Football

An “almost” but “not quite” year for Tech

It was a long season, folks.

Tech’s Wonder Boys started in Emporia, Kansas, on a good note, but they ended in Russellville, Arkansas, with a thud.

Early in the season it became strongly evident that our young offensive line would stand a rough test against experienced defenders inside our conference. The big question was how would they react to the pressure.

The offensive line lost Bill Lewis, an All-AIC center, in mid-season until the finale with Southern State.

Just as the offensive unit began to jell, John Pirpich, a four-year letterman, was injured at quarterback. Two games later his replacement, punter-quarterback Ray Palmer, was lost for the season due to an injury. Palmer was a three-year letterman.

Still, the “Green Machine” continued to win.

The defense, led by All-American Perry Goodell, became Tech’s forte. Again and again drives were stalled. Passes were intercepted. Fumbles were caused and recovered by the defense. Runners were caught behind the line of scrimmage. It was a rugged, long season for the defense.

Tech’s defense was named the “Green Demon” because the Wonder Boys won when the odds were against them. Then the inevitable happened.

The injuries, the AIC race, and the personal confusion caught up with us.

There were memorable moments too. Remember Benny Shepherd’s 95-yard run to earn a tie in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, or Rick Gray’s end reverse in Russellville, or Craig Williams’ winning field goals against Henderson? What about the sight of Goodell chasing quarterbacks, or Bruce Duderstadt’s interception to ice the SCA game at Conway?

There were some good times. Next year will be better.
Coach Toothaker studies squad members as they perfect their blocking.

SCOREBOARD

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<td>Southern State</td>
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Football

One win, one loss, in openers

With only 34 seconds left to play in the game, Craig Williams kicked a 26-yard field goal for Tech to cinch the first win of the season against Emporia. Starting the year with a loss of nine starters proved to be costly as the famous Tech wishbone failed.

Ft. Smith was the battleground for the second non-conference game of the season. Fans came especially to see two former high school teammates, Billy Joe Releford for NE Oklahoma and Benny Shepherd for Tech, in a grudge match. Unfortunately for the Wonder Boys, Releford proved to be the standout with a 95-yard touchdown.

The final score of 13-0 was the first shutout against an Arkansas Tech team since a 1969 game with Arkansas A&M. Losing must have been hard to swallow for Shepherd. With a capacity crowd, a tension-filled stadium, and the attendance of the governor, actions were strained.

With one win and one loss under their belts and the roughest games yet to play, Coach Dempsey's wonder squad looked to the future with mixed emotions.

Doug Bice downs an Emporia player with Wonder Boys Chuck Willis and Perry Goodell not far away. Goodell was chosen All American.

With one man down and another on the way, Mark Kaufman shows Emporia how to play football Arkansas Tech-style.

The Wonder Boy offense against North East Oklahoma's defense. It was quite a night as a capacity crowd filled the stands.
Tony Cotton wrenches free of a SEMO player, and tries desperately for an Arkansas Tech touchdown at Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

Tech Ties
SEMO in non-con tilt

Arkansas Tech took "fumbleitis" with them to Cape Girardeau, MO., to face SE Missouri State. The green and gold team was separated at least 10 times from the ball. Without the strong force of the defense and a 95-yard kick-off return by Shepherd, the 10-10 score could have been a lot worse.

Local fans came home with mixed feelings about a 1-1-1 record. Most began thinking optimistically about the future. One thing was beginning to be clear though, a title was going to come hard.

Day ruined;
Tigers win over Tech

On the 46th Annual Parents' Day the Lincoln University Tigers tore into Russellville and whipped a disillusioned Wonder Boy team 10-3.

Lincoln University, with one of the winningest coaches in the country, held Tech to a scoreless half. The longest drive the home team made was 29 yards. Battling a "slingshot armed" quarterback proved to be a strain, but Craig Williams, kicking specialist, managed a 53-yard field goal to prove that Arkansas Tech would not be held scoreless again.

