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CHANGES ARE AFOOT

40 PLAYERS IN NFL CAMPS, EIGHT VETS CHANGE TEAMS; NC A&T, HAMPTON LAST IN CAA PREDICTIONS

BRIAN JENKINS: Despite finishing just 4-4 in the SIAC in 2025, his Edward Waters Tigers topped 2026 preseason voting in the conference.

2026 SIAC FOOTBALL PRESEASON PREDICTIONS											
2026 SIAC FOOTBALL PREDICTED ORDER OF FINISH						FIRST TEAM OFFENSE					
1. Edward Waters	2. Benedict	OL	Chance Bush*, Jr., Allen	LB	Sean Johnson, Sr., Morehouse	DB	Travion Searcy*, Sr., Central State	RB	Micheal Cabellero, Sr., Fort Valley State	QB	Miles Scott, Sr., Morehouse
3. Tuskegee	4. Albany State	OL	Isaiah Turner*, R-Sr., Benedict	DB	Aeron Gresham*, R-Jr., Allen	DB	Lawrence McConnell, Sr., Kemticky State	SECOND TEAM DEFENSE			
5. Kentucky State	6. Allen	OL	Isaih Richardson*, R-So., Benedict	DB	Aykenon Rodgers, Jr., Edward Waters	PK	Lorcan Ryans*, Sr., Tuskegee Senior	DL	Javontae Cooper, R-Sr., Miles	DL	Jordan Diggins, Sr., Kentucky State
7. Miles	8. Fort Valley State	OL	Jason Miller*, Sr., Benedict	P	Elan Hall, Sr., Fort Valley State	P	Elan Hall, Sr., Fort Valley State	DL	Luca Chuecos, R-Jr., Morehouse	DL	Jaevin Jenkins, So., Edward Waters
9. Savannah State	10. Clark Atlanta	TE	Michael Bowman*, R-Jr., Allen	PR	Donte Curry Jr.*, Jr., Fort Valley State	PR	Donte Curry Jr.*, Jr., Fort Valley State	LB	Kendrick Curry, Jr., Kentucky State	LB	Stephen Rowser, Jr., Morehouse
11. Central State	12. Morehouse	WR	Darius Cyprian*, Sr., Kentucky State	KR	Cameron Watts*, Sr., Albany State	KR	Cameron Watts*, Sr., Albany State	LB	Elijah Henderson, Sr., Kentucky State	DB	Jeremiah Malbroue, Jr., Lane
13. Lane		WR	EJ Hall*, R-So., Tuskegee	SECOND TEAM OFFENSE							
		RB	Johntarrious Thomas*, Sr., Edeward Waters	OL	Censere Wright*, Sr., Fort Valley State	OL	Adam Badwan, Sr., Kentucky State	DB	Trei'Shaun Sanders, So., Central State	DB	Joshua Maye, Sr., Morehouse
		RB	David Smith, R-Jr., Benedict	OL	Christopher Allen, So., Morehouse	OL	Ashton Morris, Sr., Allen	DB	Tray Blackmon Jr. Kentucky State	PK	Logan Karwacki, So., Benedict
		QB	Xzavier Jackson, So., Clark Atlanta	OL	Theodis Collins, So., Morehouse	TE	Fatoma Paulk, Jr., Edward Waters	P	Seve Spruill, Sr., Morehouse	PR	Cameron Watts*, Sr., Albany State
				TE	Fatoma Paulk, Jr., Edward Waters	WR	Eric Stephens, R-So., Morehouse	KR	Chry'shawn Sellers, So., Clark Atlanta		
				WR	J.T. Pendleton, Sr., Fort Valley State	WR	J.T. Pendleton, Sr., Fort Valley State				
				LB	Bishop Blakely, Sr., Central State	RB	Johnny Morris, , Gr., Tuskegee				

LUT WILLIAMS

BCSP Editor

MACON, GA – Ordinarily, the defending football champion is picked to repeat when the four black college conferences get together for preseason Football Media Days in July.

Surprisingly, that was the case for just one of the four this season – the **Mid Eastern Athletic Conference** (MEAC) – that chose two-time defending champion **South Carolina State** to three-peat in 2026.

The **Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference** (SIAC) was the third of the four to choose someone other than the defending champion (**Albany State**) when their programs got together in Macon last Wednesday for its preseason event.

SIAC voters chose **Edward Waters**, a team that finished tied for sixth at 4-4 in the SIAC last season, as the team to beat in 2026 (see PRESEASON PREDICTIONS at top of the Page)..

