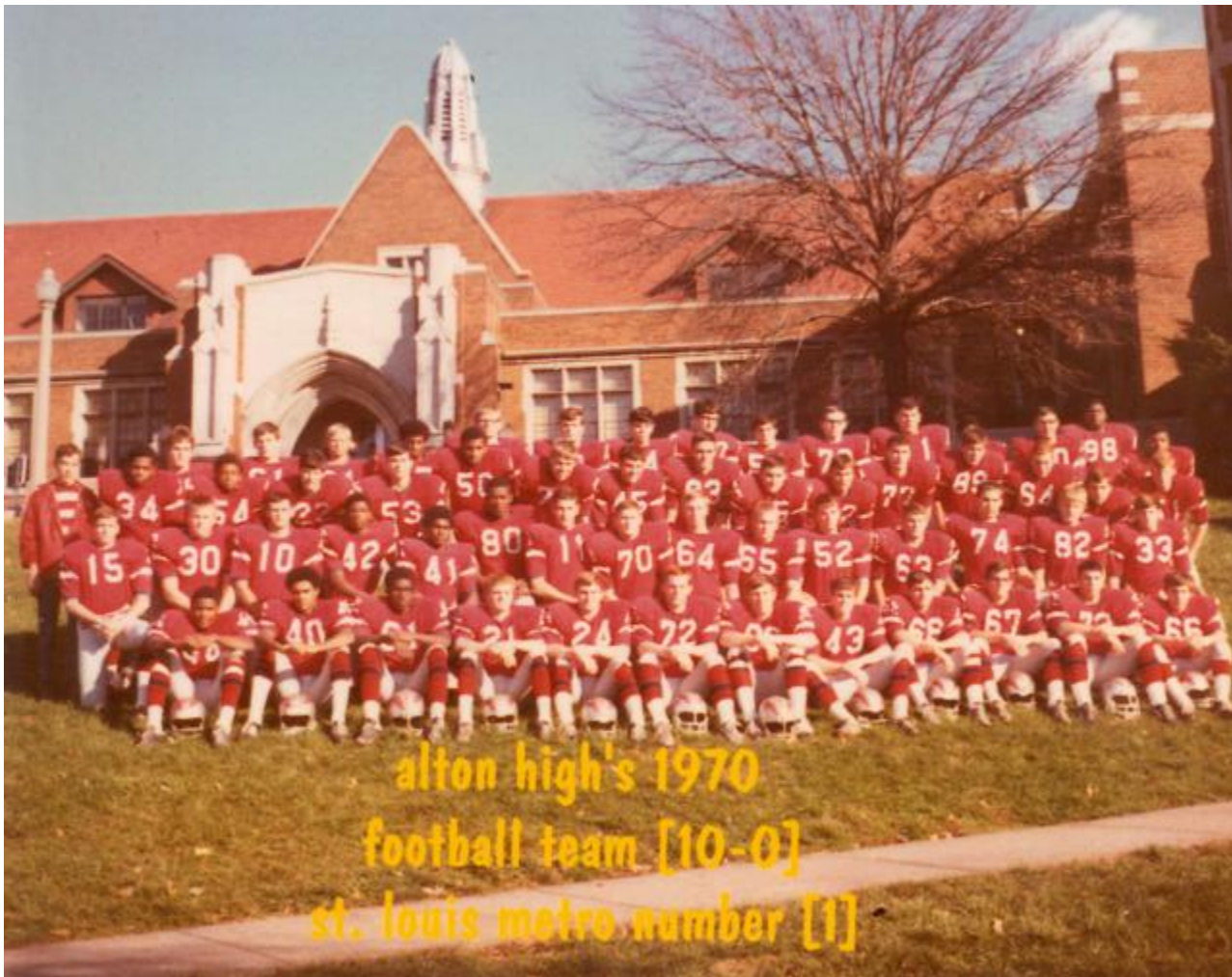


COACH YONKUS ERA: Alton High remembers 1965 to 1971 teams and unbeaten 10-0 season at football game

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - Players from the **Coach Ed Yonkus** era (1965-1971) at **Alton High School** were recognized at the Friday night home game at Alton High.

Yonkus had a 44-20-4 coaching record at Alton High.

Richard Baird, Redbirds' public announcer, and a spokesperson for the festivities, said Coach Yonkus paid attention to details, articulated his demands for excellence, required an effort on the field equal to 100 percent and reminded everyone you could not fail if you followed these principles.

