

BLACK COLLEGE
SPORTS™



Seattle Mariners Photo

WINDING DOWN

STRUGGLING: Former No. 1 pick Rickie Weeks let go by Seattle Mariners.

10 HBCU PLAYERS IN MLB DRAFT; JUST ONE FIRST TEAM TRACK ALL-AMERICAN

UNDER THE BANNER

WHAT'S GOING ON IN AND AROUND BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

RICKIE WEEKS OUT IN SEATTLE:

The Seattle Mariners have designated 12-year Major League veteran **Rickie Weeks**, the former **Southern University** and **SWAC** standout, for assignment. The move clears space for the Mariners to recall reliever Danny Farquhar, who will provide help for a Mariners bullpen that had to pitch 7 2/3 innings in a blowout against the Astros Saturday.

The Mariners signed Weeks, who selected second overall by Milwaukee in the 2003 Major League Draft, to a one-year, \$2 million deal in the offseason, and he was a disappointment, hitting .167/.263/.250 with just three recorded line drives in 95 plate appearances with the club. The 32-year-old Weeks had rebounded from a poor 2013 season to have a quality 2014 in a part-time role in his final season in Milwaukee, but that success obviously didn't continue this year as a right-handed bench bat with the Mariners.

Weeks also struggled defensively at second base in his last few seasons with the Brewers, and the Mariners used him exclusively in left field, where his bat played even worse than it would have at second.

Weeks isn't far removed from some effective seasons with the Brewers, and he's a career .260/.382/.445 hitter against lefties, so he'll probably eventually make it back to the big leagues. His salary will likely be an obstacle to any team claiming him right now, however.

FAMU'S HUBBARD ON HOF BALLOT:

IRVING, Tex. (June 13) – Former **Florida A&M University** head football coach **Rudy Hubbard** is one of 27 coaches from the divisional ranks on the 2016 National Football Foundation (NFF) & College Hall of Fame ballot announced on June 2.

On the ballot for consideration for induction will be 76 players and five coaches from the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS), and 92 players and 27 coaches from the divisional ranks (FCS, Division II, Division III, NAIA).

Hubbard, an Ohio native, was head football coach at FAMU from 1974 to 1985, compiling an 83-48-3 record, which was highlighted back-to-back national championships in 1997 and 1978.

His 1977 club ended the campaign as the nation's only undefeated team (11-0), while 1978 club posted a sterling 12-1 mark, capping the season with first-ever NCAA Division I FCS (I-AA) National Championship, thanks to a 35-28 win over the University of Massachusetts in the Pioneer Bowl at Wichita Falls, Texas.

The following season (1979), the Rattlers pulled off a stunning upset of the University of Miami, 16-13 at Doak Campbell Stadium.

Hubbard's tenure produced nearly a dozen All-American players, highlighted by three-time first team All-American guard **Tyrone McGriff** (1977-79), who in 1996, became the first FAMU player to be enshrined in the College Football Hall of Fame, as a member of the Hall's inaugural Divisional Class of players.

Should Hubbard be elected, he would become the third coach in the Hall of Fame to have served at Florida A&M joining the legendary **A.S. "Jake" Gaither** (1975) and **William "Billy" Joe** (2007), and the fifth Rattler Football personality, which includes former All-Americans **Tyrone McGriff** (1996) and halfback **Willie Galimore** (1999).

KEEPING UP WITH TIM O'NEAL:

Former **Jackson State** golfing standout **Timothy O'Neal** had his best finish on the SwingThought.com Tour finishing tied for fourth with a four-round total of -13 271 at the Air Capital Classic and Digital Ally Open in Fayetteville, N. C. in late May. O'Neal shot rounds of 69-65-71-66 and pocketed \$5,862 for his efforts. Nick Rousey won at -23 and took home the \$20,000 first prize.

Though playing in only three events, O'Neal has won \$9,820 and stands 44th on the tour's Pro Series money list.