Maybe the ascension of head coach **Brian Jenkins'** Tigers to the top spot has to do with his battle-tested experience.

The 30-year veteran coach won parts of four championships in five years, posted a 46-14 overall record and won three MEAC coach of the year awards when the led **Bethune-Cookman** in the MEAC from 2010-2014. His record as a head coach is 60-36 (.625) including a three-year stint (2015-2017) at **Alabama State**.

Jenkins was named interim head coach at Edward Waters just before the 2025 season and was named the permanent head coach after his

team got off to a 3-0 start including a big 41-38 win over **CIAA** champion **Virginia Union** in Week Three.

A 35-9 loss to his former employer (B-CU) the following week began a stretch where EWU lost three of four games including dropping contests to league foes **Kentucky State** (42-14) and **Benedict** (31-27). The Tigers won just one of its final three games to finish 5-5.

Perhaps more important to EWU being picked first is that Jenkins returns players chosen as both the offensive and defensive players of the year and has three others picked as preseason all-SIAC performers.

Senior running back **Johntarrious Thomas** (5-6, 190) was chosen as the offensive POY coming off a season where he ran for 1,016 yards in 10 games (101.6 yards per game), averaged 7.0 yards per carry and scored 8 touchdowns. His biggest game last season was a 243-yard effort in the loss to Benedict. Junior linebacker **Trevon French** (6-3, 195), who had 74 tackles, 3 sacks and 2 forced fumbles, won the defensive award.

Ron Dickerson Jr.'s Tigers of **Benedict** (10-3, 7-1), whose only losses last season were to Albany State, were picked second.

Tuskegee, 4-7 overall and tied for eighth at 3-5 in conference play a year ago, was surprisingly picked third going into its fourth season under head coach **Aaron James**.

Albany State, who made a run to the Div. II quarterfinals last season but lost head coach **Quinn Gray** to **Florida A&M**, was picked fourth. The new head man for the Golden Rams is **David Bowser** a veteran of CIAA wars at **J. C. Smith** and **Fayetteville State**.



Thomas



French

Speaking of surprises, **Kentucky State** (9-3, 7-1) under **Felton Huggins Jr.** was the revelation last season and comes off a Div. II playoff berth after only losing to Albany State in conference play. The Thorobreds were picked fifth. **Allen** (6-5, 5-3), under head coach **Cedric Pearl**, who lost both second team all-SIAC QB **Jamir Dismukes** (to **Fayetteville State**) and POY RB **Fabian Duncan** (to **J. C. Smith**), was sixth.

New coaches **Terry Sims** at **Clark Atlanta** and **Brad Sherrod** at Atlanta neighbor **Morehouse** enter the fray with standout quarterbacks. CAU sophomore **Xavier Jackson** was the preseason first teamer while Maroon Tigers' senior **Miles Scott** was named to the second team. CAU and MHS were picked 10th and 12th respectively.

Thomas Howard, who was an assistant at **North Carolina A&T** when the Aggies won four MEAC and **Celebration Bowl** titles, is the fourth new head coach in the conference as he takes the reins at **Savannah State**. The Tigers were picked ninth in the preseason voting.

BCSP Notes

40 black college players on NFL rosters as training camps open; Eight vets in new locations

A total of 40 former black college players (see STAT CORNER) are on NFL rosters as training camps for all 32 teams got underway over the last week. Eight black college veterans will be playing in new locations this season.

The most tenured black college NFL veteran, **Javon Hargrave**, will enter his 11th season in the Green Bay Packers' camp after spending last season with the Minnesota Vikings. Hargrave signed a reported two-year \$23 million deal to join the Packers.

The **South Carolina State** product is with his fifth team. He was drafted in the third round by Pittsburgh in 2016 and spent four years (thru 2019) with the Steelers. He moved on to Philadelphia (2020-2022) and then to San Francisco (2023-2024) before spending 2025 in Minnesota.

Hargrave (6-2, 307) has racked up 49 sacks with a career-high of 11, his only double-digit sack season, for Philadelphia in 2022. He has 432 combined tackles in his ten years in the NFL.

Offensive lineman **Tytus Howard** (6-5, 320) was a first round selection (23rd overall) out of **Alabama State** by Houston in 2019 and played seven seasons for the Texans. At the trading deadline in March, Howard was traded to the Cleveland Browns in exchange for a 2026 fifth-round draft pick. The Texans picked up the fifth-year option on Howard's contract on May 2, 2022 agreeing to a three-year, \$56 million contract extension. He subsequently agreed to a three-year, \$63 million extension running through the 2029 season with the Browns.

