Homecoming 2006

1967 Football Team Honored
Homecoming 2006/Victory for Tigers

Champion 1967 Football Team also Honored

On Friday, September 15th the Worth County school district celebrated "Homecoming 2006" with a parade, a pep rally and a dance, and of course, a football game. Once again this week the Tigers game was called at halftime.

Festivities began on Friday night with the introduction of the Homecoming Royalty. The 2006 Homecoming Royalty is King Jordan Hiatt, Grant City, son of Kevin and Shelly Hiatt, Queen Erica Smith, daughter of Ken and Linda Smith.

Princes are Zach Allee, Sheridan, son of Doug and Ruby Allee and Dillon DeVries, son of Lynn DeVries and Carol Borey. Princesses are Cassie Gilland, Grant City, daughter of David and Ann Gilland and Lynsie Jackson, Grant City, daughter of Loren and Amy Jackson.

The Junior Attendants are Todd Corbett, son of Kassandra and Teddy Corbett and Cassy Lyle, daughter of Kris and Jeff Lyle.

The Sophomore Attendants are Tyler Garrett, son of Darrin and Amy Garrett and Kelly Cook, daughter of Mike and Jonell Cook. The Freshman Attendants are Barrett Baker and Becky Baker and Ashley Reynolds, daughter of Joe and Julie Mace and Craig Reynolds.

The Tigers defeated the Hornets by a score of 54-6. The Tigers took the lead early in the game and continued to increase to widen the lead throughout the first and second quarter. The Hornets finally scored at the end of the second half. Team members Zach Allee, Jordan Hiatt and Andrew Davidson showed the strength of both the Tiger offense and defense but this team is in no way a "one man show" the Tigers are playing as a team and with so many talented players the Tigers could certainly once again make the trip to the state play-offs.

During half-time the Tigers and fans honored the undefeated 1967 GRC Championship team.

A roll call was announced and players stepped forward as their name was announced. The 1967 Tiger football: Jeff Saunders, Steve Combs, Bob Prather, Nels (Bear) Groom, Jim Alderson, Jerry Groce, Frank Matteson, Franklin Ross, Robert Thompson, Pat Grace, Harold Davidson, Russell Burns, Steve Goff, Bill Locke, Alan Roach, Dick Hensley, Mike Sherer, Bill Davison, Leland Cook, Mike Swift, Bill Gladstone, Sam Masters, Mark Lister, Jack Spainhower, John Cousins, K.C. Thompson, Mark Terry, Ronnie Dannar, Jack Baker, Scott Houk, Ronnie Stephenson, Error Fletcher, Bruce Downing, Barry McClellan, Randy Fletcher, Eddie Jacobs, Danny Parman, Richard Williams, Jef Gladstone, Phillip Hunt, Dennis Gabbert, Jim Combs, J.D. Gladstone, Mike Fletcher, Ken Humphrey, Brent Thompson.

Coaches were Garrett, Reece and Folland.
'67 CHAMPS They know success.
1967 GRC Champs to be Honored at Homecoming

In an effort to renew and increase the ties between alumni and their alma mater, the Worth County Education Foundation has extended a special invitation to the 1967 Grand River Conference Championship team to attend Tiger Football Homecoming 2006. Homecoming is Friday, September 15, 2006 against the Craig Hornets. This team was the first football team since 1947 to win the conference championship. Winning the conference championship was the highest possible honor for football teams at that time since there were no district or state playoff games.

Anyone interested in visiting with members of the team are invited to the Grant City Golf Clubhouse after the Homecoming game against Craig on Friday night. You can also visit with them at the game. Members of the team are: Jeff Saunders, Steve Combs, Bob Prather, Neil Groom, Jim Alderson, Jerry Groce, Frank Matteson, Franklin Ross, Co-captain; Robert Thompson, Co-Captain; Pat Grace, Harold Davidson, Russell Burns, Steve Goff, Bill Locke, Alan Roach, Dick Hensley, Mike Sherer, Bill Davison, Leland Cook, Mike Swift, Bill Gladstone, Sam Masters, Mark Lister, Jack Spainhower, John Cousins, K.C. Thompson, Mark Terry, Ronnie Dennar, Jack Baker, Scott Houk, Ronnie Stephenson, Erron Fletcher, Bruce Downing, Barry McLellan, Randy Fletcher, Eddie Jacobs, Danny Parman, Richard Williams, Jeff Gladstone, Phillip Hunt, Dennis Gabbert, Jim Combs, J.D. Gladstone, Mike Fletcher, Kent Humphrey, and Brent Thompson. Coaches were Don Reese, Marvin Garrett and Gary Poland. This information was taken from the 1968 yearbook.
Homecoming 2006

"Victory is Sweet"

On Friday, September 15th the 2006 Worth County R-III Homecoming will be held. The theme for this years Homecoming will be “Victory is Sweet.” The theme was chosen by the student council. A parade will be held on Friday at 2:15 p.m. The coronation will be held following the parade.

A window decorating contest will be held again this year for area businesses and organizations. The winning entry will win a $25 prize from the student council.

The pre-game show will begin at 6:35 p.m. at Frank B. Matteson Memorial Field with the introduction of the Queen and her court who will be escorted by their fathers. An introduction of the teams will follow. The opening kick-off between the Tigers and the Craig Hornets will take place at 7 p.m.

The 2006 Homecoming Royalty is: Queen Candidates, Cassie Gilland, Lynsie Jackson, and Erica Smith; King Candidates are Zach Allee, Dilan DeVries and Jordan Hiatt.

The Junior Attendants are Cassy Lyle and Todd Corbett, sophomore attendants are Keely Cook and Tyler Garrett, and freshman attendants are Ashley Reynolds and Barrett Baker.

