

NCAA race bias: a case for Doug Williams

By HOWIE EVANS

And now the wait begins for Doug Williams, the best quarterback in the nation, regardless of what you have heard and read about Cavanaugh of Pittsburgh and Chuck Fusina of Penn State.

All during the national telecast of the Penn State - Pitt game, announcers Al Michaels and Lee Grosscup extolled the virtues of Cavanaugh and Fusina, and never mentioned Grambling's Doug Williams who has re-written the NCAA records books this season. But then again, the NCAA itself gave just a passing glance to the achievements of Williams.

We have come to expect this from institutions that habitually exclude predominantly Black schools from their television schedules on a national level. Williams is the only legitimate Heisman candidate who did not get the benefit of national television exposure this season.

Last Saturday, ABC, after being badgered all season, beamed the Grambling-Southern University game into Arkansas and Louisiana. They also used Ron Pinkney, a Black sportscaster out of Washington D.C. as the play by play man. Pinkney is the sports director for the Mutual Black Network.

Will the voting press of the nation, or should we say, can the people who cast votes, ignore the fact that Williams plays for a predominantly Black institution?

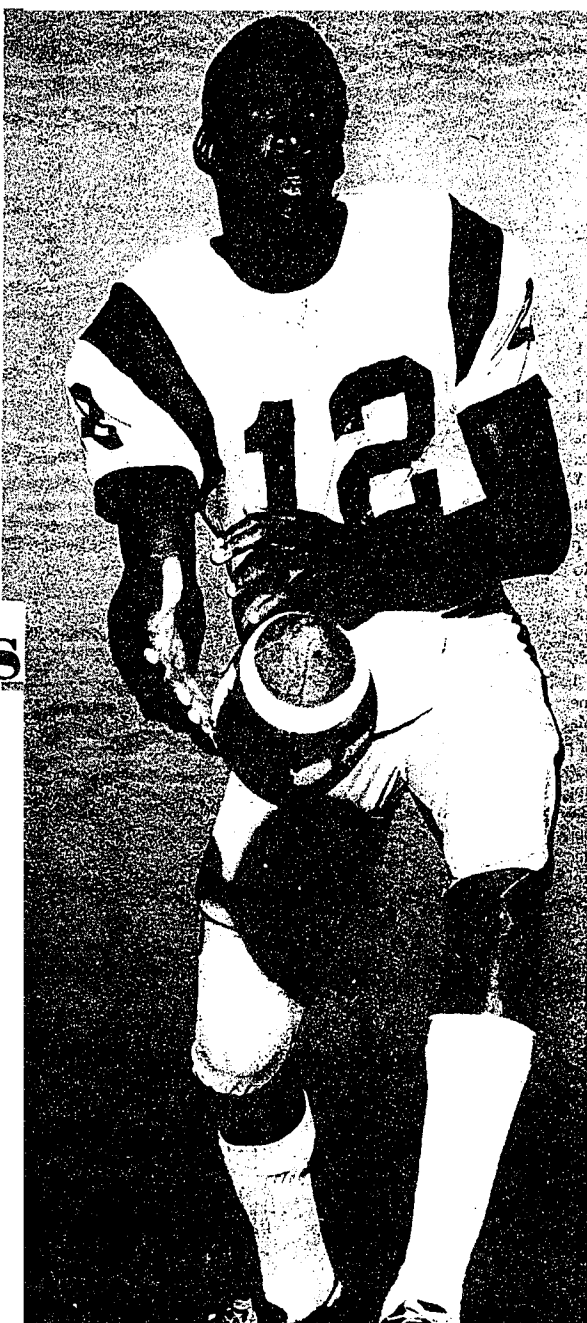
And if history is any indication of the future, then these same voters should recall that they ignored Walter Payton who set an NCAA touchdown record while at Black Jackson State, or Sammie White, who merely was named the rookie of the year in the NFL after a sensational season at Grambling.

There is no doubt that the people who vote for the Heisman award, need their committee beefed up by the scouts whose job it is to scrutinize the college talent. The pro scouts singled out Payton and White as number one draft choices, but they were completely ignored by the voting press in the Heisman, the most prestigious collegiate award in the nation.

And if history is again any indication of the future, it appears they are going to ignore Doug Williams, the 6'4, 215 pounder who has thrown for more passing yardage (8,062) than any other collegian in the history of the game.

Williams, who became the number one quarterback in the 5th game of his freshman year, also set a new standard in touchdown tosses. His 3 touchdown passes last week against Southern University in the Louisiana Dome, gave him a career total of 89, surpassing the 69 career tosses by Steve Ramsey of North Texas State and the overall record holder, Greg Bozell, who threw for 72 while attending Attawa College.

Thus far this season, with one game remaining against Temple, Williams has thrown for 34 TD passes, and needs five to tie and six to break the 39 season TD record held by Dennis Shaw from San Diego State, who played with the Bills and a number of other NFL teams.



GRAMBLING QUARTERBACK DOUG WILLIAMS

Needless to say, Williams has passed every record held by James Harris of San Diego and holds every record for passing in the state of Louisiana. Most of those records were held by Terry Bradshaw of the Steelers. Doug Williams drew these words from Eddie Robinson, who for some 36 seasons, has been churning out the best players in the country for the NFL.

Best Pro Prospect

"Doug is the best pro prospect I have ever coached," claimed Robinson who now has 263 career victories against only 86 losses and 11 ties." If he played for Notre Dame or Alabama, there would be no question who the Heisman winner would be. It would be Doug Williams by a landslide. He's going to be hard to ignore under any circumstances.

"He's un-real," continued Robby. "He's like a coach on the field. You recall Walter Payton was not taken serious as a Heisman candidate and all he has been the last three years is the best runner in pro football. All we are asking at Grambling is that Doug be evaluated on same basis as any other college football player.

"You can bet the pro scouts won't use double standards in the draft. They are calling him the next Joe Namath."

There is no doubt that Williams statistics would be even more impressive. But Robinson has removed him early from one-sided games, much to the regret of many. Against Southern University in the annual Bayou Classic, in excess of 75,000 fans saw Williams leave the game with 11 minutes remaining. Doug had thrown for 304 yards, 3 touchdowns and went 19-for 30

with two interceptions.

The final 55-7 score marked the third straight year that Williams has led Grambling to a victory in this classic which has sold out the Super Dome each time.

Last Grambling Game

Doug's last game in a Grambling uniform will come on December 11th in Tokyo against Temple University, which squeezed out a 32-31 controversial win last year in Philadelphia. The game will be held at Korakuen Stadium where the Tokyo Giants play.

The 50,000 seat stadium, a replica of Yankee Stadium, is completely sold out, and will be telecast nation-wide over 23 stations in Japan. Such is the magic of Grambling.

Yes, the waiting now begins for Doug Williams.

Waiting for the Heisman vote, and then the long wait for the draft which will be held in May. Either way, Doug is going to be in the NFL next season. The only regret is that the nation did not get an opportunity to see him play.

Maybe, with Grambling now playing in division 1 of the NCAA, some of the biggies will hold their breath and find spots for them on their schedules. With people like Williams, Harris, White, Ladd, Younger, and the countless others, including James Hunter, now with the Detroit Lions and rated the best defensive back in college football by the pro scouts last year, don't take any bets that school's such as Notre Dame, Alabama, etc. will be rushing to go against Eddie Robinson and his Tiger-Cats.