“He believed in intense practicing, including 10-20 100-yard wind sprints,” Baird said. “Coach Yonkus cared about behavior off the field in the classroom and away from school. He mentored athletes and became involved in personal situations simply because of an apparent unspoken love for each one of his players and coaches.”



The 1965 team was 4-5-1.

The 1966 team was 4-5.

The 1967 team was 7-1-1. All-State Fullback Frank Holmes went on to play at Iowa from that team. Larry Ceppanati was an all-state lineman that year.

The 1968 team was 9-0-1, with a tie to only Belleville West 6-6. All-State players were Bob Joehl and Gary Hagen.

The 1969 team was 4-6, then the 1970 team rebounded to a 10-0 mark, the first undefeated and untied team since 1935. All-State Defensive tackle Tim Fisk and All-American Running Back Bobby Everage were the leaders of the team. The team was ranked No. 1 in Illinois and No. 1 in the St. Louis Metropolitan Poll. Other key members were Regan Steiner, a running back, who started at Kansas State. Glen Lott played safety at Drake and was the 50th college player drafted by the Buffalo Bills after he graduated from high school. Running back Gale Murphy went to Drake on a track scholarship.

The last Yonkus team was in 1971. That team was led by All-State running back Everage and All-State Defensive End Dan Ewing. Everage went on to play at SEMO.

Alton High School Starting Lineup

Offense, Defense on 1970 10-0 team

Offense

SE Richard Baird

LT Rick Mihalich (Played SIU-C)

LG Dan Mueller (Played at Culver Stockton)

C Ed Ryrie

RG Chuck Osborne

RT Cliff Meisenheimer

TE Chris Mills

LH Bobby Everage Jr. (Played at SEMO)

RHB Regan Steiner (Went to Kansas State, started sophomore, junior and senior years).

RHB Gale Murphy (Went to Drake for track and Lott for football), Ronnie Caldwell

FB Randy Connors

QB Bill Clark

Defense

LDE Dan Ewing

LLB Deac Steve Joehl

LT Tim Fisk (All-State and played at Vanderbilt)

ILB Kent Caskey

ILB Dave Cousley

RT Bob Naughton

OLB Glenn Lott (Played at Drake and drafted by Bills)

DB Bob Norman

DB Steve Williams

S Randy Schwartz

CB Bobby Rodgers

Members of the 1970 Undefeated, Untied 10-0 Team:

Seniors

Richard Baird, Silas Braxton, Bill Clark, Dave Cousley, Lee Eft, Tim Fisk, Bobby Fritz, Dennis Hammond, Steve Joehl, Glenn Lott, Cliff Meisenheimer, Rick Mihalich, Chris Mills, Dan Mueller, Gale Murphy, Bob Norman, Chuck Osborne, Greg Pierson, Bobby Rogers, Steve Rynders, Randy Schwartz, Regan Steiner, and Steve Williams.

Juniors

Kent Caskey, Randy Connors, Rick Cope, Keith Corxton, Bobby Everage, Dan Ewing, Don Ewing, Jimmy Griggs, Bob Hansberry, Eric Haun, Mitchell Holmes, Jeff Huber, Charles Johnson, Jeff Joyce, Jim Knutson, Jeff Korte, Alan Locke, John Lyon, Jimmy

Matlock, Greg Matthews, Bob Naughton, Steve Naughton, Paul Pfeifer, Fred Redd, Robin Roettgers, Ed Ryrie Louis Scudere, Randy Shearburn, Larry Spears, Bobby Steiner, Dave Wallace, and Ken Williams.

Sophomores

Harvey Barham, Bob Barnes, Mike Connolly, Robert Forbes, Mike Huff, Brian Joehl, Rick Minton and Steve Shust.

Other coaches during the Yonkus era: Norm Inman, Ray Thorpe, Leroy Beck, Flex Macias, Pete Stavros and Buddy Buddell.

In 80 years, Alton's 1971 team was the only one that was undefeated.

Baird said the 1970 team possessed tremendous athletic talent, but the reason the team was so good is that a lot of mentoring occurred with the coaches about personal life along with academics and the kids were also taught to give back and contribute and persevere.

Baird played music from the 1965 to 1970 era during the halftime gathering and it was overall, a fun night to remember some of the brightest athletic moments in Alton history. Those involved will remember it for a long time to come.