BCSP Notes

Savannah State's Hall only HBCU Div. I Track and Field first team All-American

EUGENE, Ore.- **Savannah State** senior **Cameron Hall** finished eighth in the finals of the men's 110-meter hurdles in the NCAA Outdoor Track & Field Championships held at Hayward Field becoming the only HBCU athlete to score and receive first-team all-American honors this season.

The St. Mary's Georgia native posted a time of 13.61 to earn one point for the Tigers. Omar McLeod of Arkansas won the race with a time of 13.01.

Hall (6-3, 220) qualified for the finals by finishing second in his heat in the semi-finals on June 11 with a time of 13.61. The time tied the school record which was set by Hall in the 2015 **Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference** Outdoor Championships in May.

Hall earned the right to compete at the Championships by winning the quarterfinals of the East Preliminary Championships on May 30 with a run of 13.68 at North Florida's Hughes Stadium.

First team all-Americans finish in the top eight in their event. Second team all-Americans finish 9th-16th.

Morgan State's Jailah Mason leads the second teamers, finishing just out of the scoring (ninth) in the high jump clearing 5' 11". **Tennessee State** long jumper **Clairwin Dameus** finished 11th.

Hampton's quartermiler **Chidi Okezie** was 13th while teammate **Trey Holloway** was 15th in the 110-meter hurdles.

The **Alabama State** women's 4x400 meter relay team of **Tatiana Etienne**, **Alexis Ferebee**, **Kimberly Wedderburn** and **Santina Williams** finished 14th.

Bethune-Cookman's long jumper **Kenneth Fisher** and high jumper **Ed'Ricus Williams** both finished 16th in their events.

Nine SWAC players taken in 2015 Major League Baseball Draft

Alabama State relief pitchers **Armando Ruiz** and **Jorge Pantoja**, **Alcorn State** center fielder **Earl Burl III**, **Grambling State** center fielder **Edwin Drexler**, **Jackson State** infielder **Melvin Rodriguez**, **Mississippi Valley State** outfielder **Kalik May**, **Southern** centerfielder **Lance Jones** and **Arkansas-Pine Bluff** pitchers **Andre Davis** and **Kevin Walsh** are the nine **Southwestern Athletic Conference** players selected in last week's 2015 Major League Baseball Draft.

Chowan of the **CIAA** had one player taken, junior utility player **Tyler Burden**.

UAPB's Davis was the highest player drafted among all SWAC athletes going to the Kansas City Royals in the eighth round, 249th overall.

This past season for the Golden Lions, Davis saw action in 38 games, starting in 37. He finished the season with 51 hits in 140 at-bats for a .364 batting average, while driving in 39 runs and scoring 34. He also tallied 12 doubles, one triple and six homers for a total of 19 hits for extra bases. On the mound for UAPB, Davis made 19 appearances with one start. He finished the season with 2.28 ERA in 27.2 innings pitched and with a 2-2 record and five saves. He struck out 35. Davis was a 2015 First Team All-SWAC selection, a 2015 inductee into the student-athlete National Honor Society Chi Alpha Sigma and was the Trotter Ford Male Student-Athlete of the Year.

JSU's Rodriguez was taken in the 18th round and was the 554th pick. The Manati, Puerto Rico native recorded a .422 batting average and had 97 hits, 22 doubles, seven homers, 61 runs and 65 RBIs. He also posted a .477 on base percentage and a .635 slugging percentage to go along with a .961 fielding percentage. He was named to the NCBWA All-America third team and the ABCA All-Region second team. His other honors include being named a Louisville Slugger All-American, a finalist for the C Spire Ferriss Trophy, SWAC Player of the Year, SWAC Co-Hitter of the Year, an All-SWAC first team selection, a SWAC All-Tournament team member and was on the Dick Howser Trophy Watch List.

He is the first Tiger to be drafted since **Pernell Halliman** was selected by the Kansas City Royals in the 40th round in 2008.

