



Florida A&M Sports Photo

**NO FOOTBALL FOR FAM:** Disappointed, but planning for a safe return in fall 2021 when Rattlers join the SWAC, says AD Kortne Gosha.

## THEM CHANGES

**SEVEN LEFT FOR MEAC SPRING FOOTBALL; HOOPS READY TO START; NEW TSU FACILITY**

## UNDER THE BANNER

WHAT'S GOING ON IN AND AROUND BLACK COLLEGE SPORTS

### MILLS TO PLAY IN SENIOR BOWL:

MOBILE, Ala. – North Carolina Central University senior cornerback **Bryan Mills** has accepted an invitation to participate in the *Reese's Senior Bowl*.



Mills

Mills, a native of Palmdale, California, joins former NFL Pro Bowl selections **Doug Wilkerson** (1970) and **Robert Massey** (1989) as the only NCCU representatives invited to play in the Senior Bowl.

The Reese's Senior Bowl is scheduled for Jan. 30, 2021, at the University of South Alabama inside Hancock Whitney Stadium. The annual event showcases the best NFL draft prospects among players who have completed their college eligibility.

Mills was voted as a 2019 First Team All-MEAC honoree and selected to the AFCA Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) Coaches' All-America Team and BOXTOROW All-America Team in his first season at NCCU after transferring from the College of Canyons. Mills led the conference with five interceptions, and ranked second in the MEAC with 13 passes defended. He also accounted for 22 tackles.

Also during his junior campaign in 2019, the cornerback tied the NCCU record for interceptions in a game with three picks at **Morgan State** on Sept. 28.

### JONES STEPS DOWN AT ST. AUG'S:

RALEIGH, N.C. (Nov. 16) – **Montel Jones** is stepping down as Head Women's Basketball Coach at **Saint Augustine's University** (SAU) at the end of November for personal family reasons.

Jones was the Lady Falcons' head coach the past two seasons. Under Jones' leadership, the Lady Falcons improved its win total by seven games last season. Jones was an assistant men's basketball coach for the Falcons in the 2016-17 and 2017-18 seasons.

A national search for a new head women's basketball coach will begin immediately.

### NO NON-CONFERENCE HOOPS FOR 'BAMA STATE:

MONTGOMERY, Ala. | The **Alabama State University** Department of Intercollegiate Athletics has announced that both men's and women's basketball programs will shift to a conference-only schedule beginning in January, which includes nine dates at the Dunn-Oliver Acadome.

The decision was made based on the spikes around the country that would affect both Alabama State and its opponents. Both programs will open the season January 2 at home against **Grambling State** and will play an 18-game conference schedule in 2021.

"This was not an easy decision to make," Director of Intercollegiate Athletics **Jennifer Lynne Williams** said. "We have said from the outset of this pandemic, that safety is the number one priority, and we will continue toward that goal. While we may not be playing in November and December, we will set our sights toward returning to the court in January to contend for two conference titles."

Although the season has been pushed back to January, season tickets will become available for that portion of the schedule this week. There will be a limited number of season tickets on sale, and no single game tickets will be made available for 2021.

### HOWARD LANDS ANOTHER TOP HOOPS RECRUIT:

BURLINGTON, N.C. — **Howard University** has landed another top basketball recruit as 6-9 forward **Kuluel Mading** went on Instagram Live Saturday to choose the Bison.



Mading

Mading stands 6-foot-9 and weighs 190 pounds. He is rated as a three-star prospect by 247Sports.com. The recruiting website also lists him as the No. 8 overall player from North Carolina, the No. 29 power forward in the Class of 2021, and the No. 162 player nationally. He attends The Burlington School, an independent NCISAA 2A school in North Carolina. He averaged 15 points per game on 72 percent shooting from the field as a junior, while grabbing nine rebounds and recording 2.5 blocks each outing on average.

Mading had announced in August Howard, Clemson, East Carolina, fellow MEAC member **NC Central**, Providence, Tulsa, Virginia Commonwealth (VCU), and UNCG as his finalists.

The Bison were able to land 7-foot, five-star center **Makur Maker** from Hillcrest Prep (AZ) for their 2020 recruiting class. Mading follows in his footsteps to play for now second-year head basketball coach **Kenneth Blakeney** — who had a 4-29 record during the 2019-20 season.

# Florida A&M latest to opt out of football

## LUT WILLIAMS

BCSP Editor

**Florida A&M**, who was joined by **Bethune-Cookman** when it decided to leave the **Mid Eastern Athletic Conference** after this season, will now join the Wildcats sitting out MEAC football this spring.

