NCAA SOCCER CHAMPIONS HOWARD UNIVERSITY: THE TRIUMPHS AND TRIBULATIONS OF RECLAIMING A HISTORIC NATIONAL TITLE

By

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NCAA Soccer Champions Howard University: The Triumphs and Tribulations of Reclaiming a Historic National Title

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my loving wife Mira, my oldest daughter Dalia, my triplets Lilia, Joseph, Elia and baby Jacob. I also dedicate my work to an incredible mother and mother in law and my father and father in law and entire family without whom I would not have been able to achieve the completion of this thesis. I would also like to dedicate this paper to the many good citizens of the United States of America who fight for the civil rights of people of color and challenge all forms of racism. This also goes out to the many people who contributed to the growth of the game of soccer in the United States including blacks and immigrant pioneer coaches and players who don’t get deserving credit for their achievements. In order to build a tolerant and multicultural society in the United States by utilizing the sport of soccer/football, it’s my hope that this study can add value. As a member of the United Soccer Coaches, the largest soccer association in America with its newly reorganized branch Black Soccer Coaches Membership Group, I would like to thank all the people who are tirelessly helping to overcome the continued struggle of blacks and other immigrants who remain an important part of the soccer community and institutions in the United States and around the world.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HBCU………………………………………Historically Black Colleges and Universities
HU……………………………………………………………………..Howard University
NCAA…………………………………………National Collegiate Athletic Association
NAIA …………………………………….National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics
G.P.A…………………………………………Grade Point Average
NSCAA………………..National Soccer Coaches Association of America
BSCMG……………………………………Black Soccer Coaches Membership Group
UCLA……………………………………University of California Los Angeles
Bison………………………………………..Howard University Mascot
N.A.S.L…………………………………..North American Soccer League
A.S.L……………………………………………American Soccer League
CYO…………………………………………….Catholic Youth Organization
ABSTRACT

NCAA SOCCER CHAMPIONS HOWARD UNIVERSITY: THE TRIUMPHS AND TRIBULATIONS OF RECLAIMING A HISTORIC NATIONAL TITLE

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This thesis looks into Howard University’s 1971 and 1974 NCAA soccer championships under the leadership of Coach Lincoln Phillips in a sport traditionally not popular among Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The collegiate soccer world was shocked when Howard University won the 1971 NCAA title by defeating a privileged powerhouse, Saint Louis University. Filled with principally European descendant players, the Billikens of Saint Louis had dominated college soccer since official NCAA records began to be managed for the sport in the mid-1960s. Howard’s struggles were not on the soccer field alone, but also confronting the NCAA’s sometimes unchallenged behavior during the height of the civil rights movement. Coached by Lincoln Phillips, the former goalkeeper for the Trinidad and Tobago national soccer team, the Howard University Bison were composed of players from the Caribbean, Africa, and the Americas. Their ability to perform at high levels became a symbol of unity during a time when racial tensions made news headlines.
This historical study explores how the NCAA, through its Committee on Infractions, used its power to target Howard University and take away a hard-earned national soccer title in 1971. The Howard University men’s soccer team regrouped and proved that they could achieve the impossible once again in 1974. This study also examines the influence that Coach Phillips had in the success of Howard’s soccer program. Through primary documents, articles, books, magazines, newspapers, and interviews, this thesis shares the strong human spirit that transformed a HBCU institution into a soccer champion. The study also provides a historical example of how soccer at the intercollegiate level of competition could be traced back to the time when many universities across America evoked bigotry and indifference. While volumes of documents are filled with facts about the success of soccer in America, Howard University’s obtaining of a second NCAA soccer title in 1974 has received little scholarly attention. This study looks into this critical comeback story.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the late 1980s playing soccer at NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) Division II Francis Marion College (now a University), I recall rushing to the library on Monday afternoons to grab the latest edition of Soccer America magazine. A newly arrived immigrant at the time, I was one of four black scholarship players on a team of mostly white suburban kids from the Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic regions of America. Eager to see where we stood in the college soccer weekly rankings, I studied the magazine intensely week after week. It was during this process that the history of college soccer in the United States revealed itself to me. While I was aware that minorities and immigrants played a significant role in the growth of college soccer, I learned that it was in the early 1970s that the increase of black players in the sport became a phenomenon. Contradicting information about the beginnings of American soccer has made it difficult to know precisely how the game was brought here from other European nations, including England, where the game may have its roots. However, some form of the game existed in the early seventeenth century in the American Colonies, and the first written accounts of soccer matches indicated that intramural contests were common at major colleges and universities in the Northeastern part of the United States.¹

¹ Van Rheenen, Derek (2009) 'The promise of soccer in America: the open play of ethnic subcultures', Soccer & Society, 10: 6, 781 — 794
Colleges and universities in the United States play prominent roles in the development of organized athletics. While the structure and system needed much work, the passion for sports at the collegiate level was very high. There was no benchmark set of rules that guided how eligibility rules allowed athletes to compete at the college level. The way athletic scholarships at institution of higher learning were disbursed remained unclear since amateur competition between students was not a primary concern for many schools. With this in mind, the National Collegiate Athletic Association was created in 1906 under the name the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States (IAAUS).²

Around the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, soccer was taking substantial steps in America. The country had just recovered from the Spanish-American War, and the start of an economic decline of historic proportions was about to end. At the beginning of the early 1900s, a tour of an all-star team from the English leagues sparked more passion for the game in major cities across America. Fans in the United States were introduced to top-notch soccer that they were not accustomed to seeing. Major metropolitan cities in several regions across America began to witness the transformation of soccer at high levels. The sport was beginning to be noticed more as already established leagues were determined to renew the excitement that soccer has always brought with it.³

I had a desire to know what type of role indigenous people, minority immigrants, and especially black immigrants, played in the development of soccer in America. I took it upon myself to research and study college soccer players. As a former college soccer player myself, I wanted to learn more about the contribution of a group of people so often not rewarded even though they played big roles in the growth of the sport within the United States. As the game’s popularity grew in the 1960s and 1970s at the college level, there was an effort by many organizations related to the sport to move soccer away from its image as an all-white, non-immigrant sport. The idea of soccer as one of the major national competitions in the United States was creeping into a collective psyche as soccer started to spread in middle-class communities. The fields that just a few years ago exhibited American style football goal posts were beginning to share time with many young people playing soccer. Until the mid-1970s, soccer had been the territory of ethnic groups mostly from the European continent. For example in the midwestern United States the St. Louis Catholic Youth Organizations, some private academies, urban secondary schools, and universities showcased their local talent through players that were born and grew up within these communities. Over time, the sport rapidly became a white, middle-class, suburban, and small town phenomenon.\(^4\)

Consequently, the role of blacks and black immigrant athletes was conveniently eliminated from the collegiate historical record until 1971, when Howard University shocked the sports world by defeating powerhouse Saint Louis University for the NCAA

Division I championship. While Howard had previously won the small college national championship, before the 1971 victory, the contributions of black and other minority immigrants towards the development of American soccer did not get much attention. Without the past efforts of some of these athletes, many collegiate programs in the nation would cease to exist. Their contribution is perhaps most notably seen in the early stages of the NCAA championship years in the late 1950s and early 1960s. As a bonus to getting a good education at the university level, in those days the idea of non-professional competition was usually built on the principle that athletes played purely for the love of a sport. It was with this in mind the governing body of college sports came up with the idea of keeping college sports at an amateur level. The open acceptance of athletic scholarships in the early 1950s was known as the “Sanity Code.” The Sanity Code, allowed the awarding of scholarships and jobs, but with the stipulation that the awardees had to prove they were in financial need. In essence, the code stated that grants-in-aid and jobs had to be awarded solely on behalf of the student athlete’s financial need. However, given the pressures to succeed in sports felt by all student-athletes, it is not surprising that the Sanity Code failed to prevent colleges and universities from awarding “full-ride” scholarships, irrespective of need.

At the beginning of the year 1952, the NCAA (the primary governing body of intercollegiate sports) was forced to repeal the Sanity Code by a Constitutional Compliance Committee that allowed the awarding of full scholarships on athletic ability alone. These days, most NCAA Division I and NCAA Division II universities give out scholarships. The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and the
National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) also provide some scholarships, however, schools in the Ivy League and NCAA Division III do not.\(^5\) The 1950s and 1960s saw recruiting become highly systematized in most American college sports programs. Athletic departments employed coordinators that solely focused on finding athletes. Coaches moved around the country in search of top athletes. The 1950s also witnessed the conception of recruiting blue chip student-athletes that would promote the school’s interests. Scouts were hired and initially began looking for the candidates at the local, then regional level until it took on an international dimension. By the 1970s, the recruitment of student-athletes became global, with many countries becoming hotspots for young people looking to get a good education in American colleges. Coaches eager to build their collegiate programs in the United States traveled to faraway places to find good athletes. The battleground to attract students who excelled in sports stretched all over the world as athletes were being recruited to improve NCAA sports programs in general. By recruiting foreign players, many coaches made sure that their athletes felt at home. They picked athletes that represented immigrant communities large and small across America.

Howard University, as the capstone of black education located at the epicenter of the United States Capital, had influence and international recognition as an HBCU school. It attracted many foreign students during the 1970s. It is important to note that soccer at Howard was attached to race and multinationalism during an era of racial

tensions across the country. A mentor, coach and athletic director by the name of Ted Chambers started the soccer club at the university in the 1947 season under very challenging circumstances. Most major colleges and universities declined to put Howard on their soccer schedule because of race related issues. Without proper competition at the collegiate level, Howard was forced to play for three years against different embassy teams based in Washington, D.C. Since the early stages of the soccer program, Bison players consisted of students mainly from outside the United States. The Howard student body at large also embodied scholars from other nations alongside a large group of black students from across America. According to reports from the University at the time, out of the 10,152 students that enrolled in the class of 1971, the school had 1,700 international students from 72 different countries. The newcomers who came to Howard were quickly introduced to the cultural revolution of the civil rights era, where newly recruited international and national soccer players received a crash course in American race relations. 6

As new players started to be recruited outside the United States by universities to help bolster their soccer programs, Howard University was no different. Coach Ted Chambers had already been through some tough challenges in the early 1960’s in his attempt to bring good student-athletes to Howard. His primary goal was to support the passion for the sport of soccer by international students who excelled at it. He perceived the game as vital for instilling good values while educating student-athletes about the

importance of teamwork. In its very early stages of the soccer program, Howard University competed in the NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics), a smaller group of colleges linked by a different athletic association around the nation. Meanwhile, in the 1960s an organization created for black international soccer players at Howard faced difficulties in their attempt to unify the variety of different cultures and ethnicities that were part of the broader student body. These student bodies consisted of mainly black Americans from a variety of locations around the intercontinental United States. Their knowledge of soccer was very minimal. As local students they needed to communicate better in learning the more delicate points of the sport. They made very little effort to understand the Howard University team’s make up of international athletes.

During the period that spanned over 60 years, foreign and immigrant soccer players did much of the heavy lifting for soccer’s development on American campuses. Often, these efforts were unappreciated and sometimes even mocked. Soccer was seen by many college administrators and athletic department officials as a sport that was an annex of the international club that did not deserve much attention. Most officials had to adapt to a new wave of international students that were not familiar with the American culture. The increase of foreign soccer players raised the bar higher regarding competitive soccer on American campuses. However, it also created a negative outlook towards the Americanization of the sport. In other words, these teams began to take on a 'foreign' look and thus appeared un-American. Three decades earlier, some American soccer purists,

disturbed by the changing ethnic make-up of the American game, criticized it for its low quality of play, claiming most of these players lacked the intelligence to play the sport.

Among the most outspoken of the critics was Douglas Stewart, the editor of *Soccer Guide*. He also happened to be a British immigrant who became an American citizen. According to Stewart, foreign and immigrant players were the lowest of the low. In one of his statements, he goes on to say, "Their brains do not work, and while they may get some muscular exercise, they get very little of the mental exercise which the game requires.” Demeaning these players was a way of denigrating the sport itself. He implied that the game had been hijacked by “simpletons and Neanderthals”. Stewart’s interpretation of non-American soccer was a by-product of another time, the newest chapter in America's racist description of cultural change and history. His criticism was a simplistic view that fit neatly into the stereotypical perceptions of mainstream America. Unfortunately, this was the view of soccer and its international players that would take root in some regions of the United States with populations that were not familiar with immigrants and their cultures until the 1990s.8

The history of black soccer players gives historians countless opportunities for conversations about racial and cultural identification. They are rarely documented and as the sport grows fast in the United States, there are plenty of opportunities to research and study those contributions towards the growth of the game. Soccer, historically, had less coverage in the media and the achievements of blacks in the sport is not easily found in archives. It became apparent for this study to look deep into some of the crucial moments

8 Ibid.
in the game and the figures that have shaped the black soccer experience in the United States. One positive image of soccer in the black community attracted many followers in 1963 during a time when the *Official Collegiate-Scholastic Soccer Guide* featured a cover picture of a student-athlete from Howard. Ernest Ikpe, a black Nigerian playing for the Bison soccer program, became a positive symbol for black student-athletes. Ikpe was Howard's ‘Iron-Man,’ an athlete who had played nearly every game during Howard's 1961 and 1962 seasons. As an electrical engineering student, he financed his education by working part-time while keeping a 3.0 G.P.A. During the 1962 season he earned All-South and All-American honors. Ikpe represented the American college game during that period as an excellent student-athlete. He also became a symbolic figure for America's growing college soccer scene.9

After winning the NAIA title in 1961, Howard continued to face barriers as an all-black school. Its attempt to join the predominantly white fraternity of soccer universities was rejected, on account of racism as a result of its all-black team that dominated play. It was then given an opportunity by officials within the college ranks to prove itself as a serious contender that could compete with and against the best big college team in the country at the time. Howard, as a small school, took on the NCAA Division I top champions of that year. The Bison played the Rams of West Chester University, in Pennsylvania who were winners of the 1961 NCAA Championship. The game against the Rams was a thrilling encounter, one captured by the Howard University student newspaper known as, *The Hilltop*.

9 Ibid.
The paper illustrated how soccer had brought together a diverse campus community behind Howard's head coach Ted Chambers’ Bison Booters. The Hilltop noted the victory with a well-documented analysis of the day that Howard an HBCU could play quality soccer and compete against the big schools. The writers added excitement in their article to readers that were still learning the finer points of the soccer game.

They wrote, the phrase, ‘soccer is all right, but it is a game for foreign students’ is an old, cold argument that received severe dowsing in the rain last Saturday as Westchester (1961-1962) large college national champions met the Howard (1961-1962) small College champions at a mud-drenched Howard stadium. They further noted, The Booters’ great performance against the dominant Rams was indicative of the rise in the stock of soccer and the “foreign” student ... Most of the fans braved the inclement weather knew little or nothing about soccer but fell in love with the speed, skill, and rugged action of the game. The crowd, which was drained of every emotion during an action-packed struggle between two very well- matched teams, was one of the largest ever to witness a soccer game here. The writers went on to express the feeling of a big win by adding,

“After the winning goal, pandemonium reigned. The crowd in a burst of passion streamed en masse onto the field and lifted their gory, mud-splattered scorers — Winston Alexis and Vernon Hazlewood onto their formerly umbrella-protected shoulders.”

11 Ibid.
This victory was necessary for the Howard soccer program. However, Coach Chambers continued to have more challenges as he continued to build a national contender. The win established the foundation for future Howard teams in their quest to become a national powerhouse. One particular hurdle was getting the student body at Howard to recognize that soccer could bring people together even though it was not a favorite American sport at the time. The unity among the student body proved a rarity at Howard as the 1960s progressed, with the country’s largest historically black college at the epicenter of the civil rights struggle.

Receiving any positive attention from the media was very difficult in the 1960s, especially for a black university. However, Ted Chambers who was well-connected to many communities around the world in his own way, helped push Howard toward the upper echelons of college soccer. Sports Illustrated, one of the most popular magazines in the United States, printed a small article related to the achievements of unknown sports teams like Howard. Selected by the magazine, after it won the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics title, the editors of the magazine wrote,

“SOCCER—HOWARD UNIVERSITY of Washington, D.C. beat Newark College of Engineering 3-2 to win the NAIA championship, at Lock Haven, Pa. Cecil Durham kicked the winning goal with 18 seconds left to play and broke Newark’s 23-game unbeaten streak.”

The mid to late 1960s saw Howard University challenging the issues of racism head-on. During this period, the struggle of black people for civil rights was exposed around the world and was not just limited to the United States.

12 Ibid.
The fight for justice and equality in America had the strong support of other blacks from the Caribbean and Africa. Most African nations were starting to realize independence from their European colonizers. What took place in the United States also affected communities around the world. Howard as the “capstone” of black education took the lead in the fight against racism. For the Howard University community, the mid-1960s were years when campus protest organizations proliferated and student demands multiplied. The college of liberal arts was mainly targeted to transform its curriculum by external bodies. This effort to create new identities for blacks as individuals were expanded to create a new character and mission for black institutions.