Chowan's Burden was taken in the 20th round by the Toronto Blue Jays. Burden posted a .407 batting average, .731 slugging percentage and .476 on-base percentage, tallying 59 hits in 145 at-bats. He notched 11 doubles, a team-high six triples and belted eight homers. The 2015 All-CIAA First Team honoree and NCBWA All-Region First Team member accounted for 39 RBI on the season and was a perfect 19-19 in stolen base attempts.

On the mound, Burden tallied 23 strikeouts in 20 innings of work. He ended the season 2-2 with 17 appearances and a 4.05 earned run average. Burden led the Hawks and the CIAA with five saves on the year.

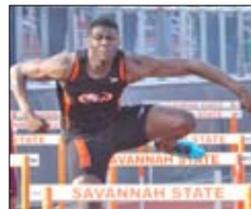
Walsh was selected in the 21st round by the Philadelphia Phillies during the third day of the draft. He earned first-team all-SWAC in 2014 and 2015. After transferring from Gloucester Community College, Walsh compiled a 4-2 record with a 1.70 ERA. He allowed 12 runs (eight earned) on 29 hits over 42.1 innings with 54 strikeouts.

Ruiz was a 29th round selection by the Oakland A's and appeared in 88 games during his four-year Hornet career, capped off by receiving his Bachelor's degree in business management last month. He posted a 5-7 record and a 3.97 ERA with 14 saves during his career, with 111 innings pitched and 125 strikeouts. This season, Ruiz was the closer, appearing in 24 games with a 1-1 record with a 3.63 ERA and a career-high seven saves.

Pantoja was selected in the 30th round by the Washington Nationals and appeared in 52 games primarily as a middle reliever. He struck out 54 batters in 56.1 innings during his three-year career.

Ruiz and Pantoja (Alabama State) became the ninth and 10th ASU baseball players selected in the MLB Draft, with five players drafted in the past two seasons - Jesse Cleveland (1965), Willie Garrison (1967), William Hardy (1979), Rufas Ellis (1984 and 1985), Adrian Urquhart (2002), and Emmanuel Marrero, Richard Amion, and Richard Gonzalez (2014).

The Toronto Blue Jays drafted May in round 33. During the 2014 season, Kalik played and started in all 42 games. In 149 at bats, he recorded 17 runs on 36 hits, six doubles, four triples, one homerun and 14 RBIs.



Cameron Hall



His slugging rate for the season was .356 and a fielding of .941. Kalik started and played in 43-43 games this season. In 179 at bats, he recorded 37 runs on 60 hits, 11 doubles, five triples, four homerun and 33 RBIs. His slugging rate this season is .520 and a .896 fielding rate.

Burl III, was named a member of the 2015 All-SWAC Baseball Tournament team after an outstanding performance in the season-ending affair. He recorded two hits, scored two runs and collected three RBIs during the tournament. He also had seven putouts.

Jones had his name called in the 36th round by the Blue Jays as well. He finished the 2015 season batting .302 with an on base percentage of .400. He was fourth on the team in runs scored (29), RBI (21), and third in doubles with 10. Jones started in 38 of the teams 43 games.

Drexler was chosen in round 38 by the Los Angeles Dodgers and was second of the team with 39 hits and led the Tigers with 30 runs scored starting in all 38 games this past season.

NC Central's Kimber signs with KC Royals

DURHAM, N.C. – A **North Carolina Central** baseball player got the call that every Little Leaguer dreams of Sunday night.

On the other end of the phone was a scout from the Kansas City Royals, who noticed Kimber's pitching ability and athleticism during a tryout on Friday (June 12) in Burlington, North Carolina at the home of the Burlington Royals. The scout liked what he saw and offered Kimber a professional contract with the Kansas City Royals.

Kimber signed the contract on Monday evening at his home in Greensboro, North Carolina and will fly to Arizona on Tuesday to join the Royals rookie team.