FAMU's Department of Athletics announced last Thursday its decision to opt out of the 2021 MEAC spring seasons for football, indoor track & field and volleyball.

The decision "was made with the health and safety of our student-athletes as our top priority," said Florida A&M VP/Director of Athletics **Kortne Gosha** in the statement.

"This was a collective decision with our coaches and staff, given the varying circumstances that COVID-19 has created for our program. We are certainly disappointed that some of our student-athletes will not be able to compete this year; however, we will shift our focus to achieving our academic priorities while planning a safe return to play in fall 2021, our inaugural season in the **Southwestern Athletic Conference**."

FAMU's decision comes just over two weeks after B-CU shut down its entire athletics program for the rest of the fall and all of the spring season. It also comes just days before an MEAC deadline of Nov. 16 for schools to opt out of scheduled athletics activities.

Back in mid-July, the MEAC suspended the fall sports season because of the COVID-19 pandemic. On October 22, the league released a spring football schedule re-aligned to only divisional competition to begin on Feb. 20. In light of pandemic realities, the new alignment and schedule was designed to minimize both travel time and time spent outside of class, reduce travel expenses and eliminate air travel.

The schedule called for the four Northern Division teams to play each other twice. The five Southern Division teams were to play two teams twice and two teams once. Each team was to have two bye weeks.

FAMU and B-CU were to be two of the five schools competing in the re-aligned Southern Division. **North Carolina A&T**, **North Carolina Central** and **South Carolina State**



are the remaining members of the Southern Division. **Norfolk State**, **Howard**, **Morgan State** and **Delaware State** make up the Northern Division.

How the football schedule will be changed with B-CU and FAMU pulling out is likely to be unveiled now that the Nov. 16 deadline has passed.

The MEAC Championship football game is scheduled for Saturday, April 16.

### MEAC Basketball

Meanwhile, Bethune-Cookman is the only MEAC program not competing in basketball.

A divisional format was also adopted for men's and women's MEAC basketball, with each school playing 16 games, all in their division, over the course of nine weeks beginning Jan. 2, 2021. **Coppin State** and **Maryland-Eastern**

**Shore** are additional MEAC members that will play a Northern Division schedule.

Conference games are scheduled for Saturdays, Mondays and Wednesdays. How the schedules will be changed absent B-CU is still to be determined.

The MEAC Men's and Women's Basketball Tournament is set for March 8-13 at the Norfolk Scope Arena.

The non-conference portion of the basketball schedules is slated to begin next week but because of constantly changing pandemic circumstances, some of those schedules are still in flux (see below).

On the men's side, South Carolina State has an ambitious 11-game non-conference slate. Coppin State has a robust ten-game schedule while Morgan State shows eight such contests and Norfolk State seven. Howard has released a five-game non-conference schedule. Delaware State shows three non-conference games on its website. Florida A&M shows just two non-league match ups.

Apparently, the non-conference schedules for North Carolina A&T, North Carolina Central and Maryland-Eastern Shore have not been finalized.

### MEAC MEN'S BASKETBALL NON-CONFERENCE SLATE

COPPIN STATE	HOWARD	MORGAN STATE	NORFOLK STATE
11/25 @ Marshall	11/26 Belmont (@ WWC)	11/25 Mt. Saint Mary's	11/27 @ James Madison
11/26 Tenn. State @ Marshall	11/27 Northeastern (@ WWC)	11/28 Bowie State	11/28 Radford @ JMU
11/28 @ Duke	11/28 George Mason (@ WWC)	12/1 Lincoln (PA)	
12/3 @ Towson	12/6 Bellarmine	12/8 @ George Mason	
12/6 @ Drexel	12/8 Elon	12/13 Bellarmine	
12/8 @ Georgetown		12/16 @ Navy	
12/13 @ UMBC		12/19 @ Towson	
12/16 @ George Mason		12/22 Washington Adventist	
12/19 @ Virginia Tech			
12/29 @ Rider			
DELAWARE STATE	FLORIDA A&M	SOUTH CAROLINA STATE	
11/30 Manhattan	11/25 @ Florida Gulf Coast	11/25 Appalachian State	
12/5 Delaware	12/18 @ Georgia Tech	11/28 @ Bowling Green	
12/12 Saint Francis		12/2 @ Clemson	
		12/5 @ UNC-Asheville	
		12/7 @ UNC Charlotte	
		12/11 @ College of Charleston	
		12/13 Jacksonville	
		12/15 @ Liberty	
		12/18 @ Presbyterian	
		12/21 @ Furman	
		12/23 @ South Carolina	

## BCSP Notes

### NBA vet and alum Robert Covington to fund new practice facility at Tennessee State

NASHVILLE --- **Tennessee State University** men's basketball alumnus and NBA star **Robert Covington** announced his plan to fund a practice facility for the men's and women's basketball programs at TSU.

