



## **Albany State, North Carolina Central host Division II Playoffs**

Rams play Saturday, while Eagles have first round bye

*By Donal Ware*

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Albany State, ranked #3 in the NCAA Division II Southeast Region and winner of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, will host a first-round game in the playoffs against Central Arkansas (9-2). North Carolina Central, ranked #2 in the region and winners of the CIAA Championship game, will have a first round bye and will host the winner of #3 Valdosta State (9-2) versus #6 North Alabama (8-2). The Eagles' second-round game will be played on Nov. 19, at noon, at O'Kelly-Riddick Stadium in Durham, N.C. Valdosta State is Division II's defending national champion.

"I am happy and pleased for our kids to be able to win a conference championship and play a playoff game at home," said NCCU head coach Rod Broadway.

As for Albany State, should the Rams defeat Central Arkansas, they will face Presbyterian, the region's #1 ranked team, on November 19 in Clinton, S.C.

Both the Rams and the Eagles entered last Saturday's contests with a chance to win their respective conferences outright with a victory and both teams were successful – Albany State with a 41-23 victory over #7 seeded Fort Valley State, and North Carolina Central with a 26-23 come-from-behind victory over #10 seeded Bowie State. The Eagles began Saturday's game as the #4 seed and the Rams were seeded #3. After Valdosta State fell this weekend to West Georgia, Presbyterian moved up to the top spot, while the Eagles leapfrogged Albany State to move to the second spot, leaving the Rams in third. The seedings are set by the NCAA Division II football committee.

Second-round winners will meet in the quarterfinals at various campus sites on Nov. 26. Quarterfinal winners will advance to play in the semifinals on the campus of one of the competing institutions on Dec. 3. Six teams selected per region make up the field of 24 teams.

The championship game will be played Dec. 10, at 3 p.m. Central time at Braly Municipal Stadium in Florence, Alabama and will be broadcast live on ESPN. The 2005 championship will mark 20 consecutive years that the Division II championship game has been played in Florence.