Howard was known as one the most important black educational institution in the United States. It became the object of compelling social and cultural forces that pressed for fundamental changes. Rejecting the integrationist assumptions of the past, many students insisted that universities in which the majority of students were black have a special obligation to transform themselves into universities in which the curriculum was relevant to the particular problems of black people living in a racist society. The same type of mentality applied to Howard’s sports programs. With the other local teams able to recruit players from the continental United States, Howard had a considerable challenge in recruiting good soccer players that could compete at the highest level. The main hurdles were that many blacks in America at that time did not excel in soccer. They focused heavily on playing and participating in more popular American sports like basketball, American football or baseball. The Howard soccer program's significance on

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the international stage was critical during the year 1970. Coach Ted Chambers transferred power to coach Lincoln Phillips before the start of the season. With his knowledge and expertise, Phillips was better equipped to combat all the difficulties that Chambers faced. In the middle of the civil rights era, the battle that Phillips had to fight as a soccer coach would be monumental. It was also an excellent opportunity to help build a competitive program. There may already have been a soccer team at Howard, but enthusiasm for the sport among the school’s athletic officials was lacking. Phillips knew what he wanted. He knew he could get better players from Trinidad or elsewhere in the Caribbean. His charm and his mischievous grin persuaded university administrators to get more funds to help improve the soccer team. Having convinced Howard to award their first-ever scholarships for soccer, he brought in players from Trinidad, Jamaica, and Africa. Within two years of Phillip’s arrival, Howard University was winning. Generation after generations, the sport of soccer in the United States has been inclusive of millions of players and fans from across the African diaspora. A beautiful combination of cultures and experiences has existed within soccer’s black population. As a diverse community within the United States, players with roots from Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean played their part in many different schools and clubs across the United States. A vast depository of books and hours of documentaries have explored facts as well as folklore from other multi-national sports in America, but the national soccer federation and professional soccer leagues still continue to lack famous players that can be compared to internationally

acclaimed players and standards.\textsuperscript{14} Howard University’s 1970-1974 soccer teams should be considered good candidates to fill in the gap as legends for the black soccer community.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: BLACKS, IMMIGRANTS AND SOCCER

As a nation of immigrants, the United States has been closely linked to soccer's international presence since the early stages of the game. While the game has its roots in Britain and Europe, it is believed that it made its way into America through immigration. Most newcomers were working individuals who came to this country for better opportunities as the American economy experienced rapid growth in the early decades of the twentieth century. The improvements were largely due to productivity within the manufacturing sector. The 1920s was a period of significant economic expansion and, until the passage of the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act, a welcoming immigration policy. Factories employed large numbers of European workers, who brought a love of soccer with them to their new country.\(^{15}\) Blacks were one part of that migration. However, due to segregation and less exposure of the sport in America, only a limited number of the black population was made aware of soccer.

In a large and diverse nation experiencing waves of immigration, struggling with racial divisions, and undergoing a pace of economic change, it had been difficult to negotiate sport. In most places around the world, the importance of sport is not to be ignored. Sport has provided many Americans with more than a much-needed escape from 

the hardships of their daily lives; it has given them a visceral connection to the American lived traditions and cultural values. In the early years of soccer, administrators and players of direct European descent dominated the game in most countries, including the United States. By the late 1920s, many American-born players were advancing into the professional ranks within the region as Italian and Portuguese names began to appear on top teams. One African player, Egypt’s Tewfik Abdallah, starred in the (ASL) American Soccer League from 1924 to 1928. However, the professional game in the United States mirrored the whitewashing of the British game, and players originating from sub-Saharan and African countries were excluded.

The first black American-born superstar soccer player was Adelino "Billy" Gonsalves, whose parents emigrated from the Madeira Islands, a Portuguese possession off the North Africa coast. Gonsalves began playing alongside the mill workers in Fall River, Massachusetts, emerging as one of the country's best players as a teenager in greater Boston. At 21, Gonsalves was a key player for the United States in the first World Cup in Uruguay and by 1934 had played in two World Cups and been offered contracts by top clubs in Brazil (Botafogo) and Italy (Lazio). He was also offered a chance to play for the New York Yankees as a first baseman and pitcher. Black players of Caribbean descent began to emerge at the top of American teams in the 1940s. Gil Heron, a Jamaica-born forward, joined the Detroit Wolverines in 1946 and led the North American

Soccer Football League with 15 goals in eight games. In 1951, a Celtic scout spotted Heron and the club brought him to Glasgow. In order to understand why it has taken such a long time for blacks of American heritage to succeed at high levels in soccer, one needs to understand the complications that come with the racial disparities existing within the governing bodies of sports within the United States and around the world. Leading to Howard's championship decade in the 1970s, this chapter will attempt to explain the role blacks and black immigrants played in helping to develop the sport of soccer within North America.

By the turn of the twentieth century, soccer was considered a secondary sport to American football, basketball, and baseball in the United States, and it took a back seat despite its international popularity. The sport of soccer did not really feature prominently in the United States until the late 1960s after an attempt for decades to promote it. A professional league was formed after securing a TV contract from CBS without permission from FIFA (Federation International Football Association), the sport’s world governing body. A group of entrepreneurs launched the National Professional Soccer League (NPSL) in 1967. It lasted just one season. The stadiums were empty, which made it tough to generate much excitement. In addition, most players had foreign names, their faces were unfamiliar, their backgrounds undistinguished, according to a CBS sports executive at the time.

During the 1960s, support for soccer on many university campuses remained

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weak, as Americans stayed away from the games, preferring to watch instead so-called “American sports.” Many campus soccer teams had difficulty obtaining financial support and a number of them lost their varsity status or were simply deemed to be 'club sports', a polite word for “non-important or non-essential,” the athletic department’s first step in having them eliminated. In this decade, foreign students were welcome to play soccer on American campuses. However, increasingly they were no longer guaranteed collegiate funding nor varsity support. As a result, many of these players had to buy their own uniforms or hold on-campus fundraisers in order to acquire funds for road trips. In time, a number of teams simply disappeared or were relegated to a 'pick-up game' existence due to these financial constraints.

This denigration of soccer also coincided with the emergence of an ever-increasing number of Latino, Arab, and African players on American college campuses, cultural groups especially receptive to the sport. Although these players raised the bar skill-wise, the underfunding of their teams in the face of the sports’ international and non-white collegiate evolution was not a coincidence. Americans did not show a big interest in soccer in the late 1960s and early 1970s, with the exception of areas in the country where European immigrants settled. St. Louis, Missouri was one place where the sport became popular. As a prestigious Catholic university, St. Louis University dominated the NCAA Division I Championship for a number of years, appearing in six finals.

The local Catholic clergy was responsible for establishing and developing a system that produced native-born players in St. Louis. Leagues were created starting in the late 1880s as boys grew up, their sons and successive generations took up the sport in Catholic grade
schools. As a result, soccer became a staple of the large Catholic population in St. Louis.

The Catholic Youth Council, which organized parish soccer leagues, had 9,000 players in eight age groups by 1965. This network of Catholic youth soccer was directly responsible for St. Louis teams winning 15 of 20 U.S. Junior Cups starting in 1960.\textsuperscript{19}

In 1969, St. Louis University was overrun with large number of good players that wanted to remain at home and play for the national powerhouse of the time. The other option for these players that wanted to continue their careers near their community was to look elsewhere around states connected to St. Louis. The best decisions for those players was to opt out and play at universities within the surrounding states at other nearby colleges. During this period, the college game started to become competitive nationwide. The role that St. Louis played in helping to grow the game can be attributed to the development of the game within the region as well as the nation.

In Washington D.C., Howard University made Lincoln Phillips head coach of soccer, and the Bison suddenly became a legitimate contender on the national scene. In 1970, he became known as the not-too-well paid soccer coach at Howard University. There was already a soccer team at Howard, but enthusiasm for, and knowledge of, the sport among the athletic officials was lacking. He was able to persuade better players from Trinidad or elsewhere in the Caribbean to play for the Bison. Having convinced Howard to award their first-ever scholarships for soccer, he brought in players from Trinidad, Jamaica and Africa. In just two years, Howard was able to capture the NCAA

title in soccer. When the NCAA published its 1972 soccer guide, the cover-boy was Howard’s star forward, Keith Aqui.  

Coach Phillips was aware of the new interest in the sport of soccer at American colleges when he took over the head coaching job at Howard University. In an interview he provided, Phillips stressed that coaching at an HBCU school was challenging, especially during a time when the United States was at the height of the civil rights movement, where being a black school with all black players offered countless opportunities for conversations about racial and cultural identity. Even more, being a black soccer player travelling across America had its challenges. Many players faced name calling during games as the Howard soccer team experienced direct racism on many occasions in their quest to win a national title. Coach Phillips was, however, confident that by bringing in black immigrant players to the program, Howard and other schools could challenge the bigger and more advantaged white institutions that had lots of fan support as well as spending money for their programs. While there was a smattering of black players at universities across the country, Howard was known as an institution that fielded decent teams made up of black players from the Caribbean, Africa and locally. In a very humble way, Coach Phillips pioneered the trend of bringing players to the United States from sub-Saharan African and Caribbean countries that would attend Howard University. He once proudly noted, “Our success in the 1970s brought an additional spotlight on players from those same regions and really sparked a rush of college coaches to those countries looking for players at a rate never seen before. So, our

success helped bring additional opportunities for Caribbean and African players.” 21

Due to ethnocentric denunciations, many believed that teams at Howard were not "American” like many other institutions administered by white men with close connections to the NCAA. Frustrated at the prominence of the Bison, the attacks against Howard came in two forms. The first was racially motivated behaviors, while the second was the result of backlash against the idea of a foreign sport being dominated by a black university. Howard’s players excelled at team work on and off the field which helped unite people of color during a time when it was most important. However, the lack of American interest in soccer made it more difficult to win the hearts of the majority of the population in a country where racism was still visible. Despite all of the racial problems the spike in African and Caribbean players in the United States increased. The reasons were mainly because of the opportunities that were offered to many of those student athletes that wanted to come to a more developed country. The lack of any real organized sports offered in their respective countries, as well as civil unrests following many years of colonization, may also have played some role. Most students from Africa came to the United States for academics but to also to play soccer in hopes of helping to enhance a career in the sport.

The Immigration Act, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on Oct. 3rd 1965, took full effect three years later. The act ended a long term quota system that was based on national origin and heavily favored Western Europeans like the English, Irish and Germans. Eventually, the law created a new approach aimed at reuniting immigrant

families and bringing skilled workers into the United States. The demographic makeup of the country started to change, as immigrants came increasingly from Latin America, Asia, and Africa.\textsuperscript{22} A big contributing factor to the growth of immigrants and foreign students from Africa was a new wave of nationalism, which was prevalent during the heyday of the civil rights movement in America. Most black Americans at the time associated their cause with the African continent. Long a popular institution of higher learning for blacks and minorities, Howard then became a symbol of the black movement. It should be noted that the lengthy fight for equal rights that had been going on in America shared a common enemy with most African nations as they struggled for independence from many European nations.

When the British colony of Gold Coast emerged as the independent nation of Ghana in 1957, the civil rights movement in the United States was in full motion. African Americans, who had been demanding first-class citizenship since the beginning of the republic, stepped up their protests against inferior educational facilities, restricted voting access, and racial discrimination in the workplace with an urgency and level of organization unprecedented in the country’s history. Much of the impetus behind the movement had to do with domestic conditions that limited the opportunities of African Americans in nearly every area of society. However, international affairs had a significant impact on both the nature and timing of postwar civil rights activism, as well as the nation’s response to it.\textsuperscript{23}

The soccer team at Howard was composed of players from the Caribbean, Africa, as well as a couple of Americans. It also had a large following within the United States, the African continent and the Caribbean region with people that had a common interest in seeing the school win a national title. The setting for what would be the final of the college championship game in Miami, Florida for the 1971 NCAA Division I final was the Orange Bowl. At a banquet dinner, a nice occasion where all final-four teams were present, all well dressed, and with everyone on eager to listen, Lincoln Phillips was ready to express his feelings. The semifinals had been played. Howard had beaten Harvard, and the St. Louis “Billikens” had beaten San Francisco. The final game would feature Howard versus St Louis. Phillips was making his speech, with, his soft Trinidad accent, and a smile. He recognized the great team effort of the St. Louis players and his archrival coach Harry Keough. He paused for a moment, then looked impishly over to the St. Louis table and added, “For tomorrow, I want to wish you the worst game you’ve ever played.” No one took offense at that superb throw-away line, perfectly timed and beautifully delivered. 24 Howard, utilizing all the great skills of its international contingent, won a close game by the score of 3-2. This was the first big title won by an HBCU institution. It also happened to be during a time when there were serious implications in the battle for racial equality. A year later, based on a conversation that I had with Coach Phillips and the captain of the team at the time, Ian Bain, the NCAA

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administrators received a letter and an article written by the *Washington Post* which suggested that an investigation was taking place into the Howard soccer program. Coach Phillips, even though not sure, believed the letter was sent by a coach from a college within close proximity to Howard in the Washington, D.C. area.

An accusation against Howard and a talented star player on the team who was a 25-year-old freshman at the school surfaced. It was first leaked to some media outlets. The possibility of other teams around the country practicing similar behaviors was all too common. As a matter of fact, the NCAA in its February 1973 issue of its national newspaper, “The *NCAA News*”, posted that Howard University was placed on a one-year probation for violations of the principles governing the eligibility of student-athletes, individual eligibility, and institutional eligibility. Howard’s 1971 NCAA National Collegiate Soccer Championship and its 1970 third place finish were vacated.\(^\text{25}\) The fact that the 1971 Howard team was stripped of its national title triggered more anger towards the NCAA and drove support from many civil rights organizations across America. The team’s performance became an extension of the civil rights movement.

Howard University rebranded its message to the world that it was the victim of racism. It used the strength of its soccer team, its coaches, and its fan base to challenge the NCAA. Coach Phillips, who took over the Howard University program, had just brought the school its first national championship in any sport. Journalists, critics as well

as followers of the college game felt that the NCAA and its affiliate, the National Soccer Coaches Association of America, had a hard time accepting an all-black school being the undisputed champions of the college soccer world, which at the time was dominated by cliques that had controlled the governing of the organization for decades. It was clear that Howard’s infraction was an innocent mistake; many other schools were practicing the similar types of behavior that Howard was accused of and they got away without punishment from the NCAA. Meanwhile, the secret formula to Howard’s success, according to Coach Phillips, was Howard’s united stance toward fighting for a common cause through the soccer program’s athletic prowess. In an interview conducted with the New York Times, he mentioned a moment that brought the team together through an interesting analogy explained by a colleague and professor at Howard University. Coach Phillips puts the cause for the civil rights movement and the redemption of the 1971 championship that the NCAA took away from Howard. In precise and clear terms, he answers to the New York Times explicitly about his belief that Howard had been unfairly treated by the NCAA. He went on to say:

“There was a sense we were cheated out of a championship, and our situation fit in the social milieu at the time with the rise of black consciousness and the community’s pride in producing a team that was considered among the best. We wanted to be the best at a sport largely identified and dominated by Europeans. So, the team was more than an athletic program; it became an extension of the civil rights movement in a way only sports can by achieving a set of objective results and debunking myths that doubted our abilities to be disciplined, organized and intelligent enough to win against the best the country had to offer. I felt if I could include players from West Africa to complement the players I had from the Caribbean, we would have an explosive and athletic squad that would be difficult to handle. So, a successful recruiting trip to Nigeria and bringing several players back was one of the first steps taken in preparation. However, I felt the moment where we invited one of our professors, Dr. Dom Basil Matthews, to address the team was when everything fell into place for the staff and players. In that discussion, Dr. Matthews talked about the Atlantic slave trade and the triangular trek slave ships took from Europe to Africa to pick up slaves, to the Americas to drop off the slaves and pick up raw materials to then return to Europe for manufacturing. Dr. Matthews explained that our team represented a
The implications for the civil rights movement, and the school’s fight for its racial dignity in the face of racism, was on the line. It became a struggle that would require a miracle by the Howard University soccer team, in an attempt to create a historic turn of events at one of the most prestigious HBCU schools in the nation. The media attention became more noticeable, especially the local area media in the nation’s capital. One of the solutions for Howard to prove itself as a top notch institution while getting the recognition it deserved as a champion was to win fairly on the field.

During the era of Howard’s successful soccer years, the best player in the world, Edson Arantes do Nascimento, generally known as Pelé, would visit the university, giving the school much needed attention at the national and international levels. While participating and winning a bronze medal at the 1967 Pan American Games, Coach Phillips developed a connection with some of the most famous soccer players in the world. Pele was one such player. The connection that Coach Phillips made in Canada played a role in Pele's visit to Howard University. Coach Phillips, who in his own right was considered the leading goalkeeper in the West Indies during the 1960s, was highly respected. He held three records in the Guinness Book of Records for ten years before coaching the Howard University soccer team to an NCAA Division I Championship in 1971 and 1974. The next chapter will further share the story of a humble icon in the sport.

of soccer and the role he played in developing the game in the Americas, Coach Lincoln "Tiger" Phillips.
CHAPTER 3: WHO IS COACH LINCOLN “TIGER’ PHILLIPS?