Every one of Mark Wilkerson's 170 pounds is in motion to attempt to stop the Lincoln University Tigers during the annual Parents' Day game.
An offensive play by the Henderson Reddies is stopped by the Tech defense. The Wonder Boys’ strong defense and aggressive offense helped the team to edge past the Reddies for a 17 to 16 win.

Football

Reddies fall in last play by kicker

The Henderson Reddies came to Tech land wanting to win, and it looked to Wonderboy fans that they might do just that ... until the 4th quarter.

With 3:03 left in the game and the Reddies leading 16-7, Doug Bice made a touchdown, and the extra point was good. With defeat alarmingly near and the clock running into the seconds, Craig Williams, saviour in many games, kicked a field goal. The result: 17-16 win over Henderson, the first win in conferences, and just a little bit of the confidence the earlier games had lacked.

Now the machine was in motion. There is nothing like a winner. Just wait til next week. The spirit was there.

Stopping the man with the ball doesn’t come easy, especially when the opponent is Henderson. By the look on the ball carrier’s face, seems to be in a definitely uncomfortable position.
Herd loses to "hot" Tech

"Are the Bisons for real?"
That was the question that was in the minds of many as Tech readied for Harding. The "Herd" had compiled quite an impressive record in AIC standings. They were 5-0 and a foe to be reckoned with in the biggest sense of the word.

The green and gold team was ready, however, and put in what was later decided to be the best offensive performance of the season.

The 13-9 victory over Harding seemed to put the AIC crown in perspective again. Now other teams were watching APC to see if it were possible that another fantastic year of football would be granted to the Wonder Boys. They also wondered if a quarterback for Tech would ever be found.

Harding's loss to Tech was their only one of the season.

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Offensive halfback, Benny Shepherd, moves on much to the chagrin of wary Bison players.

Defensive plays such as this were part of the reason that the Arkansas Tech Wonder Boys defeated the Harding Bisons 5-0 record.
Football

“Headhunter” finds no heads,
Wonder Boys win fourth straight

The University of Arkansas at Monticello Boll Weevils came to town with high hopes and a young man from Daingerfield, Texas, and another gentleman who is a native of Arkansas.

Freshman running back Terry Lee is the Texan. Roy Strickland, an All-AIC linebacker and the leader of the headhunters, is the gentleman.

Despite these potent offensive and defensive threats, Tech prevailed for a 24-14 victory on Buerkle Field.

Coach Dempsey was very scientific in his approach to this game. He recruited Ricky Pilkington, a former quarterback for Tech, after seniors John Pirpich and Ray Palmer were injured. Coach Dempsey found Pilkington in a geology lab.

With only a week to get back in shape, Pilkington led his squad to their third straight conference victory for the season. Another title loomed on the horizon.

The quarterback position was questionable. Rick Gray began the year there, but was now a wide receiver. Freshman Charlie Sorrels was inexperienced. Pilkington was the fifth signal-caller of the season.

After scoring two touchdowns and gaining over 100 yards, Benny Shepherd said, "I'm very happy. We finally scored more than 20 points. I think we can make it now."

Shepherd's down, and a UAM player looks as if he would like for him to remain there, permanently. Sophomore Rick Gray handles the situation adeptly.

Hanging on, a Boll Weevil and a Wonder Boy refuse to give up an inch either way.

Up and running, crowd-pleaser Benny tries for another inch.
A swarm of offending SCABs try to push their way through the famous “green machine.” Only one bear headed young man seems to have made it.

Sandwiched in between a Bear and a Wonder Boy, an unfortunate Techman is about to be rescued by Eddie Lacy and Danny Rodman.

Play pays in bout with Bears

The Wonder Boys famous Wishbone offense finally came to life in the annual grudge match with the State College of Arkansas Bears. This year the war was fought in Conway.

Rick Hampton took things in his own hands in the second half. Hampton replaced Benny Shepherd who was injured on the last play of the first half. Hampton scored two touchdowns, and the Bears got skinned again.