Howard primarily started at tackle but showed his versatiltly by sometimes moving to guard.

Nick Leverett is an offensive lineman who spent three seasons at **North Carolina Central** before playing his final year of college eligibility at Rice. He went undrafted in 2020 but spent four seasons with Tampa Bay (2020-2023) before having stints at New England (2024) and Arizona (2024-2025). On November 19, 2025, Leverett signed with the Dallas Cowboys' practice squad. He signed a reserve/future contract with Dallas on January 6, 2026 and is now in the Cowboys' camp.

Another South Carolina State product, defensive back **Cobie Durant**, left the Los Angeles Rams after four productive seasons and signed as a free agent with the Cowboys on a one-year, \$4 million contract.

Durant (5-11, 181), taken in the fourth round by LA in 2022, worked his way into becoming a starter with the Rams. He started 14 of 15 games in 2024 and 15 of 17 last season. Durant had team highs of three picks in his rookie season and a team-high three a year ago. He returned two of his seven career thefts for touchdowns.

Others at new locations include 2022 draft picks, safety **Bryan Cook** and defensive back **Joshua Williams**, who both left Kansas City after winning two Super Bowl championships with the Chiefs.

On March 12, 2026, Cook signed a three-year, \$40.25 million contract to join his hometown Cincinnati Bengals. Cook (6-1, 206) played two seasons at **Howard** before finishing with two seasons at Cincinnati.

After being drafted in the second round of the 2022 draft by KC, the Cincinnati native started 12 games in 2023 before becoming a starter for all 17 Chiefs' games over the last two seasons. He had a career-high 85 tackles last season and a career-high two interceptions in 2024.

Kansas City picked Williams (6-3, 201) after Cook in the fourth round of the 2022 draft out of **Fayetteville State**. He will be in Tennessee's camp this season after the Titans signed him to a two-year, \$6.75 million contract.

The Chiefs won Super Bowls in his first two seasons as Williams

started 11 of 33 games and played primarily as a back-up. He started another six games in 2024 before he was used almost exclusively as a special teamer last season with no starts.

Running back **Emanuel Wilson** established himself as a dependable and productive runner over three seasons after Green Bay signed him as a free agent in 2023 following 1,000-yard seasons at **Johnson C. Smith** and **Fort Valley State**. In March, the Super Bowl champion Seattle Seahawks signed Wilson to a one-year, \$2.1 million contract.

Wilson rushed for 1,083 yards in 41 games with Green Bay averaging 4.5 yards per carry and scoring seven rushing TDs. He had career-highs of 502 rushing yards and four TDs averaging 4.9 yards per carry in 2024. Last season he averaged 4.0 ypc. while totaling 496 rushing yards and three TDs. He did not lose a fumble in 242 carries with the Packers.

Brandon Codrington (5-9, 185) was an undrafted free agent out of N. C. Central that got his first shot in the NFL with Buffalo, after the New York Jets signed and traded him after a productive preseason in 2024. He logged 619 total return yards on 38 attempts as the primarily return man for the Bills in his rookie season and was named to the PFWA All-Rookie Team.

After missing most of the Bills' 2024 and 2025 seasons with injuries, Codrington signed a reserve/futures contract with the Houston Texans.

NC A&T, Hampton at bottom of 2026 CAA preseason football rankings

North Carolina A&T was picked 12th and **Hampton** 13th at the bottom of the 2026 preseason voting unveiled last week in virtual Coastal Athletic Association (CAA) Media Days. Defending champion Rhode Island was picked to repeat Monmouth and Elon.

NC A&T finished 2-6 a year ago in the conference, with wins over Hampton (33-30) and Campbell (28-24) and single-digit losses in two other conference games.

In his interview last week, second-year head coach **Shawn Gibbs** said he concentrated on developing the players already on the roster and bringing in more talented players to compete in the CAA. He particularly talked about bringing in a new offensive line coach and beefing up the offensive line in effort to return the Aggies to elite status running the ball.

Senior kick returner/wide receiver **Elijah Kennedy** was the only Aggie picked preseason all-CAA. Kennedy, who had one kickoff and two punt return TDs, received the nod as the all-CAA punt returner and also received preseason all-America status as a kick returner.