Considered Trinidad and Tobago’s leading goalkeeper in soccer during the 1960s, Coach Lincoln "Tiger" Phillips was born and grew up on Bengal Street in St. James. The story of Coach Phillips began on a farm. In his autobiography, Rising Above and Beyond The Cross Bar: The Life Story of Lincoln “Tiger” Phillips, he discussed his biggest influences in life that turned him into an accomplished athlete and a leader:

The farm proved good for conditioning, too. While living there I met track athlete Edwin Roberts. On mornings before school, we ran several miles to Carenage where we often took a dip in the grey Gulf of Paria before running home. Edwin was fast enough that he could easily have left me, but he never did. By 1964, when I was starting in net for the national football team, on the cusp of the country’s first-ever World Cup qualifying match, Edwin had proven that those morning runs and countless laps of the sand track at the Queen’s Park Savannah had done him well. He won two bronze—in the 200 metre and 4X400 m relay—at the Summer Olympics in Japan. I was no slouch at any sport I put my mind to. After the Harlem Globetrotters came to town to show off their skills, I got a basketball. It was my companion, like Tom Hanks’s volleyball Wilson in Cast Away.27

Coach Phillips, considered one of the most prolific soccer players in Trinidad and Tobago’s long soccer history, made his way overseas as part of the Trinidad national teams that competed in the Caribbean, North and South America regions. But how did it all start and what inspired Phillips to be a goalkeeper? His local community and family may have encouraged him, but other reasons could be attributed to his incredible talent that allowed him to play in the goalkeeping position. St. James produced many of the soccer players that were playing at the time for the well-known Malvern Football Club.
Phillips supported Malvern but admired the goalkeeper from a club known as Maple by the name of Hugh Sealy, dubbed the “Black Panther.” According to Phillips, there was something about Sealy that “just blew my mind. He was like a tiger or panther in a cage.” It was Sealy who inspired Phillips to become a goalkeeper. His role in helping Phillips helped create one of the world’s most recognized goalkeepers. While playing for his school, Queen’s Royal College (QRC), a college team in the Trinidad First Division, fans appreciated his decent goalkeeping skills. Then, according to Phillips, a wonderful man walked into his life. A stranger named Pa Aleong, a well-known, self-taught athlete and coach. “Pa” Aleong specialized in soccer and cricket, just the mentor Phillips needed. In Trinidad and Tobago, he was a well-known father figure to many young people. Aleong watched Phillips play, taking him under his wing and giving him advice. Even more, Pa showed him how to improve and become a good goalkeeper. They worked out from six o’clock in the morning at Pompeii Savannah, King George V Park, in the capital city of the country Port-of-Spain as Pa Aleong tried to work on Phillips’ weaknesses.  

Phillips stated that another key figure in his development was a gentleman by the name of Joey Gonsalves. Gonsalves would instruct him not to concede any goals on his first post “the first post is yours” he told Phillips. Cax Baptiste, another of Trinidad’s finest goalkeepers, once said to him: “You’re the first, second and third best ’keeper in this country.” Phillips said that people would meet him on the street and compliment him on his goalkeeping ability. He remembers one person telling him, “Anytime a shot is

kicked at your goal tell yourself, ‘wherever you put it I’m going to get it’, and when you make the save give the crowd a little roll.” He admitted later that he used to do an extra roll, and make a little flip. Phillips did well while playing for Maple between 1960 and 1963, in front of the large crowds that flocked to the Queen’s Park Savannah, in the capital city Port-of-Spain, during afternoon matches to watch the top teams play. He joined the military in 1964 and immediately became a mainstay in goal for the Regiment football team in the North Zone division. His stellar performances resulted in him becoming a household name and soon, a national senior team member.

The lanky Phillips led Trinidad and Tobago to a bronze medal in the Pan American Games of 1967 in Winnipeg, Canada; and that same year, he left the Regiment. In 1968, Phillips migrated to the Washington D.C area and enrolled at Howard University, where he studied and eventually obtained his B.A. and M.Sc. degrees in Physical Education. It was during this time that the coach of Howard Ted Chambers, approached him about taking over the soccer program at the University. 29

According to Jet, a popular black magazine at the time, Coach Phillips was the first black professional soccer coach in the United States. The magazine, which reached millions of people, was very active in following the story of Howard and Coach Phillips as he started to promote the game to black communities around the United States. The magazine featured the new star by writing a very positive review about him and the new professional soccer league. It went on to say, Lincoln Phillips, player-coach of the

Washington Darts-heads the top team in the American Soccer League (ASL), a seven-member minor league on the East Coast. After their first seven outings of the September-December campaign, the Darts sported a 6-0-1 record, scoring 22 goals while holding their opponents to only two. The Scottish manager of the team Norman Sutherland gave much of the credit for the team’s success to Phillips.\(^{30}\)

After 25 years of almost single handedly promoting soccer at Howard, Ted Chambers recognized the impact that the game was having on campus. Chambers believed he could no longer keep up with the now-rigorous playing schedule. Howard’s soccer team had long passed the time when they played a few games with local teams and few black institutions. Moreover, soccer was becoming a popular sport on many American college campuses. Each team wanted not only to compete, but they wanted to win. St. Louis University, propelled mainly by homebred American players, had become the dominant name in college soccer. Coach Chambers, fueled by the desire to keep Howard at the top of college soccer, made a brilliant tactical move. In 1970, he looked around for help, and help came by way of Lincoln Phillips, who quickly developed the Bison into a splendid “soccer machine,” with players such as Keith Aquí, Alvin Henderson, and Ian Bain, all soccer All-Stars. Phillips was to prove a hard taskmaster.\(^{31}\) Howard University and its community wanted to rebuild the soccer program, and Lincoln Phillips was the perfect fit for the position. He was able to mold the Bison from a group of talented student-athletes into a dauntingly, formidable team. Phillips was a young 29

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\(^{29}\) Bryan, Basil K. (1989) "The Bison Booters Battling in the Howard Spirit," *New Directions: Vol. 16: Iss. 1, Article 8*

years old when he joined Howard as an assistant coach in 1970. He was doubling up the role of a coach at Howard while he also served as the starting goalkeeper and coach of the Washington Darts in the NASL. The Darts eventually would move to Miami following the 1971 season.

The soon to be Coach Phillips met Chambers when they both appeared at a community event in the D.C. area supporting the Special Olympics. At Howard, Phillips introduced regular practices, better organization, and an effective form of soccer built on quick thinking that complemented the Bison’s’ powerful athletes. Phillips enrolled as an under-graduate student at Howard, taking classes alongside his players. His players, while studying with a famous professional soccer star for the Washington Darts, were able to easily relate to him as athletes. Many of them also shared his Caribbean roots with him.32

On a hot July Saturday afternoon in 2016, I had an opportunity to sit down and ask Coach Lincoln Phillips questions about his experience as the coach of Howard University’s historic soccer teams, including other questions related to this project. I discussed with him why it was so important to take on a coaching career at the college level, when he could have just focused on playing professional soccer. Coach Phillips explained his reasons for taking on the coaching job at Howard University. When asked, “Why Howard?” His response was:

31 Ibid.
I came from Trinidad and Tobago to play professional soccer here in United States. In the North American soccer league. I also happen to be representing my country, Trinidad and Tobago in the Pan Am games in Winnipeg. We won a bronze medal. We stunned the world. We beat Argentina, tied Mexico and beat up on Canada. We won the bronze medal. I was discovered there at that tournament. I got a contract with the Baltimore Bays. I was in the Trinidad and Tobago regiment at the time. I was their physical education training instructor. I was well on my way to being an officer. I really wanted to get the opportunity to further myself and get a degree. I didn't have all the credentials to get into university. The first opportunity I got when they signed me, I had asked them to put in the addendum that they would get me into college. When I got up here after the season was over, I enrolled into Catonsville Community College and I started doing some of my physical education works there. At the end of that season also, the team folded, and I was given an opportunity to not only play professionally but to coach and transferred to the Washington Darts. In that capacity, we played in Washington, and we did a lot of clinics, all over the place. There was a clinic, I think it was the Special Olympics, the Kennedy Foundation, they ran these clinics for the Special Olympics. Of course they invited all the professional teams and athletes. We had folks from the Redskins were there, from the Washington Bullets, and of course our team. It was there that I met Coach Chambers who was a strong supporter of these Olympic Games.\textsuperscript{33}

An opportunity for a change in his career opened up for Coach Phillips, when he took over as the head of the soccer program at Howard University. One of the first things Phillips did was to travel throughout the Caribbean and Africa in an effort to find the best student-athletes available to attend Howard. He created a team that would challenge opponents on the field of play by creating a unified black group of athletes and fans. However, Howard University’s outstanding men’s soccer team set the tone through which people viewed the civil rights era’s injustices and triumphs. The student-athletes who arrived on the Washington D.C. campus realized the tensions that existed in a country going through change. These soccer players, as much as anyone, received a crash course in American race relations.\textsuperscript{34} What Phillips did with the variety of black

\textsuperscript{33} (L. Phillips, personal communication, July 02, 2016)
\textsuperscript{34} (Wahl, G. 1997)
nationalities playing soccer at Howard will go down in history as a great accomplishment. It had a major impact on the black culture in the United States.

The stadium at Howard was packed to capacity at every home game, filled with the rhythms of African drums. Howard's teams entertained their fans while demolishing the opposition. Most of the students and supporters were united by the success of a historically black American institution that made the feat even more unique.

To understand the black immigrant’s challenges in the United States, one must look back at matters in a historical context. The historical legacy of slavery in America and in the Caribbean created a heightened sense of racial consciousness in which blacks in Africa were generally unfamiliar. Due to the differences in black consciousness among African immigrants and African Americans, their identity formation would also turn out to be very different. In her book, *Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities*, Mary Waters (1999) explored how racial identification placements among some immigrant populations from the West Indies were different from usual interpretations of race in the United States. Waters wrote that immigrants from the West Indies were able to transcend the White and Black binary and embrace cultural or more nationality-based identities.35

Coach Phillips did not make excuses in regards to racism but faced it head on by transcending the racial barriers and the challenges that come with it. He was determined to create a historic chapter at the top of the college soccer game. His journey through the

trials and tribulations he endured made him a winner in a sport that has been dominated by his staunchest critics and toughest competitors around the United States. Coach Lincoln Phillips withstood adversity when he represented the Washington Darts as player-coach and lead them to the ASL League championship and runner-up in the NASL (1970). In the years 1970-1972, he played for the Maryland Bays and the Baltimore Comets at the time when his teams faced off against the world’s best player, Pele, and his team Santos of Brazil. Coach Phillips took all of his skills and used them to enhance his coaching career. He was able to bring a leadership style at the collegiate level as he won two national championships, putting Howard University into the national college soccer spotlight.
CHAPTER 4: 1971 NCAA DIVISION I SOCCER CHAMPIONS

The early 1970s were times when the civil rights movement in America was transforming. Howard University, the premier institution for blacks around the world, was considered one of the leading advocates for social issues around the country. It was an era of the beginning of the Post-Civil Rights Movement. Several national acts of legislation were established to protect the rights of African-Americans and other minorities. During this decade, many blacks made great strides in different sectors of leadership despite a rough transition period from the challenges of the 1960s decade. Athletic teams at Howard University faced difficulty as they represented their school in different sports. The University athletic department worked hard to systematically overcome obstacles by providing support to its student athletes.

During a period when African-Americans as a people were still fighting for their civil rights, Howard University chose to battle for equal rights of many blacks and black immigrants by utilizing the school’s athletic program to garner much needed attention. While most sports programs at Howard always competed at regional and national standard levels, Howard’s soccer team was still in the process of establishing itself in the mostly white middle class dominated national college game. This was a time when the sport of soccer in many parts of America was going through growing pains. The general
public in most parts of the country perceived soccer as a foreign sport. Some even labeled it a communist sport.

To get an idea of how soccer was battling the sports culture in the United States, one needs to understand that the average soccer fan around the nation was barely aware that an American national soccer team even existed. Most blacks in the United States during this period usually chose to participate in the more traditional American sports of baseball, football and basketball as well as track and field. Professional soccer was attempting to make its way into the American sports culture during this period. In 1972, the North American Soccer League (NASL) started a new project with eight teams and by 1974 the league expanded to 15 teams. Spearheaded by European executives, the new league attempted to promote the game to Americans at a higher scale. Despite all the hard work, the NASL had a big problem. The dominance of foreign players meant that soccer was still a foreign game to most fans in the United States.  

Under the many difficult situations the sport of soccer was put in America, Phillips still decided to take over the head coaching job at Howard University. He was a young semi-professional player that was being overlooked by the coach of the Washington Darts team for a starting goalkeeper position. Phillips looked for new opportunities elsewhere. In his autobiography, he further explains why it was important for him to take over the program at Howard University. He goes on to write:

“The Darts and I were done for. Along comes Ted Chambers, his tonsured head gleaming in the sun as he crosses the Howard University sports field. He has found an African by the name of Dr. Salah Yousif from Southern Ethiopia to coach the team while he manages. There are a few

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quality players on the squad, but the majority are mediocre. This is a black college team in a country where soccer is just moving out of the immigrant communities. Most of the players are West Indians (with a heavy emphasis on Trinidadians) and Africans. There’s not a single American on the side. Its a .500 team in 1969, meaning that they lose just as many as they win.”

In 1970, Phillips’ team qualified for the NCAA’s Final Four, prompting the school to offer him a full-time contract the following year. In accepting the head coaching role at the university, Phillips received a free education to pursue his undergraduate degree. He often mentions that his players had better grades in class and he would sometimes get embarrassed by it. Despite what may have been perceived as an awkward situation for Phillips, sitting alongside his players in the lecture halls while still expected to exert authority on the field, the coach’s personality traits made him the perfect figurehead for Howard at the time. Following his immediate hiring, he surprised many in the collegiate soccer scene by quickly winning games and competing with the best college soccer programs in the country.

Howard University under his tenure started to beat traditional powerhouse schools that had far more experience. Howard’s rise to the top was the work of a collaboration between two different coaches. It started to take shape in the 1970 season. Ted Chambers, who had the team under his wings for many years, decided to transition the program by hiring the young Trinidadian with international playing experience. He knew that in order to help grow the program into a national contender, he needed to hire a person with more

experience than himself. As successor for the Howard University soccer program, Lincoln Phillips was the perfect choice to mold the Bison from a group of gifted athletes into a dauntingly formidable team. Phillips met Chambers when they both appeared at a community event in the D.C. area supporting the Special Olympics. At Howard, Phillips introduced regular practices, better organization and an effective style of soccer built on quick movement that complimented the Bison’s’ powerful athletes. 39

In his personal autobiography, Coach Phillips talks about his humble beginning in Trinidad and Tobago and his military education which taught him discipline. He was easily able to transfer knowledge of the sport and its coaching methods to his new team. His journey as a full-time head coach officially began during the 1971 season at Howard. One obstacle that Coach Phillips had was the fact that Howard was a historically black school without a big budget for the soccer program. Most of the schools that competed with Howard were well funded and had a strong support base. After working hard and close to the Howard administrators, Coach Phillips started to map out his plan. It was slowly starting to make progress. The spotlight around the country started to focus on Howard University as the program improved tremendously. Howard's inspiration came from their team’s unity as well as their ability to play top quality soccer that combined lots of speed and athletic agility. They also became aware of the racial tensions that brought more attention to their program.

Coach Phillips made sure that the team was mentally prepared to face those challenges. Sharing an excerpt from his book, he writes about how he was able to inform his players about the racial problems of the time, while helping to motivate them. He writes:

Let me shock you with a word: Nigger. I’ll spare you the indignity from now on, but I can assure you that on an American soccer pitch in the 1970s, that string of vowels and consonants, arranged just-so and bearing the odious power of centuries of accumulated hate, was not uncommon. We heard it from the stands: “Damn, those n—s can run!” And we heard it on the field, where it was used as a cheap psychological ploy to throw us off our game. We heard it and we hated it. Sometimes it made us mad; sometimes it motivated. I urged my players not to respond to race talk, but in the heat of the moment, some lost the struggle.40

Howard University dominated the 1971 season with so much virtuosity. They were the talk of college soccer across America. They were a fast paced team with lots of agility that depended on their well-organized system. The team was loaded with black players from different parts of the world that spoke with a variety of accents. It became one way of identifying that the players were foreign. Many of the college teams that Howard played against had one or two black foreign players from different countries. When they saw the Howard players, they quickly knew that they were in for a challenge. Even with players that had different backgrounds, the Howard team clicked together. They were also aware that they had to perform at high levels in order to be successful. They represented black communities throughout the United States during a period of racial tensions. Coach Phillips utilized his strict military background to send a message to the players that they were under a very tight microscope. If they made mistakes, there would be consequences. People that followed soccer in general were awed by the way in which Howard played beautifully while dominating games. The university’s image as a black

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school that took on an international flavor started to pay dividends. Howard University’s athletics programs as a whole also benefited from the attention. Many pundits in the media underestimated Howard’s soccer program early on during its transitional period towards becoming a nationally competitive program, according to Phillips:

The press immediately kicked some sand in our faces, calling us ‘upstarts.’ If any team in the final four deserved to be labeled as if they’d appeared from nowhere, it was Harvard; they hadn’t been to the finals before. But Harvard wasn’t black and uppity. I can’t fully explain how racially sensitive we were at the time. On campus, people saw most things in racial terms, whether they were, or they weren’t. Calling us upstarts was just as good as calling us n—s. And if my boys didn’t understand that we were playing for everyone of African ancestry, Dom Basil Matthews got the message through. 41

Dom Matthews was a personal friend of Coach Phillips who also happened to be inspirational. Phillips knew him while in his native Trinidad and Tobago. Matthews also happened to be a teacher at Howard University in Washington D.C. where he remained a confidant of Coach Phillips. The coach asked him to give a pep talk to his soccer team right before an important game in the playoffs during the 1971 NCAA championships. Sitting in a classroom, the group listened intently as Dom held forth on the triangle of blackness, which he described as stretching from Africa to the Caribbean to North America. He said that little Howard University sat at the center of that triangle, binding together the Pan-African struggle for civil rights. Howard, along with the black community, was at the epicenter of a global civil rights struggle. Phillips felt that it was everyone’s job to instill pride to young people in general. He stressed that the soccer players were ambassadors of their race, and that ambassadors must always be at their

41 Ibid.
best. He stressed the Pan-Africanism that took place at the time was important. Dom had respected credentials as Howard University once requested his services to develop an intellectual academic base for the integration of black experience into the curriculum of the University. While on the project, he was also assigned to the Graduate School of Social Work, where he was Chairman of Human Behavior in Social Environment. He later, was named Chairman of the Graduate Studies at the School of Communications involving print and broadcast media.