A special recognition will be given to the Conference Champions of 1967. The 1967 team will have a float in the parade and will be recognized during the half-time activities.
Who were these 1967 Tigers that came from nowhere and won it all? It takes little analysis to point to the amazing senior class of 1970, the sophomore athletes that stepped up and played their best. They were so young and enthusiastic they did not know that they could lose a game. Sadly, three of these talented players are no longer with us because they have died prematurely. Bob Prather, a scholarship player at Mizzou died of meningitis during the summer after his sophomore year in college. Billy Gladstone owns track records at Northwest and William Jewel but died several years ago in a farm accident. KC Thompson died in an accident in Colorado. Gladstone and Prather were two of the best athletes to come from Worth County and Northwest Missouri. Prather played end and linebacker, punted, kicked-off and occasionally threw a double reverse pass. Offensive halfback Gladstone could hurdle two players, both a defender and his blocker on a kick-off return—Take that Reggie Bush! In addition to those great athletes, there were a number of very, very exceptional sophomore athletes that started, including all of the backfield except senior Frank Matteson. Gladstone and Ronnie Dannar at halfback, Bear Groom at fullback. On defense, end Bill Locke and linebacker Steve Gof showed leadership and stability. Juniors who started were center Alan Roach, offensive tackle Mark Lister, defensive tackle Steve Combs, and cornerback Mark Terry. Senior players were captain Franklin Ross, tackle; and captain Robert Thompson, guard; halfback Jim Alderson; tackle Russell Burns; guard Harold Davidson; guard Pat Grace; end Jerry Groce and quarterback Frank Matteson. All of the other underclassmen were also part of the team. They practiced hard even during the off-season, and in the games filled in at key moments. Their hard play earned the coach’s confidence to play them thus likely limited injuries to the starting players.

We also got great support from the community. It seemed like half the town would travel to support the Tigers at the games away. Grant City had waited a long time for a championship team. Looking back, the winning effort was not just the players and coaches, but all, including the students and community fans.

I do not know if the 1967 Tiger championship team surprised Coach Reese. He played each game plan with confidence and expected to win. He had known it would take some time for the players to learn his complicated offense, but he had confidence in his system and in the players that developed. He gave them strength, character and confidence, always saying that regardless of the record and appearances, any high school team can beat any other on any Friday night. One team of boys just needs to want to win the game more.
Robert Thompson
Recounts 1967 GRC Title

Grant City Wins the 1967 Grand River Conference Championship

In early September the scent of fall in a cool morning breeze signals the end of the hot dry summer. The cycle of another school year begins. This is the way it was in the fall of 1967 in Grant City.

Football was the first sports activity offered by the high school. Every season the students, parents and fans would go out and support the Tigers on the field, and if Grant City could just beat Albany, the season would be a success. Grant City had last won the Grand River Conference championship in 1947, twenty years before. Cameron and Bethany had more than twice as many students from which to field teams, making it difficult for smaller schools like Grant to be competitive.

The Tiger fans were cautiously hopeful for just a winning record in 1967. The year before the Tigers had barely booked more wins than losses, and there were a lot of positions to fill. The team had lost three of four starters in the backfield and over half the line at May's graduation. However, the returning players were much more positive because they knew that Grant City had been competitive in every game, and that their coach had a unique offense that could score from anywhere on the field. Besides, if the players were going to put in so much time and energy, why not play for the win?

And win we did. First, a 38-0 blowout against Gallatin, and then a 12-12 tie with the Cameron powerhouse. This shocked all of the fans and probably all of the other GRC coaches — The 1967 Tigers were for real! The starters only played about one quarter in the 61-12 rout of Hamilton. Against a dangerous King City team, the Tigers controlled the game but squeaked out a 14-13 win. Against Princeton, the Tigers came out passing in the sheet of rain and won 19-7. Maysville was beaten mentally before the kickoff whistle and lost 6-19. Stanberry lost 0-19. There might have been 2,000 fans at the Bethany game, the night was bitterly cold, and the conference championship was won on the line. The Tigers and Bulldogs fought the most physical battle of the season. The Tigers left it all on the field, and earned a 6-0 victory. The last game, Albany, was anticlimactic. The Tigers focused on business and won easily, 29-6.

The season brought a lot of excitement to town. Everyone loves to follow their favorite team, and winning makes it even more special, and the 1967 Tigers were special.

Some say that success is the combination of preparation and opportunity. The magic of the 1967 championship was preparation, opportunity and a little luck. The Tigers had great coaches in Don (Bull) Reese, Marvin Garrett and Gary Poland. Reese, the University of Missouri star fullback and professional standout, had been hired out of retirement from farming in his hometown, Maysville, five years earlier. He had led the Gower Bulldogs to many winning seasons in the past. The Tigers had needed a coach. Longtime Coach Max had retired in about 1960 and Grant City then hired two young and inexperienced men, Rocky Calhoun and Marly Vance in short succession. Neither could showcase Grant City's talent. Reese burned with the desire to win, but patiently built the team on and off the field. Over the years, he started an off-season strength and weight training program, and required everyone to run during track. Reese knew that the training would develop the players who did not necessarily possess the most athletic ability, but who would be needed for the entire team to compete successfully. Reese also installed an offense that featured power straight at the defense as well as counters and feints, and innovated with spread ends and receivers to use the entire field and 4 and 5 receivers before this was popular with most coaches. More fun was his list of every trick play in the book; The statue of liberty punt, the no-huddle quick line-up play, and passes laterally across the field on punts and kick-offs. The Tigers put on an entertaining show, and the fans never even saw all of the tricks the team practiced.

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