Shepherd got Tech on the scoreboard with a 65-yard run in the first quarter, but SCA came back and took a halftime lead.

It was Tech’s fourth conference victory in a row. We were tied for the lead with Southern State and a title looked like it was getting closer to us.

Despite the win against State College, Shepherd, Bill Breedlove, and Doug Bice were injured. Only Pilkington remained in the starting Wishbone backfield for Arkansas Tech. We had won, but at a high price.

The next week ... Homecoming. Johnny Baker and the Ouachita Baptist Tigers of Arkadelphia. The latter two were bad notes in any tune to Wonder Boys.
Playing without Benny Shepherd, Tech's ALL-AIC running back, and without wingback Doug Bice, the Wonder Boys were severely hampered offensively.

Rick Hampton tried heroically to fill Shepherd's shoes in the wishbone, but finally the Wonder Boys went into an I-formation with Rick Gray playing tailback.

Six thousand fans, including Capt. Alan Bean, astronaut, filed into Arkansas Tech's Buerkle Field expecting to see another Tech Homecoming victory. They were to be denied.

Buddy Benson, Ouachita's coach, called the game "the Hospital Bowl."

The Baptist Tigers were playing for keeps. Despite the cheerings and encouragement from the homecoming crowd, the Wonder Boys could not persevere. Their only points were produced after a 77-yard drive in the third quarter. The final score was 27-7, Ouachita Baptist University.

It was the largest score an OBU team had ever tallied against a Tech team.

"Rah, rah, ree, rah, rass, Perry Goodell's gonna kick your...", was a popular yell among Tech fans. Goodell, a favorite of Tech, is a senior.
Title is lost in finale with SSC

It was the final game of the season, the last chance Arkansas Tech had for a share of the AIC crown. It was slowly boiling down to 60 minutes of an entire season.

Southern State had two losses and both were to nationally-ranked teams. Could Tech's "Green Demon" defense contain their powerful wishbone offense? Could Pilkington or the newly-healed John Pirpich make the "Green Machine" work to perfection?

The 'Riders had said earlier that "they had their backs against the wall." Perhaps this is why they could not be stopped.

Once again, turnovers gave our opponent easy scoring opportunities. Pirpich and Pilkington could not find their receivers and SSC keyed on Shepherd. They even refused to kickoff to Shepherd until late in the game.

When the game was over, stunned fans looked at the 21-3 score in disbelief. Although the championship moved to another school, Arkansas Tech still ranked in the top three.

Straining fiercely in his last Arkansas Tech game, senior Benny Shepherd plugs on.
Basketball

Tech team completes slow season

Any soldier knows that every battle is not a victory. Every victory does not come easily and even if the war is lost valiant efforts are not forgotten by those who care.

- So it was with our Wonder Boys. Unlike so many previous campaigns, the victories became few and far between, but when we won, it was as if we all had become millionaires. The fervor was still in our hearts.

The good times were usually supplied by Eugene Grant and Ron Edmonds, premier performers throughout the season.

Edmonds, a senior guard from East Chicago, Ind., had been known as a playmaker his first three years at Tech. He became a pointmaker of prolific proportions this season.

1972-73 Basketball

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<td>75 College of the Ozarks</td>
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Kneeling: David Christian; Randy Hamilton; Bobby Furnatter; Larry Sidney; Ron Edmonds; Levi Hicks. Standing: Coach Ted Lyons; equipment manager, Greg Miller; James Mackey; Roosevelt Dawson; Mark Loris; Jimmy Cunningham; Nelson Ennis; Ron Huber; Eugene Grant; Tommy Hodges; manager, Billy Fryman; statistician, Dennis Chastain; Coach Deward Dopson.
Eugene Grant is a transfer student from Pensacola, Fla., Jr. College. Grant hails from Savannah, Ga.

The Jumpin' Georgian from Savannah became a stalwart instantly. Grant, only 6-2 at center, proceeded to take the Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference by storm.

Playing against men three to six inches taller than he, Grant won the rebounding crown his first year in the AIC with a 13.6 average.