The preparations by the team and the confidence going into the final game gave the coaches and players hope that they would make history as the first HBCU school to win a national title in soccer. Adding to that, a win would be the first championship of any sport for the Howard University athletic program at the NCAA Division I level. The mainstream media had low expectations of Howard, because Saint Louis was going into the game as the number one team in the nation. Of this possibility, the Chicago Daily Defender wrote:

**Howard makes finals**

_Miami - (UPI) - The Billikens of St. St. Louis University will look for their third straight NCAA soccer championship tonight in a contest against an aggressive Howard University squad from the Nation’s Capital. Considered the premier American soccer team, St. Louis outlasted a stubborn University of San Francisco team 3-2 Tuesday night, and Howard knocked off favored Harvard 1-0 in the semifinals before a respectable crowd of about 5,500 in the Orange Bowl._

In Miami, during the week of the finals, there would be a banquet held for the final championship teams. As recorded by soccer historian, Paul Gardner of

42 Ibid.
Soccer America Magazine, the atmosphere was very friendly and Howard coaches and players were relaxed:

This was in Miami, the night before the 1971 NCAA Division I final, to be played in the Orange Bowl. A nice occasion, all final-four teams present, all smartly dressed, everyone on his best behavior. The semifinals had been played. Howard had beaten Harvard, St. Louis -- the “Billikens” -- had beaten San Francisco. Tomorrow it would be Howard vs. St Louis. Phillips was making his speech, radiating charm with his melodious voice, his soft Trinidad accent and his fetching smile. He praised the St. Louis players and their veteran coach, Harry Keough. He paused for a moment, then looked impishly over to the St. Louis table and added, “For tomorrow, I want to wish you the worst game you’ve ever played.”

Phillips always kept a cool head, aware that the social taboo was already hard on some of his players. He did not want to be negative in any way. After all, he was coaching an outsider black school with players that performed at high levels in a sport that had been dominated by upper middle class white teams. He was very savvy and smart to use a sense of humor to calm things down. The Cinderella story of a nationally acclaimed black school in the finals of the NCAA Division I soccer championship during a time of the civil rights movement should have attracted a lot of media coverage but not enough showed up. Only a handful of local papers were present to document the historic achievement that took place. One of the magazines that covered the aftermath of this event was Jet. It went on to write:

Three hundred Howard University students, faculty and alumni streamed onto the field of the Orange Bowl stadium on New Year's Eve in Miami Fla., and with assistance of a 40-piece pep band, the crowd celebrated the most amazing and spectacular victory in black collegiate sports. After a 25-year effort, the Howard University soccer team defeated (3-2) the reigning champions, St. Louis University, to win the (NCAA) Championship. The victory marked the first time in history that a Black college had ever captured a national collegiate championship at the NCAA division I level. It was a win that brought tears to the eyes of veterans such as Ted Chambers, who for more than a quarter Century kept soccer alive at Howard when first-rate

teams refused to play the outfit. The budget for soccer during that time was so low that the team wore the worst looking uniforms and had well-used equipment, and interest on the campus about soccer dipped well below that reserved for football and basketball. But on the closing down of 1971, the Howard aggregation composed of Africans, American blacks, students from the Caribbean and coached by a man who was fired as coach of the professional Darts team in the nation's capital, Lincoln Phillips, may come true the impossible dream. At no time did anyone other than the Howard family believe the brothers would go the distance. 46

As if the script had already been written, St. Louis scored in the first three minutes of the game and scored again three minutes later. Sidelined because of an infection and a soaring fever, Keith Aqui, the Howard team’s high scorer with 25 goals that year, approached Coach Phillips, according to one sports reporter, with tears in his eyes. “He should have been in bed,” said the coach. “But Aqui wanted to help his teammates.” So Aqui and another injured player, Alvin Henderson, also from Trinidad, put together a closing drive to tie the game at 2-2 in the first half. A minute after the second half began, Henderson scored a goal and Howard University had achieved a victory that will long be remembered in the annals of college soccer history.

One Howard official said, “A few dailies even bothered to carry an account of the game or the impact of the win.” Already a formidable squad after a 15-0 season, the Howard team defeated Harvard and West Virginia University to advance to the finals. After the Miami conquest, the team traveled to the West Indies for a four game exhibition series. When the Howard team returned, the Hilltop campus was expected to give a “ripping” welcome to the Bison, who brought home the national trophy.47 The euphoria that erupted in Washington D.C spread all over the region as Howard's historic win

46 Soccer World is Shaken by Championship Victory of Howard University (1972) JET (January), p. 52.
became a show of resistance to racism. The first ever NCAA Division I championship sports title by a black school symbolized a proud moment for millions of people of color.

The victory helped in boosting awareness for the civil rights movement. It brought much needed attention from the President of the United States, Richard Nixon. President Nixon sent a telegram to Coach Phillips. Obtained through a digital text from team member Ian Bain, the letter read like this:

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 31, 1971

Coach Lincoln Phillips
Howard University
C/o U. S. Embassy
Trinidad

My heartiest congratulations to you and the Howard University Soccer Team. Your victory yesterday, your perfect season of fifteen wins and no losses, and your NCAA Championship make all Washington very proud. You have made a great season for Washington teams even better. Good luck in your exhibition games in the West Indies. Washington looks forward to the return of its champion.

RICHARD NIXON 48

The importance of the victory would serve as a way to bridge open gaps between people for better understanding about racial tensions. It is even more important to note that Howard had been underdogs in the final game, despite their undefeated season where

they had dominated all the teams they faced. For Coach Phillips, it was a moment of joy as his hard work in transforming the Howard program finally paid off. He surprised the college soccer world by beating a Saint Louis team that had dominated college soccer for a decade. It was unusual for that time period to see an HBCU school challenging for national championships in any type of sport. Not only did Howard University do that, but in the process, brought down a college soccer dynasty. The reaction created bad feelings from some prominent college soccer programs that spent years attempting to build their programs. The NCAA urged by many of those schools that were members of the NSCAA, an organization which had influence in the college game, decided to look further into how Howard was able to win a title dominating every game. After discussions at its annual conference, the organization persuaded the NCAA to challenge Howard’s 1971 championship title. It ultimately decided to investigate Howard’s soccer program. While perfectly reasonable to look into Howard’s quick success, many schools around the country were found to engage in far worse illegal activities of recruiting athletes. For over a year, the team enjoyed its title as champions of college soccer. They felt like they won it fair and square; but once their 1972 season came to an end, they were informed by the NCAA investigation committee that their championship would be stripped of the title.

News broke out at the 1972-1973 NCAA championship finals in Miami, Florida that Howard was in violation of NCAA rules that it won in the year 1971. The media covering the finals of the 1972 season were the first to break the story that Howard
University may have broken the law. While the local newspapers took their time to write articles, the *New York Times* was quick to post an article which stated that Warren Brown, an assistant executive director of the NCAA, said last week in response to a statement by Howard that the loss of the title was 'automatic whenever it is discovered that an ineligible player has participated. The NCAA telegram to the school also said that two Howard players had been engaged in five seasons of play, at least one of which may have taken place in Trinidad.\(^\text{49}\)

Howard’s coach and the university community as a whole felt this was an attack against blacks and student-athletes with foreign backgrounds. The main player that was being targeted by the new ruling was Trinidadian Keith Aqui. The young man had made an impact towards the team’s success in their quest to winning the national title. He was the player that shaped the team’s NCAA championship drive. Accused of attending college in his native Trinidad, which did not have a four-year degree program, Aqui’s eligibility should not have hindered him from participating as a player; however, he became a prime target because of his age as a 25-year old underclassman student-athlete.

After the 1972 season, Howard learned that the NCAA informed school officials of their determination that three player eligibility rules had been violated. The NCAA stripped Howard of its 1971 title; they were banned from postseason play for the 1973 season; and placed on probation for one year. Mori Diane, a player on the 1971 team, summed up his thoughts on what he thought was a witch hunt: “In my opinion, the Howard University team stood knee-deep in the civil rights struggle...We played our little

part, even unbeknown at the time. Our struggles were pebbles in the sandstorm that brought acceptance of blacks as equals.” Most felt that the ruling handed down by the NCAA was vindictive. Others further felt that Howard was harshly punished, in part, due to their visible part in the nation’s civil rights movement. The school decided to push back, challenging the NCAA’s ruling in court. In the end, they were able to win a court battle that said the NCAA rules regarding foreign student eligibility was discriminatory. Still, the decision did not restore the 1971 national championship that was taken away from Howard which still remains officially vacated.⁵⁰

CHAPTER 5: THE NCAA ACCUSATION AGAINST HOWARD UNIVERSITY

The National Soccer Coaches Association of America pressured by member parties were not supportive or ecstatic to see an HBCU school winning the college soccer championship with mostly foreign players during the 1971 season. Even worse, the NCAA’s decision to target and investigate Howard University, while many other colleges were breaking rules and regulations, seemed unfair. For Coach Phillips, the investigation became a burden as he was still learning the administrative duties of being a college soccer coach. There was already a soccer team at Howard when he took over, but enthusiasm for, and knowledge of the sport among the athletic officials was lacking. He was adamant in what he desired as a new coach. He was also very aware and excited to get better players from his home country of Trinidad or elsewhere in the Caribbean.

Having convinced Howard to award their first-ever scholarships for soccer, he brought in players from Trinidad, Jamaica and Africa.

In a matter of just two years, an institution not known for its soccer program but rather as the capstone of black education ended up winning the NCAA Division I soccer trophy. It is important to look back once again to understand how they did it. For the Bison Booters, it was not an easy battle as their experiences made them stronger. They travelled around the country facing racism straight in the eye. Most of the teams that
Howard played were all-white; and in some matches, they saw fights during games as well as red cards attempting to defend themselves from physical attacks.

According to some players, most referees were biased against them and acts of discrimination from opponents and fans were expected everywhere they went. Howard would better its 1970 performance in 1971, reaching the final, where it would face Saint Louis University, which happened to be the top soccer program in NCAA history at the time. The Billikens had won eight Division I championships over the previous 12 seasons.  

When the NCAA published its 1972 soccer guide, the cover boy was Howard’s star forward, Keith Aqui. Coach Phillips has plenty to tell of that championship team, its characters, its games, and its triumph. However, there is an undercurrent that follows the coach throughout his career and it was racism. The early 1970s were turbulent times on that front. Black Power was making itself felt. On campus, the soccer championship was greeted with huge interest. Then the problems began. They revolved around cover boy Aqui, the 25 year old who had not been recruited by Phillips. He was already at Howard, studying psychology, and he decided to join the team. Aqui attracted attention as a super-fast, slick goal-scorer from opposing players and coaches alike and, eventually, from NCAA investigators. In the fall of 1972, an NCAA investigator appeared on the Howard campus. He was interested in Aqui, asking many questions about how much soccer he had played before arriving at Howard. It was quickly established that there was no

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professional soccer in Trinidad, but it did not matter. The NCAA rule stated that for every year of organized soccer played overseas, one year of college eligibility was canceled. Aqui had certainly broken that rule. To Phillips, to his players, and to Howard University, the move by the overwhelmingly white NCAA administrators smacked of racism. On the matter, he stated:

Admittedly, I never got around to that viewpoint, but I found the investigation not to my liking for three other reasons: first, it appeared that there were clauses in the NCAA rule book that were rarely activated, and that no one really understood; second, I definitely had the opinion that the NCAA decision, if not anti-black, was certainly anti-foreign; third, from a strictly soccer point of view, I felt that the college game, already stagnating, needed the invigoration that Howard was bringing. Yes, I did want Howard to come out on top.52

The irony is the NCAA did not decide until after the 1971 season to question the validity of Howard’s national title. The organization along with its associate, the NSCAA, wanted to make sure that Howard should be investigated as pressure mounted from many members. The decision handed down to the school was made final.

The NCAA claims to have sympathy for Howard, as its accusation was vague in nature because at that time most competitive colleges would also have been guilty of abusing the rules. The impact on the powerful governing body of college soccer came at the expense of pressure from coaches that wanted to challenge Howard. After many meetings, it was concluded that, while unintentional, the university was in violation of the NCAA rules. The following season at the championship week of college soccer in Miami, word got out that the sanctions against Howard were for real. Coach Phillips became worried and decided not to put into the semi-final game, players that were

suspected of violating the NCAA rules by the administrators. The main player in question happened to be the fastest and best player as well as the leading Bison scorer. There is no question that the process in which he was investigated begs an answer from the NCAA. Howard still under close watch by the NCAA for possible recruiting violations, was about to pay a heavy price. The Bison soccer team, ranked number one in the country, became the first team from a predominantly black university to ever win a national title. Refusing to comment specifically on the Howard case, Arthur J. Bengstrom, then NCAA assistant executive director, said “the rules are very explicit in cases involving individuals who knowingly violate rules. If the institution is at fault, then the school can lose the championship.” 53

An investigator from the NCAA headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri, was sent to Howard to examine the academic records of the players and talk to them. Speaking up openly, Coach Phillips strongly believed that the investigation on his team resulted from attempts by rival schools to discredit the team and possibly have its title taken away. He expressed his feelings during an interview with the media; “This whole thing stems from Keith (Aquí),” he said. “It’s a plot to get rid of him because he's our main player. Rival coaches are jealous.” Aquí, the team’s leading scorer, and the twenty other members of the team were not Americans. This could have been another point of agitation for the rival schools. Phillips noted that Howard's team was comprised entirely of black players from Tobago, Trinidad, Jamaica, Guinea, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Bermuda and Ghana. Commenting on the investigation, Leo Miles, Howard's athletic director, said it would be

hard to ignore the fact that this might be a racial thing. He went on to express that he did not know if the other schools would be resentful if Howard wasn’t a black university winning with black players.\textsuperscript{54}

In 1972, once again, the Bison dominated the season as they made it to the semifinal of the tournament. The team had beaten very strong teams throughout the season and deserved to, once again, be one of the top four teams in the nation. The finals taking place in Miami once again were being held at the Orange Bowl. Howard’s team was to hear its fate about the national championship that it had won the previous year. Nearly 130 soccer players, coaches and media packed the ballroom of Miami’s well known McAllister Hotel for the NCAA’s Final Four banquet a few days after Christmas in 1972. When Howard University Coach Lincoln Phillips walked to the front of the room, everyone was quiet and very attentive. Twenty-four hours earlier, on December 27, 1972, the Howard Bison had been denied in their attempt to repeat as national champions, losing 2-1 in the semifinals to St. Louis University. The Billikens, a powerhouse that Howard defeated in the previous year’s championship played with their top players while Howard sat some of their stars. In only three years, Coach Phillips, just 31 years old at the time, had taken the team from mediocrity to becoming the first historically black college or university to win an NCAA Division I national championship.

Despite the title being taken away, the reasons behaind the ruling remain to be unfair to this day as the NCAA’s double standard treatment towards Howard may have been motivated by the racial divide of that time period. After praising St. Louis and their

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
coach in an interview, Phillips directed his attention to his team’s toughest opponent that year, the NCAA’s governing body. Five Howard players had been pulled off the field over the course of a season-long investigation, including some investigations as late as the tournament quarterfinals. At a gathering of coaches from across America an angry Coach Phillips took to the podium to stand up for his rights as a coach. Phillips believed he knew the source of his team’s travails. He was ready to speak his mind, as he looked out over a room in which—with few exceptions—the only black faces belonged to the players on his team and he eloquently said; “We played against this entire wretched system of this society,” as the room became quiet. He went on to add, “I would say the NCAA is guilty of practicing racism. St. Louis did not beat Howard University last night. They beat the remnants of what was left of Howard University.” To Phillips’ surprise, the room erupted in a standing ovation. Except for the NCAA officials seated in the front row.”

