

BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS PAGE



Florida A&M Athletics Photo

RUDY HUBBARD: Football coach who led Florida A&M to the first Div. I-AA (now FCS) national title in 1979 to be inducted into Black College Football Hall of Fame Friday in Atlanta.

HALLS, HONORS AWAIT

PLAYERS, COACHES ON COLLEGE HOF BALLOT; 13 IN NCAA DIV. I TRACK & FIELD FINALS; CIAA MEDIA DAY SET

BCSP Notes

HBCU players, coaches on 2027 College Football HOF ballot

Five outstanding black college players and four legendary coaches are on the 2027 College Football Hall of Fame Ballot released Monday by the National Football Foundation (NFF).

The nine are among 99 players and 39 coaches from the NCAA divisional (non Div. I) and NAIA ranks on the ballot.

The players include former **Mississippi Valley State** defenders **Ashley Ambrose** and **Vincent "The Undertaker" Brown**, former **Virginia Union** safety **William Dillon**, former **Winston-Salem State** running back **Timmy Newsome** and former **Fort Valley State** defensive back **Tyrone Poole**.

The coaches on the ballot include **Gideon Smith** who coached at **Hampton** from 1921-40, **Eddie Hurt**, who led **Virginia Lynchburg** from 1925-28 before spending 30 years leading **Morgan State** (1929-59), **Bill Hayes**, who led **Winston-Salem State** from 1976-87 before taking over at **North Carolina A&T** from 1988-2002, and **Rod Broadway** who had black college national championship stints at **North Carolina Central** (2003-06), **Grambling State** (2007-10) and **North Carolina A&T** (2011-17).

Of the players, all except Dillon, a three-time all-CIAA defensive back and three-time first-team Div. II all-American, played and excelled in the NFL.

Ambrose was an all-SWAC defensive back who led the nation in punt returns his senior year. Brown was a first team all-American in 1987 who led the nation in tackles in 1986 and 1987.

Newsome was a first team all-American in 1978 and a three-time all-CIAA selectee who finished as the school's all-time leading rusher with 3,843 yards. He helped led the Rams to league titles and undefeated regular seasons in 1977 and 1978. Poole was a first team all-American in 1994 and a two-time SIAC defensive player of the year while leading the Wildcats to two conference titles.

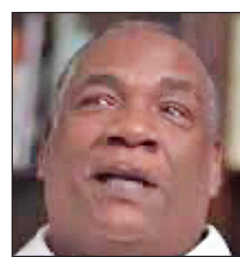
Among the coaches, Gideon posted a 97-46-12 record at Hampton with four CIAA titles and two undefeated seasons. He has the second-most wins in school history.

Hurt (186-62-21) led Morgan to six black college national titles, 11 undefeated seasons, a 54-game winning streak and one season where the Bears did not give up a point.

Hayes (195-104-2) is the winningest coach at both WSSU and NCA&T with six conference titles. His 195 wins are the most of any coach in



Newsome



Broadway

North Carolina history.

Broadway (127-45-0) is the only coach to win black college national champions at three different schools, winning five overall. He won six conference crowns and two Celebration Bowls.

PLAYERS

Ashley Ambrose, DB, MVSU (1989-91); Vincent Brown, LB, MVSU (1984-87); William Dillon, S, VUU (1979-82); Timmy Newsome, RB, WSSU (1976-79); Tyrone Poole, DB, FVSU (1991-94)

COACHES

Gideon Smith, HU; Eddie Hurt, VUL, MSU; Bill Hayes, WSSU, NC A&T; Rod Broadway, NCCU, GSU, NC A&T

CIAA Football Media Day, Golf outing in Durham in July

DURHAM, N.C. (June 1st, 2026) – The Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA®) will hold the 2026 CIAA Football Media Day on Wednesday, July 15, 2026, beginning at 9:00 a.m. ET in Durham, North

Carolina at the Hilton Durham.

The conference will provide media representatives with exclusive access to conference leadership, head coaches, and student athletes from all 11 CIAA football member institutions.

