Alabama State** Hornets captured the

## THE STAT CORNER

WHO ARE THE BEST PERFORMERS IN BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

### REMAINING 2026 SPRING CHAMPIONSHIPS

	DATE	LOCATION
<b>CIAA</b>		
Women's Tennis	April 24-25	Virginia State
Men's & Women's Outdoor Track & Field	May 1-2	Virginia State
Softball	May 7-9	Clafin
<b>MEACX</b>		
Men's & Women's Tennis	April 23-25	N. C. Central
Softball	May 6-9	Norfolk State
Men's & Women's Outdoor Track & Field	May 14-16	Norfolk State
<b>SIAC</b>		
Men's & Women's Outdoor Track & Field	April 21-23	Columbia, SC
Men's & Women's Tennis	April 24-26	Peachtree City, GA
Softball	April 27-29	Columbus, GA
Baseball	April 30-May 3	Macon, GA
<b>SWAC</b>		
Softball	May 5-8	Gulfport, MS
Men's & Women's Outdoor Track & Field	May 10-12	Southern
Baseball	May 20-24	Birmingham, AL

2026 SWAC Men's Tennis Tournament Championship with a 4-0 sweep of **Alabama A&M Bulldogs** on Sunday at City Park Tennis Center. The win also marks the Hornets fifth consecutive tournament title.

Alabama State set the tone early by claiming the doubles point with wins at No. 1 and No. 3. **Vid Maric** and **Gordan F. Mileusnic** securing a dominant 6-1 victory at the top spot, while **Eloi Roux** and **Milan Ristov** followed with a 6-3 win at No. 3.

In singles play, the Hornets quickly extended their lead. **Loris Gueli** was first off the court with a 7-5, 6-0 win at No. 6, followed by **Flor De Sitter** who earned a 6-2, 6-4 victory at No. 2.

**Milan Ristov** then clinched the match at the No. 1 position, winning a tightly contested first set in a tiebreak before closing out the match 7-6 (11-9), 6-1.

The match concluded in the following order: Alabama State secured the doubles point with wins at No. 1 and No. 3 before singles matches finished at positions No. 6, No. 2, and No. 1.

**ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM**  
Jhoan Vaquero, Jackson State  
Juwan Bae, Alabama A&M  
Tasso Moreira, Alabama A&M  
Flor De Sitter, Alabama State  
Loris Gueli, Alabama State  
Milan Ristov, Alabama State (MVP)



FORT VALLEY STATE, SIAC Volleyball champions

## Top-seeded Fort Valley State completes three-peat with SIAC Volleyball title

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Top-seeded **Fort Valley State** swept No. 2 **Central State**, 3-0 (25-19, 25-22, 25-19), to complete a three-peat and capture the 2026 **SIAC Men's Volleyball** Championship on Saturday afternoon here at the Adams-Jenkins Community Sports & Music Complex.

With the title secured, FVSU improves to 16-12 overall and earns the conference's automatic bid to the 2026 NCAA National Collegiate Men's Volleyball Tournament.

Fort Valley State hit .427 as a team, totaling 43 kills on 82 attempts with eight errors. The Wildcats added 43 assists, 29 digs, 10 block assists and three service aces.

2026 SIAC Men's Volleyball Tournament MVP **Isaiah Fedd** led Fort Valley State with 13 kills in the match. He added five digs, two service aces and two block assists. **Muhammad Mbaye** followed with 10 kills (.625), two block assists, one assist and one dig, while **Jamari Griffin** contributed seven kills and five digs. **Keaton Long** finished with six kills (.500), four digs, three assists, one service ace and one block assist, while **Taviian Martin** posted five kills (.625), adding two digs, one assist and one block assist.

**Logan Rogers** directed the offense with 33 assists, while contributing two kills, three digs and four block assists. **Constantine Ononye** led the Wildcats with eight digs.

FVSU will await its postseason assignment, which will be unveiled during the 2026 NCAA National Collegiate Men's Volleyball Selection Show on Sunday, April 26 on [NCAA.com](http://NCAA.com)

# BCSP Notes

## Delaware State names new women's basketball coach

DOVER, DE – **Delaware State** announced last week the appointment of **Khadijah Rushdan** as the new head coach of the women's basketball team.

A celebrated figure in Delaware basketball, Rushdan brings a wealth of experience and a proven track record of success both as a player and a coach. Rushdan played at St. Elizabeth's School in Wilmington, Delaware and led her team to a state championship. Her remarkable

talent and dedication to the game earned her a scholarship to Rutgers, where she played under the guidance of Hall of Fame coach, **Vivian Stringer**.

"I am beyond grateful and excited to be back home and lead the women's basketball program at Delaware State University, a truly historic institution," Rushdan said. "As a native of Delaware, this opportunity is incredibly special to me. DSU has tremendous potential, and I'm ready to build a championship culture that energizes our campus, engages our community,

and makes our supporters proud!"

Following her graduation, Rushdan transitioned into coaching, where she has continued to make an impact. Most recently, she served as the assistant coach and recruiting coordinator at Marquette.

"We are excited to welcome Khadijah Rushdan back to Delaware as our new head Coach," said **Tony Tucker**, Athletic Director at DSU.