During an interview I conducted with Coach Phillips, he mentioned to me that he did not mean to speak so maliciously, because it had the potential to create some backlash against the team by the NCAA. However, the support he got from many colleges around the country, including from the St. Louis coaching staff, was a positive one. Harry Keough, the head coach at St. Louis, had already accepted defeat by Howard in the 1971 national championship. In the 1972 semi-final game against St. Louis, Coach Phillips benched players who were implicated in the NCAA violations for the 1971 season to

make sure that no other excuses would be used against the school. Howard used second string players to play during that game instead. They ended up losing to St. Louis. Meanwhile, Billikens Coach Harry Keough defended his position that he had nothing to do with the accusations directed at Howard. At the very same banquet in which Phillips spoke, Coach Keough expressed his views clearly as he said, "I'm not apologizing for sending my team out to win a soccer game," he got a standing ovation from his team and colleagues, the minute he stepped up to the microphone. He went on to add, "I'm sorry politics affects other teams."56

A couple of days later, St. Louis went on to defeat another strong contender in the college soccer game. The University of California at Los Angeles soccer team, had a talented pool of international players similar to Howard and battled the Billikens to the end as they lost in the championship game. Meanwhile, Howard’s success has inspired many other college powerhouses to recruit players from the Caribbean, Africa and other countries around the world. The NCAA's accusations against Howard’s 1971 championship team to this day stand and documented as vacant with no winner indicated for that year. The decisions made by the NCAA remain to be a topic for discussion. Many people believe that the governing body of college sports took away the title from Howard by looking for and finding an infraction. Very similar contraventions or if not worse surfaced at many other colleges that competed in soccer and other sports. Howard was targeted while other teams that made postseason playoffs got off without being investigated for similar breaches.

In his 1989 article about the history of Howard University soccer, Basil Bryan wrote: “Howard, as expected, went to court. At issue was the NCAA charge with respect to players they considered ineligible.” What it came down to was a matter of different interpretations. Ever since it began to accept foreign students, Howard had relied on the interpretations of the United States Office of Education (now the Department of Education) in determining the academic level of incoming foreign students. The NCAA charged that Howard, in accepting foreign students from college, ought not to accept them as freshmen, but as transfers, thus limiting their eligibility in NCAA competitions. However, familiarity with the educational system in many foreign countries attests to the fact that Trinidadian students from “St. Mary’s College” or Jamaican students from “Cornwall College,” are merely high school students and thus not eligible to be recognized as college transfers. Ironically, the NCAA’s unfamiliarity with these schools, paired with the fact that these “colleges” are really high schools, did not make a difference in the outcome of the ruling for Howard. Despite the abundance of evidence that was presented, the NCAA prevailed, vacated the title, and thus denied Howard a championship earned on the field. 57

In his book, The History of Athletics and Physical Education at Howard University, Ted Chambers recalls this unfortunate situation as he wrote, after months of investigation, a never-before-rule, limiting the number of years a foreign student could play on an American team, was applied. Consequently, the NCAA stripped Howard of its

crown (deciding not to name a champion at all). The decision proved very unpopular with many colleges throughout America. The NCAA ruled Howard ineligible because one player did not take the Scholastic Aptitude Test.” Coach Phillips, was blunt as he bitterly explained that “some people couldn’t handle a black team of foreigners winning. There were some jealous people who couldn’t stand our success.\textsuperscript{58} The infractions that the NCAA found to undermine the Howard team needed further investigation. What made it more important is that the rules even if they were broken did not apply in the same manner for other schools, especially for nearby rival schools in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. These schools also recruited foreign players but they just happened to be mostly Europeans whose ethnicity makeup was different than the Howard players. Howard continued to be under investigation, as its opponents claimed it should be disqualified due to its use of foreign players. A subsequent witch-hunt resulted in two of the Howard players being deemed ineligible, thus Howard University was forced to relinquish the national title. Some argued that Howard’s crime was not that their players were foreign, as most teams had foreigners, but that they were black.\textsuperscript{59}

During the early 1970s, most universities and colleges throughout America recruited players from overseas. While the NCAA remained tough on those who broke rules and regulation, they rarely enforced them. Many colleges got away with breaking rules. Meanwhile, the NCAA was in for a surprise as it did not expect Howard to quickly

\textsuperscript{58} The history of athletics and physical education at Howard University
Ted Chambers - Vantage Press - 1986
show successful turnaround of the program. Backed by Coach Phillips and his strong ethical compass, they started beating powerful programs with much bigger budgets all across America. Due to Howard’s reputation, the team Coach Phillips built contained a global mix of lineages. Some saw this as a negative clash of soccer identities. But Phillips believed the appeal of the talented players at his disposal far outweighed management issues. During this period, European professional soccer was making strides and growing fast. However, the teams in Europe failed to reach out for players from third world countries. For African and the Caribbean players, America became an excellent choice to get a good college education while also pursuing the dream of playing soccer at a high level. Bison players under Phillips, originated from countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Eritrea, Trinidad and Tobago, Ethiopia and Jamaica.

After finishing third in 1970, Howard steamrolled the opposition during the 1971 season. Speed was the driving force behind this success. The Bison were playing with high intensity, capitalizing on counter attacks whenever possible. A cordial atmosphere pervaded the entire year, past players commented, resulting in a small, easy-going group putting their egos aside for the collective goal, which, as the season progressed, became ever more achievable.\textsuperscript{60} Howard played against schools with a majority Caucasian players from across small town America and suburban communities that were not exposed to all-black teams. It was a time when racism in United States was still a factor in people’s lives. The civil rights movement was at the forefront of American politics. During some games, fights broke out, resulting in penalty cards from the referees.
More often than not, it was proven that referees were biased against Howard players.

Despite these challenges, the Bison continued to do well in 1971. They surpassed their own expectations with help from Ian Bain as a leader and team captain. Bain was a rising star that embodied a well-balanced student-athlete. Like Coach Phillips, Bain hailed from Trinidad and Tobago. In an interview conducted for this project, he expressed the rampant and blatant racism the team faced as they rose to national prominence:

*Truthfully it’s difficult, you come into a new environment, you have to adapt. We come from our Third-world countries. A lot of stuff that we were looking at on television was now right on our doorstep, and on the field, and on the campus. I mean, things were swirling around us. We came straight into a cauldron of civil rights, a cauldron of anti-war, Vietnam. So it was an exciting time. It was an adventure to many of us, because on the campus on a given day you are meeting all these civil right leaders, Stokely Carmichael, people like that. It was interesting then, and it was also interesting on the field because there was a lot of push-back with our success. I would say even on the campus because typically on a campus, football and basketball has a lot of meaning, it’s the American sport. They are the athletes that are recognized, and suddenly this little upstart group starts to garner some national and international recognition, so that was difficult in general. Everybody had to adapt to it. On the field we found ourselves playing games, and for each player it’s a game, and you play the game. I would say, speaking personally, for the first half of the season for me they were just games. I hadn’t tuned into causes. I was young. I was just playing games with the class.*

Most players on Howard’s team felt similar to how Bain felt. Their first and main goal was to perform at high levels as the competition among themselves for spots on the starting lineup were difficult. The team clearly proved that as a black university not known for soccer, it could play the sport at the highest level, offering a counter to the image which promoted a lack of role models in the black community. Howard’s Bison Booters also helped to popularize the game of soccer which was being promoted as a growing sport from coast to coast within the United States.

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61 (I. Bain, personal communication, April 30, 2016)
An article written during black history month offers context:

For generations, soccer in this country has included millions of players and fans from across the Pan-African diaspora. A beautiful tapestry of cultures and experiences exists within soccer’s black population — diverse within itself, with roots reaching from the United States back to Africa, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. Volumes of books and hours of documentaries have been filled with facts and folklore from other sports, but somehow, our nearly 102-year-old national federation and 20-year-old league don’t seem to have any legends of their own. Why not? 62

Howard University’s soccer teams of the 1970s inspired people from all walks of life. Their education and athletic prowess displayed for the world to see, these young men proved that it is not race that defines a people; it is the collective contribution of a body of people that does. The leadership of principled men like Ted Chambers and Lincoln Phillips, who did so much for the growth of American soccer, are historic in nature. These giants should be considered legendary for their contribution to humanity, the American culture, sports and politics. However, their hard work and efforts were tested when their 1971 national title was taken away from them.

It is important to always challenge organizations like the NCAA, so that someday future generations can help bring back the hard earned trophy that Howard University won in 1971. The document, which accused Howard University of violations, was distributed around the time of the 1972 championships, while Howard was on another mission to win a title. Fearing the complicated rules set out by the NCAA, Coach Phillips decided to keep some of his best international players on the bench. However, as has been stated previously, Howard’s backups could not pull ahead against St. Louis which won the game by the score of 2-1 in sudden-death overtime. The goal was scored by a
header from one of the top college players from St. Louis known by the name Dan Counce. This marked the first time Howard lost in 31 games. Their loss was not from a lack of effort, though. For the occasion, Howard brought out a fine stand of foreign students: Stan-field Smith of Bermuda, Ian Bain of Trinidad, Desmond Alfred of Tobago, Amdemichael Selassie of Eritrea and Mario McLennon of Jamaica, and all of them displayed fancy footwork. Coach Phillips, however, had even more devastatingly good players on the bench, most notably his countryman, Keith Aqui, the 1971 leading scorer. In fact, seven men on Howard's team, those who rode the bench during the championship, had been accused of violating NCAA eligibility rules on various counts.63

It is important to note once again that the charges against Howard by the NCAA were ill-defined in nature. They were backed by a rule that discredited Howard University as a cheater. The portrayal became problematic for the Washington D.C. university known for its excellent education. The HBCU school with all black soccer players, was already facing challenges of racism as it struggled to overcome the negative image brought by the NCAA decision. On campus, Howard officials, were working day and night to fix the damage because the 1971 title meant a lot to the program. Fans, students, coaches and alumni all felt the title was stripped away systematically. While it accused Howard of wrongdoing, the NCAA claimed that it was not initially interested in taking the 1971 title away, which it eventually did. In early January of 1972, Dr. James E. Cheek, the school's president, received the charges from the NCAA in a telegram and

there was no discussion of their title being stripped. The NCAA, which had also placed
the school on a year of probation, said “Howard's predicament resulted from a
combination of unfamiliarity with NCAA legislation” and an insufficient effort to
determine whether these provisions were applicable to members of the soccer team. They
also stated that the administration was "inadequate" in terms of certifying eligibility. A
week before the ruling, Warren Brown, an assistant executive director of the NCAA, said
in response to a statement by Howard that the loss of the title was “automatic whenever it
is discovered that an ineligible player has participated.”

Responding to these accusations, Coach Phillips rebutted that the NCAA
maintained one standard for American athletes and another for foreign athletes.
He felt that it is simply because Howard is a black institution that the NCAA was
requested to investigate the eligibility of its players, Lincoln said. He stated that Howard
offered zero financial aid to any player overseas who was not academically qualified. Not
at least while he was there, he added. The NCAA telegram to the school also said that
two Howard players had been engaged in five seasons of play, at least one of which may
have taken place in Trinidad.64 This meant that these players were in violation of the
NCAA’s rules that were being tested during a period when college sports were on the rise
in the United States. During an interview for this paper, Coach Phillips was still adamant
about the wrongful decision made by the NCAA. He stood by his convictions that
Howard was singled out because of its standing as a HBCU school that contained black

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09 Apr. 2016.
foreign players. He was confident that some of these players were very good scholars in their respective countries. The levels of education of the countries where these athletes came from provided a very advanced educational system which would have been on par if not better than what was being offered in schools around the United States. Coach Phillips spoke very emotionally as education was very important to him and his players. when sharing his view as he said;

“It was obvious that two of the rules, which eventually we were able to uphold their decision, one was the SAT's. We had several players who didn't take the SAT. The NCAA law at the time was everybody has to take the SAT. In Trinidad, Caribbean and Africa, we have an end of school examination like the SAT.” 65

Pressured by some schools that competed against Howard, the NCAA felt that Howard's hard earned 1971 championship must continue to be challenged. Eventually, the championship was taken away. Ironically, even St. Louis University’s head coach Harry Keough accepted the loss and went on to praise Howard’s excellent performance on the field of play. Coach Phillips’ argument, paired with the arrogance of the NCAA’s treatment of Howard University, begged a review of why a Howard was being targeted while other schools were allowed to freely get away with violations. The upshot was that the Bison lost five starters through ineligibility, and with that any chance of winning the 1972 championship. Another argument was that one of the ineligible players as claimed by the investigators had played on the 1971 championship team; so under NCAA regulations, Howard should be punished. Coach Phillips charged that the NCAA was not

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65 (L. Phillips, personal communication, July 02, 2016)
being fair at all. At the very least, penalizing Howard, had a lot to do with its association of being a predominantly black university. Its strong support to be in the forefront of the civil rights movement did not help neither. By the NCAA's metric, many schools used ineligible players, but Howard was the only school penalized. The NCAA's creation of eligibility rules of Byzantine complexity was surely responsible. These rules apply to all college sports, but soccer is unusual in that so many of its players come from Europe, Asia, Africa and South America, where educational systems and sports traditions do not neatly correspond with NCAA regulations.66

Outraged by the outcome, Coach Phillips and the university community decided the best way to retaliate was to perform even better on the field of play. The task would be harder, and the journey toward the new goal started soon after the announcement of Howard’s punishment by the college system’s athletic ruling body. The NCAA's investigation of Howard was so powerful in comparison to other schools that Coach Phillips had no choice but to accept the sanctions. In his autobiography, Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar, he expresses his naiveté in regards to the rules:

I sometimes wonder if I was negligent in checking player eligibility. Today there is an NCAA Eligibility Center that reviews each and every prospective player’s academic record and amateur status, but at the time there was no one to do it but me. I had to interpret all the NCAA rules, some of which seemed to have been variably enforced. I can tell you that I certainly never set out to cheat.67

Motivated by strong feelings for the unfair judgement, it was time for

redemption with a drive to win another title for the Howard University soccer team. Coach Phillips expressed in the strongest terms that the Bison would challenge for another NCAA title. He made it clear to all the players that he would measure the character of his team by the way they respond back to adversity. He stressed that the team must now strive for what he termed as “Black Excellence”. He wanted no excuses as he told his players and the fans “don’t get mad, get smart” to help inspire his team to perform at a higher level of play. In his interview with me, Coach Phillips wanted to inform the world just how much Howard wanted to become a force to be reckoned with:

Winston Churchill had a quote which I saw recently, which is really the message I can send whenever I’m speaking to people or whenever I’m relating to our season. He said, “Victory or defeat is not final. Victory or winning is not final. Defeat is not fatal, but what is most important is ability to get up, day in and day out and to keep striving for excellence. Working hard towards excellence regardless of winning or losing.” That was Howard University. We lost, we came back in ’71 and we won. In ’72 we lost, we came back and we fought through ’73 which was tough, but we kept fighting and in ’74 we won again. That to me is the message of our program.68

The story of Howard's case was publicized for two years after the first NCAA title of 1971. In order to win again, they had to avoid dwelling in the past. When the 1974 season started, the team was on a mission, by strictly focusing on returning back what they felt was unjustly taken away from them. One of the positive outcomes from Howard’s punishment was that the school was able to challenge the NCAA by making them amend some rules that also affected other schools around the country. It should be noted that Howard challenged a very important case against the Supreme Court, which had a huge impact on the recruiting of international players at the collegiate level. Ruling on the lawsuit brought on by Howard University against the NCAA, United States District Court Judge Gerhard Gesell said that foreign-student athletes had been penalized
for activities like summer amateur participation, in which American student-athletes were allowed to compete. He found it a “denial of equal protection under the 14th Amendment.” The ruling issued in early December 1973, forced the NCAA to comply. It also forced it to drop the alien student rule. The rule was officially removed from the rulebooks during the association's annual convention that year. Gessell's decision, which allowed coaches to recruit foreign athletes without regard to age, immediately had an impact on sports programs at NCAA division I and II programs.

Many journalists and analysts agree that the decision made against the Bison team of 1971 by the NCAA was appalling to say the least. Stripping Howard of their national championship was controversial despite the innocent mistakes the school made concerning its recruits. Some believed the school’s visibility in the midst of the nation’s civil rights turmoil may have played some role in the NCAA’s decision towards the harsh punishment. Coach Phillips, who is a positive thinker, did not believe that crying discrimination would bring back what was taken from his 1970 and 1971 teams. Instead, he embarked on getting right back into the field of play by winning a second title again. It was on to the 1974 season with a new determination to bring back the trophy to Washington D.C. Fresh off post-season exile, the Howard team adopted a motto for what would be a history making 1974 season. Coach Phillips and the team became inspired

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68 (L. Phillips, personal communication, July 02. 2016)
after reading a line from the New York Evening Post editor William Cullen Bryant titled, “Truth, crushed to Earth, shall rise again.”\textsuperscript{70}

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid
Coach Phillips was aware that in order for Howard to reclaim the glory that was unjustly taken away, from his team had to be mentally prepared. The pressures of being in the spotlight during the period of the civil rights movement became an additional burden. It was time for the team to overcome the adversity of an NCAA governing system that was unfair. It made it even more compelling for Howard to attempt at winning another title.