Hampton will begin 2026 with new head coach **Van Malone** at the helm. The Pirates finished 2025 last in the CAA at 0-8 and 2-10 overall. Senior offensive lineman **Omari Allen** and edge rusher **Korede Sogbesan** were preseason all-conference picks. Malone had Sogbesan and QB **Jalen Woods**, a transfer from **Southern**, with him on Media Day.

Malone has spent over 20 years as an assistant at the collegiate level at nine stops including the last seven years at Kansas State as pass-game coordinator and defensive backs coach.



Gibbs



Malone



Kennedy

THE STAT CORNER

WHO ARE THE BEST PERFORMERS IN BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS



Codrington



Cook



Durant



Hargrave

BLACK COLLEGE NFL VETS ON NEW TEAMS



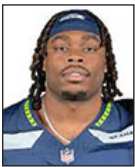
Howard



Leverett



Williams



Wilson

BLACK COLLEGE PLAYERS ON 2026 NFL TRAINING CAMP ROSTERS

NO.	NAME	POS	YRS	HBCU
ARIZONA CARDINALS				
ATLANTA FALCONS (1)				
19	Chris Blair	WR	3	Alcorn State
BALTIMORE RAVENS (2)				
76	Carson Vinson	OT	2	Alabama A&M
67	Corey Bullock	C/G	2	NC Central / Maryland
BUFFALO BILLS (2)				
76	Da'Metrius Weatherspoon	OT	R	Howard / Syracuse
27	Ian Wheeler	RB	2	Howard
CAROLINA PANTHERS (2)				
65	Ja'Tyre Carter	G		Southern
53	Claudin Chereilus	LB	4	Alcorn State
CHICAGO BEARS				
CINCINNATI BENGALS (1)				
6	Bryan Cook	S	5	Howard / Cincinnati
CLEVELAND BROWNS (2)				
2	Shedeur Sanders	QB	2	Jackson State / Colorado
71	Tytus Howard	OT/G	8	Alabama State
DALLAS COWBOYS (5)				
14	Markquese Bell	S/LB	5	Florida A&M
2	Cobie Durant	CB	5	SC State
53	James Houston IV	EDGE	5	Jackson State
58	Isaiah Land	EDGE/LB	3	Florida A&M
51	Nick Leverett	G/C	5	NC Central / Rice
DENVER BRONCOS				
DETROIT LIONS (2)				
48	Erick Hunter	LB		Morgan State
74	Melvin Priestly	OL		Grambling State / Illinois
GREEN BAY PACKERS (1)				
98	Javon Hargrave	DT	11	SC State
HOUSTON TEXANS (1)				
17	Brandon Codrington	CB/RS	3	NC Central
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS (1)				
90	Grover Stewart	DT	10	Albany State
JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS (4)				
12	Travis Hunter	WR/CB	2	Jackson State / Colorado
33	Bhayshul Tuten	RB	2	NC A&T / Virginia Tech
30	J'Mari Taylor	RB	R	NC Central / Virginia
66	Ricky Lee	OT	3	NC A&T
KANSAS CITY CHIEFS				
LOS ANGELES CHARGERS				
LOS ANGELES RAMS (1)				
19	Xavier Smith	WR/RS	3	Florida A&M
MIAMI DOLPHINS (2)				
83	Kevin Coleman Jr.	WR	R	Jackson State / Missouri
71	Kion Smith	OT	4	Fayetteville State
MINNESOTA VIKINGS (2)				
99	Elijah Williams	DL	2	Morgan State
48	Jacob Roberts	LB	R	NC A&T / Wake Forest
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS (2)				
21	Karon Prunty	CB	R	NC A&T / Wake Forest
26	Terrell Jennings	RB	2	Florida A&M
NEW ORLEANS SAINTS (1)				
68	Torricelli Simpkins III	G/C	2	NC Central / South Carolina
NEW YORK GIANTS				
NEW YORK JETS				
PHILADELPHIA EAGLES				
PITTSBURGH STEELERS				
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS (1)				
60	Brandon Parker	OT	9	NC A&T
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS (2)				
27	Emanuel Wilson	RB	4	Fort Valley State
35	Eric Fuller	CB	R	Arkansas-Pine Bluff / Toledo
TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS				
TENNESSEE TITANS (1)				
25	Joshua Williams	CB	5	Fayetteville State
WASHINGTON COMMANDERS (4)				
22	Jacory Croskey-Merritt	RB	2	Alabama State / Arizona
73	Trent Scott	OT	9	Grambling State
34	Antonio Hamilton Sr.	CB	11	SC State
47	Robert McDaniel	DB	2	Jackson State