Covington, a nine-year NBA vet who has played for Houston (twice), Minnesota and Philadelphia, made the announcement last Thursday during a press conference.

"I love my alma mater, I'm not donating a new practice facility for the recognition or because I need to - I am doing it because I truly want to. I know what the school didn't have when I was here as a student and I want future generations of kids to have the best resources available to them, to build their futures both on and off the court. I want them to step on this campus and feel like their dreams can come true here, because mine really did."

Head men's basketball coach **Brian "Penny" Collins** spoke before Covington took the stage. Collins talked about Covington's commitment to the program.

"Rob has been a beacon of inspiration for our student-athletes since he left Tennessee State University," said Coach Collins.

"To have a practice facility for our men's and women's basketball programs will be a game changer. It also shows how serious we are on taking the next step in being an extremely competitive program in the OVC (Ohio Valley Conference). Our players will be committed to making Rob proud. He has definitely set the bar for them to follow. Rob was already a legend and with this commitment he becomes iconic. His name and legacy will live on forever in the land of golden sunshine."

During his remarks, Covington talked about how Tennessee State has

**HERO:** Tennessee State grad Robert Covington, who played this season for the NBA's Houston Rockets, to build a new basketball practice facility at the school. Construction is to begin in spring 2021.



impacted his life and how special this moment was for him and his family.

"I made some of the best memories of my life at TSU. Go to a bigger school? Nope. I wouldn't change it for the world because the people who've had the most significant impact on my life, they wouldn't be next to me today. It's special to be at the forefront of something that can spark a major change as far as kids going to an HBCU and learning about black history, their culture and where they came from. Learning about your ancestors - you can't always get that in the classroom. That's a big thing, it's very important.

"I had an experience very few professional athletes had. It was life changing. I'm a walking product of a kid that went to an HBCU and created a narrative for myself."

"I feel like now is the time for change and progression all around. I'm in a great place to give back to the place that shaped who I am - not only as an athlete but as a man. My family and I are excited to be able to do this and to break ground on Covington Pavilion today!"

Media reports Tuesday indicated that Covington was traded from the Houston Rockets to the Portland Trailblazers.

## BCSP NFL PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

For games of November 12 - 16, 2020



### SPECIAL TEAMS

- **TRENTON CANNON**, RB/KR, Carolina (3rd season, **VIRGINIA STATE**) - Three kickoff returns for 151 yards (50.3-yard average) with a long return of 98 yards in 46-23 loss to Tampa Bay. Took kickoff return two yards deep in his own end zone and returned it to the Tampa Bay 5. Got in on five (5) plays on offense and 19 on special teams (59%).



- **DANNY JOHNSON**, DB/S, Washington (3rd season, **SOUTHERN**) - Had five kickoff returns for 127 yards (25.4 yard average) with a long return of 46 yards in 30-27 loss in overtime to Detroit. Got in on 16 plays on special teams (53%).

### DEFENSE

- **DARIUS LEONARD**, LB, Indianapolis (3rd season, **SOUTH CAROLINA STATE**) - Led Colts with nine (9) tackles, 3 solos in 34-17 win over Tennessee. Was in on 61 plays on defense (94%) and four (4) on special teams (17%).

### OFFENSE

- **BRANDON PARKER**, OT, Las Vegas (3rd season, **NORTH CAROLINA A&T**) - Started at left tackle in 37-12 win over Denver. Playtime percentage not available. Raiders rushed for 203 yards and passed for 154 yards and two TDs while giving up no sacks in the win.

- **TERRON ARMSTEAD**, LT, New Orleans (8th season, **ARKANSAS-PINE BLUFF**) - Started at left tackle and played on all 59 offensive snaps (100%) and two (2) on special teams as the Saints rolled up 139 passing yards and 114 rushing yards in 27-13 win over San Francisco.



carolinapanthers.com Photo

### TURNING ON THE JETS!!

Carolina RB/KR **TRENTON CANNON** (#36, **VIRGINIA STATE**), who was drafted by and played three years for the NY Jets, showed the scintillating form that made him the 2017 **CIAA** Player of the Year as he makes a deft cut to the left into the clear en route to a 98-yard kick return in Sunday's game vs. Tampa Bay. It was the seventh longest kickoff return in Panthers history. The return set up a Teddy Bridgewater touchdown run. Cannon had three kickoff returns for 151 yards (50.3-yard average) in the Panthers' 46-23 loss to the Buccaneers.