Although Kimber spent much of his three-year NCCU career in the outfield or infield, his opportunity at the professional level will be as a pitcher. As a senior in 2015, the dynamic Eagle started 20 games at third base, 18 in left field, five at second base, two in right field, two at designated hitter and two as a pitcher. In three total pitching appearances this season, Kimber tossed just 5.0 innings.

Still, during Friday's tryout just minutes away from his hometown, Kimber took full advantage of his 20 bullpen pitches by lighting the radar gun to between 92-94 miles per hour.

In three seasons at NCCU, Kimber accumulated 46.1 innings pitched in 19 appearances with 10 starts. Most of that work came in 2014 with 38.0 innings pitched in 14 appearances with seven starts.

"I feel like I have worked hard enough and someone saw the effort," said Kimber, who graduated from NCCU in May with a degree in psychology.

Kimber is the first NCCU student-athlete to sign with a Major League Baseball franchise in the modern era of the program (since baseball returned in 2006).

"This is a tremendous honor and opportunity for Eric," said NCCU baseball head coach Jim Koerner. "He has been working hard towards this goal since I've known him and it's been a pleasure watching him mature and improve. Eric is extremely athletic, and now that he can finally focus on just pitching he is only going to continue to improve."

Alabama State, Tennessee State selected for 2015 Preseason Women's NIT

ATLANTA, Georgia (June 5, 2015) - The basketball teams from **Alabama State** and **Tennessee State** have been selected to compete in the 2015 Preseason Women's National Invitational Tournament.

The 16 team WNIT field, announced on Tuesday, consists of Alabama State (**SWAC**); Baylor (Big 12); Chattanooga (Southern); Dartmouth (Ivy); DePaul (Big East); Drexel (Colonial); Indiana (Big Ten); Jacksonville (Atlantic Sun); McNeese State (Southland); Siena (Metro Atlantic); South Florida (American); Southern Illinois (MVC); Southern Miss (Conference USA); St. Bonaventure (Atlantic 10); Tennessee State (Ohio Valley); and UT Arlington (Sun Belt).

Alabama State won the 2015 **Southwest Athletic Conference** Tournament title while Tennessee State took the crown in the Ohio Valley Conference (OVC).

Ten of the 16 teams advanced to postseason play in 2015. This is the Preseason WNIT debut for Alabama State, Jacksonville, Southern Miss, St. Bonaventure, Tennessee State and UT Arlington.

Teams making their first return to the event are Dartmouth (2006), DePaul (2010), Siena (2002), South Florida (2004) and Southern Illinois (1997). Others with multiple appearances are Drexel (2011, 2005), Indiana (2008, 1998), McNeese State (2011, 2004), Baylor (2011, 2006, 1998) and Chattanooga (2011, 2005, 2000). The No.-1 ranked Baylor Lady Bears won the 2011 Preseason championship after defeating No. 2 Notre Dame 94-81 in front of a sold-out home crowd. Baylor went on that season to capture the NCAA Tournament Championship and finish with a 40-0 record.

The event is formatted to guarantee three games for each team.

SWAC to adopt new rules in women's hoops

NCAA women's basketball games will be played in four 10-minute quarters next season. The NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel approved moving the game to the new format and away from the 20-minute halves the sport has always used in NCAA competition on a conference call last week.

Teams will now reach the bonus and shoot two free throws on the fifth team foul in each quarter. Previously, teams reached a one-and-one bonus on the seventh team foul of each half and reached the double bonus (two shots) on the 10th team foul.

In the four-quarter format, team fouls reset to zero at the start of each quarter. Other changes include:

Advancing the ball

The panel approved a rule that allows teams to advance the ball to the frontcourt following a timeout immediately after a made basket in the last 59.9 seconds of the fourth quarter and any overtime periods.

Post defense

The panel approved a new rule that allows defenders to place a forearm or an open hand with a bend in the elbow on an offensive post player with the ball whose back is to the basket.

Bands and amplified music

In an effort to improve the overall fan experience, bands or amplified music may be played during any dead-ball situation during a women's basketball game. Previously, rules allowed music to be played only during timeouts and intermission.