



In SWAC's Eastern Division, A Battle for the Number One Spot

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Despite average overall records, when Alabama A&M and Jackson State meet in Mississippi on Saturday the SWAC Eastern Division title will be on the line. The Bulldogs (4-6, 3-2) enter the contest hoping to bounce back from a 24-10 loss to Prairie View A&M a week ago, while the Tigers seek their fifth consecutive win. A victory on Saturday will give JSU their second consecutive division title.

Alabama A&M's offense has struggled at times throughout the season, but they are a talented bunch led by sophomore QB Kevin Atkins, third in the SWAC with 1,704 passing yards, six touchdowns and six interceptions. His favorite target is senior Thomas Harris (57-956-4). The Bulldog's defense is paced by senior LBs Alfred Williams (49 tackles) and Quinton Holmes (51 tackles, 2.5 sacks), junior end Jeremy Maddox (9 sacks) and tackle Whitney Garrett (3.5 sacks). Jackson State's offense is led by junior QB Trae Rutland who ranks among the league's top ten in passing (97-168 1,231 yards, 6 TDs, 8 ints.) and rushing (100-436-3). Rutland has completed passes to 17 different receivers during the season. The SWAC's best defense (230.9 ypg) is led by its leading tackler, senior LB Marcellus Speaks (96 tackles, 2.5 sacks). Other defensive leaders include junior end Sam Washington (45 tackles, 5 sacks), junior LB Marcus Jamison (44 tackles) and senior end Marcus Benard (conference-best 10.5 sacks).