

Alcorn State University



Alcorn's Phenomenal 2016-17 Season Ends at Finals of SWAC Championships
Men's Basketball

Posted: 3/11/2017 9:20:00 PM

HOUSTON – It may not have ended the way the Alcorn State University men's basketball program wanted, but the Braves laid it all on the court in a defensive 53-50 battle against Texas Southern in the finals of the SWAC Championships on Saturday at the Toyota Center.

The second-seeded Braves ended the year 18-14 overall after going 13-5 in the SWAC. The 18 wins were the most since 2001-02.

The Braves trailed by five with 30 seconds left. Freshman [Maurice Howard](#) was fouled after he drove to the bucket and nailed a pair of free throws to make it a one possession game. Alcorn was able to get a tie-up in the back-court defensively and had the possession arrow with 11 seconds remaining. The Braves were able to get off a three-point attempt but it hit the front of the rim.

Alcorn was led by junior [Reginal Johnson](#) who finished with 16 points and six rebounds. He was joined in double-figures by senior [Denzel Dulin](#) who recorded 12 points and five rebounds.

After the game, Johnson was named to the SWAC All-Tournament Team. It came after he was selected to the All-Conference Second-Team.

Senior [Marquis Vance](#), an All-Conference First-Team honoree, registered six points and six rebounds.

Top-seeded TSU (23-11, 16-2 SWAC) was guided by Kevin Scott's 15 points and 12 rebounds. Marvin Jones ended with 14 points and Demontrae Jefferson had 13.

In a low scoring first half, the Tigers used an early 8-0 run to build a 10-2 lead at the 13:16 mark. The Braves got going with both an inside basket and a three-pointer by Johnson to make it 10-7 with 11:27 left.

TSU answered by scoring the next six points to leap up 16-7 with 7:15 to go.

Alcorn still trailed 25-16 when freshman [Tyler Carter](#) drained a three-pointer with 1:36 remaining. A put-back by Johnson at the buzzer cut the deficit to 26-21 at the half.

The Braves scored the first four points of the second half on lay-ups by senior [DeAndre Davis](#) and Mosby to quickly make it a one-point spread, 26-25 with 17:42 left. The Tigers scored the next three baskets to go back up seven with 14:29 remaining.

Alcorn trailed 35-27 when lay-ups by freshman [Yalen Reed](#) and Dulin forced a TSU timeout with the score 35-31 at the 11:35 mark. A three-pointer in the right corner by Johnson further chopped it to 41-39 with 8:04 left.

The Braves tied it for the first time since it was 2-2 on a bucket in the post by Johnson, 41-41 with 7:20 to go. Dulin put the Braves ahead for the first time 43-41 on a strong drive which capped a 7-0 run with 5:41 remaining.

TSU responded with a 5-0 run as Alcorn called timeout down 46-43 with 4:20 left. The Braves got the deficit back down to one, 48-47, after a lay-up by Johnson at the 1:36 mark.

On the ensuing possession, the Tigers hit a big three-pointer near the end of the shot clock by Jefferson to go back up by four with 1:06 remaining.

The Braves were down five when Howard made a pair of free throws with 11 ticks left to make it a one possession game. Alcorn then forced a jump ball and had the possession arrow with 8.7 seconds. The Braves had a last-second three-point look from the left wing that was straight on target but fell just short and hit the rim.

NOTES

- Alcorn held an opponent to under 60 points for the ninth time this year. The Braves were 8-1 in those contests.

- Vance finished his four-year career at Alcorn with 1,303 points, 803 rebounds, 209 assists, 80 blocks, 70 double-figure scoring games and 11 double-doubles. He played in 124 matches and made 107 starters. This season, he ranked top-10 in the league in rebounding, blocks and assists. Vance's career-high was 30 points set at Grambling on Feb. 9, 2015.

- Davis wrapped-up his Alcorn career with 423 points, 255 rebounds, 42 blocks and 19 double-figure scoring games. He played in 53 games and made 41 starts. Davis swatted a career-high four blocks in the game. His career-high in scoring was 26 points set at Alabama State on Feb. 22, 2016.

- Dulin completed his collegiate career at Alcorn as a one-year graduate transfer. He netted 14 double-figure scoring games for the Braves. In the SWAC first round, he came up with a huge steal on MVSU's final possession and then hit a pair of clutch free throws. Dulin registered at least eight points in 12 conference games. He scored a career-high 20 points at Colorado State on Nov. 27.

- Johnson, a two-time SWAC Player of the Week winner, scored at least 10 points in 30 of the last 31 games. He went 6-for-13 from the field. It was his 49th career double-figure scoring game.

- The Braves outrebounded the Tigers 43-35. Alcorn also held a 23-9 edge in points off the bench.

- Alcorn led the league in field goal percentage defense (.402) and held TSU to a .392 (20-51) clip.

- Head coach [Montez Robinson](#), the SWAC Coach of the Year, completed his second season and hoists a 26-10 record in the SWAC. He coached the Braves to back-to-back winning seasons in conference for the first time since 2001-02, 02-03.

Quoting Alcorn head coach [Montez Robinson](#)

Opening Statement

"This was tough. We started out slow, but we got our legs up from under us and we were able to run our offense and get into a flow. We guarded them really well and this was one of the best defensive games we've had all year. We held a team to 53 points when they average close to 80. We've preached guarding and defending all year, and usually when you defend like this and rebound a team like we did you end up on the other side of it. It's really tough when you see your guys do everything that you've asked them to do."

On Alcorn's offense

"We had some looks and opportunities tonight that we didn't capitalize on. We've had dry spells all year and that's sort of been our nemesis. It's been game-to-game, and last game against Southern everything was flowing. Tonight, we were a little bit stagnant. We kept getting stops defensively, and we made a run to come back, but we had back-to-back turnovers late which hurt us."

On what the play call was on Alcorn's final possession

"I wanted to put the ball in A.J.'s hands. He's our best shooter from beyond-the-arc when you look at the percentages. We ran a screen for him and he had a solid look but it went in-and-out. You couldn't have asked for a better execution from our guys and it was just a situation where the ball was at a bad angle. Though, the play was executed pretty well."

On whether or not Texas Southern did things that Alcorn wasn't expecting

"Not really. Mike Davis is a creature of habit and he's not really going to change up much. He wants you to adjust to him, but I'm actually the same way. I want them to adjust to us. So, it was two heavyweight boxers going at it. All of our games against them this year have been really close. They won on a buzzer beater at our place, we lost in overtime at theirs, and then a three-point game tonight. There's a lot of things that we wish we could have back in this game such as missed lay-ups and turnovers. There wasn't a lot, but just some critical ones."

Closing Statement

"The season was a blessing. It was an honor to be around all these players, coaches, managers, etc. Going to work has been a joy, and that's hard for a lot of people to say. One of the things about working at the reservation at Alcorn is it's a family. People do a great job there at making you feel welcome. I'm just thankful for the University for giving me the opportunity to coach here when they didn't have to. I'm really appreciative of that."

SWAC All-Tournament Team

Marvin Jones, Texas Southern (Tournament MVP)

Kevin Scott, Texas Southern

Demontrae Jefferson, Texas Southern

[Reginal Johnson](#), Alcorn

Ivy Smith Jr., Grambling

#FearTheBrave

Copyright ©2017 Alcorn State University