Most analysts and soccer historians agree that the earlier ruling was egregious and vindictive. Stripping Howard of their 1971 national championship was as good as a felony verdict for a misdemeanor charge. Many believe that the school’s advocacy for the black movement in the midst of the nation’s civil rights turmoil may have played into the hands of the elite NCAA executives and administrators. “I was never thinking about discrimination,” said Phillips. “I was thinking about, ‘We’ll get it back.’” 71 Already loaded with talent, Coach Phillips set his goals toward building a stronger team by adding the missing pieces from the previous years. Given his recent victory in the courts over "the age rule," a set of rules from the NCAA targeting foreigners, Phillips knew the best way to build a team of good leaders was to recruit outside of the United States.

In 1974, Ian Bain, the captain of the team, expressed why it mattered that the diversity of players would be a solution for the team’s success. During a sit-down interview I had with him, he spoke in high regard about his coach:

Lincoln was smart this way. He knew he couldn't compete with the American athlete. He knew that. Up till today, Howard would not be looking to compete with the American athletes because every year let's say there are a hundred top recruits in the United States. You have maybe three levels there. A really top group of 20, then maybe a group of 50 and then a group of 30. None of those people come into Howard. They're going to UCLA, they're going to Duke, they're going to North Carolina, and they are going to places. Howard cannot compete there. If Howard has to compete, they have to go back to their international flavor and reach out like they did.

Coach Phillips, would start the process of building by requesting financial assistance to recruit more international players. He looked for players that would help enhance the rest of the talented pool of players that were already on the Howard team. He mapped out a plan that would allow his team to play against stronger teams during the offseason, including national teams that would travel to the United States. With most players from the 1971 team gone, and the 1973 season finished, the handful of players that remained were determined to lead the way with a new squad. Former Coach Ted Chambers now served as a spokesperson for the University’s athletic programs. As a former soccer coach, he was very impressed by the recruiting of the new additional class. He felt that this was the time to regain what had been taken away from Howard in 1971.

The journey to regain a new championship began as the start of the 1974 season got underway. Mindful, of the importance of recapturing a new NCAA title, Coach Phillips and Ted Chambers decided that they would look at the growing numbers of African players that might be a good fit in their system. The sport was growing fast in many parts of Africa, but the lack of professionally organized teams made it difficult for young people to have a career. By the 1960s and 1970s, education became one way out of
poverty for many young African student athletes. African countries were also gaining independence from their European colonizers. Beginning more than 50 years ago, football clubs began to be formed in many African cities. These clubs were most often sponsored by large companies or businesses, or in some cases by government departments. So, for example, it was not unusual in larger cities for the police force, army, and railroads to sponsor football clubs. These teams would compete against each other and against clubs sponsored by other large private businesses. It was from these clubs that the best players were selected to become members of a national team. Club football expanded with the coming of independence in many African countries in the 1960s. Some African countries were able to form an entire league of football clubs that competed over a long season to be crowned the league champion in their country. Each year, the national champion teams from all over Africa compete for the African Club Champions Cup. You may wonder about varsity football teams in Africa. Varsity sports are very important in countries such as South Africa and Zimbabwe, but in many African countries schools simply cannot afford to sponsor varsity teams. Schools cannot afford the equipment, uniforms, or transportation essential for inter-varsity sports. However, if you visit schools in rural or urban areas in almost any African country, you will almost certainly find students playing football during recess periods and after school.  

Understanding the complicated rules of the NCAA was a priority for Coach Phillips. He was also poised not to repeat any mistakes that would replicate the 1971 accusations against Howard University.

Intact with this knowledge, he made it his goal to get some new African players that would also benefit from coming to school at Howard. This would be a win-win situation for all interested parties. Coach Phillips explained during my interview about his thoughts of traveling to Nigeria on a recruiting trip.

We never spent a lot of money on recruiting. I went to the director. To go over there would cost $5,000 and all of that stuff. They turned me down and I went to Dr. Anderson and I said coach, if I get these 5 players, we win the championship. He said, really? Howard was hurting because of the loss. He said, come back tomorrow and pick up the check. I said wow. Went down the next day, picked up the check. He had ways and means of getting money. Off I was to see these special players. I had a breakdown on every single player I had from the movies, their likes, their customs, the food, their nicknames. I knew them like if I had met them before. They were impressed with that and I was only able to get some.  

In a conversation I had with him, Coach Phillips once said to me that what happened to Howard as a result of the NCAA’s unfair decision had made him a stronger and better person. He simply took the situation and proved that, with hard work and dedication for a just cause, things would turn around for the better. He was adamant on winning the title again. He added that the ordeal of losing what he worked hard for was just a “setback” that helped with his team’s comeback. During the offseason in 1973, Coach Phillips kept busy by organizing friendly scrimmages and using the Howard brand to compete against other college, semi-pro as well as international teams visiting the United State.

Uruguay, a country that won the World Cup in the early stages of the coveted international event, was rebuilding its national program in 1973 with consideration of University players. Around the same period, the National University team made a trip to the United States to play exhibition matches of which Howard was one of the opponents.

73 (L. Phillips, personal communication, July 02, 2016)
Aware of the opportunities ahead, the heavy burden of the NCAA probation in their psyche, Howard University was ready to pay the ultimate sacrifice to reclaim a national championship that they were convinced was taken away from them. The probation was lifted prior to the 1974 season, which finds two stalwarts of the 1971 team—center half-back Michael Bain and goal-keeper Amdemichael Selassie, leading the effort to capture a title the school can keep. A Howard University spokesman assured the media that the school had carefully screened each player to make sure they passed NCAA eligibility requirements. This careful screening resulted in a statement made by Ted Chambers that the 1974 team is the best he had ever seen in America because of its speed and depth. The Bison defeated Baltimore University by the score of 6-0 in a scrimmage where most of the returnees sat out. Out of a five-man Nigerian contingent, two freshmen had already beaten out returning starters. Coach Phillips knew utilizing those friendly games served as catalyst for combining a collective team work with individual abilities of his full squad. As foreign teams came to the United States to take on schools like Howard, the media was getting involved more in an attempt to cover the sport. In an interview for an article on the Washington Post about Uruguay’s team coming to face Howard, Coach Phillips speaks about his idea of playing better international teams:

Howard University will host the touring university national soccer team of Uruguay at Howard Stadium today at 5 pm. The Uruguayans have already beaten the defending NCAA champion, St. Louis University, 2-1, on their current American tour. Howard won its opener, 3-1 over Cleveland State, on Saturday. Howard coach Lincoln Phillips said the game is important because he is eying the proposed World Cup University Division championships tentatively scheduled either 1974 or 1975 in Chile. “That’s what we are shooting for,” Phillips said.

This game will give us an idea of where we stand in comparison to other University teams around the world. It is the first step toward international competition for us.\textsuperscript{75}

To understand American soccer at the collegiate level in the 1970s, it is helpful to view the growth of the game globally. At the time, the average American did not understand the love affair the rest of the world had with the beautiful game of soccer. Football, basketball, and baseball had already taken front row seats in the eyes of the American culture. It was difficult for the foreign players at Howard to comprehend why many Americans did not care for the sport of soccer.

Coach Phillips knew that in order to win a title in 1974, the team that he was assembling must get some exposure. Assured that some spectacular Nigerian players would attend Howard in the fall of 1974, he travelled with the team on a trip to Nigeria. The Howard coaches felt this trip would serve as a way to share the different cultures of the diaspora and the African homeland. The mainstream media outlets were once again not covering this story. However, some black owned media outlets noticed and did their small share. They reported the story in order to help connect the audience with the African experience. The limited reports helped garner little attention for Howard in their quest to build a strong program that would help bring home a national championship.

The \textit{New York Amsterdam} a prominent black paper writes;

\textit{New York Amsterdam News (1962-1993); Jul 13, 1974;}

\textit{The Howard University 'soccer team will fly to Lagos, Nigeria, next Wednesday, to start a two-week period of competition against, teams representing several of the largest cities of that}

country. Leo F. Miles, Howard athletic director, announced that plans for the 20,000-mile trip have been completed. Fulfillment of the project gave reality to a dream first projected by Howard soccer coach Lincoln Phillips two years ago. Games will be played in Lagos, Ibadan, Benin and Enugu. As most African countries, Nigeria considers soccer the foremost of all sports. The famed Bison soccer team, beaten but twice in two seasons, has been preparing for the trip since Intensive practice sessions were launched on June 8. Led by captain Ian Bain, two-time All-American choice, ten handpicked freshmen and 18 lettermen are rounding into top condition. In the last four years, the Howard soccer team has reached the semi-finals of the NCAA Soccer Championships twice and the finals once (1971). According to Phillips, the University is endorsing the venture in an attempt to improve the human relations between all peoples of African heritage.  

In the middle of Washington D.C., the nerve center of the country, a historic black institution was yearning for positive attention. A new opportunity for Coach Phillips to compete for a second title became a reality. He seized the moment by hiring a friend that could help push his message to the multicultural players. The first historically black college to win an NCAA title is the 1971 Howard University soccer team even if it was taken away by the NCAA. However, the winning and losing of a team does not necessarily identify the challenges of becoming a champion. Rather, it is also important to learn that when one peels back the layers—where a myriad of cultural differences lies within the social construct of race there was more to the struggle than one can see. Mixed with dreams and hope, those differences, more often than not, foster harmony, while paving the way for success.

According to a popular former Howard student-athlete boxing manager Rock Newman, “This wasn’t just about a soccer championship. This was black excellence.” It can also teach us as humans that adversity and education go hand in hand for many immigrants who aspire to build vibrant, successful, and prideful lives in America.

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The men who played on the NCAA Division I Howard University 1971-1974 soccer teams came from many different countries to pursue a high quality university education. Howard not only beat teams convincingly in 1974. The Bison blasted doors off, outscoring the opposition in the regular season, 63-6. They beat Hartwick College of New York in the semifinals to set up a rematch with St. Louis, whom the Bison defeated in 1971 before being stripped of the title. Pitting an all-black players for the Howard Bison against the all-white St. Louis University, the game was played at Busch Stadium during a cold December drizzle giving the Billikens a home field advantage.

Before the 1974 season began, Phillips asked Howard professor Dom Basil Matthews to speak to his players for inspiration. Dom Matthews was a fellow Trinidadian intellectual that wanted to share his ideas to young people to help motivate them to do better. With the emergence of the “black is beautiful concept,” Howard University requested Dom Basil's services to develop an intellectual academic base for the integration of black experience into the curriculum of the University. Matthews drew a triangle on the chalkboard inside the team's locker room. He then told them, “All of us, whether we're from Africa, the Caribbean, North America, we were all taken away and had pieces of our culture stripped from us.” Phillips went onto say, "The only line that was missing was a direct line back to Africa. That's where Howard is, in the middle of that triangle, bringing all of us together. You have an opportunity to go out and

connect us all with your excellence on the field. Howard University is the custodian of that triangle of blackness.” That season, Howard would not compete for merely their university. The Bison would play for black pride.  

Howard still lacked more media coverage as it continued to have an incredible season. In comparison to other area schools nearby, like the University of Maryland and Navy, Howard's media coverage was very minimal even as the team was making history. *The Washington Post* and a couple of black publications were the only media outlets covering the team. There is no doubt that Howard would have received more coverage had their success been in a different sport or if the school wasn’t a black institution.

To understand the media coverage of black schools, one needs to look into research that was done to reflect the issue. Four years after the 1974 championship, a study was completed about race and media coverage. The study compared black schools and white schools during the early 1970s, when Howard's soccer team would have been newsworthy. The study concluded that the national media ignored Howard entirely, while the local media offered small headlines. In other words, for Howard to get coverage, they had to do more work and win convincingly than other college sports teams. With the weight of the black community on their shoulders, their performance had to be nothing short of spectacular. The study also investigated the reasons for the lack of media coverage as the study was shared by a well-respected academic journal. It showed that race did play a factor in coverage of sports. Investigated was the extent of biased

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reporting of collegiate athletics by comparing press coverage accorded to black and white athletes at the University of Maryland and at Howard. Howard University is predominantly black, Maryland, predominantly white. All relevant articles about basketball and football programs appearing in the Washington Post during the two-year period between January 1973 and December 1974 were analyzed. Four hypotheses were presented:

(1) Sports programs at the predominantly white school receive more coverage than at the black school.

(2) Articles covering sports at the white school receive more favorable placement in the newspaper than articles about the black school.

(3) Articles about white school project a more positive image in the headline than those about the black school.

(4) Coverage of white athletes at the white university are more favorable than that of black athletes at the same school. All hypotheses were supported. Only 42% of the articles about Howard University received front page coverage during 1973, and only 21% in 1974. University of Maryland's athletics were reported on the front page in 61% of the articles in 1973, and 56% in 1974. Maryland had favorable coverage in the headlines of 55% of their articles in 1973, while Howard University received positive headlines in only 39% of the stories. Black athletes on the Maryland teams received twice as much negative press coverage as the white athletes (16% compared to 7% in 1973, 14% to 6% in 1974.80

Throughout the season, the history making Howard Bison had to settle for small articles hidden in corners of publications like the *Washington Post*. By the middle of the season, however, the world was starting to notice. For example, in 1974, the *Washington Post* wrote:

*Howard Runs Soccer String to 13 Games*

Howard University scored all its goals in an eight-minute span during the first half and the undefeated Bison posted their 13th straight soccer victory of the season, 3-1, yesterday over host Florida international University. After spotting their hosts an early goal Howard got consecutive goals from — Tunde Balogun, Muyiwa Sanya and Richard Davy to hand Florida International its second loss in nine games. The Bison outshot their opponents.\(^{81}\)

At this point, Howard’s confidence was growing and, media coverage or not, the team’s focus shifted towards winning the title and doing so without losing a single game.

Some black owned publications also gave Howard a much needed boost in coverage, which was helpful for the team’s momentum. The *New York Times* coverage was a breath of fresh air while The *New York Amsterdam News*, a black newspaper, also followed the team from time to time. The paper wrote on its sports section known as “*The Sports Whirl*”

By Les Matthews,

*Howard University’s soccer team which has yet to taste defeat this season is shaping up for the NCAA playoffs in December. The team, coached by Lincoln Phillips, former North American Soccer League coach joined the team seven years ago and developed one of the best soccer teams in the college circle. Howard U. won the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) small college championship in 1970 and 1971 the team won the National Intercollegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Howard won the first major college title for a Black College when they won the NCAA championship. The team won again in 1974. A major portion of the team is made up of West Indian and African booters. The school has been promoting soccer in the United States before the Cosmos.*\(^{82}\)


A large segment of America’s population did not care to understand the game of soccer, during this period as there were many other pressing issues that took priority. The racial turmoil of the time along with Howard’s success in the sport garnered attention mainly because Howard was at the forefront of the civil rights movement. Activists from Howard were starting to get noticed as a result of their association with what were considered radical movements. After the heady rush of the civil rights movement’s important years, anger and frustration was increasing among many African Americans, who saw clearly that true equality—social, economic and political—still eluded them.

In the early 1970s, this frustration fueled the rise of the Black Power movement. SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) chairman Stokely Carmichael a student at Howard University, who popularized the term “black power” felt that the traditional civil rights movement and its emphasis on nonviolence, did not go far enough, and the federal legislation had failed to address the economic and social disadvantages facing blacks in America. Black Power was a form of both self–definition and self–defense for African Americans. It called on them to stop looking to the institutions of white America which were believed to be inherently racist and act for themselves, by themselves, to seize the gains they desired, in all aspects of their lives.83

The fact that the team was filled with an international mix of black players started to attract some media coverage. Black publications started to cover Howard University as a top story after the booters started to accomplish a feat no other NCAA team was able to. It helped that news coverage of soccer around that time was starting to

be promoted in the United States as the NASL (North American Soccer League), was going through transformation. The world’s greatest player was being touted to play for the NASL’s flagship team, the New York Cosmos. Edson Arantes Do Nascimento, otherwise known as Pele, had won his third World Cup in 1970 with his national team Brazil. He also had a desire to help the growth of soccer in the United States. During a summer visit in 1973, with Howard University still on probation, Pele met with the President of the United States, Richard Nixon. Howard University was mentioned during the meeting by the President. From the archives of the Nixon audio tapes, a clip was recorded at the meeting with Pele at the White House in May of 1973. Nixon greeted the player with flattery, by saying:

"You are the greatest in the world."

He then asked the Brazilian if he spoke Spanish, with the greatest player replying:

"No, Portuguese. It is all the same." The President said to Pele's wife "He always wins" before starting the talk on soccer.

Nixon, then added: "The national champions of soccer in the US are here in Washington, at Howard University."

Pele responded:

"Soccer is very different from American football." The President in his attempt to talk about soccer remarked: "Do I know that! The main thing is to use your head.

Pele then shared his idea on soccer.

