

Eighth Annual MEAC/SWAC Challenge Presented by Disney Set for Sept. 2

Tickets for Bethune-Cookman vs. Alabama State Game Now on Sale

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., May 30, 2012- The eighth installment of the MEAC/SWAC Challenge presented by Disney – featuring Bethune-Cookman of the MEAC against Alabama State of the SWAC – will be Sunday, Sept. 2, 2012, at Florida Citrus Bowl Stadium in Orlando, Fla. The yearly event features teams from two prominent Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) conferences.

The game marks the first time that one school, Bethune-Cookman, which beat Prairie View 63-14 in 2011, has appeared in back-to-back years. Alabama State returns having last played in the event in 2005, the first year of the annual game. At stake, as usual, is conference supremacy as the MEAC has won five of the previous seven games.

Alabama State finished with an 8-3 record in 2011, recording the most program wins since the 2004 season when the team went 10-2 and won the SWAC Championship. Bethune-Cookman also secured an 8-3 record last season and highlighting the team's schedule was a 14-6 win over No. 24 Norfolk State on Oct. 20. Bethune-Cookman holds a 10-3 lead in the series against Alabama State.

Several events will take place around the MEAC/SWAC Challenge presented by Disney, including a high school career panel and the halftime Battle of the Bands.

"Disney has a long history of supporting the African-American community and we're proud to build on this legacy by supporting the Historically Black Colleges and Universities in the Mid-Eastern and Southwestern Athletic Conferences," said Eugene Campbell, vice president of Domestic Minority Business Development for the Walt Disney Company. "The MEAC/SWAC Challenge presented by Disney showcases football but it celebrates so much more. Our sponsorship of the event is just one way Disney demonstrates its commitment to diversity and inclusion, which benefits everyone."

"Our team is excited about the opportunity to play on national television and we hope they take away what a blessing it is to be chosen to represent the SWAC in a game that will be watched all over the country," said Reggie Barlow, head coach at Alabama State. "I'm looking forward to seeing how we measure up against a great team like Bethune-Cookman, who has Division I transfers and great recruits. I'm also looking forward to our student-athletes traveling to a great city and experiencing a great venue."

"The overall experience last year was great for the team because it was aired on a national level and put on in a special way; it caused our team to really have to focus. It helped our young men understand preparation and how to stay in the moment," said Brian Jenkins Sr., head coach at Bethune-Cookman. "Everything was done in a first-class manner and being invited back for a second time and as the first team to appear in back-to-back years is great. We are very thankful for this opportunity and hope we have continued success with this event."

Tickets for the 2012 MEAC/SWAC Challenge Presented by Disney are on sale now at all Ticketmaster outlets. Tickets are \$30 for reserved seating and \$20 for general admission, plus applicable taxes and fees.

The MEAC/SWAC Challenge is owned and operated by ESPN Regional Television (ERT), a subsidiary of ESPN. For more information about the MEAC/SWAC Challenge, or to join the event's following on Facebook and Twitter, please visit the event's official Web site at www.meacswacchallenge.com or at www.espnplus.com/msc.php.