Grant led team scoring with an 18.3 average and Edmonds followed with a 16.0 scoring average. Edmonds was also second in rebounds for the Wonder Boys.

Their efforts were not unnoticed. Grant was named to the All-NAIA District 17 team. Edmonds was given honorable mention recognition.

Tech opened its season on the road against strong competition, coming away with only one victory in four games.
Basketball

Ball refuses to cooperate with players

On that road trip, Grant and Edmonds were instrumental in guiding the fledgling Wonder Boys to an 87-82 victory over Southeast Oklahoma College. The losses were to Cameron State College, Northeast Missouri State, and Central Missouri State.

Coach Deward Dopson's squad opened its home season against Henderson dropping it after a good first half by an 85-70 score and then dropping the second game to State College of Arkansas 112-89.

With Southern State College, the Wonder Boys put together a good first half, but again dropped out in the second to lose 89-59.

Tech was host to the Arkansas Valley Basketball tournament which brought teams from Missouri, Wisconsin, and Arkansas.

Rosy Dawson stretches like a firstbaseman to retrieve a loose ball in the Tech-SCA clash. Jimmy Cunningham breaks for the Tech goal between Hutchcraft and Tabor.

"It's a bird! No, it's a ball!" Or so it seems these participants are exclaiming in the Tech-Central Missouri game. Actually, the Mule in the middle took a shot.
Central Missouri State won the tournament by defeating Racine Wisconsin in the finals, 105-94.

Tech narrowly lost to Central Missouri State 85-76 in the opening game.

Tech lost the consolation game to College of the Ozarks, 66-59. Racine had beaten Ozarks in the opening game 80-65.

On January 2 the Wonder Boys took Harding College into two over-times with the help of Edmond’s 48 points, a college career high. Unfortunately, it was not enough as the Bisons won 105-98.

The University of Arkansas at Monticello also chalked up a 79-57 victory, again Tech played a good first half.

The thin squad returned home to meet Arkansas College, but the Scots jumped out to an early lead and never trailed.

Randy Hamilton displays the kind of aggressive resistance that gave Arkansas College a scare, although Tech lost 67-55.

Ron Edmonds watches Ozark’s Eugene Gipson pass out of a double team trap set by Nelson Ennis and Bobby Furnatter.

That worried look on Ron Edmonds face is genuine, the Wonder Boys were trailing Ozarks and the visitors’ Fred Dowd has just pilfered a Tech pass.
Cameron State College came to town to attempt to duplicate their earlier win over the Wonder Boys. Front and center stood Eugene Grant, the “Jumpin’ Georgian,” to thwart their plans.

Gene opened the scoring for the Wonder Boys by shooting over Cameron’s 6-10 center. He led the team to a 71-64 victory. Cameron was leading their conference. Grant collected 33 points and 16 rebounds.

Grant began to get recognition after the Ouachita Baptist game. Even though Tech lost the contest, the “Georgian” scored 34 points, his best scoring effort of the season and it was against the leading team in the AIC.

Twice Gene had risen to the occasion to give stellar performances against the best of two conferences.

James Mackey came on in relief for Grant to spark the Wonder Boys to Tech’s first conference victory, a 71-70 decision over College of the Ozarks. Mackey finished with 26 points for high scoring honors. Coach Dopson relied heavily on his bench and got clutch performances from two freshmen — Mark Loris and David Christian.

James Mackey plays a lone hand in the company of three Mountaineers, but he got the rebound which finally came down.

Basketball

30-footer brings cheer

Bobby Furnatter, always on target from the far corners, triggers a 30-footer over Southern State’s Shady Patton. Other Wonder Boys are Gene Grant and James Mackey.
Eugene Grant’s facial expression indicates rebounds aren’t always easy to come by. James Mackey’s face also reflects muscular tension on this play with SE Oklahoma.