The event will offer insight into the upcoming season, preseason storylines, and the opportunity to engage directly with key voices from around the conference.

Media Day serves as the official kickoff to the 2026 CIAA football season and continues the conference's longstanding tradition of celebrating the excellence, history, and future of HBCU athletics.

The week's activities will also include the CIAA® "Live the Legacy" Golf Tournament, taking place Monday, July 13, 2026, at Hillandale Golf Course in Durham. Held in conjunction with Football Media Day.

The event will bring together conference leadership, coaches, student athletes, alumni, and supporters for a day centered on fellowship, networking, and celebration of the CIAA's rich history and tradition.

Teams and individuals are invited to participate in the tournament, which supports initiatives designed to enhance the student athlete experience throughout the conference.

Registration is available for \$600 per four-person team or \$150 per individual participant. Sponsorship opportunities are also available.

UNDER THE BANNER

WHAT'S GOING ON IN AND AROUND BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

WEEKS TO MANAGE IN SWINGMAN CLASSIC:



Weeks

Southern baseball legend **Rickie Weeks** and 2007 NL MVP **Jimmy Rollins** have been named managers for the 2026 **HBCU Swingman Classic** when 50 current black college baseball take the field at Citizens Bank Park in Philadelphia on July 10.

Founded by Hall of Famer **Ken Griffey Jr.** in 2023, the HBCU Swingman Classic will open MLB All-Star Week in Philadelphia highlighting players from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) while celebrating HBCU culture through pregame festivities and events.

Weeks' connection to the classic is personal owing to his starring days at Southern and his 14-year Major League career with Milwaukee, Seattle, Arizona and Tampa Bay.

Weeks starred at Southern where set college baseball records, winning the **Golden Spikes Award** and **Dick Howser Trophy** in 2003. The Brewers drafted him with the second pick in that summer's draft. In 2010 he batted .269 with 20 homers and 89 RBI and earned an All-Star selection with Milwaukee in 2011. Weeks serves as a special assistant in baseball operations and domestic/international scouting for the Brewers.

The opportunity to manage in the HBCU Swingman Classic brought him back to where his dreams started to take shape.

"Just coming back and getting a chance to manage a team that gave me the chance to play college baseball," Weeks said. "What more can you ask than that?"

Years ago, Weeks would have dreamed of an opportunity like this while attending Southern. He also thought about what it could mean for teammates who deserved more opportunities.

"I would've welcomed that with open arms," Weeks said. "I've always said when you go off the Minor League baseball and start playing and seeing the guys around you and knowing that guys who you [used to] play with should have been there."

THE STAT CORNER

WHO ARE THE BEST PERFORMERS IN BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

BLACK COLLEGE ATHLETES IN NCAA DIV. I OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

June 10 - 13 • Hayward Field
Eugene, Oregon

EVENT 9 MEN 110 METER HURDLES PRELIMS

RNK	NAME	YEAR	SCHOOL	SEED
15	Jason Holmes	JR	N. Carolina A&T	13.40
24	Leonard Mustari	SR	Florida A&M	13.53

EVENT 10 MEN 400 METER HURDLES PRELIMS

1	Isaiah Taylor	JR	N. Carolina A&T	48.71
3	Xzaviah Taylor	JR	N. Carolina A&T	48.82

EVENT 11 MEN 4X100 METER RELAY PRELIMS

9	N. Carolina A&T	38.84	
1)	Lassale Hewlett JR	2)	Jason Holmes JR
3)	Jalen Booth-Mitchell SR	4)	Nakhi Benjamin JR
5)	Correy McManus Jr. SO	6)	Brandon Johnson SR
7)	Jordan Ware JR	8)	Xzaviah Taylor JR

EVENT 12 MEN 4X400 METER RELAY PRELIMS

7	N. Carolina A&T	3:01.22	
1)	Elijah Thomas SO	2)	Xzaviah Taylor JR
3)	Dyiamond Walker SR	4)	Isaiah Taylor JR
5)	Michael Brittingham SR	6)	Caleb Gumell JR