"Here is a film of soccer which I would like to present. I know you are busy. "It shows the worldwide soccer and the training that is required. Soccer is played more and more around the world and in the United States. I wish you well."84

With more attention being given to Howard University, and with the increase of

international students at the prestigious HBCU School, more and more people started to
follow the soccer program. Coach Phillips was determined to execute a plan that would
redeem Howard’s championship title that was stripped away in 1971. He set the tone for
the 1974 season as he discussed his success to getting back into the finals once again.

When the playoffs started to roll around, the team was came together. Everybody
was understood their role. We knew that when things were not going well, we had guys who
would come off the bench and turn things around for us as happened in the final. I think
everybody was headed in the same direction, rowing towards the same goal. The boat was
pushing, and the wings helped that. Suddenly you have 10 wings, 12 wings, 14 wings and
everybody is saying, “Wow! Undefeated season is that possible?” and it went like that.85

In his autobiography book, Rising Above and Beyond the Cross Bar, Coach Phillips
writes about his show of respect for all of his opponents, especially for St. Louis
University’s head coach Harry Keough. The very same coach whose national power
house team played against Howard in the 1971 championship.

A coach I did have a great deal of respect for was Harry Keough. Keough had worked for
the U.S. Postal Service while playing professional soccer. He was a defender on the U.S.
team that beat England 1-0 in the 1950 World Cup—a result that remains one of the most
shocking upsets in the history of sport. In his time as coach of St Louis University, he won
five NCAA championships. After my 1972 speech when I accused the NCAA of racism for
declaring several players ineligible, he had claimed ignorance of the origin of the
investigation. “Lincoln, I don’t know what happened,” he said. “You have to trust me. I am
a soccer coach; I am coming out to beat you.” I believed him. He played it fair and square.86

College soccer continued its remarkable growth in the 1970s. The NCAA was
faced with a tough task of managing new conferences and independent teams. The large
number of universities across America were increasingly falling into the have and have-
not categories as the smaller colleges simply could not keep up with the recruiting power

85 Ibid.
86 Phillips, L. (2014) ‘Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar’ Excerpt From: Lincoln A.
Phillips Edited by Robert Clarke. Bloomington Indiana: author house
of the major institutions. St. Louis made their sixth consecutive appearance in the NCAA final. Their decade long dynasty was about to come to an end in the 1974 championship game. Howard was determined not to settle for anything less than a championship in their quest for another title. The Bison as team made history when they brought to an end the dominance of American college soccer by St. Louis University. They prevented the Billikens from winning another title. To this day the Billikens have not repeated as champions. Other contributing factors that played a role may be the fact that college soccer teams from every corner of the country started to improve by recruiting foreign players from around the world as they copied Howard’s success by looking outside of the United States for better players. *Sports Illustrated* devoted an article for the final game of the 1974 NCAA college soccer as they described the scene:

*It was drizzly and just as cold Saturday afternoon for the finals, which drew only 3,802 hardy souls. Before the match a special truck cruised back and forth over the artificial turf sucking up gallons of water and then spewing it out in Busch Stadium’s remote corners. St. Louis passed beautifully in the first half, outrunning Howard and shielding the ball cleverly. Frustrated Howard players, getting to the center of action a little late, kept making contact with Billikens rather than the ball and drew the unusual total of 20 fouls. St. Louis was attacking Howard’s goal constantly but still finished the half leading only 1-0, after Fullback Don Droge kicked the ball through a crowd past Howard Goalie Trevor Leiba. Taking proper advantage of all their thrusts, the Billikens might have been leading by as much as 4-0.*

The Howard booters knew that half way through the final game that they must play harder to win. They trailed St. Louis but had confidence that Howard would come back stronger in the second half. A loss to St. Louis would be a devastating blow to the black movement’s collective consciousness. It meant that every time the Howard soccer

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team was on the field, they represented a segment of the American population in a
country that was struggling with racial tensions. The team’s strong following from the
university community was considered a part of the black American struggle for civil
rights. The second half of the final remains to be an important moment in the history of
college soccer. Howard made slight changes to speed up the game and catch St. Louis off
guard. It worked as the game was tied one to one entering the fourth overtime, when
Kenneth Ilodigwe knocked in a beautiful cross from Richard Davy for a pulsating end to
a perfect season: A Jamaican-to-Nigerian, multi-ethnic connection that encapsulated what
Phillips had created. Howard University’s historic team enjoy their national
championships to this day as an elite team to have gone undefeated twice without a tie,
resulting in two separate titles. *Sports Illustrated*’s article summed it up best,

Howard played smarter in the second half, not trying to guard the Billikens tightly all
over the field, but instead dropping back in a sort of zone defense. They let St. Louis have its way
midfield and clogged the field when the Howard's goal was threatened. Midway, Ayomi Bamiro,
a substitute from Nigeria, tied the score with a header, which was how it remained to the end of
regulation time. Then they went into OT. While they played, it seemed both teams might challenge
the NCAA record for overtimes (10). The first, second, and third 15-minute periods went by with
some close calls, but nothing record breaking. One of Howard's shots hit the crossbar, and
another hit the left goalpost. Finally, shortly after the start of the fourth overtime, Howard's
Richard Davy worked his way to St. Louis's goal on the left side, crossed the ball toward the
goalmouth, and then Striker Kenneth Ilodigwe of Nigeria kicked it in from about four feet away. It
happened. Howard once again had won. They had beaten St. Louis, and it was not likely that the
NCAA would vacate the title this time.\(^88\)

History was made once again. Finally, a historically black school had won an
officially recognized NCAA title. This time it was legitimate by all standards. Media
coverage of the school’s victory from around the nation was still modest. Most of the
coverage came from local papers in the Washington D.C. area.

\(^88\) Ibid.
While I was working on this project, I found information from the Washington Post in abundance as Howard University is considered to be a popular Washington D.C. institution. In his autobiography, Coach Phillips shared the excitement of the students at Howard following the national championship:

Hundreds of students, faculty members, and administration officials jammed the Cramton Auditorium at Howard for a celebration after our win. A DJ announced each player’s name as he accepted his medal. Kendo, our match winner, was dressed in red pants, a red shirt, and a pair of red shoes. “FIIIIRE!!!” bellowed the DJ. The Washington Post had asked him immediately after he netted the championship-winning goal what he would have done if he hadn’t scored. In typically melodramatic fashion, he said he would have died.89

The Washington Post wrote several other articles about Howard. On December 12, 1974, as the Redskins were getting ready for their playoffs, the paper wrote a decent sized article that expressed the need to recognize Howard's achievement. The article went on to say:

The Champion Bison of Howard

WHILE IT MAY NEVER match the television appeal of big-moneyed college and professional football, soccer is rapidly becoming a national sport: at its best, it is a marvelous test of athletic skill. And so, while this community proudly cheers its battered Redskins into the 1974 National Football League playoffs, it should reserve a special salute for the remarkable performance of Howard University's Bison soccer team which captured the NCAA university division one championship in the final sudden-death period of a tense game against St. Louis University last Saturday. It took 135 minutes of close calls in the cold and damp weather at Busch Memorial Stadium before Richard Davy drilled a shot through a crowd of St. Louis defenders and Howard freshman Kenneth Illogwe kicked it into the net to give the Bison a dramatic 2-1 victory. For coach Lincoln Phillips and his talented players, the triumph was doubly sweet: Not only did the team finish with a perfect season19 wins, no losses, no ties—but it delivered to Howard the trophy yanked heartbreakingly from the team three years ago, when the Bison won the NCAA title but were disqualified on ineligibility charges. That year, the NCAA named no champion, and St. Louis remained runner-up. With this exception, powerful St. Louis which draws players from the most extensive soccer development program in the country had won the title every season for the last five years. Now, after a bitter wait and an extraordinary team effort, the championship trophy has been brought to the, hilltop of Howard and a jubilant campus community.

"It's a very big load off my chest." said Coach Phillips, who refuses to single out individual stars among the champion Bison, emphasizing instead the team effort in that spirit. We are pleased to congratulate all the-Howard plan for doing the community proud.90

Other publications picked up their story from what was then a popular news service, UPI (United Press International). UPI wrote a small paragraph about the championship titled “Hit Miss, Goal, and Howard wins NCAA title.” The article was distributed throughout the nation, and the Boston Globe carried it. The article was short, but the message important.

The No 1 ranked Bison completing a perfect season with their 19th win, gained the title that was denied them in 1971 for using ineligible players. They beat St. Louis, 3-2, that year, but the courts later ruled the law which forced them to forfeit the title was unconstitutional.91

As the Howard Bison proudly won a national title, it was clear that the NCAA intentionally looked the other way when selecting players for post season awards by using the excuse that the players on Howard were foreign. In what was another unexpected decision, the NSCAA decided not to select any players from Howard University as top players in college soccer for that year. The 1974 All-American selection was made up of players from teams that Howard defeated on the field of play. The NSCAA's selection process usually includes players from the winning championship team, but none were chosen from Howard. Coach Phillips felt that, once again, the NCAA system was not being fair. Newspaper articles stated that the new champion Howard failed to place any players on the all-America team.

In a humorous statement, Coach Phillips put the selection process to rest: "Our whole team could be made all-American. This is not something where we can go out on the field and prove they are wrong, so we have to live with it. We have players who could play professionally on any level. And they can't make college all-America? Who can figure it out?" 92 What mattered most was that they returned the title to their school.

Since Coach Phillips took over the team in 1971, the national spotlight on the University increased tenfold. Even so, Howard barely received the national attention it deserved. Note that Saint Louis University was the premier college soccer team in the United States as early as the 1960s. Coach Keough was a member of the 1950 United States National soccer team that upset England at the World Cup. He took over the Saint Louis University program in the late 1960s. Paul Gardner, a soccer historian and columnist, knew Coach Keough very well. He has been following the college soccer scene as a reporter, columnist, and award winning writer for many years. In one of Gardner’s articles, he reflected back on how the Saint Louis program’s dominance came to an end after the 1974 season:

Harry and I had an ongoing disagreement over the matter of style. For me, the Billikens relied way too much on the physical side of the game strength, stamina, running and so on. I found the soccer side of their game rather prosaic. Of course, Harry disagreed countering with numerous examples of what he considered highly skilled Billiken play and players. Anyway and again, I never remember him boasting about this his team was by far the most successful college team in the country so they were evidently getting more right than wrong.93

He then went on to talk about the events of the 1974 finals when Howard defeated the team that had dominated American soccer for a long time. The soccer and the style remained a problem. In 1974, the Final Four tournament abandoned the cavernous Orange Bowl and the final was played at Busch Stadium in Saint Louis. The home team Billikens would surely win again, on their home turf. However, it was not meant to be.

The Billikens had made the Final Four thanks to a two to one overtime win against Southern Illinois-Edwardsville -- a game that the incorrigibly honest Harry admitted his team had been lucky to win. Even luckier were the Billikens’ 3-2 overtime win against UCLA in the semifinal. In the final, the old nemesis, Howard, awaited -- and the Billikens’ luck at last ran out. Overtime again, but it was Howard -- which had already hit the woodwork twice -- that got the winner. The imperturbable Harry smiled and acknowledged the defeat. People everywhere came up with ideas about Howard’s win and accused the school of allowing foreign players to dominate. Sports Illustrated covered the final game for a short feature story and had this to say about the game.

How nice for Howard that one out of every six students on its campus is a foreigner and that its soccer coach, Lincoln Abraham Phillips, is from Trinidad. How nice that while doing a little reverse Peace Corps work on the poverty-stricken soccer fields of the U.S., Howard’s fancy-footed foreigners could also win an NCAA title, beating all-American, all-white St. Louis U. in four overtimes 2-1. 94

The piece written by Joe Jares following the game in December of 1974 also shares some important thoughts and brings the idea of foreign players at the college level into perspective. He compares other athletes as a way to let people know that plenty of

colleges used athletes from different countries including St. Louis University whose fans and pundits were complaining after the loss to Howard:

There was considerable grumbling in Busch Stadium when they failed once again to get that third straight title. The gist of the gripes was that it was somehow unfair for these fine boys from the local parishes to have to play a West Indies-Africa all-star team. The gripers conveniently forgot that the St. Louis U. ice hockey team was laced with Canadians and that the soccer team had fielded at least two foreigners in the past.\(^95\)

Paul Gardner, an advocate for the game and a seasoned soccer journalist of the finest kind, wrote a very touching article about his experience of the final game for the coveted Soccer America Magazine. In 2012 after Harry Keough’s death, he wrote a great tribute to the legendary American coach. In it, he shares the reaction of Coach Keough from his personal point of view. He goes on to write:

Whatever magic Harry had been working with his team and I was almost at the point of thinking of it as voodoo was no longer working. And so, we arrived at the point where any other coach, I’m sure, would have heaped criticism and scorn on me. In February 1975 I wrote in The Sporting News, a St. Louis publication a severe criticism of the St. Louis style, saying that it had stagnated, that it was being overtaken by the soccer being played in the rest of the country. I concluded that St Louis soccer was boring lacking in individuality, flair and inventiveness. I did not mention Harry, but the implication was clear. Harry did not react. I never saw in print, nor heard from him personally -- an attack on me for my trashin of his teams. But the change took place, rather more quickly than I had anticipated; St. Louis has never won another college title.\(^96\)

The college game has grown throughout the nation since the 1970s. What Howard and Saint Louis did for the sport will go down in history as one of the best sports stories that deserves to get much needed recognition. Race, civil rights, the NCAA and the role of immigrants from black nations plays a huge factor in the development of the game in the United States today.

\(^{95}\) Ibid.

\(^{96}\) Ibid.
Howard University’s accomplishment had a tremendous impact on the growth of the sport across the nation. While many black and black-immigrant players continue to play college and professional soccer in the United States, the lack of coaches at the professional and college ranks continues to be almost non-existent. It took Americans a long time to put the sport of soccer at a level where it seems to be thriving today. The work of many people and the competitions of the bygone era of the 1970s should serve as a reminder that it takes the contribution of successful people working with skills of social development that can make a long lasting impact. The legacy of international recruitment has brought remarkable value to American soccer, with many alums remaining to play, coach and advocate for the sport’s growth in the United States. Coach Phillips believes that Howard helped break barriers across the country as “a black school playing soccer in a white man’s game”, inspiring so many others.97

For decades, the sport of soccer in the United States was geared towards European immigrants as they were the first to arrive to America. St. Louis University had traditionally been the college soccer powerhouse in this country, mainly because Catholics in the city learn playing the sport in their parishes as youth. They then continue in high school and if they are good enough, move on to the varsity team at the Jesuit University, which does not offer a football team. The team is white not because of bigotry but because soccer is essentially a Catholic sport in St. Louis and most blacks live in the poorer city parishes which cannot afford to field soccer teams. The Billikens won

10 tournaments until 1973, including two in a row four different times. When Howard beat them in 1974, not only did they win a historic championship, but also stopped a dynasty that once dominated college soccer for over a decade. The win was very important for the District of Columbia institution. It brought the much needed recognition the school needed at the global level.

Other than a small comeback in the 1988 season where Howard lost in the finals of the NCAA title game, Howard’s soccer teams never won another championship. Meanwhile, Coach Phillips went on to help build great athletes and soccer stars that played for the United States national team and other professional teams throughout the world. He also initiated the organizations that helped the growth of the game in North America and his native Trinidad and Tobago. Howard University alumni association recently honored and recognized the achievements of the 1971 and 1974 teams. A video that was put together by the University, used for a Hall of Fame ceremony event, shows Coach Phillips and Ian Bain expressing their views from those memorable years:

**Ian Bain:**
It's like going into the lion's den and taking food out of its mouth and we were all too happy to do that because it would send a big message who don't have a small understanding of what years of suffering and the NCAA pushback meant.

**Lincoln Phillips:**
Basically, the slogan that we had Truth crushed to the earth shall rise again and that carried us right through the season.

**Ian Bain:**
We were quite happy to go there into the cold at Saint Louis in a snow-covered field, the snow had to be pushed to the side, Caribbean and African and African-American players to go there and in four over times and impose ourselves on them.
**Lincoln Phillips:**
And I remember in the dressing room the one last thing I said to the players “Gentlemen the truth is here”.

**Ian Bain:**
Gave us a lot, a lot of joy! a lot of joy!

**Lincoln Phillips:**
It was just a great moment for the soccer players, it was just a great moment for the 71 players, it was just a great moment for Howard University and all the folks involved in the civil rights movement, it was just a great moment for people of color.\(^{98}\)

In an attempt to find information on Howard’s successful history of the 1971 and 1974 championships, it became evident that this story was buried for a long time until recent discoveries were made when ESPN decided to make a documentary film. The fact that Howard was a black school dominating a sport played by mostly white kids may have had something to do with it.

For Coach Phillips, in the moments after that 1974 championship, his reflection on winning the title opened up new ideas that he was able to practice as a successful soccer coach in many places. In another interview he conducted with ESPN’s The Undefeated, he stressed, “I don’t know what would have happened had we lost that game versus St. Louis, the perennial soccer powerhouse at the time, and our biggest rival. Our whole lives depended on it. Remember, this was 1974 — smack in the middle of post-civil rights movement America, the Vietnam War still fresh in our minds and racial tensions as thick and tense and unpredictable as they are today.” To think that four decades after our epic

triumph, we have only made baby steps with race relations in America.” While I agree with Coach Phillips in his argument about race relations, it is also important to note that the work he did for the sport has transcended race relations as he played a major role in helping develop excellent athletes including some members of the United States national team. It is also imperative to note that the current racial issues and fight for equal rights are in no way similar to the time when the Howard University soccer dynasty dominated the game at a high level.