‘Cheese’ does what crowd screams for

The Reddies proved too strong for the Wonder Boys in the second meeting of the two teams in Arkadelphia, chalking up a 99-65 victory. Tech’s arch rivals in Conway also took their second game from Tech, 96-72, although Grant grabbed 15 rebounds and scored 27 points. Southern State utilized balanced scoring and strong defensive play to scuttle Tech 80-57 in their return contest at Russellville. The Riders took an early lead, prevailed 40-30 at the half and won going away.

Out-of-state foe Southeast Oklahoma avenged an earlier defeat by Tech with a 92-67 win in the Stroupe Building.

James Mackey looks for a way out after being hemmed in by a host of Muleriders. SSC’s Ron Fluker does an adagio in an effort to distract Mackey, but “Cheese” finally found Grant.

Sacking a layup before an audience of muscular Muleriders is James “Cheese” Mackey.
Basketball

With 19 degree weather outside the Stroupe Building, the Wonder Boys could score only 19 points inside in the second half, so they dropped a 76-63 decision to the Harding Bisons.

Edmonds started out as if he were going to match his earlier 48 points against the Bisons at Searcy. He scored 16 points in the first period but managed only five in the second half and fouled out with one minute to go.

Although the University of Arkansas at Monticello had beaten Tech there, Grant led the Wonder Boys to a victory by grabbing off 20 rebounds and scoring 23 points when the two teams met here. James Mackey added 20 points and Edmonds contributed 18 points to the 85-72 victory.

The Wonder Boys gave the towering Arkansas Scotties a scare at Batesville, but the host team was able to come back in the second half to trim the Wonder Boys 75-70. Mackey and Edmonds each scored 16 for Tech.

Tech defeats A & M

Wonder Boys make a tight ring around the basket, keeping the ball moving away from the Harding Bisons.

Flanked by Southern State cagers, Jim Cunningham receives a pass.

Randy Hamilton makes a try for the ball in the Southern State contest.
Wonder Boys keep trying

The Wonder Boys hit only 27 per cent of their floor shots in the first half and ended with a 37 per cent overall as the Hendrix Warriors won an easy 86-63 victory there. The Warriors hit their first five shots from the floor to trigger the avalanche. Grant finished with 19 points and 23 rebounds while Mackey scored 13.

When OBU came to Russellville, the game spelled our season finals at home. The fact that the Tigers were leading the conference seemed insignificant. There was a touch of sentimentality strong enough to counter-act anything.

The Wonder Boys fought hard and held a 45-39 lead at intermission. But Ouachita came back strong in the second half. The lead changed hands every 90 seconds. It was a nip and tuck battle until the final 30 seconds when the Tigers got three quick buckets. The Wonder Boys had lost 76-69. Eugene Grant led the scoring with 31 points for Arkansas Tech.

A fired up band of Ozark Mountaineers ambushed the Techster’s at Clarksville, defeating them 91-75. For Tech, it resulted in a 2-16 conference record and co-ownership of the AIC cellar with Ozarks.

The Wonder Boys fought a good courageous fight. Despite their lack of height, they gave it their all. Amid giants at times, yet they fought. Against incomparable odds they still fought.

It did not matter where they were or who they played. They did their best.
Women's Basketball

Wonderettes finish unsuccessful season

A basketball season that ended in a not too successful fashion was completed in February with the Wonderettes winning one and losing 10 games.

The squad, coached by Judy Key, sponsored an Invitational Tournament in February with Henderson taking first, Southern State College second, and Southwest Missouri State third.

Season scores are:

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<th>Team</th>
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Kathy Swaim struggles to keep the roundball from two aggressive Southern State defenders.
Diane Cain, Judy Key (coach), Kathleen Vaught, Terrie Rusher, and Diana Carpenter file into the locker room to plan strategy after a tough first half. The Wonderettes were defending champions of Arkansas Women’s Extramural Sports Association.

Linda Lowrey and Kay Nuttleman get the rebound in a game with Southern State.

Barred from getting inside. Suzie Park attempts a long jumper. Teammate is Anita Carter.