

# Classic will air on FSN Network

## ***Deal includes options for '08, '09 for annual Southern Heritage game***

Commercial Appeal: By David Williams

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The Southern Heritage Classic, after making its Fox Sports Net South debut last year, will continue its relationship with the regional sports TV network.

This year's Sept. 8 football game between Jackson State and Tennessee State at Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium will be televised on either FSN South or sister channel SportSouth (formerly Turner South).

FSN South reaches 11.8 million homes across a football-mad region including Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Kentucky. SportSouth reaches 8.2 million homes with a slightly smaller footprint.

The deal includes options for 2008 and 2009.

"The coverage area of FSN is right in major football country," said SHC producer Fred Jones. "It gives us a presence, like a UT, like an Alabama ... It was tremendous exposure for Tennessee State and Jackson State.

"The other thing was, our corporate partners for the Classic were very excited. It adds value to their participation."

The Classic -- which includes concerts, parties and other events over three days -- began in 1990. It has developed into one of the city's most consistent and enduring sports and entertainment events, with the game routinely drawing crowds of 50,000 or more. It was televised on BET for several years.

The FSN South broadcast was a virtual last-minute arrangement in 2006. But Jeff Genthner, vice president and general manager of FSN South and SportSouth, said it was a success despite reduced planning time.

"We very much like the relationship. We like Fred very much. We like his company very much," Genthner said. "We also believe very strongly that there is an unfulfilled niche, if you will, to package historically black college football.

"Last year was our first endeavor in doing historically black college football, between the Southern Heritage Classic in Memphis and the Bank of America Atlanta Football Classic.

"We were very pleased with not only the quality of play, but also with the interest from viewers and advertisers and cable operators.

"So, going forward, we'd like to not only retain those two games, but we're actually looking to add more games and create a season package."

FSN South also is home of the Memphis Grizzlies.

-- David Williams: 529-2310

### **Southern Heritage Classic football game**

**Who:** Jackson State vs. Tennessee State.

**When:** Sept. 8.

**Where:** Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium, and broadcast on FSN South or sister channel SportSouth.

**Web site:** For more information about the game and other Classic events, see [southernheritageclassic.com](http://southernheritageclassic.com).