EVENT 15 MEN LONG JUMP

24	Justin Walker	JR	Alabama A&M	7.67m
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EVENT 16 MEN TRIPLE JUMP

10	Xavier Partee	JR	N. Carolina A&T	16.26m
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EVENT 22 WOMEN 200 METER DASH PRELIMS

14	Yahnari Lyons	SO	Howard	22.72
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EVENT 29 WOMEN 100 METER HURDLES PRELIMS

3	Tashina Alase	JR	Southern	12.74
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EVENT 30 WOMEN 400 METER HURDLES PRELIMS

4	Cenaiya Billups	SO	Howard	55.09
9	Aniya Woodruff	SR	Howard	55.43

EVENT 31 WOMEN 4X100 METER RELAY PRELIMS

9	Howard	43.23	
1)	Nilajah Darden FR	2)	Marcia Sey SR
3)	Yahnari Lyons SO	4)	Mackenzie Robinson JR
5)	Ai'yana Gray-Williams JR	6)	

12	Florida A&M	43.31	
1)	Janaree Kinchen FR	2)	Diandrenique Gaines SR
3)	Kiersten Clark SR	4)	Arayana Ladson SO
5)	Ty'yanah Adams SO	6)	

EVENT 33 WOMEN HIGH JUMP

15	Spirit Morgan	SR	N. Carolina A&T	1.82m
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EVENT 36 WOMEN TRIPLE JUMP

20	Olivia Dowd	JR	N. Carolina A&T	13.23m
24	Daedrian Beville	FR	Alabama State	13.21m

BCSP Spring Notes

HBCU athletes punch their ticket to NCAA Div. I Outdoor Track & Field Championships

Thirteen black college track and field competitors and three relay teams advanced out of NCAA Outdoor Div. I Track & Field East and West Regional championships Saturday.

They will advance to the NCAA Championships in Eugene, Oregon on Wednesday, June 10 thru Saturday, June 13.

The top 12 finishers in each individual event and the top 12 relay teams from the regionals advanced to Eugene.

Twin juniors **Isaiah** and **Xzavier Taylor** of **North Carolina A&T** posted the best and third-best times in the 400 meter hurdles at the East Regional in Lexington, Kentucky Saturday.

Isaiah ran a personal best of 48.71 seconds to finish first in the third and final 400 hurdles heat Saturday. Xzavier also clocked a personal best of 48.82 for to finish first in Heat 1. Florida sophomore Vance Nilsson won Heat 2 in 48.77 to clock the second-best time.

Xzavier and Isiah had both clocked 49.76 in the preliminary rounds to both go under 50 seconds for the first time this season.

The Taylors were also part of A&T's 4x400 relay team that included **Elijah Thomas** and **Dyiamond Walker** that advanced after posting the seventh-best time of 3:01.22.

A&T sophomore **Jason Holmes** also is headed to Eugene with the eighth-best time (13.40 seconds) in the men's 110-meter hurdles. **Florida A&M** senior **Leonard Mustari**, who began his career at A&T, also advanced in the event with the 12th-best time, 13.53 seconds.

A&T's 4x100 meter relay quartet of **Lessale Hewitt**, **Holmes**, **Jalen Booth-Mitchell** and **Nakhi Benjamin** posted the sixth-best time of 38.84 to advance.

Also advancing for the Aggies was junior **Xavier Partee** who had a jump of 16.26 meters to finish second in the triple jump. **Alabama State** senior **Anthony Woods** fell just short of advancing with a 13th-place finish (15.80m) in the event.

Alabama A&M junior **Justin Walker** advanced with a 12th-place finish in the long jump with a leap of 7.67 meters.

Booth-Mitchell, an Aggie senior, fell just short of advancing in the 200 meters as he finished with the 13th best time in 20.50.

Southern high jumpers, **Roman Smith** (2.11m) and **Keith Fowler** (2.11m), also just missed out on advancing, finishing 13th and 14th in their semifinals.