Today, we see several issues intertwined within the context of civil rights which have taken away from the real narrative of what the struggle for racial equality is about. In the conclusion chapter the role of Howard and the pioneering Bison championship teams will direct us on what type of change their influence brought to the sport of soccer in black communities.

Visiting the new National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington D.C. I observed a display titled, “Sports: Leveling the Playing Field.” Below this display, a short statement read:

Sports have a unique role in American culture. Through much of the nation’s history, African Americans were systematically denied opportunities to participate at the highest levels of competition. Yet sports were also among the earliest and most high-profile spaces to accept African Americans on terms of relative equality. For African Americans, sports records and individual accomplishments matter, but it’s the political and social implications of sports that have transformed the world.\textsuperscript{100}

While this statement certainly rings true for sports' impact on black culture, it does not directly address the accomplishments of Howard University's soccer teams. In Howard’s case, the coach and the team used sports as a tool to fight for social justice, clearing the way for avenues of understanding between people across all cultures. Overlooked by a large segment of the black people not too familiar with a foreign sport like soccer, the Bison soccer programs of the 1970s paid the ultimate price of being sanctioned in 1973 to get back the dignity of the soccer program. As this study concludes, the paper's main focus should be clear, Howard University and Coach Phillips, did not dwell on the accusations of the 1971 season.

Instead, they decided to prove to the world that they were good enough to reclaim the coveted NCAA title stripped away from them in 1971. Some players have joked that

there was more pressure on them on the soccer field than in the classroom. Others have said the opposite, claiming that history and a sense of purpose made them feel certain of Howard winning the title. But whatever the reason—nerves, confidence, and redemption—the Bison stampeded through the 1974 season in a style not seen in NCAA Division I college soccer. What lessons can be learned from their story? Howard’s soccer program overcame a society dominated by a racist ideologue during the heyday of the civil rights era. Their achievements required coordination, discipline, and a leader who focused on fixing the problem rather than self-distracting and proceeded to make history.

Today, Coach Phillips and his accomplishments have become integral to understanding the history of American sports and soccer as a whole. Starting from the early years of the game, Blacks played roles in helping develop the game alongside of their white counterparts. They may not have excelled in the sport at a fast rate due to segregation and the racial composition of this country. The simplicity of the game is not supposed to limit the ability of soccer players to play in big numbers. However, social settings overwhelmingly force most blacks into choosing to play other popular American sports like baseball, basketball and football. Howard’s impact on the game should never be overlooked. The school was creating a template for winning and for success — not only for historically black colleges and universities, but for the game of soccer in America. Howard made recruiting players from Africa and the Caribbean the norm — at a time when nobody looked beyond their state lines for players.

Howard also created an opportunity for international students because not only was America an option for an education, they could also play the game they loved.
The Bison had a sprinkling of African-Americans gravitating to the game, and there was a sense that momentum was being built. Sadly, though, that momentum was quickly halted. Other schools, predominantly white institutions, were watching from afar and had started to copy the template Howard had established. Clemson University, a perennial powerhouse, was first. 101 The idea behind this project is to explain the role that blacks and immigrants played in the development of the most popular game in the world within the United States. It is also with the hope of this author that this study can help improve and educate people about the continued scarcity of facilities and the lack of opportunity for young people in inner-city neighborhoods. Not many organizations have attempted to concentrate resources for the development of soccer leagues, clinics, and administrators for communities where the game is not well known due to socio-economic problems and its image as being a mostly white sport. Understanding that the difference between blacks whose backgrounds are from inner cities and those who come from other countries and how they are treated from the socio-economic aspect of one of the fastest growing games in the United States is important. Yet the potential remains in creating black star players, maybe an American Pele, is yet to be discovered; and by working with African-American youngsters in soccer clinics, there is no doubt that someday African-American kids in large numbers will discover soccer at the highest of levels and will contribute to the development of the USA as a truly competitive soccer nation.

On a personal note, I would like to conclude that when I was recruited to play at the college level, my college coach Tom Davidson, may he rest in peace, was still

101 Ibid.
learning the finer points of the game as he was asked by the college to fill in the position of a head soccer coach. What he lacked in soccer knowledge, he made up with his humanity, kindness and leadership skills that allowed our team to flourish. He was able to recruit top notch players as a head coach knowing fully that his assistant coach, a more seasoned soccer instructor, would be the technical trainer. A lot like Coach Ted Chambers, Coach Davidson involved everyone in community activities. He was very committed to working with young people. Like Ted Chambers, Coach Davidson built positive relationships that glued the team together. His background in sports like baseball and basketball allowed him to share the style in which most of the players he recruited were able to ease into. Such positive relationships create resonance, an environment where players felt their feelings were being taken care of. Coach Chambers eventually passed on his skills of many years coaching a great institution like Howard University to Coach Lincoln Phillips. He was unselfish and a man of integrity. While the focus of this paper may have been on the 1971 and 1974 championships, it should be clear that the pioneering work of Ted Chambers should never go unnoticed.

The comparison of Coach Davidson with coaches around the country like Ted Chambers and many others can be attributed by the fact that America’s welcoming culture has always been to help individuals, immigrants and honest people to thrive. Eventually before coach Davidson left his position, he was able to start the process of building a strong program at my alma mater by bringing in players from Trinidad and Tobago. He was also able to help arrange games for the school against the national team of Trinidad and other established international teams. I mention Coach Davidson because
he was the catalyst for helping build character including mine as he left a long legacy for Francis Marion University. He reminds me of the man who recruited Coach Phillips to Howard University. Ted Chambers was the man behind the success that Howard University was associated with for decades. It is my strong belief that those people who never get the recognition will always have a role in any successful organization. A documentary for the television network ESPN described how Coach Phillips and his team became an inspiration by doing the unthinkable.

Generally speaking, in sports, the mind-set of athletes is largely determined by the personalities and actions of their coaches. The coaching environment plays a big role in how a team is shaped. It is clear that coaches like Ted Chambers, Tom Davidson and Lincoln Phillips all in their own unique way were able to develop a new range of relationship skills that allowed their programs to thrive. My alma mater, Francis Marion University has become one of the top NCAA Division II programs in the country thanks to Coach Davidson. Howard University’s soccer programs of the 1970s also continues to inspire future generations. Talking to Coach Phillips these days, you get a sense of confidence that what he was able to build at Howard should serve as an example to all people no matter what their race. Turning Caribbean, Africans and Americans into one united front, he was able to make history. As a Caribbean himself, he was able to get top prospects into the capstone of black education at Howard. It helped Coach Phillips that from the 1960s until the mid-1980s, the mass migration of players from the African continent were players exclusively looking for academic advancement as the idea of professional soccer was still going through the development process. What he lacked
from the recruitment of the American pool of players, he made up with Caribbean and Africans. Nonetheless, the Howard teams that won the national championships in soccer are just now getting the recognition. We should, as a society, remember that while some African Americans were fighting for civil rights; others had already been immersed in breaking barriers in the sporting world.

Sport is not just about athletic endeavors, but is human interaction played out in a way that only sport allows it to happen. Nationalism, state supremacy, college glory, and a city's pride in its pro teams, all create an environment whereby the people cajole the team as much as the individual; thus, the need to win over rides one's skin color. Throughout American history, black athletes have been such a distinct and integral part of the black social fabric that our lives have been greatly influenced and enriched by their triumphs and near triumphs. 102

Howard University should be a part of this great American story. It is a black American school with American rules that was able to achieve a moment in NCAA sports history that has since 1974 not been matched by other colleges. Howard University’s national soccer championship 44 years ago sent an alarm that black people were being recognized by those who disliked them for their god given abilities and talents. Sport has been a harbinger of change in America for a long time. It also serves as a reflective of the larger societal values. In 1971 and 1974 during a time of racial divides, animosity, subtle shifts in the narrative around hate, America’s insidious disease of racism took a big blow as Howard University confirmed their superiority by reclaiming a

title that was taken away from them. The 1974 NCAA national title contest between the Bison of Howard and the Billikens of St. Louis was much bigger than just soccer. It represented something more important and crucial to the soul of America and in the process stopped a dynasty that St. Louis had built for a long time. However, the lack of diversity in the sport still continues to be a big problem 44 years after that historic and amazing victory by Howard University. Coach Lincoln Phillips who helped start an organization that advocates for black soccer coaches during his tenure at Howard made it his mission to help other black coaches and players to advance in the game within the United States. To this day the number of black and immigrant coaches is still considered very low in comparison to white coaches that dominate the coaching ranks of most American universities.

The Black Soccer Coaches Group advocates for diversity in the coaching circles of college and professional soccer. In a recent study that was done, the organization came up with new statistics that are concerning. The study looked to understand all 1,862 NCAA college soccer programs around the nation to determine how many minority coaches are in head coaching positions. Data that was collected indicates that there is clearly a trend which expose significant diversity issues in regards to these coaching vacancies at colleges and universities across America. At the Division I level, the highest level of the three NCAA Divisions, there were a total of 528 programs, of which white coaches, both male and female, totaling 475 combined hold 89.9% of the head coaching positions. There were only 25 black head coaches (4.7%), 18 Latin head coaches (3.2%), and 6 Asian head coaches (1.14%), and even more
concerning were the number of minorities in Athletic Director positions despite the make of athletes that are diverse in institutions across America make up 35%. \(^{103}\)

In conclusion, the effort put into this study can bring honest and frank discussions that can help to bring attention to college soccer’s lack of diversity. College soccer in America has started to change its dynamics. It is important to understand that there are advantages for many international students around the world who want to make a career out of soccer while also getting quality American education. The growth of Major League Soccer is also starting to attract players from other nations. Howard University’s 1970’s teams were way ahead of their time in this regard as other schools seem to be emulating the great accomplishments of the only HBCU school to win a national soccer title until these days. Data that was provided by the Black Soccer Coaches Group indicates that there is more evidence that black soccer coaches in the United States continue to be at a disadvantage especially at the college and professional levels without enough opportunities in the hiring process.

With the United States, Canada and Mexico hosting the 2026 world cup, the diversity issues must be resolved soon in the sport of soccer. Other sports have made it a priority to allow diversity based on merit. As a sensitive issue at the forefront of other sports within the United States, it is clear that in order to prosper as a society people of different backgrounds should be included in decision making positions. One of the solutions for improvement can be to use information from other sports leagues. For

example, enforcing policies for hiring practices at NCAA schools similar to the NFL would help looking into the lack of diversity in head soccer coaching positions at the college level.
APPENDIX A

NCAA VIOLATIONS VS HOWARD AS WRITTEN ON JANUARY 1ST, 1973.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, D. C.

WHEREAS, the NCAA Committee on Infractions has investigated alleged violations of the Association's legislation on the part of Howard University and has reported its findings to the NCAA Council;

WHEREAS, the Council has found Howard University to have violated the principles governing the eligibility of student-athletes [NCAA Constitution 3-9-(a)], in that:

1. During the 1970-71, 1971-72 and 1972-73 academic years, a student athlete was permitted to participate in intercollegiate soccer competition subsequent to the date his eligibility expired under the Association's five-year rule.

WHEREAS, the Council has found Howard University to have violated the provisions governing individual eligibility for NCAA championship events [NCAA Bylaw 4-1-(b) and executive Regulation 2-3-(a)], in that:

1. A student-athlete participated as a member of the University's intercollegiate soccer team in the 1970 and 1971 NCAA Soccer Championships while ineligible under the Association's five-year rule. He was certified by the University as meeting the eligibility rules for NCAA events (Bylaw 4) and all other rules and regulations of the Association as they pertain to eligibility.

WHEREAS, the Council has found Howard University to have violated the provisions governing individual eligibility for NCAA championship events [NCAA Bylaw 4-1-(f)-(2) and Executive regulation 2-3-(a)], in that:

1. Two student-athletes participated as members of the University's intercollegiate soccer team in the 1971 NCAA Soccer Championships while ineligible, both having previously engaged in at least five seasons of varsity

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competition, as defined by NCAA legislation, prior to this event. The student athletes were certified by the University as meeting the eligibility rules for NCAA events (Bylaw 4) and all other rules and regulations of the Association as they pertain to eligibility.

WHEREAS, the Council has found Howard University to have violated the provisions governing institutional eligibility for NCAA Championship events [NCAA Bylaw 4-6-(b)-(l)], in that:

1. During the 1971-72 academic year, two student-athletes were erroneously certified eligible under the NCAA 1.600 rule and therefore were permitted to practice, participate and receive institutionally administered financial aid (based upon their athletic ability) as freshmen while ineligible. Specifically, the young men did not take a national test to establish eligibility.

WHEREAS, the Council has found Howard University to have violated the provisions governing institutional eligibility for NCAA championship events [NCAA Bylaw 4-6-(c)], in that:

1. The University did not maintain a file available for inspection upon request containing the basis for certification for eligibility under the Association's 1.600 legislation for any student-athlete entering the University as a freshman during the 1972-73 academic year.

WHEREAS, the Council has found Howard University to have violated the provisions governing individual eligibility for NCAA championship events [NCAA Bylaw 4-6-(b)-(1) and Executive Regulation 2-3-(a)], in that:

1. Two student-athletes participated as members of the University's intercollegiate soccer team in the 1971 Soccer Championships while ineligible under the prediction requirements of the Association's 1.600 legislation. At the time of the event they were certified by the University as meeting the eligibility requirements for NCAA events (Bylaw 4) and all other rules and regulations of the Association as they pertain to eligibility.

WHEREAS, the Council has noted that the legislation in question is sufficiently clear to preclude its erroneous application;

WHEREAS, the Council has concluded that these violations resulted from a combination of unfamiliarity with NCAA legislation in question, insufficient effort to determine whether these
provisions were applicable to members of the University's intercollegiate soccer team, and inadequate administration on the part of University personnel responsible to certify eligibility;

WHEREAS, the Council has noted that Howard University has taken necessary action concerning each student-athlete's eligibility for intercollegiate athletics as prescribed by NCAA legislation;

WHEREAS, the Council recognizes that the actions taken by Howard University give meaning to the cooperative principle and philosophy of the NCAA enforcement program, and has appropriately considered these corrective actions in arriving at its conclusion;

WHEREAS, the Council is directed by the NCAA policy which provides that in cases of serious violations, the institution and NCAA both should take corrective and punitive action;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Howard University be reprimanded and censured, and placed on probation for a period of one year from this date (January 9, 1973), it being understood that prior to the expiration of this probationary period the NCAA Committee on Infractions shall review the athletic policies and practices of the institution:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that during this probationary period, Howard University's intercollegiate soccer team shall end its season with the playing of the last, regularly-scheduled, in season game and not be eligible to participate in the National Collegiate Soccer Championships or any other postseason soccer competition;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that record be made of the excellent assistance and cooperation extended to the NCAA and its Committee on Infractions by the executive and athletic administrations of Howard University.

January 9, 1973\textsuperscript{104}

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BIOGRAPHY

Michael Seium is an Eritrean born American raised television news and sports journalist/Academic. Born in the horn of Africa nation of Eritrea, Mike came to the United States during his early teenage years. After attending South Hagerstown High School and Hagerstown Junior College where he excelled in soccer, wrestling, and Tennis as well as being an honor student, he attended Francis Marion College on a soccer scholarship where he helped the Patriots become one of the top-notch programs in the country. After graduating with a Bachelor’s of Science in Political Science and minors in Mass communications as well as Geography, Mike landed an internship with the CBS Affiliate in Florence, South Carolina where he got his first exposure in television by covering sports as a producer/videographer/editor and sometimes reporter. Mike also worked in the award winning team at WBTW’s creative services department as a producer. Working in competition with the likes of Stuart Scott of ESPN and many other top market sports directors Mike also covered News as producer/videographer/editor in the Carolinas for more than five years. Mike then moved to Baltimore where he worked with NPPA (National Press Photographers Association) best videography station FOX-45 WBFF-TV. Mike joined Cox Broadcasting where he worked as a photojournalist in 1998 and covered many important Washington news stories. Mike went on to work at the Washington News Network as Director of Operations. One of the most successful programs that Mike worked with is the Washington Post High School Sports show. Mike went on to help launch the Al Jazeera International broadcast center in Washington D.C by contributing technically while also producing stories for the sports department. Following a three-year stint at Al Jazeera English Mike started to consult and worked for the Al Jazeera Sports Channel now (beinsport) covering major sports events such as the NBA, NASCAR, NHRA, World Challenge Soccer, ATP Tennis, The Pan American games in Guadalajara as well as many other sports news and feature stories for the Al Jazeera Sport channel. As M.S. in Sport and Recreation Studies candidate with a concentration in International Sports Management at George Mason University Mike’s plan is to go into full-time teaching at the collegiate level while working on an independent consulting basis in the fields of communications, sports, and media.