In the women's East Regional, **Howard** sophomore **Yahnari Lyons** clocked a 22.72 seconds time in the 200 meters to finish fifth and punch her ticket to Eugene. **Florida A&M's** **Diandrenique Gaines** finished 15th with a time of 23.00.

Lyons later teamed with **Nilajah Darden**, **Marcia Sey** and **Mackenzie Robinson** in Howard's 4x100 relay team who posted a time of 43.23 seconds, good for seventh place. **Florida A&M** (**Janaree Kinchen**, **Gaines**, **Kiersten Clark** and **Arayana Ladson**) also advanced with a 10th-place finish in 43.31 seconds.

Southern junior **Tashina Alase** posted the second-best time in the 100 hurdles at 12.74 seconds to advance. **Alabama State's** **Rasunek Tyler-Thompson** finished 15th in 13.11.

A&T senior **Spirit Morgan** advanced with a leap of 1.82 meters to finish tied for second in the high jump. Aggie junior **Olivia Dowd** also advanced in the triple jump with an eighth-place finish in 13.23m as did **Alabama State** freshman **Daedrian Beville** who finished 12th at 13.21m.

Howard's **Cenaya Billups** and **Aniya Woodruff** had a 2-3 finish in



BCFHOF to induct 17th class Friday

The six-member 2026 class of the **Black College Football Hall of Fame** will be presented Friday at the 17th Annual Induction Ceremony, presented by the Atlanta Falcons at the College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta, Georgia.

The class includes former standout **Jackson State** and NFL receiver **Jimmy Smith**, former outstanding **Alabama State** and NFL linebacker **Eddie Robinson, Jr.**, former **Bethune-Cookman** and NFL standout safety **Nick Collins**, former **Fort Valley State** and NFL defensive back **Tyrone Poole**, legendary former **Florida A&M** head coach **Rudy Hubbard** and **Howard** journalism grad and noted NFL host and analyst **Steve Wyche**.



I. Taylor



X. Taylor



Alase



Morgan

the 400 hurdles with times of 55.09 and 55.43 respectively to advance.

There were only three black college athletes competing in the West Regional in Fayetteville, Arkansas. None of the three advanced.



N. C. A&T Athletics Photo

EUGENE BOUND: Former walk-on **Olivia Dowd** of **North Carolina A&T** finished eighth in the triple jump at the East Regional to earn a spot in the NCAA Div. I Track & Field Championships in Eugene, Oregon (June 10-13). She jumped a program-best 43 feet, 5 inches to earn her spot. NC A&T Head Track & Field Coach **Allen Johnson** had four men's competitors, two men's relay teams and two women's competitors advance to Eugene. **Howard** head coach **David Oliver** had three women's competitors and one women's relay team advance.

Alabama State bows out of NCAA Baseball Regional

TUSCALOOSA, AL – After taking a 21-3 shellacking from top-seed and No. 7 host **Alabama** in a first round game Friday, **SWAC** champion **Alabama State** went down swinging in an NCAA Div. I Tuscaloosa Region elimination game falling to **Oklahoma State** 8-7 in 11 innings Saturday.

Alabama State (34-23) erased a six-run deficit and forced extra innings on **Cale Clark's** two-run home run in the eighth inning, but No. 2 seed **Oklahoma State** plated a run in the top of the 11th to claim the victory Saturday afternoon at Sewell-Thomas Stadium.

Alabama State outhit the **Cowboys** 11-5. **Nigel Jenkins** led the offensive attack by going 3-for-4 with a home run, two RBI and two runs scored. **Clark** finished 2-for-4 with a home run, two RBIs and a walk. **Jackson Williams** added two hits and an RBI, while **Trey Callaway** collected two hits.

In Friday's opener, the **SWAC** champs finished with six hits, including home runs from **Miguel Oropeza** and **Callaway**, but the **Crimson Tide** used a 15-hit attack and multiple big innings to secure the victory.

Oropeza paced **ASU** offensively, finishing 2-for-3 with a home run and two RBIs. **Callaway** went 2-for-4 with a homer and one RBI, while **Breydon Divine** added a hit and scored a run.